

Rajya Sabha begins discussion on bill to remove Bhogta caste from SC list

NEW DELHI(KCN): (Amendment) Bill, 2022, that also aims to help beneficiaries tap better into the provisions of reservation in education and government jobs, for



(SC) and include certain communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes (ST) for Jharkhand. The bill was introduced in the Upper House on February 7. Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda moved the Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order

discussion. Initiating the debate, Congress member Naranbhai J Rathwa supported the bill and said that the BJP government has ignored the demand of adding Bhogta community in the list of Scheduled Tribes. He said that there are many tribal communities in the Other

Backward Classes category among others and suggested that certain communities could be brought under the list of Scheduled Tribes.

The discussion on the bill will continue in the Upper House on Wednesday.

The bill amends the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950. The Scheduled Castes Order specifies the castes, races and tribes deemed to be Scheduled Castes in various states and union territories, while the Scheduled Tribes Order specifies the same for tribes and tribal communities.

The bill amends the

schedule to the Scheduled Tribes Order to include Deshwari, Ganjhu, D a u t a l b a n d i (D w a l b a n d i), Patbandi, Raut, Maajhia, Khairi (Kheri), Tamararia (Tamadia), and Puran communities in the Scheduled Tribes list in Jharkhand.

Further, the schedule to the Scheduled Castes Order is being amended to omit the Bhogta community from the list of Scheduled Castes and is instead being included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in the state. The government keeps amending the lists originally notified in 1950 based on requests made by various state governments.

Naveen Patnaik is asked about his stand on presidential election

NEW DELHI(KCN): Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday said there had not been any discussion on the presidential election and neither the opposition nor the Bharatiya Janata Party has approached him in this context.



"There is still lots of time," Patnaik told reporters in Delhi at Parliament House on the presidential election expected to be held in July. Patnaik's BJD has 112 legislators and 21 members of parliament.

There was speculation that Patnaik may meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his three-day trip to Delhi beginning Monday and that the BJP might seek the Biju Janata Dal's

support for its candidate. Patnaik said he only came to Parliament to meet BJD MPs and to follow up on various programmes and welfare schemes for Odisha, underlining that he is not scheduled to meet PM Modi or union home minister Amit Shah.

Patnaik last visited Delhi in September 2021 to attend a meeting of chief ministers of Maoist-hit states convened by Amit Shah.

Bhupendra Patel is asked about Congress vs AAP in Gujarat. He explains Bhupendra Patel is asked about Congress vs AAP in Gujarat. He explains.

Naveen Patnaik's Delhi visit triggers speculation of support for NDA presidential nominee Naveen Patnaik's Delhi visit triggers speculation of support for NDA presidential nominee.

Privilege notice in Rajya Sabha against TMC MP Dola Sen's remarks on deputy speaker Privilege notice in Rajya Sabha against TMC MP Dola Sen's remarks on deputy speaker. Navjot Singh Sidhu meets Congress leaders to reach consensus on leader of opposition post Navjot Singh Sidhu CONTINUED ON: P-7

Ukraine-Russia peace deal soon? Moscow to 'radically' reduce military activity around Kyiv

ISTANBUL(KCN): Russia's military said on Tuesday it would "fundamentally" cut back operations near Ukraine's capital and a northern city, as talks brought a possible deal to end a grinding and brutal war into view.

Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin said the move was meant to increase trust in the talks after several rounds of failed negotiations to halt the conflict that has devolved into a bloody campaign of attrition.

Fomin said Moscow had decided to "fundamentally, cut back military activity in the direction of Kyiv and Chernihiv" to "increase mutual trust and create conditions for further negotiations." That appeared to be a goodwill gesture, but also comes as Russia's troops have become bogged down and struggled to make major advances on the ground recently in the face of stiff Ukrainian resistance, thwarting Russian President Vladimir Putin's aim of a quick military victory. Ukraine's military said it had noted withdrawals around Kyiv and Chernihiv, though the Pentagon said it could not corroborate Russia's claim.

Earlier talks, held in person in Belarus or by video, failed to make progress on ending a more than month-long war that has killed thousands and driven more than 10 million Ukrainians from their homes, including almost 4 million from their country.

