

INDIA IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING STABILITY, PROSPERITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA: PRESIDENT MURMU



New Delhi: On the second day of her visit to Serbia, the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu met the President of Serbia, Mr Aleksandar Vucic, the Prime Minister, Mrs Ana Brnabic and Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, Mr Vladimir Orlic and led the delegation-level talks in Belgrade today (June 8, 2023).

The President commenced her engagements with the visit to Serbia Palace where she was received by President Vucic and accorded a ceremonial welcome. During the one-to-one discussion, the President thanked President Vucic and the people of Serbia for the

warm welcome and hospitality. Subsequently speaking at the delegation-level talks, the President said that India and Serbia have a time-tested and trust-based relationship. As co-founders of the Non-Aligned Movement, both countries share a historic association. She reiterated India's commitment to supporting stability, prosperity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia. The President said that the economies of India and Serbia have done well in recent times. She underlined that there are several areas of promise, such as IT, Infrastructure, Machinery and Equipment, Agriculture,

Science and Technology, Education, Tourism and others that offer significant mutually beneficial opportunities. The President noted that a significant number of Indian students are in Serbia to study medicine. She expressed confidence that they would receive a quality education and become competent professionals, as well as enduring goodwill Ambassadors for India-Serbia relations. Subsequently, the President addressed the India-Serbia Business Forum. Speaking on the occasion, she said that the Indian economy is one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world. India has the third largest

start-up ecosystem in the world, with over 100 unicorns. In 2022, the total FDI inflow into India was around US \$ 77 billion. She noted that the Serbian economy has recovered from the Covid pandemic and has attracted more than half of the FDI received by the Western Balkans region since 2018. The President said that Serbia is a country of intelligent, hard-working people driven by innovation and ideas. She noted that Serbia is looking for skilled workers and professionals from overseas, to help meet its workforce requirements. She said that Indian talent can be a credible partner in the progress of Serbia.

The President said that there is huge potential for India-Serbia trade and investment. Serbia can become an effective gateway for Indian companies to access broader markets in Europe and Eurasia. She emphasized on strengthening the old bridges, and also building new ones. She said that a better understanding of each other's capabilities would help the two countries to discover cost-effective alternate supply sources to meet their requirements. She called for more frequent trade and business interactions.

Prime Minister Ana Brnabic hosted the President over a working lunch.

Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia Vladimir Orlic also called on the President. During the meeting, the President said that Parliament represents the hopes and aspirations of the people and in that context, his role as the Speaker is fundamental. Both the leaders agreed that the Parliamentarians of India and Serbia have an important role in enhancing the goodwill and mutual understanding between the two countries.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first-ever National Training Conclave at the International Exhibition and Convention Centre Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 11th June, 2023 at 10:30 AM. Prime Minister will also address the gathering on the occasion.

Prime Minister has been a proponent of improving the governance process and policy implementation in the country through capacity building of civil service. Guided by this vision, the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) – 'Mission Karmayogi' was launched to prepare a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge. This Conclave is yet another



step in this direction. The National Training Conclave is being hosted by Capacity Building Commission with an objective to foster collaboration among civil services training institutes and strengthen the training infrastructure for civil servants across the country.

More than 1500 representatives from training institutes, including Central Training Institutes, State Administrative Training

Institutes, Regional and Zonal Training Institutes, and Research institutes will participate in the conclave. Civil Servants from central government departments, state governments, local governments, as well as experts from the private sector will take part in the deliberations.

This diverse gathering will foster the exchange of ideas, identify the challenges being faced and opportunities available, and generate actionable solutions and comprehensive strategies for capacity building. The conclave will have eight panel discussions, each focusing on key concerns pertinent to Civil services training institutes such as faculty development, training impact assessment and content digitisation, among others.

Odisha: Cyber Police Bust Pre-Activated SIM Card Racket, 7 Telecom Staff Among 8 Held

Cuttack(KCN): In a major crackdown, a team of cyber police bust a pre-activated SIM card racket in Cuttack, today. Police have arrested eight persons including seven telecom staff in this connection.

The telecom employees are Babuna Das, Rakesh Kumar Nayak, Biswajeet Sarangi, Biswajeet Pradhan, Mahabir Das, Jyotiranjana Sahoo and Soumya Ranjan Khandayat. However, the identity of the other arrested person has not been known yet.

The inter-state racket was supplying SIM cards from Puri to different places outside the State such as New Delhi, Assam, Rajasthan and Western UP for the last five months. With an intention to meet the sales target and also to earn easy money within a short span of time, the



racket was indulging in this illegal activity, divulging on the racket's modus operandi Cuttack DCP Pinak Mishra said. Also Read: Balasore 3-train tragedy: Trains passing through Bahanaga Bazaar rly station not to halt "The racket sold over 5,000 pre-activated SIM cards to different agents. During the probe, it was ascertained that each member earned around Rs 3 lakh. We initiated a detailed investigation after it was known that two SIMs, which used to

commit cyber crimes, were activated from Odisha," the DCP stated. Cyber Police have seized 800 SIMs and 16 mobile phones from the possession of the racket. Jyotiranjana, the key accused in the case, earlier got training from a person in Assam on how to pre-activate SIM cards. Subsequently, he camped in a farmland in his village and carried out the illegal trade. "More persons involved in the crime will be arrested soon," DCP Mishra expressed.

No Respite From Heatwave Condition In Odisha

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The prevailing heatwave condition in Odisha is likely to continue till June 13, said the IMD in its weather bulletin today.

As per the prediction, heatwave condition is likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sonepur, Bolangir, Boudh and



Keonjhar on June 11 (Sunday). Similarly, a few places in Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sundargarh,

Jharsuguda, Sonepur, Bolangir, Boudh and Keonjhar are likely to witness heatwave condition on June 12 (Monday), said the IMD. Besides, the MeT department has predicted heatwave at one or two places over the districts of Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sonepur, Bolangir, Boudh and Keonjhar on June 13 (Tuesday).

The IMD has warned that the heatwave condition may affect the health of infants, senior citizens and sick people. It has advised people to avoid direct exposure to sunrays and take all possible steps to avoid dehydration.

The MeT department has also advised people to arrange proper shelter for their domestic animals during the daytime.

Balasore 3-Train Tragedy: Trains Passing Through Bahanaga Bazaar Rly Station Not To Halt



Bhubaneswar / Balasore(KCN): With a CBI inquiry into the horrific 3-train accident that took place on June 2 evening near Bahanaga Bazaar railway station of Odisha's Balasore district underway, no trains passing through would halt at the station for the time being to facilitate the probe. This was informed today by the Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) of South Eastern

Railway (SER) Aditya Kumar Chaudhary. Relay rooms of Bahanaga Bazaar railway station have been closed for the time being. Hence, no train would stop at the station until further orders. The probe team earlier collected evidence from the relay room. The CBI team is trying to find out probable cause, if any, that led to the tragic mishap. "The relay rooms, panels, data loggers, and equipment are part of the investigation. The CBI team has been working discretely at different locations and as soon as we get clearance from the team, we will allow the trains passing on this route to halt at Bahanaga Bazaar railway station," CPRO Chaudhary said. It is pertinent to mention, according to official sources, the death toll stands at 288, making it the most disastrous train accident in the State. The total number of injured is 920, of which 169 are grievously injured, 372 had sustained simple injuries in the fatal mishap and 379 persons were discharged after they were given initial treatments.

Odisha: Bahanaga Train Mishap Victim From Assam Reunites With Family

Bhubaneswar(KCN): It was an emotionally-charged moment for Dulal Majumdar, one of the Odisha train mishap victims, as he was reunited with his family at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, a week after the tragic accident took place at Bahanaga in the State's Balasore district.

Hailing from Uttar Barbil village of Karbi Anglong district in Assam, Dulal was one of the lucky ones who managed to survive the mishap that claimed hundreds of lives. He was rescued from the site and shifted to the casualty ward of



AIIMS Bhubaneswar for treatment on June 5, three days after the accident.

After his admission, hospital authorities and sections of the media got details of Dulal and informed his father who reached AIIMS today. "Dulal was brought here

from Balasore in a private ambulance. His head was wrapped in a blood soaked cloth. He was admitted with traumatic brain injury with frontal contusion and subdural hematoma. He was initially confused and conscious and kept under close

observation with medication. However, as there was clinical deterioration and increase in brain swelling, he was operated immediately by Dr Chinmayee Das and was recuperating post surgery. He was weaned off ventilator and is stable now," said one of the doctors. "The patient's condition was very bad when he was admitted here. His condition improved after surgery," corroborated another doctor.

"I feel humbled by all the efforts that were taken for my son's treatment. I could reach here, all thanks to the hospital and media fraternity who coordinated and helped me reunite with my son," Dulal's father said. On June 2, three trains namely the Chennai Central Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Express and a goods train collided in what is being termed as the deadliest railway accidents that took place in the country in the last two decades. The accident claimed 275 lives, leaving more than 1,100 injured.