But Fomin suggested there had been progress Tuesday, saying "negotiations on preparing an agreement on Ukraine's neutrality and non-nuclear status, as well as on giving Ukraine security guarantees, are turning to practical mat-

ters." Ukraine's team, meanwhile, set out a detailed framework for a future peace deal under which the country would remain neutral but its security would be guaranteed by a group of third countries, including the US, Britain, France, Turkey, China and Poland, in an arrangement

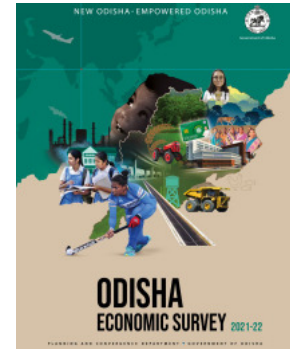


similar to NATO's an "attack on one is an attack on all" principle. Ukraine would also be willing to hold talks over a 15-year period on the future of the Crimean Peninsula, which was seized by Russia in 2014, with both countries agreeing not to use their armed forces to resolve the issue in the meantime.

PCI scales double digit

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Per Capita Income (PCI) of Odisha has grown at a double-digit rate of 16.8 per cent in 2021-22, as per Odisha Economic Survey Report 2021-22 published on Tuesday.

The average growth of Odisha's per capita income over the last ten years (2012-13 to 2021-22) is 10.3 per cent against 9.15 per cent growth rate in the case of India, it said.



Odisha's per capita income of Rs 48,499 in 2011-12 reached Rs 1,27,383 in 2021-22. While in absolute terms, it is lower than India's per capita income, the rate at which it is growing implies that it would soon exceed India level.

Odisha's per capita income was 76 per cent of the per-capita income of India in 2011-12. It stands now at 84.7 per cent in 2021-22.

Between 2011-12 and 2019-20, for which comparable data are available, there are only nine states including Odisha whose per capita income rank has improved, while in the case of ten states, there is no change in rank and another ten states have CONTINUED ON: P-7

State economy grows 10.1%, per capita income rises 16.78% in 2021-22 fiscal

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday said that the State has been able to successfully reboot the Covid-19 pandemic-hit economy by registering a growth of 10.1 per cent in 2021-22 compared to the national growth rate of 8.8 per cent. This has been made possible by adopting the twin policy of fiscal prudence and inclusive development, he said.

Replying to the discussion on the motion of thanks to the Governor's address in the Assembly virtually, the Chief Minister said that over the last 10 years, the State has grown at an average rate of 6.5 per cent against the national average of 5.3 per cent. He said that during 2020-21 fiscal, Odisha's economy was less affected by the pandemic-induced slowdown as it contracted by only around 5.3 per cent against 7.3 per cent of contraction in the national economy. Stating that Odisha is the only state to be fully Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBM) compliant since its enactment, the Chief Minister said that recovery of the economy from the



lakh employment opportunities. "The State government has undertaken integrated master planning and destination development

impact of the pandemic was a huge challenge. The State has successfully met this challenge with resolve, he asserted.

In spite of the pandemic, Odisha has emerged as a leading investment destination with over Rs 4.4 lakh crore investment intent during the last three years that would create more than 1.53

lakh employment opportunities. "The State government has undertaken integrated master planning and destination development

programme to boost tourism, facilitate private sector investment, augment livelihood opportunities for the local communities and promote local entrepreneurship," he said. Odisha's per capita income has also grown by an impressive 16.78 per cent in 2021-22 fiscal. Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari in reply to a question of MLA Pradeep Kumar Panigrahy, in writing, informed the House that the State's per capita income that shrunk by .91 per cent to Rs 1,09,071 in 2020-21 following outbreak of Covid-19, increased to Rs 1,27,383, a growth of over 16 per cent in 2021-22. The per CONTINUED ON: P-7

south, with several deaths.

A missile struck the oil depot late Monday, the second attack on oil facilities in a region that has been spared the worst of the fighting.

On Tuesday morning, an explosion blasted a hole in a nine-story administration building in Mykolaiv, a southern port city that Russia has unsuccessfully tried to capture.

Seven people died in the missile attack and 22 were wounded, Zelenskyy said in an address to Danish lawmakers.

"It's terrible. They waited for people to go to work, before striking the building," said regional governor Vitaliy Kim. "I overslept. I'm lucky."

In other developments: The head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog arrived in Ukraine to try to ensure the safety of the country's nuclear facilities.

Russian forces have taken control of the decommissioned Chernobyl plant, site in 1986 of the world's worst nuclear accident, and of the active Zaporizhzhia plant, where a building was damaged in fighting.