Team Tamilnadu Lauds 'Garima'

Bhubaneswar: A 15 member team of senior officers from Tamil Nadu Government led by R. Lalitha, Additional Commissioner, Municipal Administration including Prasanth M.S., Additional Director Rural Development (G), Department of Rural Development & Panchayatiraj were on a two days visit to Odisha to study implementation FSTP management system through a community participation model including the involvement of MSGs, SDAs and the transgender groups and dislodging practices. They also learnt about

the Jal Sathis operation of 24*7 drink from tap. Before leaving Bhubaneswar after their visit the team had an interaction with G Mathi Vathanan, Principal Secretary H&UD Department in Kharabela Bhawan yesterday. During the discussion, the team members shared their learnings and were highly impressed and exited with the state's community participation initiatives in all of its programme verticals, as well as in the way the "Garima" scheme brings safety in sewer and septic tank cleaning. On their arrival the delegates had a meeting with Housing



& Urban Development Department Officials presided over by DMA cum Mission Director SBM Sangramajit Nayak. DMA Sri Nayak made a detailed understanding of the various people centric programmes, FSSM value chain, Garima,

the Dight platform and initiatives for urban-rural convergence being implemented in the State. Following the meeting, the team visited the Odisha Urban Academy and the FSTP in Basuaghai, Bhubaneswar. There

they interacted with the transgender community and comprehended the group's own operational and maintenance processes. On the second day of their trip the team visited Cuttack

Municipal Corporation to study the entire dislodging process, right from the time a caller dials the helpline number 14420 till the sludge is disposed of at the FSTP. The team was briefed by a Ms Sanjibeta Ray Deputy

Commissioner, as to how the element of safety is prioritized after the implementation of the Garima Scheme and steps taken to prevent illegal cleaning and disposal. In the afternoon, they paid a visit to one of

the Garima Gruhas, the resting lounge of Core Sanitation Workers, and were shown a display of the PPE, safety devices, and cleaning equipment used in sewer and septic tank cleaning. The team also interacted with Core Sanitation workers to get an understanding of the changes that have taken place in their personal as well as professional lives following the implementation of the Garima Scheme. During the interaction session with Principal Secretary H&UD, Shri Mathivathnan among others Director Municipal Administration Sangramjit

Prepare safety action plan: Railway board to zones



BHUBANESWAR: Making track safety a top priority in the aftermath of the Bahanaga train mishap, the railway board has directed all zones to put in place a comprehensive action plan by preparing a list of deficiencies and setting targets to address them at the earliest. The direction came a day after the chairman of the railway board (CRB) Anil Kumar Lahoti called for a complete review of operations and maintenance practices to ensure the implementation of foolproof procedures on the ground. Railway board member

(infrastructure) Roop Narayan Sunkar asked all general managers to find out deficiencies and other infrastructural issues with inputs from the track management system and ensure compliance. Since proper maintenance of assets is the primary responsibility of divisional railway managers, they will be responsible for keeping assets safe, he warned. r section engineers (SSEs) and junior engineers (JEs), who are well aware of the shortcomings and strengths of railway assets in their jurisdictions, before

preparing the list of deficiencies. While heads of departments will carry out inspections covering all aspects of maintenance, and guide JEs and SSEs for the safe execution of works, principal chief engineers will monitor compliance and submit action-taken reports to the board every week. Divisional and headquarters officers will be held responsible if any shortcut method is adopted while carrying out maintenance works. The general managers have been asked to ensure the works are done under traffic blocks as stipulated in Indian

Railways Permanent Way Manual (IRPWM). The railway board has also issued a set of guidelines and SoPs directing strict compliance to them while carrying out renewal work and maintenance. As per the SoP, senior officers will be required to check the preparedness of works to be carried out during blocks and make available all resources. Work on doubling and tripling of railway lines being executed by project agencies will be regularly inspected by open line officials for ensuring safe working and prevent infringement to track. Senior officials will carry out checks and take immediate corrective actions if deficiencies are found. Sunkar also made it clear that requisite outsourcing can be planned to meet the shortage of manpower for maintenance requirements as sufficient funds are available for carrying out the works.

Excavation work at Palur port in Odisha's Ganjam begins

BERHAMPUR: An excavation jointly by the Odisha Institute of Maritime and South East Asian Studies and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at Palur in Ganjam district has got underway from Friday. Project director, of Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, Odisha, Sunil Kumar Patnaik said Chilika lagoon explorations have brought to light many prehistoric sites in and around the early historic port of Palur area which also continued up to the prehistoric period. The early historic port of Palur, identified with 2nd century AD Paloura of Ptolemy, is located near



the modern Palur village in between the south of Rambha harbour and north of Rushikulya estuary in the Chhatrapur sub-division of Ganjam district. The harbour is protected by the arms of Dumanagiri hills which run from east to west,

Jhinkarradi hills in the northwest and the estuary of Rushikulya River in the south. Presently, littoral drift and a few coastal islands separate the ancient harbour from the Bay of Bengal. During a recent survey, many important facts came to light based on

which excavation of Palur has begun and it will continue till December 2023, Patnaik added. The joint excavation work has been taken up with assistance from archaeologists of Utkal, Fakir Mohan and Benaras Hindu universities and the ASI.

MAHARISHI PLAY SCHOOL

Nurturing awareness Moulding Future

ADMISSION OPEN FOR

PLAY GROUP (2+) to Onwards

A great Place to grow @ MPS

Laugh
Play
Learn
Share

Call now for Application:

25% reservation as per RTE Act (2009)

MAHARISHI PUBLIC SCHOOL

N-3 B/14-15, IRC Village,
Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar

PH. 2558884 / 2550786 / 8984600700 (M)

E-mail : maharishipublic13@yahoo.com

Find us on
facebook.com/maharishiplayschool

FOLLOW US
ON TWITTER
twitter.com/maharishiplayschool

CLASSIFIED

CAUTION

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. The Kalinga chronicle publication does not vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers. The Printer, Publisher, Editor and Owner of The Kalinga Chronicle Publications shall not be held responsible/liable for any consequences, in case such claims are found to be false.



SALE

Cawasik Bajaj on tiptop condition for sale. Contact: 2555326

PURCHASE
Required a Marshal/Commandor / Bolo in good condition. Contact: 555763



SALE

Flats ready for possession before Rathayatra at Puri near Seabeach for sale. Contact: 9961078308

Residential plots at Pahala close to NH-5 and near Pata Railway Station, Bhubaneswar for immediate sale. Contact: 0674-2556733
Residential plots at

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT TARIFF

Classified advertisements are released daily. The normal classified advertisement is charged @ Rs. 5/- per word up to maximum number of 50 words. Any extra word will be Rs. 8/- per word. The minimum charges for any classified advertisement is Rs. 100/-. The options for bold lettering and outlining are also available and are charged @ 7/- and 10/- per word respectively. Extra charges for photographs Rs. 100/-. For Box No. Rs. 100/-

HIRE

For hiring of Car / Jeep / Bus on monthly basis. Contact: 2555763



BUSINESS

Saving 10,000/- for high return, extra earn and foreign trip opportunity, 9238904001.
Independent business work from home, training in Singapore, 9338014287.



MATRIMONIAL

BRIDE WANTED
Wanted bride for Chandayat Boy, 37plus, Taste no bar, 0674-2555763

GROOM WANTED
Wanted Groom any service / business family or a Brahmin Girl. Contact 2555226

Gohira/Chhak in front of CV Raman Engineering College beside NH-5, near Tamando. Contact: 9239691168

PURCHASE

Simplex / Duplex building at BBSR contact: 9437002509

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Required Single / Double / Triple Storied North/East facing building at Puri. Contact 9437143482



TOURS & TRAVELS

We provide luxury coach buses (16,25,32,41,52 seater) for Picnic, Excursion, Marriage. Maa Santoshi Travels, Contact: 9961079437
For Luxury Passenger vehicle, Contact: Sagacity Tours & Travels, Acharya Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Ph. 2540219

WANTED

Required Driver/Peon/Attendant/ Aya

Please Contact-8984600400

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Required double/Single/ Multi storied Bungalow type North or East Facing independent building At-Nayapalli, Jayadev Vihar, V.S.S. Nagar, Mancheswar, Rasulgarh, Sallashree Vihar, Niladri Vihar.

Please Contact- 8338870595

Satyaprem Ki Katha: Kiara Advani, Kartik Aaryan Give A Glimpse Of Pure Romance In This Poster

It's just been a day since the teaser of Sajid Nadiadwala and Namah Pictures upcoming larger than life romantic-drama 'Satyaprem Ki Katha' was released which totally took over the audience giving them a glimpse of this pure romantic love story. The makers have now released the poster of this upcoming musical romance. As the audience truly relished the amazing chemistry of Kartik Aaryan and Kiara Advani in the teaser, it is to be noted that the makers chose a perfect date for the release of the poster,



which is the first anniversary of 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2'. The audience got to see the poster launch on

the same day when the 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2' was released in theatres on the same date in 2022. The film

turned out to be a Box Office hit and brought a fresh pairing on the big screen, which was loved by the masses.

Speaking of the latest poster of 'Satyaprem Ki Katha', it looks absolutely a worthy one to fall in love with.

Featuring the magical couple Kartik Aaryan and Kiara Advani, the poster has yet again reminisced all the love and romantic vibes.

'Satyaprem Ki Katha' also marks a massive collaboration between NGE and Namah Pictures. Interestingly, Sajid Nadiadwala and Shareen Mantri Kedia with Kishor Arora and director Sameer Vidwans won a national award for their respective feature films. 'Satyaprem Ki Katha' will be releasing in theatres on June 29, 2023.

Khatron Ke Khiladi 13: Rohit Roy Aces The 'Pose Game' With Shiv Thakare, Daisy Shah And Others



In a treat to the eager fans, Rohit Shetty is all set to come back with his popular stunt reality show, Khatron Ke Khiladi 13. Just like it has been in the last couple of years, the 13th season will also be held in South Africa's Cape Town. The 14 contestants along with host Rohit Shetty have started the shooting. Some popular faces like Shiv Thakare, Mohammad Sheezan Khan, Archana Gautam, Arjit Taneja, and Rohit Roy will be seen coming together to face their fears and perform

some daring stunts on the screen this year. Now, Rohit Roy shared a bunch of pictures with his co-contestants. The opening frame is a group picture. Rohit Roy, in the following pictures, is seen posing with actress Daisy Shah, singer Dino James, actress Nyra Banerjee, actor Arjit Taneja, Roadies fame Soundous Moufakir, Bigg Boss fame Shiv Thakare, and actors Anjum Fakih and Ruhi Chaturvedi, among others. "Kuch khaas hai, hum sabhi mein!", he wrote.

Reacting to it, many of the contestants also shared their thoughts in the comment section. Not just Rohit Roy, other contestants have also been sharing their experience from the South African jungle as the shooting has begun. Several BTS pictures and videos have been going viral, showing the bond among the contestants. This has left the audience more eager and impatient for the season to come on air. Ever since the news of Khatron Ke Khiladi's latest

instalment came out, it has kept the Internet abuzz, with fans waiting to watch their favourite contestants perform some nerve-wracking stunts on the screen. While a total of 14 celebrities are expected to take part in the latest edition, they will shoot the promo of the show in the coming days. As per sources, the season is expected to premiere on television around July on Colors. However, an official confirmation is yet to be provided by the makers of the show.

RRR Star Jr NTR's 30th Film Called 'Devara', First Look Is Raw, Intense And Deadly

NTR Jr has announced the official title of his film that was previously titled 'NTR30': 'Devara'. The highly anticipated action drama is directed by Kortala Siva and the actor is looking all things raw, intense and tough in its official first look.

Speaking of his look, NTR Jr looks like an alpha man who's on a mission in this action spectacle. With 'Devara' which means God, the star is here to set new benchmarks for the action genre in India.

'Devara' is produced by Yuvasudha Arts & NTR Arts and presented by Nandamuri Kalyan Ram. The film is slated to release Pan Indian on April 5, 2024. The film also stars Janhvi Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan in pivotal roles. 'Devara' also marks Janhvi Kapoor's debut in the Telugu industry.

The film is produced by Mikkilineni Sudhakar and Kosaraju Hari Krishna. Anirudh Ravichander will handle the music, R. Rathnavel will be the cinematographer, Subu Cyril will lead the art department, and Sreekar Prasad will serve as the editor.



Pepsi Announces 'KGF' Star Yash as Their Brand Ambassador, Rocky Bhai adds Another Feather to his cap!

The way Yash has redefined the statement of stardom with the super success of 'KGF 2' in the post-pandemic era is truly exemplary. The success of the film not only introduced the audience to a new cinema but it has also given them a new superstar to look up to that resulting in filling up the theaters with a huge crowd of audience. But of course, as it's a long time now since the film has been released, the audience surely has very less of him on the big screen which has resulted in rising

curiosity to watch him in the films. However, the Rocking star also couldn't stay apart from his fans for a long while he certainly made an appearance in a television commercial as a brand ambassador. Superstar Yash has recently come on board with Pepsi for a commercial as he has been announced as their Pan India brand ambassador. The superstar has himself taken this to his social media, to bring this news to his fans. Yash has certainly shot a commercial for Pepsi



and must say there couldn't be any big reason for his fans to celebrate. It is indeed a treat for Yash's fans who are eagerly

looking forward to watching him on the screen after 'KGF 2'. Be it creating a trend in the market with his style in the film to

taking the Kannada industry on the world map, Yash holds all the credit to create examples of success that no one has done

before. The superstar today enjoys a fan base all across the nation and on the global front as well who adore him also for the trends, he started for having the perfect beard and being dressed as a perfect gentleman always well suited. No doubt, his sheer belief in making films for the fans that appeal to the larger audience, is a base that has made him what he is today. Moreover, the success of 'KGF 2' broke several records at the national and international box office, yes, the man behind all this is Yash.

Why Pakistan again hikes defence budget ?

Vivek Shukla



In the Army headquarter of Pakistan in the garrison town Rawalpindi, the Generals must be feeling happy that Pakistan Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, who is a Chartered Accountant by qualification and a Kashmiri descent, have followed their instructions in letter and spirit as he hiked the defence budget for the year 2023-24 by around 13 per cent. The government aims to spend Rs 1.804 trillion on defence over the next year that too when the country is facing massive inflation and political upheaval. Well, the defence budget makes up nearly 1.7pc of the GDP and 12.5pc of the total expenditure planned by the government for the next year, the budget documents for the 2023-24 fiscal year showed on last Friday. If we talk about last year, Rs 1.57 trillion was allocated for defence affairs and

services. However, it was later revised higher to Rs1.59tr.

Clearly, the Shahbaz Shariff headed Pakistan government is more interested in keeping the military happy than providing support for struggling citizens.

Even when the world was facing the crisis of Covid-19, the then Imran Khan's government allocated increased defence budget for the financial year 2020-2021. So, the Pakistani government does not seem willing to shift its spending priorities. It does not matter who is the Prime Minister there.

To avoid hard questions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Pakistan refuses to be fully transparent about its military spending. Major acquisitions by the armed forces, spending on the public sector development programme (PSDP), expenditure on the nuclear programme and para-military forces, payments for military pensions, a newly set-up national security division and a few other military expenditures are not reflected in the budget.

The increase in defence spending comes at a time when Pakistan is forced to allocate 41

percent of its expenditure to debt servicing. The economy was underperforming even before the onset of COVID-19, surviving on an IMF loan package of \$6bn. The gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate had plummeted from 5.5 percent in the 2017-2018 financial year to 2.4 percent in 2020-2021. Following the coronavirus outbreak, it decreased further to -1.5 percent. This marked the first time in Pakistan's history that a negative growth rate was recorded.

Pakistani watchers say that currently it is facing the additional challenge of feeding some 2.05 crores poor families that can no longer make a living due to COVID-19. Moreover, the country saw a 30 percent reduction in tax revenue, due to the government's incompetence and decreased spending caused by the coronavirus lockdown. This led to a reduction in overall health spending, as the provincial governments received less funds from the federal government.

Surely, Pakistan government seems to be more interested in keeping the powerful and bloated military content and impressing its strategic allies than providing support for the millions of struggling Pakistani citizens. Why Pakistan spends so much on Defence? Says Pakistan affairs expert Shalini Chawla, "Pakistan claims that it is India's military posture that has a deep impression on Pakistan's defence planning. The early 1970s comprised the era of Bhutto and the late 1970s that of General Zia, who resisted almost all ideas aimed at defence reduction. Being a military man and dependent on the support from the army, General Zia never supported cuts in defence spending." This high level of defence spending during the 1970s also resulted in heavy

growth of force levels. The effect was a substantive increase in military power, especially between 1972 (after the war) and December 1979 (before the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan) when the size of the army



nearly doubled, the navy grew three times and the air force grew one-and-a-half times. During the 1981-1990 decade, defence expenditure grew at a slightly slower pace, but the defence spending was maintained at a much higher level after 1988. In the 1980s and 1990s, Pakistan's policy-makers quoted the "perception of threat" as the root cause of the high defence spending. During Jalandhar born General Zia's time, Pakistan faced tremendous pressure from international institutions to cut its defence spending. General Zia did not

allow any cuts in defence allocation, because, according to him, "How can you fight a nuclear submarine or an aircraft carrier with a bamboo stick? We have to match sword with sword, tank with tank and destroyer with destroyer. The situation demands that national defence be bolstered and Pakistan cannot afford any cut or freeze in defence expenditure, since you cannot freeze the threat to Pakistan's security".

Experts say that Pakistan's strategic environment has been, to a great extent, conditioned by its perception of a security threat from India. Its adversarial relations with India definitely play a vital role in the formation of its official threat perception and national security plans. The two nations have fought a number of wars and experienced countless border clashes. This perceived threat from India has led the nation's security planners being constantly engaged in a search for a situation that could generate a sense of security. It has led the defence planners of Pakistan to raise well equipped, modern armed forces.

Pakistan looks at India as a powerful state with hegemonic ambitions. The most disconcerting factor is the rationalisation by Pakistan of this inequality between the two nations. This insecurity has taken strong roots due to the fragmentation of Pakistani society. The governments in Pakistan have used the security issues like Kashmir and nuclear deterrence to generate a national consensus. Eventually, this has increased the fear of India in the minds of the people.

The logic of Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme is Indo-centric. It aims to neutralise the inevitable conventional military superiority of India. The impetus for Pakistan's nuclear development came in January 1972, when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto announced a plan to develop nuclear arms at a meeting with Pakistan's top scientists at Multan. Pakistan's terrible defeat in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War and India's proven conventional military superiority over Pakistan were the main reasons for Pakistan's decision to go nuclear. Pakistan's nuclearisation has been aimed at managing the Indian threat by matching India's nuclear capability. Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's remarks that Pakistan will "eat grass" if necessary to stay at par with Indian nuclear capability demonstrate the depth of insecurity in the nation.

Naturally, the huge spending of defence has negative influence in the form of retarded growth of the social sector in Pakistan. Pakistan's social conditions are pitiful and the state of development is deplorable. Pakistan ranks 9th among 117 market economies in terms of the government's expenditure on defence as a percentage of total expenditure. On the other hand, it ranks 2nd among the 34 poorest economies. It ranks 17th in education and 34th in health per capita expenditure in these 34 poorest economies. With hardly any earning from exports, things are rather bad for Pakistan but that does both either the political leaders or Army of Pakistan.