Russia has destroyed more than 60 religious buildings across the country in just over a month of war, with most of the damage concentrated near Kyiv and in the east, Ukraine's military said in a post Tuesday.

Bloomberg News said it has suspended its operations in Russia and Belarus.

Customers in both countries won't be able to access any Bloomberg financial products and trading functions for Russian securities were disabled in line with internat- CONTINUED ON: P-7

SankalpTaru Foundation becomes the first Indian NGO in environmental conservation space to launch Blockchain

Kolkata(KCN): One of India's leading IT enabled NGO, SankalpTaru Foundation today announced an integration with

mation, including the tree data shared with them. As a major agricultural producer, West Bengal is said to have

program, thus creating efficient and effective self-enthusiastic model for the project beneficiaries. On this occasion, Mr

such as tree image, tree ID, and its geo-location to be recorded and distrib-

The Blockchain is an information management technology that uses a distributed

with a record in one instance of the database, the other nodes would cross-reference each other and easily pinpoint the node with the incorrect information. Thus, this system helps to establish an exact and transparent order of events. This way, SankalpTaru would ensure that the trees planted by its individual and corporate donors are never duplicated or re-assigned to anyone else. Every planted tree in the digital forest would bear unique

cision to contribute their time, money, and trust in making the planet liveable. Blockchain initiative of SankalpTaru and Polygon is there to assure that one's tree data is very much validated and immutable. This integration is foreseen to revolutionize the way data is stored and accessed. This integration is a shining example of bringing new green opportunities to the technological world. About SankalpTaru Foundation

inction in planting trees in some of the toughest terrains in the country. Some of their bio-diverse tree planting locations include the Thar Desert, The Cold Desert of Ladakh, hilly terrains of Himalayas, Vidarbha, Southern Deccan, Sundarban and islands of Brahmaputra, Assam. They extensively leverage technology to scale their operations and maximize socio-environmental impact. Planting 3 million trees, introducing 150+ Tree Species, greenifying an area of over 3000 hectares, measuring carbon sequestration of up to 1.5 million Tons, supporting nearly 36,000 farmer-beneficiaries, giving out close to 30,000 Tons of fruit production annually, generating an annual income of close to 7600 million for its beneficiary farmers and outreaching 1,00,000+ students. This is what SankalpTaru is about and as their motto says, "We don't just plant"!



Polygon to adopt blockchain technology. This integration enables SankalpTaru Foundation to become the first Indian NGO in the environmental conservation space. It also helps to further enhance the trust of its donors that offers them an additional handle to check the veracity of infor-

good farming interventions, despite which the state's marginal farmers do not receive a good return over their crops due to low selling rates. SankalpTaru initiated Project Shyamolima with a pledge to promote biodiversity in the state through development of a sustainable plantation

Apurva Bhandari, Founder of SankalpTaru Foundation says, "SankalpTaru has always pioneered through its various creative interventions and has brought technology closer to the cause. Blockchain allows digital information like tree URL with basic details



uted with no scope of editing, deletion, or destruction of any data. Through Blockchain, we would build trust among our donors and sponsors and encourage them to plant millions of trees to combat the war against climate change."

processing architect-



ture to enhance the resiliency of data transactions from unauthorized changes, hacks, and corruptions. If someone tries to alter or tamper

data and a placeholder to cross-verify the details shared with the donors. The green patrons are environmentally aware and take a de-

SankalpTaru is one of the largest Indian non-profits working on tree plantation activities across 25 states and UTs across India and holds a dis-

Tarunya Tayashi Batch friends get together with Guru Puja at BNodal Bidyapitha, Deuli

Cuttack Sadar(KCN) : Cuttack Sadar 42 mouza Balunkeswar Bidyapitha at Deuli Tarunya Tayashi 1983 Matric Batch(BSE Odisha) friends get together program held with paid silence prayer for departed souls as Late Headmaster Lokanatha Barik, Late Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, Late Banamali Moharana, Late Krushna Chandra Khatua, Late Nrusingha Nayak. Old students Mr.Santosh Pati addressed to the respected teachers, Alok Pati, Sanjaya Kumar Mohapatra,