The Author is a Delhi based columnist and former Editor

The Author is a Delhi based columnist and former Editor

What's bad in Restoration of OPS?

Bruhaspati Samal



The much awaited first meeting of the NPS (National Pension System) Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Finance Secretary on 6th April, 2023 to propose changes for improvising NPS was held with the Standing Committee Members of National Council Joint Consultative Machinery (NCJCM) on 9th June, 2023. Since no Central Govt. Employees Organization and the Staff Side of NCJCM have ever demanded for any improvement in the NPS except demanding for restoration of Old Pension Scheme (OPS), the Terms of Reference were not acceptable and thus, the Staff Side submitted a memorandum to the Chairman of NPS Committee to scrap the No Guarantee NPS with request for restoration of OPS under CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 reiterating the historic judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India delivered on 17th December, 1982 upholding the pension as a fundamental right of the employees by a five-member bench inclusive of the then Chief Justice of India V D Chandrachud against Writ Petition Nos. 5939-41 under Article 32 of the Constitution of India known as D S Nakra and Others Vs. Union of India which stressed upon the

following three important aspects in Para - 31 of the Judgement.

i. That Pension is neither a bounty, nor a matter of grace depending upon the sweet will of the employer and that it creates a vested right subject to 1972 Rules which are statutory in character, because they enacted in exercise of the powers conferred by the proviso to Art. 309 and Clause 50 of Art. 148 of the Constitution.

ii. That Pension is not an ex-gratia payment, but it is a payment for the past services rendered and iii. It is a social welfare measure rendering socio-economic justice to those who in the heyday of their life ceaselessly toiled for the employer on an assurance that in their old age they would not be left in the lurch".

The NPS Committee in the above meeting on 9th June, 2023 has assured to study the points and justification given by the Staff Side and noted to take into account while finalizing its recommendations subject to the Terms of Reference given to the Committee.

Since introduction of NPS abolishing OPS with effect from 1st January, 2004, while serious protests against scrapping up of the NPS demanding restoration of OPS are continuing by both the Central and State Govt. employees across the nation on one hand, arguments and counter arguments are going on both in favour and against of NPS and OPS by the politicians, economists and intellectuals on the other. Encumbered with decisions taken by various

State Governments like Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh to rollback to OPS, Andhra Pradesh Govt.'s decision to offer a guaranteed pension of 33% of the last basic pay without any monthly deduction from the employees' salary and latest by Maharashtra Govt. to exit from the NPS only because of the continuous struggle programmes of the employees, the Hon'ble Finance Minister, Govt. of India has set up a Committee on 6th April, 2023 under the Chairmanship of Finance Secretary to propose changes for improvising NPS.

Further, with the constitution of the NPS committee, the debate on the topic is touching the headlines always. Arguing in favour of NPS, while the decision of some State Governments as above for rolling back to OPS is treated as bad politics from election point of view, some consider it as bad economics since such restoration will put an unnecessary burden on the Govt. exchequer. Contradictorily, while some argue OPS as the fundamental right of the employees who have sacrificed their life for about 35 to 40 years in serving the nation, some even debate for a Guaranteed Pension System (GPS) instead of NPS.

To analyze the pension issue of State Govt. employees, it is worth reminding the statements of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh Chief Ministers who are of the opinion that

Pension is a State subject and they have the power to decide what type of pension the respective Govt. employees should get. It is good politics for them. Govt. of India has no right to any kind of interference. But while talking about the pension issues of the Central Govt. employees, it may be recalled that NPS was implemented with an Executive Order on 22nd December, 2003 by the BJP led NDA Govt. Subsequently, the Congress led UPA Govt. brought the Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority (PFRDA) Act in 2013. The irony is that while both the NDA and UPA Govt. at the Centre are responsible for bringing and implementing NPS, the ruling parties of these alliances in the States are moving ahead to restore OPS. But, unless the PFRDA Act, 2013 is repealed by the Centre, it will not be technically feasible to restore OPS both for the Central and State Govt. employees since the employees' contribution from 2004 till date is required to be refunded to the respective State Governments opting for OPS. Unfortunately, there is no provision of such return in PFRDA Act, 2013. Thus, playing with the sentiments of the employees clearly knowing the technical loopholes of the pension policy is bad politics rather than restoration of OPS.

The historic judgement dated 17th December, 1982 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in D.S. Nakra versus Union of India stated as above is not being analysed by any

economists and intellectuals who favour NPS. Thus, introduction of NPS just through an Executive Order at the sweet will of the Govt. ignoring the above judgement of the Hon'ble Apex Court and violating the statutory provision of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 guaranteed under Constitution of India is just bad politics.

Contradictorily, the provision of multiple pensions under OPS to the people's representatives even after introduction of NPS is certainly bad economics and bad politics as well. In a democratic welfare country like India, there shouldn't be two separate principles, i.e. one for the people and another for the people's representative. If the NPS Committee skips this aspect, it may be called as bad politics since no member has been nominated from the Staff Side to the Committee to defend the employees' interest. While argument is going on that restoration of OPS will just satisfy a small section of organized labour, say up to 3% only at the cost of the poor unprivileged citizens of India, the so called economists and intellectuals forget to calculate the total amount of bad loans written off including heavy tax relief in favour of the big corporate houses by the Govt. every year which can be able to support the OPS burden removing the unnecessary pressure on the members of public. This is certainly another form of bad economics with the help of bad politics.

Now, the NPS Committee has to take a decision in

suggesting the Govt. only to improve the NPS since the Terms of Reference do not allow to propose anything for restoration of OPS. However, some are of the opinion that it may be better for the Committee to suggest Guaranteed Pension System (GPS) with continuance of the present 10% monthly contributions from the employee's salary as done under NPS. Stoppage of 14% contribution by the employer will balance the State's deficiency and add to the minimum 50% of the last basic pay as guaranteed pension as was under OPS. If the return under GPS will be more than 50%, the extra amount earned beyond 50% will be kept by the Govt. and if the same is less than 50%, the Govt. has to pay the deficiency to give guaranteed pension of 50% of last basic pay. Thus, GPS may not be a bad economics.

But the fact is that the employees are neither in favour of any improvement in NPS nor interested for GPS. Rather, they are struggling to scrap out the NPS and restore OPS which is neither bad economics nor bad politics in the light of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's judgement. The NPS Committee needs to consider the demands raised by the Staff Side in the light of Hon'ble Supreme Court's Judgement as above.

**General Secretary
Confederation of
Central Govt.
Employees and
Workers
Odisha State
Coordination
Committee
Mobile: 9437022669,
eMail:
bsamalbbbsr@gmail.com**

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor

June 8 is recognized as the International Oceans Day. The main purpose of celebrating the day is to increase people's awareness about the oceans. Since 2009, the world has been celebrating June 8 as World Ocean Day. Oceans cover more than 70% of the Earth's surface. Oceans are called the lungs of our planet. At least 50% of the oxygen is produced by the oceans. Oceans are key to our economy and root cause of our survival on this planet; with an estimated 40 million people to be employed by ocean-based industries by 2030.

About 30% of carbon dioxide is absorbed by the ocean; generated through anthropogenic sources, mitigating the effects of global warming. Polar ice caps and glaciers are melting faster, coral reefs are bleaching at an alarming pace, and acidity in water is increasing as the temperature rises in the atmosphere. The sea is now endangered due to numerous impacts of the Climate Change. Both the polar regions of the globe, Arctic (North Pole) and Antarctica (South Pole) are showing rapid biogeochemical and biogeophysical changes that are detrimental to the long term health of our planet. The sea is now laden with plastic, that the sea creatures are gasping.

Micro plastics have thus entered into both our food chains and food webs impacting our health as well as quality of life. Saving the world requires saving the ocean. The world's oceans and coastal areas are endangered today and needs our support for their sustainable survival. All species of marine vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles and fishes) as well as invertebrates (Protozoa, Porifera, Colenterata, Arthropods, Platyhelminths, Nematelminths, Molluscs, Echinoderms) are showing signs of alarming declines across the planet.

According to a recent study, there are around 170 trillion plastic particles floating in the world's oceans, weighing approximately 2 million metric tons. Out of this vast majority of plastic, 89%, is single-use disposable. What's even more concerning is that if immediate action is not taken, this substantial amount could nearly triple by the year 2040.

The Global Plastics Treaty establishes international pledges and rules to decrease plastic waste and is critical for ocean protection. It encourages countries to work together to combat plastic waste in a cohesive manner. By holding governments and corporates accountable and fostering international cooperation, the treaty provides a comprehensive framework to safeguard the oceans' health and preserve marine biodiversity. This World Oceans Day, let's put our oceans first. Let's push the treaty to come into action. Add your voice to this fight by signing the Global Plastic Petition and save our oceans and its inhabitants from the wrath of plastics.