BDK collector Trilochan Majahi delivered a speech about the past students memories which is unforgettable. The esteemed old teachers Kishore Kumar Panda, Kulamani Beura, Surjyamani Parija, Prahallad Pati, Nursingha Charan Panda, Narayan Sahu, Brajakishore Sinha, Sadashib Moharana, Sailendra Kumara Nayaak, Late Guru Banamali Morana's wife Labanya Bati Moharana, Bijaya Ram Beura present and remember last 40 years students memo-

ries with feels happy. 1983 batch students Niranjan Das, Dr.Banaprabha Parida, Jyanti Pati, Manorama Pati, Mamata Pati, Manjulata Pati, J a n m a j a y a Mohapatra, Manoj M o h a n t y , Patiatapaban Pati, Purna Chandra Behera, Jagabandhu Behera, Biswanath Behera, Prakash Mohapatra, Basanta Kumar Bhoi, Ashok B e h e r a , R a m a c h a n d r a Majahi, Prabodha Kumar Pati, Henamanjari Pati, Malati Das, Sukanti Das, Rekha Parida,

Kuni Parida, Golaka Das, Bikaram Pani, Trilochan Pati, Sultana R Begum present and make the program grand success. BNodal Bidyapitha Headmistress Sulochana Das, Teacher Prahallad Mishra joined with given thanks, blessed to all old students for there arrangements and convince them to join in The Mo School Abhiyan Yojana. BNodal Bidyapitha, Deuli working committee honorable president Sitikantha Barik felicitated by old students association.

All please Come forward to protect vulnerable Children: ZP President, Puri Observation of "A Day for Children"

Puri (KCN): Celebrating "A Day for Children" programme at District level all the members and Chairpersons of the District Level Committees like; District Child Protection Committee, District level Task force for ending child marriage and adolescent empowerment, District Task force for elimination of Child labour, District Childline Advisory Board were participated. To raise Block and GP level issues and challenges of children, all Child Development project officers and their representatives along with all line department officials, NGO personnels were present and actively participated and shared their views. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Swapnarani Swain, Chairperson, Zillaparisad, Puri and Co-Chaired by Mr. Jyoti Shankar Mohapatra, Project Director, DRDA, Puri. In her Address Chairperson said to all members and community to

come forward to protect such vulnerable children. She was encouraged all to extend necessary support so that the benefits of Ashirvad scheme of

for protecting child rights and best interest of children in district. Mr. Manoj Kumar Tripathy, DCPO welcomed to chair and participants. The

at every place of the district. It was decided that to create awareness at various level from village level to district level on child protection. On that day oath was



Trade Unions continue protests in 2nd day of Bharat Bandh



Barbil(KCN):The CITU and AITUC staged protest against the steep hike in prices of petroleum products and labour code other for the 2nd day in Barbil of Keonjhar.The district. Hundreds of agitating party

workers hit the streets with slogans and placards demanding immediate cuts in the fuel prices and withdrawing all anti labour laws. They marched around the city and blazed fire on image of Prime minister Modi as a

protest. Later, a delegation of the members led by Indramani Behera submitted a memorandum to Tahsildar ,Barbil accompanied by many other party workers addressed to honourable President Ram Nath

Kovind.Meanwhile, Opposition BJP have alleged that the ruling community provoked strike is organising such protests to divert the attention of people from the main other developmental activities of BJP government and to show their presence.

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'Shakeela' trailer falls flat, lacks the punch expected in a star biopic



The trailer of Indrajit Lankesh's Hindi language film "Shakeela" doesn't hold much to impress. From using modern-day Hindi music to cliched film sets, it feels like a repackaging of Vidya Balan's 'Dirty Picture' except that this version fails to bring the charm Vidya brought to the

screen. The film, as described by the filmmakers of 'Shakeela', is "inspired by life events of a famous star Shakeela who predominantly starred in southern cinema." It features Richa Chadha as the titular adult actor who was one of the biggest stars of the 1990s ar-

iving from Kerala who went on to act in several adult films in languages spanning Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada, while Pankaj Tripathi is the male lead. The film is described to "portray the hardships of the actress as she had to face a lot of criticism, insults and betrayals from

her own family members and the film fraternity who were influential in getting her films banned." The main reason for the success of 'Kinnarathumbikal', one of the films that catapulted her into the limelight, was solely her screen presence and energy, and with no other male lead in the

movie. Trying to fill in the gaping hole left by Silk Smitha in the low-budget softcore industry, Shakeela made her own mark with around 250 movies in her kitty -- heralding the 'Shakeela Tharangam' (The wave of Shakeela). Meanwhile, the Shakeela that

Indrajith is trying to portray doesn't look like she has much story to tell. The screen-space also seems to be overpowered by star cast Pankaj Tripathi. Let's hope the full length movie holds more than what the trailer showed. The film is produced by Sammy Nanwani and Sahil Nanwani, with music by Meet Bros and Veer Samarth.

Priyanka Chopra reveals husband Nick Jonas likes her 'natural' looks, calls him 'appreciator'

WASHINGTON(K-CN): Nick Jonas has

Chopra. The actor re-

2019 and revealed how her husband is

natural or a more glamorous look.

"there are days when he likes a really natu-

went all out for the event, wearing a sheer black top with a pussycat bow, a white blazer paired with a matching pair of pants. Adding a pop of colour to the whole look, she opted for striking pink eye makeup with a matching bold lip colour.

Earlier this month, Priyanka joined her fellow J sisters Sophie Turner and Danielle Jonas in celebrating the first night of their husbands' 'Happiness Begins' tour. All three women rocked Jonas Brothers T-shirts.

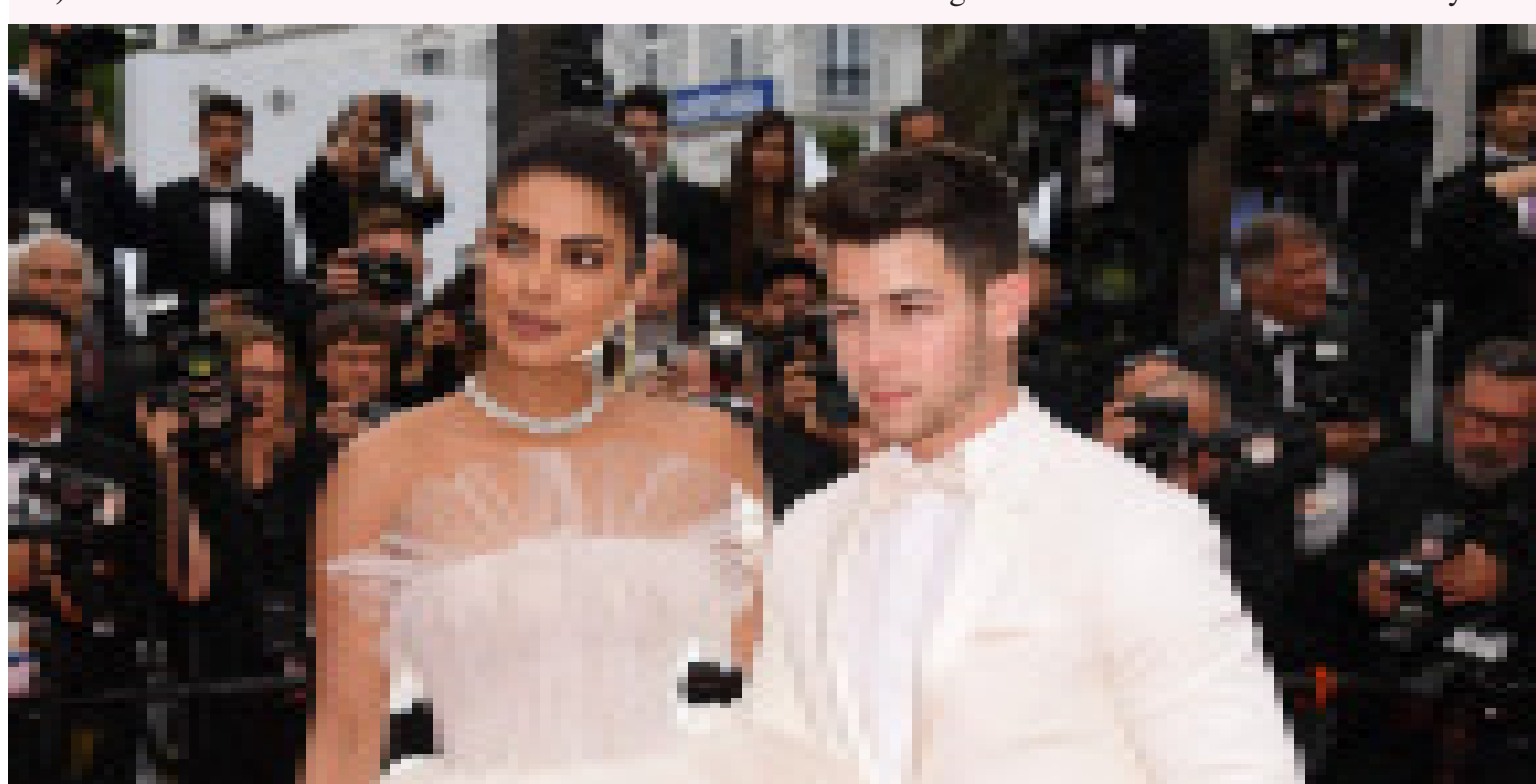
The actor shared that it was "really cool" that they all decided on coordinating their outfits since they "have such distinct personalities."