**Saikat Kumar Basu
378 Prince Anwar Shah Road
Kolkata 700045 West Bengal India
Mobile: 8697491914
WhatsApp: +1 403 894 4254
Email: saikat.basu@alumni.uleth.ca**



The Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Dr V K Paul, the Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Smt Vini Mahajan, the Secretary, Department of Health Research, the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Dr. Rajiv Bahl and WHO Representative to India, Dr. Roderico H. Ofri attend the occasion of "Potential health impacts of Jal Jeevan Mission" in New Delhi

Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma Meets Manipur Chief Minister In Imphal



Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday met Chief Minister N Biren Singh in Manipur. The ministers are meeting to discuss the backdrop of the ongoing violence in Manipur. The Supreme Court on Friday declined the urgent listing of a plea against the suspension of internet services in the violence-hit state of Manipur since May 3, saying High Court is seized of the matter. The ban on the internet was imposed on May 3 and remains in effect till now. The violence in Manipur between the Hindu Meiteis and the tribal Kuki, who are Christians, erupted after a rally by the All

Tribal Students Union of Manipur (ATSUM) on May 3. Violence has gripped the entire state for more than a month now and the Central government had to deploy paramilitary forces to bring the situation under control. On Friday, the Supreme Court declined the urgent listing of a plea against the suspension of internet services in the violence-hit state of Manipur since May 3, saying High Court is seized of the matter. "High Court is seized of the matter. Why are you duplicating it? Let it come before the regular bench," a vacation bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose and Rajesh Bindal had said. Earlier, the top court expressed concern

over the loss of lives and properties in Manipur during the violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities and stressed taking adequate measures to restore normalcy there. On March 27, the High Court directed the State to consider the inclusion of the Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribes list. The violence in Manipur between the Hindu Meiteis and the tribal Kuki, who are Christians, erupted after a rally by the All Tribal Students Union of Manipur (ATSUM) on May 3. Violence has gripped the entire State for now a month and the Central government had to deploy paramilitary forces to bring the situation under control.

Central Ayurveda Research Institute, Kolkata observed " World Accreditation Day

Kolkata (Patha Roy): Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI), Kolkata a Ministry of Ayush institution celebrated World Accreditation Day on 9th June, 2023. Dr. G. Babu, Director, CARI, Kolkata informed that under the guidance and support of Prof. Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General, CCRAS, New Delhi, the Hospital division of CARI has obtained NABH accreditation in June, 2023. Whereas, the Biochemistry and Pathology Department of the Institute achieved the NABL accreditation in July 2022. The Pharmacy Department of CARI has already obtained GMP certifications for manufacturing of 40 types of Ayurvedic drugs



since 2021. This is probably the first Ayush Hospital in West Bengal with NABH and NABL accreditation together. Dr. Babu mentioned that all other laboratories like Histopathology of Pathology, Chemistry, Microbiology and Pharmacognosy of CARI

will be obtaining NABL 17025:2017 within next few months as the audit is going on for the same. Public interaction session was also organized in the hospital where Dr. G. Babu, Director, and other officials of CARI spoke on the awareness and

importance of accreditation on the quality standard of service provided by CARI. Patients are the biggest beneficiaries among all the stakeholders as certification results in high-quality of care and patient safety and ensure the whole

system is patient-centric. Accreditation of various services provided by CARI has stimulated a continuous improvement program for commitment to quality care. It will raise community confidence in the services provided by the Central Ayurveda Research Institute.

Punjab Approves Regularising Services Of Over 14,000 Contractual Teachers

Mansa: The Punjab Cabinet on Saturday gave nod to regularise the services of over 14,000 contractual teachers in the state. A decision in this regard was taken at a cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, here. Of the total 14,239 contractual/temporary teachers, whose services will be regularised, 7,902 have completed 10 and more years in service, Mann said. The remaining 6,337 teachers are those who

have gaps in regular service because of "unavoidable circumstances", he said. "Because of the gap, these teachers could not complete 10 years of service. We decided that the gap will also be counted and with this, these 6,337 teachers will also be regularised," Mr Mann added. The regularised teachers will get salary, perks and holidays as per the state government policy, the chief minister said. In another decision, the cabinet decided to

propose strict action against chit fund companies found involved in duping people. Mr Mann cited the example of 'Pearl Group', which had allegedly cheated many people in various parts of the country including Punjab, by illegally operating different investment schemes. "There are many chit fund companies which dupe people and for these, we will bring an amendment in the law for proposing punishment of up to 10 years," he said.

Later, an official statement said to tighten noose around fraudulent financial institutions, the cabinet gave nod to frame "The Punjab Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Rules 2023". There has been a mushroom growth of financial establishments in the country in the recent past, which are duping the people, particularly the middle class and the poorer, by making impracticable or commercially unviable promises, or by offering highly attractive rates of

interest, or rewards, with the intention of defrauding the investors, it said. In fact, many of such financial establishments have intentionally failed to return the deposits on maturity, or to pay interest, or to render any specified service offered against such deposits, the statement said. Therefore, it was felt necessary to provide for a suitable legislation in the state for the protection of interests of depositors in the financial establishments, it said.

With "Internal Matter" Tag, Ashok Gehlot Cements Detente With Sachin Pilot

New Delhi: After months of exchanging piercing attacks with rival Sachin Pilot, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has labelled the feud an "internal matter" of the Congress party as it struggles to cobble up a united front for the state elections, just a few months away. "Recently, in Delhi, we spoke to each other, monitored by Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal, and Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa," Mr Gehlot said in an interview with NDTV. "I wouldn't want to talk about it right now. When

we have sat down to talk once, if I now say something it might be misunderstood," he said, requesting to "close the topic". He did, however, assure that he was ready even now to act against former Chief Minister and BJP leader Vasundhara Raje -- a demand repeatedly raised by Mr Pilot, who has accused the state government of going soft on her in corruption charges. "All the allegations we made against her (Ms Raje) have been taken to the courts. I will act if someone, even a random individual, can point out what we have left pending," he said.



The Chief Minister, clarified his comment from last month when he claimed Vasundhara Raje and two other BJP leaders had played a role in saving his government

during the 2020 revolt by his party MLAs led by Mr Pilot. "Kailash Meghwal had raised the topic of how I had once refused to help topple the BJP

government of Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, and stated how Rajasthan has not had a culture of horse-trading," Mr Gehlot said. "Responding to that, I let

slip that Vasundhara Raje ji also did not believe in horse-trading. She had not said it to me herself, but her MLAs suggested so when they met me," he said. "That comment was twisted to claim that I credited her for saving my government during the 2020 revolt. People within her party tried to make it an issue against her," he added. Mr Gehlot had posed for photographs with Mr Pilot last week after a four-hour meeting with the Congress party's leadership in Delhi in an effort to project their unity that left many questions unanswered. Though he said he was ready to work together

with his rival, Ashok Gehlot closed the appearance with a parting shot, urging leaders to be "patient" and wait for their opportunity to serve, suggesting that his rift with Mr Pilot remained alive and kicking. Mr Gehlot and Mr Pilot have been tangled in a power tussle since the Congress came to power in Rajasthan in 2018. Though Mr Pilot agreed to play second fiddle to the veteran, he revolted in 2020 and camped for days near Delhi but ended his strike after the Gandhis assured him of a solution. The rebellion fizzled out as 80-plus MLAs chose

to stay with Mr Gehlot. At no point has Mr Pilot been able to produce more than 20 MLAs in his support. Last year, some 72 MLAs resigned in protest against the Congress's move to make Mr Gehlot party president, which would mean his replacement in Rajasthan, possibly by Mr Pilot. Earlier this year, Mr Pilot launched a solo campaign for the Rajasthan polls soon after Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in the state while being called a gaddar (traitor) and nikamma (worthless) among other things by Mr Gehlot.

American Tourister urges to explore the unexplored & challenge one's own limits with its new campaign, "Born To Cross Boundaries"

Bhubaneswar : American Tourister is a well-known international luggage brand that has stood tall for the past 90 years. With the design ethos of American Tourister bags reflecting vibrant, joyful and trendy backpacks as well as luggages, the brand beckons resilient, efficient, and trendy products. Moreover, it emphasizes on making traveling fun and adventurous. The partnership with ace cricketer Virat Kohli, as the brand

ambassador of American Tourister has been going strong for the past seven years and the duo have delivered striking and off beat campaigns seamlessly. Like the earlier widely appreciated campaigns, the new campaign encourages travellers to unleash their adventurous side and surpass their inhibitions. The brand's recent TVC displays colossal mountains, oceans & new cultures bringing a whiff of adventure. It embarks with Virat Kohli plunging into

freezing water to bungee jumping from bridges, skilfully playing the Alpine Horn, and donning a skirt, a cultural Scottish outfit. As he dives into these myriad experiences, his fearless and exuberant spirit is witnessed vividly. This new campaign showcases an individual pushing themselves out of their comfort zones & personal boundaries to celebrate their wilderness. It wants them to break their barriers, make

discoveries, and indulge in new experiences. In sum, it wants them to cross their boundaries. Speaking about the campaign, Jai Krishnan, CEO Samsonite India stated, "American Tourister is truly a global, international and inspirational brand. It goes beyond only recognising the necessity for luggage that can facilitate travel. It inspires individuals to seek out experiences rather than the conventional tourist activity of sight-seeing. This campaign really

brings to life this facet of American Tourister. It is a brand designed to honour the spirit of pushing our boundaries and crossing our fear" Adding to this, Anushree Tainwala, Executive Director - Marketing shared "American Tourister wants to push people to overcome their own limitations. This film along with Virat Kohli showcases an exploratory and fun attitude, convincing people to push their limits and cross their boundaries wherever they are travelling in the world"

Bhubaneswar: Senior IAS Officer, Aravind Agrawal is appointed as the Secretary, Higher Education. 2007 Batch IAS Shri Agrawal is serving as Director, Social Welfare & ICDS in the Department of Women & Child Development. He is also Managing Director, Mahila Vikas Samabaya Nigam and Director Rural Development, The State Government on 9 June effected the reshuffle and appointed Shri Agrawal in the Department of Higher Education. Shri Agrawal was promoted to

Commissioner-cum-Secretary Rank on 1 January, 2023 and was waiting for a new assignment as Commissioner-cum-Secretary of a Department. Recently, Shri Agrawal was rushed to attend Train Tragedy at Bahanaga, where 288 people were left dead and over 1200 injured. Team Odisha Care performed the rescue services and Shri Agrawal quietly performed the services in a befitting manner, said a senior officials. Shri Agrawal, who is serving in Social Sector for quite some years, has been given charge of

Higher Education. Shri Agrawal is also allowed to remain in additional charge of Director, Rural Development, the notification added. Principal Secretary Finance, Vishal Kumar Dev is allowed to remain in additional charge of Chairman, Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Ltd, (OHPC) Bhubaneswar. A notification issued by the Department of General Administration & Pension & Public Grievances assigns Senior IAS Officer Bishnupada Sethi as Officer on Special Duty, General Administration & Public Grievance Department.

Wind up OCPL, merge with OPGC: Soumya to OERC

BHUBANESWAR: In a major development, senior BJD leader and MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik has called for the abolition of Odisha Coal and Power Limited (OCPL) as an independent entity and its merger with the Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC).



In a submission to the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) on May 15, the ruling party lawmaker raised several pertinent issues including the continuance of OCPL after AES relinquished 49 per cent of its equity in the Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC). He also requested the regulatory body to determine the input cost of coal supplied by OCPL to the stage-II power projects of Ib thermal power station afresh on the basis of the price determined by the Central Electricity

Regulatory Commission (CERC) for Darlipali power station of NTPC. "We do not find any reason for the continuance of OCPL as OPGC is now a wholly-owned company of the state government. BGR Infra has been selected in the competitive bidding process to carry out mining operations at coal mines allotted to OPGC," he said. Patnaik urged OERC to advise the state government for the closure of OCPL and its merger with OPGC to carry out coal mining operation of Manoharpur coal blocks through BGR Infra. The BJD leader, one of

the objectors to the power generation tariff application of OPGC for 2023-24, had charged OCPL, a joint venture of OPGC and OHPC, of making an excess profit of Rs 479.33 crore during 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years by charging a higher price than the actual cost of coal to OPGC. Citing various notifications and orders of the central government as well as the terms and conditions specified in the allotment order, Patnaik had argued that OCPL cannot make any profit on sale of coal to OPGC so that the benefit should be passed on to

the ultimate consumers. Accusing OERC of failing on its mandate by not following the principles adopted by CERC for the determination of input price of coal produced from Dulanga mines to NTPC's 2X800 MW power plants at Darlipali in Sundargarh district, Patnaik said the state regulator has burdened the consumers by increasing the generation tariff of OPGC by 50 paise per unit. Seeking amendment to the OERC (Terms & Conditions for Determination of Generation Tariff) Regulations, 2020, in line with the CERC regulations, Patnaik requested the commission to initiate action to utilise the profit derived by the OCPL by billing higher coal cost and from merchant sale of coal for the reduction of generation tariff from the Unit-III and IV of Ib thermal power station.

BSKY Comes To Rescue Of Needy Patient; Odisha-Mo Parivar Provides Assistance

Bhubaneswar: A 47-year-old woman resident of Marsaghai locality in Kendrapada got cured today from fatal injuries that she had sustained in a previous road mishap, owing to the assistance extended by a non-government organisation (NGO) named Odisha-Mo Parivar.




According to a spokesperson of the NGO, the needy patient Damayanti Samal was earlier working as a community resource person (CRP) under the government's Mission Shakti programme. She was provided with an autorickshaw to pick up and drop off school students. However, in the month of April, she met with

an accident and was admitted to Government Hospital in Kendrapada for emergency care and was later shifted to a private hospital for further treatment. The family of Damayanti had approached MLA Sabitri Agarwalla seeking help for the former's treatment. The matter was intimated to Odisha-


Mo Parivar through the MLA's representative Sanjay Agarwalla and immediately necessary steps were taken to shift her to Bhubaneswar. The critical patient received all requisite assistance throughout the course of her treatment under the BSKY scheme, where the NGO's helpdesk associate Rashmi

Ranjan Pradhan coordinated starting from the documentation process till her recovery and discharge. A conveyance arrangement was also made for Damayanti's return to her native place at Kendrapada. The family expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the much-needed help during their difficult times.



2023-2024

ADMISSION OPEN



Maharishi Public School, Baripada

STD-NURSERY TO VIII

ENROLL YOUR CHILD TODAY


(Special discount for new admission before 15.03.2023)

Find the Difference

- Small Classes
- Experienced, trained & loving teachers.
- Individual attention to each child.
- Regular meditation and yoga.
- Unique exam system, evaluation & Principles etc.

25% reservation as per RTE Act (2009)

MAHARISHI PUBLIC SCHOOL
Baghra Road, Baripada
For details
Contact :
Call-9438102188, 06792-255227
Time : 8.00 A.M. to 12.00 noon
E-mail- mps.bpd@gmail.com

 Find us on
Facebook.com/Mps, Baripada

CFA Institute in India Expands Student Accessibility with a New Exam Center in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar : CFA Institute, the professional body for excellence and thought leadership in finance, has opened registrations for their upcoming February 2023 intake. Additionally, with the rising demand to increase candidate accessibility and convenience, the institute will have 4 new exam centers in Kochi, Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati for the CFA Program. These centers will take the total number of test center cities for the CFA exam to 16 across India and over 400 worldwide.

The recent CFA Institute Investor Trust survey showed that Indians place a high level of trust on the potential growth in job opportunities in the financial services sector. However, in the post-pandemic era, students as

well as professionals are prioritizing safety, accessibility and ease of travel while accomplishing their life and career goals. Ease of accessibility to exam centers is expected to improve a candidate journey through the program and reduce costs associated with travelling to take exams.

The CFA Charter continues to be the global gold standard for professionals aspiring to work in the investment management industry. We constantly work to make the CFA Program affordable, accessible, meritocratic and relevant. During the pandemic we moved our examinations to Computer Based Testing from Paper Based Exams and started offering examinations four times in a year. By expanding of our test center

network, we are taking one more step to bring the CFA Program within the reach of aspiring professionals and students in India." Said Arati Porwal, Director Society Relations at CFA Institute in India.

India has a robust banking, insurance and investment industry It has a diversified financial sector undergoing rapid expansion, both in terms of strong growth of existing financial services firms and new entities entering the market. With such rapid expansion, there is a growing demand for professionals with relevant competencies and high standards of ethics. The CFA Institute works closely with the industry and regulators to support an inclusive and secure financial services industry in India.

Experience the best-in-class customer services at 11 new Alpha Service Centers across India

Bhubaneswar : Sony India is expanding its Alpha Service Network across 11 cities in India including Mumbai, Coimbatore, Jaipur, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Trivandrum, Chennai, Indore, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati. This is expansion for Alpha Camera body and lens repairs facilities is a testament to the brand's continued dedication to customer satisfaction. Sony now has the widest service network of after sales support for Digital Imaging products with 8 service centers for lens repairs, 18 service centers for Alpha Camera Body repair, 40+ service centers which can offer basic services like CCD

Imager cleaning and firmware updates and 220+ collection centers pan India.

The service centers are equipped with necessary jigs and tools to deliver best quality repair of Alpha camera body, Camera Lens, Professional Cameras and other digital imaging products like Digital Still Cameras and Camcorders. Customers can also avail instant services for basic supports like CCD Imager cleaning and getting the latest firmware update to enjoy best performance from their products. The friendly customer care staff at these service centers will help customers to register their in-warranty products on

Sony Alpha Community portal to enable them avail free of cost additional one year warranty on applicable products.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Mukesh Srivastava, Head of Digital Imaging Business at Sony India, said, "By supporting and assisting partners in local markets, Sony aims to ensure customers receive exceptional service and satisfaction along with quicker and faster turnaround at all outlets across the country. The new service centers will offer customers a seamless experience across multiple touch-points to provide a consistent brand experience that surpasses expectations."

ATLAS OF AFFLUENCE - INDIA'S FIRST EVER WHITE PAPER ON LUXURY LAUNCHED AS A YEARLY FEATURE

Mumbai: Amidst leading luminaries of industries spanning across the business of luxury, the Atlas of Affluence (AOA) 2022 has been launched in Mumbai. Created by The Voice of Fashion (TVOF), a division of Reliance Brands Limited, the daily digital magazine that tracks and leads conversations on Indian fashion, design, crafts and retail, AOA 2022, is

the first such wide and deep white paper from India that dissects consumer behaviour studied through the prism of luxury.

A collective reflection on what affluence means in India spiked during the two years of the pandemic. Charting the post-pandemic market and the clearly altered consumer mindset through a specially commissioned study

across six cities and markets of India, AOA 2022 has been published as a book with exclusively commissioned artworks. This study uses the time graph of "pre-pandemic" and "post-pandemic" months to specify a comparative matrix. It also helps debunk long-held ideas about what affluence and luxury have meant to Indians.

NSDL launches "Market ka Eklavya- Express" in 75 cities to mark 75 years of Independence

Mumbai: India's largest depository, National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) launched 'Market ka Eklavya- Express', an online investment awareness program for students that will be conducted in 8 different languages including Hindi. The program would serve as a beginner's guide for investing for the youth.

To mark the significance of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an

initiative of Government of India to celebrate 75 years of independence and the glorious history of our people, culture and achievements, NSDL has launched a new initiative towards investor awareness 'Market Ka Eklavya - Express' across 75 cities, especially aimed at the college students who would very soon be entering the phase where they would start earning and naturally,

look for avenues of investment.