Just 'normal' to exclude women in decision making process: Adil Hussain

MUMBAI(KCN): Actor Adil Hussain has offered support to the growing group of female artistes who are asking the reason for women's absence from the Bollywood delegation of producers and actors that recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss issues faced by the film industry.

Ritesh Sidhwani and CBFC chief Prasoon Joshi, met Modi to discuss how to take the entertainment industry to the next stage.

The meeting of the delegation came under fire on Wednesday for its exclusion of female representation with some activists and filmmakers pointing out that it was 2018 and asking, "Where are the women?" Adil took to Twitter to criticise the panel that met the prime minister.



nothing but love and admiration for his wife Priyanka

cently spoke to People at Beautycon Festival Los Angeles

full of admiration for her whether she decides to go for a more

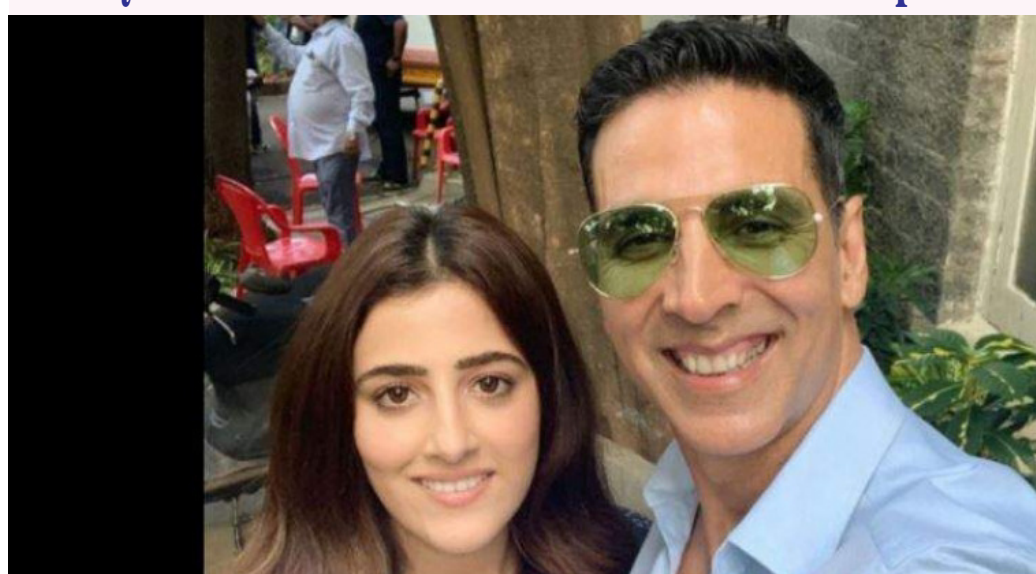
"He likes a bit of both," the 'Quantico' star, said, adding that

real thing."

The 'Mary Kom' actor added, "He's an appreciator. He's someone who can appreciate both things."

In honour of Beautycon, Priyanka

Akshay Kumar shoots with Kriti Sanon's sister Nupur for music video



MUMBAI(KCN): Actor Akshay Kumar on Sunday shot for singer B Praaks new single with actress Kriti Sanon's younger sister Nupur.

written by Jaani. B Praak has previously lent his voice to the song "Teri Mitti" in Akshay's film "Kesari".

It is reported that the romantic song is

ALSO READ: Akshay Kumar has a namesake actor in

London! The song will also feature renowned Punjabi singer Ammy Virk.

London! The song will also feature renowned Punjabi singer Ammy Virk.

On the work front, Akshay will be seen in "Housefull 4" and "Good Newwz" this year.