Earlier this month, Market ka Eklavya (5-hours program) was launched by the hon'ble Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman at the silver jubilee event of NSDL.

On the launch of the initiative Ms. Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO, NSDL said, "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a special initiative launched by

SBI now offers Real Time Xpress Credit on YONO app

Mumbai : With an aim to digitally empower customers and offer additional convenience, the country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) has announced the introduction of Real Time Xpress Credit (RTXC) on YONO. The bank's flagship personal loan product for salaried customers - Xpress Credit has a Digital Avatar now. Customers can now avail RTXC from the comfort of their homes through YONO - which is going to be 100% paperless and digital. The end-to-end 8 step journey would be easy and instant for the customers.

Under Real Time Xpress Credit, Central/ State Government and Defence salaried customers of SBI will no longer be required to visit the branch for availing a personal loan. The credit checks, eligibility, sanction & documentation will now be done digitally in real-time.

Shri Dinesh Khara, Chairman, SBI said, "We are pleased to introduce Real Time Xpress Credit (RTXC) Loan facility for our eligible salaried customers on YONO. The Xpress Credit product will enable our customers to experience a digital, hassle-free, and paperless loan process. We at SBI constantly endeavour to offer technology-led enhanced digital banking experience to the customers in order to simplify banking." The digitalization of Xpress Credit delivery will also help the bank to do away with the need to handle and store enormous paperwork.

Blenders Pride Fashion Nights arrives in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar : Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, a unique travelling experiential property, arrived in the City of Temples - Bhubaneswar - celebrating the authentic spirit of the city through fashion and style. A spirit that echoes with Pride and inspires the creators of today to become icons of tomorrow. Bhubaneswar's 'Made of Artistic Flair' edition for Blenders Pride Fashion Nights, brought together an eclectic evening that blended fashion, culture and dance, celebrating a symbolic amalgamation of homegrown artistry and the unwavering spirit of local talent.

Exemplifying the region's signature weave through a curated evening at the majestic Vivanta, Bhubaneswar, DC Square was Odia designer Sabyasachi Satpathy, whose intricately crafted ensembles drew inspiration from the multicultural city and its colourful history. In a true celebration of Odisha's distinct and masterful craftsmanship, the show was elevated with a captivating performance by the Prince Dance Group - from the small Odisha town of Berhampur - widely lauded for their artistry. The show drew to a finale with none other than actor Diana Penty, who captivated the audience in a beautiful ensemble by the designer. The "Made of Artistic Flair" edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Nights was a beautiful embodiment of the rich craft and cultural heritage of the city in a modern and contemporary setting.

Taking us on a 'Jatra' - The Journey of a Young Woman - the show encapsulated the journey of a woman from post adolescence to her nuptials, navigating the various challenges, trials and significant moments that come her way. The enigmatic journey was captured through the array of colours and textiles that Odisha Bandha/Ikkat offers. Truly encapsulating the spirit of 'Made of Pride', the designer made use of Odisha weave, which is sustainable, hand-woven, organic and a homegrown initiative of design, painstakingly woven by the weavers of Odisha. The upbeat set was a composition designed to narrate the spirit of Bhubaneswar along with the flair of the designer. The evening was attended by the city's A-listers & influencers. The fashion walk truly left the guests mesmerized and engaged.

Through this unique showcase of Pride encompassing diverse talent across creative fields, Blenders Pride Fashion Nights 2022, encourages everyone, especially youth at large to celebrate & take pride in their authentic and individual journeys. The evening spotlighted individuals who take Pride in their choices, are comfortable in their skin and, most importantly, embrace their authentic selves - truly living a life that is 'Made of Pride'.

Mahindra Unveils its Disruptive Product Innovation, the brand-new 'G75 Smart' Motor Grader at EXCON

Bengaluru: Mahindra's Construction Equipment Division (MCE), a part of the Mahindra Group, announced expansion of its road construction equipment range with the launch of the brand-new Mahindra RoadMaster G75 Smart - "Profit Ka Partner".

Speaking on the occasion, Jalaj Gupta, Business Head, Commercial Vehicles Business Unit, Mahindra & Mahindra Limited, said, "We at Mahindra are committed to provide disruptive products and services for our customers and are launching yet another product innovation in the fast-growing road construction equipment segment, the Mahindra RoadMaster G75 Smart Motor Grader. It has been designed and developed in India based

on deep insights of the needs of smaller road contractors. Our aim is to help small contractors break free from sub-optimal grading practices and to upgrade them to mechanization and enable them to participate in nation building. The brand-new G75 Smart motor grader is a highly reliable machine with low owning and operating costs and will truly be their "Profit Ka Partner". Our existing RoadMaster range of motor graders has already captured over 20% market share, and we are confident that G75 Smart will further strengthen our position while transforming construction of small roads in India, which constitute about 60% of country's roads."

The RoadMaster G75 Smart offers road contractors, liberation

from compromised makeshift solution, such as manual labor and farm tractor-based graders. It is the ideal machine for spreading and grading applications for the rural, semi-rural and district roads, land development, internal housing and commercial roads. It enables small road contractors to participate in projects with grading needs for government flagship programs as Smart City, as well as PMGSY roads. The RoadMaster G75 Smart provides small contractors affordable un-compromised mechanization and an opportunity to deploy a registered motor grader in the smaller projects which was not possible hitherto with the conventional graders. Also, it will help improve the quality and longevity of work and quicker turnaround of projects.

Vi Brings Attractive International Roaming Packs for its Customers this Travel Season!

Mumbai: As international travel opens up and more Indians resume international travel for business and leisure, Vi, India's leading telecom operator, offers attractive international roaming packs for its customers this holiday season. Currently, Vi has roaming arrangements with operators across geographies, making international travel experience seamless and worry-free for its customers.

Vi International Roaming packs enable users to roam worry-free with unlimited Voice

calls and Data on its unparalleled roaming networks across top travel destinations globally. Vi post-paid customers travelling to popular business and holiday destinations such as UAE, UK, USA, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Australia, Thailand, Brazil and more can opt for Vi Unlimited International Roaming packs, starting from Rs. 599 offering 24 hour validity to Rs 5999 pack that comes with 28 days validity.

The 'Always On' feature on all Vi Postpaid Roaming Packs ensures that customers do not get

charged exorbitant rates while on international roaming even after the expiry of the subscribed pack. For example if travelers who have subscribed to the 7 day Vi Postpaid Roaming Pack, have to extend their stay, they can continue to use their phone for voice, SMS and data, and will be charged standard rates till the user's usage value doesn't cross Rs. 599. Upon crossing Rs. 599, the user will be billed @Rs 599 for each additional day that they use the International roaming facility, thus getting safeguarded from bill shocks.

BOB Financial and HPCL launch co-branded contactless RuPay Credit Card

Mumbai: BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (BoB) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) - a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise in partnership with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), have announced the launch of HPCL Co-branded contactless RuPay Credit Card. The card is designed to reward customers for spends at HPCL fuel pumps as

well as the HP Pay app. It also offers accelerated rewards for spends on utilities, grocery and departmental stores. This card can be used across merchants and ATMs globally through the JCB network.

Cardholders of HPCL BoB RuPay Contactless Credit Card will be able to earn up to 24 reward points (per INR 150 spent) for spends at HPCL fuel pumps and on the HP Pay app. In addition, cardholders will also benefit from 1% Fuel

Surcharge Waiver on fuel purchases at HPCL pumps or on HP Pay. Customers who spend INR 5,000 or more within 60 days of card issuance will get 2,000 bonus reward points.

The co-branded credit card will offer 10 reward points (per INR 150 spent) on utilities, grocery and departmental stores and 2 reward points on other categories. The card also offers attractive discount on movie ticket bookings.

Jindal Stainless signs MoU with SCTEVT, Odisha to train future-ready stainless steel professionals

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's State Council for Technical Education & Vocational Training (SCTEVT) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Jindal Stainless to promote technical education in the field of stainless steel and its various applications. Under this MoU, stainless steel courses will be introduced in all the Polytechnic colleges in Odisha from June 2022. The MoU was signed by Vice Chairman,

SCTE&VT, Shri Reghu G (IAS) and Unit Head, Jindal Stainless Limited (JSL), Shri Deepak Agrawal. Dignitaries present at the ceremony included Chairman, SCTE&VT and Principal Secretary to Government, Skill Development and Technical Education (SDTE) and Industries Departments, Shri Hemant Sharma (IAS); Additional Secretary, SDTE, Govt of Odisha, Shri Tapan Satpathy (OAS); Resident Director, JSL, Mr SS

Upadhyay, and General Manager, Sales & Distribution, Mr Ranit Rana.

Commenting the development, Chairman, SCTE&VT and Principal Secretary to Government, SDTE and Industries Departments, Shri Hemant Sharma (IAS) said, "This collaboration with Jindal Stainless will enhance the learning experience for students and faculty both, as it will give them insights about and practical exposure to the stainless steel industry."

'Still too early to make any prediction': Thakur presents optimistic front

London: Shardul Thakur will not sign off India's chances in the ongoing World Test Championship final and believes the memory of England's recent fourth-innings efforts in this country will keep his team afloat even if they are asked to chase 450 for victory. India are a long way behind in the final with Australia stretching their lead to 296 but

they did mount a respectable comeback on the third day through Thakur and Ajinkya Rahane's 109-run partnership for the seventh wicket that allowed them to avoid the follow-on and eat into the big deficit. They also produced a better bowling show to prize out four Australian wickets before close of play. "Well, cricket is a funny game. You can

never say what is the right total and this one-off game, especially ICC finals, you never know, I mean, who can handle the pressure better out there - one good partnership and you can even chase down 450 or maybe more than that," Thakur said. "So last year... England chased 400 and they did not lose too many wickets. So that's a positive sign for us.

Whatever they put up on the board, it's too early to make any predictions. We see a lot of times in Test cricket that the game changes within an hour. So yes, we like to be optimistic tomorrow going on the field. And yeah, we'll take it on from there." While Thakur presented an optimistic front, chasing even Australia's current lead is unlikely to be a

straightforward proposition on a pitch that has significantly dried out. Moreover, bowling from the pavilion end at The Oval has proved particularly problematic for the batters to face with the odd ball rearing up from length and another shooting lower from an identical spot. "I think there is an area from where the ball is coming up, there is a

little grass around the crack and the length is such that batsmen can't leave the deliveries easily," Thakur explained. "You have to play committedly because we saw today many balls kept down and I mean, that area is at a good length, a little short of length. So that's the area where the batsmen can't immediately see and leave the ball. "You have to play it.

And if it bounces from there - then good luck for the batsmen. It was bouncing from the other end too - but from a bit behind, so the batsmen were getting time to adjust, I think only Virat [Kohli] got the bounce from further on - but for all the rest, it bounced from behind." There was further acknowledgement from Thakur that India may not have made full use of this variable bounce after

electing to field on the opening day of the Test. After a promising start with the ball, their subsequent lack of discipline allowed Australia, and particularly centurion Travis Head, to get away to a big score. Thakur also seconded bowling coach Paras Mhambrey's assertion that the bowling group may have erred in not testing out Head with short balls early on in his innings.

Luke Wood, Luke Wells set up Lancashire's four-wicket win



New Delhi: Lancashire kickstarted the T20 Blast season of 2023 with a comfortable four-wicket win over Derbyshire, courtesy the two Lukes - Wood and Wells - who made a sizeable impact on either innings. Asked to bat, Derbyshire made a strong start - including a 17-run sixth over. Wayne Madsen scored a half-century (50 off 35) but fell in the 11th over to Danny Lumb. Wood, who'd dismissed Haider Ali on the first ball of the season, made two late dents by taking out

Derbyshire captain Leus du Plooy (33 off 16) and Anuj Dal (24 off 20). Derbyshire got 48 runs in the last five overs to post 179 for 5, and yet fell short. That was because Wells gave Lancashire a flying start with a blistering 66 off 35 balls - with 9 fours and 3 sixes. Thanks to that, Lancashire had the perfect platform for chase with 77/1 in 6 overs. Wells continued to attack after the PowerPlay and fell in the 10th over. Daryl Mitchell carried forward the

attack with a 19-ball 31. Though Lancashire lost a few wickets in a heap, Rob Jones took them over the line with four wickets and four balls to spare. Sam Hain's brutal 83*, off just 45 deliveries, set up Warwickshire's comfortable win against Yorkshire. After posting 200/6, Henry Brookes (4-32) and Chris Woakes (2-34) starred with the ball to restrict Yorkshire to 166 on the penultimate ball. Hain arrived when Warwickshire were 30-2

in the fourth over, and saw the team slip to 51-4 before putting on a 97-run stand with Chris Benjamin (46 off 28) for the fifth wicket to put their side on course for a big total. Benjamin missed out on his half-century but Hain hammered four sixes and seven boundaries in his unbeaten knock. Brookes and Wokaes then combined to reduce Yorkshire to 20-4 inside four overs, which soon spiralled to 66-7 despite Dawid Malan's brisk 43. He was the eighth man dismissed, with team's score on 104 in the 15th over, and the chase was well out of their reach. However, Dom Bess (42* off 28) and Jafer Chohan (37 off 20) decided to have some late fun, posting a ninth wicket partnership of 52 that was in vain.

World Table Tennis Championships Finals 2023: Sharath Kamal, Manika Batra To Lead Indian Campaign

New Delhi: Achanta Sharath Kamal, the Commonwealth Games winner, and Manika Batra, India's best women's player, will lead the Indian campaign at the World Table Tennis Championships Finals 2023, which begin on Saturday in Durban, South Africa.

There are 11 players in the Indian table tennis team. Sharath Kamal will captain the five-man men's squad, which features Olympian Sathiyann Gnanasekaran and bronze medalists Manav Thakkar and Harmeet Desai from the Asian Games 2018. Manush Shah is also included in the squad, as per Olympics.com. India's top-ranked men's table tennis player is Sathiyann Gnanasekaran, who is rated 51st in the world, followed by



Sharath Kamal, who is ranked 53rd. The seasoned pair will also compete in the men's doubles event. Apart from singles and men's doubles, Sathiyann Gnanasekaran will compete in mixed doubles alongside Manika Batra. The pair is ranked fifth in the world. At the World Table Tennis Championships, India has only won two medals. At the first 1926 event, the men's team and

SRG Suppiah in the men's singles both won bronze. The onus will be on world No. 39 Manika Batra to deliver for India in the women's competition. She will compete in singles and women's doubles partnering Archana Kamath. In women's doubles, the pair is rated No. 12 in the world. In women's singles, national champion Sreeja Akula (world No. 112), Olympian Sutirtha Mukherjee (world No.

113), and Reeth Tennison (world No. 176) will compete. The singles competition will begin with a round of 128 while the doubles events will begin with a round of 64. The event will end on May 28. For the first time since the 1939 edition in Egypt, the table tennis world championships are being hosted on the African continent. Indian squad for ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals 2023

HS Prannoy Becomes First Indian Men's Singles Shuttler To Clinch Malaysia Masters Title

New Delhi: HS Prannoy became the first Indian men's singles shuttler to clinch the Malaysia Masters title here on Sunday as he defeated China's Weng Hong Yang in the final. Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu are the other two Indian players to win Malaysia Masters in the singles category. Prannoy used his experience right from the start of the match and got the better of Weng Hong Yang 21-19, 13-21, 21-18 in a three-game final that lasted one hour and 34 minutes. "I congratulate HS Prannoy for becoming the first Indian men's singles shuttler to clinch the Malaysia Masters title. He has contributed to many memorable victories in Indian badminton and continuing his fine form into the BWF World Tour title is a matter of great pride for the country and all of us. I hope and wish he continues his impressive run in the



competitions and brings more laurels to India," said Sanjay Mishra, General Secretary of the Badminton Association of India. The Indian shuttler has been instrumental in many victories for the Indian badminton team, including the historic Thomas Cup and the 2023 Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships. Now, with the BWF World Tour Title in the men's singles category, Prannoy will look forward to upcoming tournaments with more confidence.

"I think just too many emotions as such because the last six years were too much of a roller coaster ride for me and really didn't expect this to happen after six years. To be honest, if you had me asked in 2017, I don't think I would have told you that in 2023 I would be winning a Super 500. I want to thank all the coaches and the support staff. I think we have worked really, really hard and the result is showing," Prannoy stated after the victory. He added, "It's too much of emotions as such and then you are

excited to come out there and play in front of such a big crowd. It was a beautiful crowd out there, so you're always excited to be there. The draw was really tough for me and had really tough matches as I had to dig really deep. All four matches went to the wire and that shows how patient I was and my fitness was also pretty much decent. I think to beat these kinds of players is not easy, you just have to dig in deep. The conditions were really slow the entire tournament and all matches were going

long and you just had to hang in there and I did that." The first game of the final was a tight battle as both the shuttlers began with high energy and gave their all to earn each point. They were tied at 5-5 before Prannoy played some ferocious shots to get ahead (11-10) by a point at the break. Prannoy did not fall behind Weng in the second half of the first game and took the lead in the match. The Indian shuttler took time to find his feet in the second game as Weng came all guns blazing. He didn't give Prannoy any time to settle and won the second game 21-13. However, in the third game, it was Prannoy who came out on top as he maintained his calmness in tough situations. He was ahead at the break (11-10) in the third game before showcasing some superior net play and smashes to clinch the game 21-18 and win the title.

Premier League: Virgil van Dijk 'Far Better' Than Manchester United Legend Nemanja Vidic, Believes Jamie Carragher



New Delhi: Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk is "far better" Manchester United legend Nemanja Vidic, believes Jamie Carragher. The Dutch defender is being criticised a lot these days following Liverpool's average performance this season. Van Dijk is considered as one of the best in the business since his move to Liverpool in January 2018. The Netherlands international moved from Southampton to Anfield for a massive price tag of £75 million (\$93m). He has won a Champions League, Premier League, FA Cup, Carabao Cup, UEFA Super Cup and a FIFA World Club World Cup

with the club. He has made 213 appearances for the club and is still the main defender of Jurgen Klopp's backline. Former Liverpool defender Carragher respond to a tweet suggesting that "Van Dijk's drop off is actually insane" by saying: "VVD is far better than Vidic, who was a top CB, but have you forgot his performances against Torres? Rio & JT had poor seasons in their career like all players, VVD is having one now. No CB in the PL era has ever had VVD's impact on a team. Never mind the best CB in the league, he's been the best player in the league along with KDB for four years

before this one. We have never spoken about about other CB's being the best player before, that shows the level he was at." Virgil van Dijk is often compared to the likes of some great defenders of the modern era including some names like Sergio Ramos, Carlos Puyol, Nemanja Vidic, Rio Ferdinand and many more. This all has happened since that one season when no one could dribble past the Dutch wall, yes the same season Liverpool went on to win the Premier League. However, former Liverpool footballer Carragher believes he is better from United legend Vidic.