Welfare schemes and identity: What funders must learn

Haqdarshak works in 26 states across India through its team of haqdarshikas (women field agents) who, via a range of government schemes, help people access



benefits and entitlements that are due to them. These states are often vast and home to a diverse population with many layers of social and political identities that add peculiar challenges to our work.

For instance, working in Uttar Pradesh is a unique experience as it is the equivalent of three mini states. When one moves from the Jat-dominated and more com-

mercial western Uttar Pradesh—Noida, Ghaziabad, and Meerut—towards Lucknow, the Awadh area, and Ayodhya, one finds identities beginning to centre around religion. Finally, when one reaches eastern Uttar Pradesh, a clear dominance of caste identities is seen. This diverse demographic in the state is important to understand because the delivery of government schemes in Uttar Pradesh is geared according to it. Establishing one's identity—and having it validated by government documentation—is one of the biggest demands of the populace in Uttar Pradesh as denominators such as caste, religion, gender, income, and domicile are the basis of eligibility for all government schemes. Exclusion happens because of identity. Individuals are excluded from schemes if they do not possess or update basic identity documents such as birth and caste certificates, Aadhaar, PAN card, and so on. This is particularly true for areas such as eastern Uttar Pradesh with a large proportion of marginalised and economically weaker castes. A long queue of male and female voters at a polling booth—social welfare. If people have their identity documents, it's difficult to exclude them because they can walk into a government office and take assisted help | Picture courtesy: Flickr/CC BY



Through our work in the state, we've seen local MLAs and MPs undertake activities that benefit their favoured constituency but exclude large sections of citizens. For instance, an upper-caste MLA will ensure that they first deliver benefits to the upper-caste voters in their constituency. They hold camps for providing identity and bank documents and to add people's names to the lists for different schemes. However, as only people from their constituency and caste are allowed

to be a part of these camps, most of the marginalised castes are left out. If people have their identity documents, it's difficult to exclude them because they can walk into a government office and take assisted help. They no longer have to rely on the largesse of their local elected representative whose allegiances may lie with a particular religious community and/or caste. This is because, since 2018, nearly 90 percent of the schemes in India have been digitised and are run by the central government. So, even though some discretion is left to the state or the district, this centralisation works in favour of the most marginalised

and vulnerable populations. This issue of establishing one's identity must be solved at scale. For instance, a Dalit person from Balrampur, eastern Uttar Pradesh, with updated and linked identity documents can take the help of a frontline worker—ASHA, anganwadi, nonprofit coordinator, or even their local haqdarshikas—and apply for the schemes directly. There is very little that the MP or MLA can do to stop it. Once the application is accepted, they may be waitlisted, but the system cannot technically reject them. We need to get people to this stage at least. This issue of establishing one's identity must be solved at scale, be it by

organisations like Haqdarshak that look at it from a service technology angle or by other nonprofits that come with an understanding of the communities. How-



ever, this is a complex issue to tackle, and there aren't enough funders who are willing to support this work around identity in geographies such as Uttar Pradesh where the demand is substantial. Funders are largely focused on monetary benefits. During the pandemic, funders wanted their nonprofit partners to help provide immediate support to families in distress by improving their access to government schemes. While their intent was good, their limited understanding of ground realities and how exclusion works has become a barrier in communities benefitting from these programmes. Funders are focused almost entirely on outputs—how much money reaches the bank accounts of the recipients. They want to fund programmes that will help people get, say, INR 10,000 or INR 20,000 in tangible benefits within a short span of time. But nonprofits that pivoted from their core activities of education, skilling, and livelihoods to provide their communities the support they needed during the pandemic are struggling with this mandate. A social security ecosystem that believes that delivering welfare benefits to people will directly increase community incomes is simplistic and naive. It is nearly impossible to ensure that every person receives a certain fixed amount in their bank account, because their eligibility is dependent on the various conditions that dictate their life, including income level, caste, religion, geographic location, family structure, and so on. The nature and value of the entitlements people get will vary based on all these factors. There also aren't enough big-ticket direct benefit transfer (DBT) schemes that meet this monetary threshold set by funders. A social security ecosystem that believes that delivering welfare benefits to people

Aniket Doegar

Identities such as caste, class, and gender decide who is eligible for social welfare schemes; funders must realise this and support documentation drives

will directly increase community incomes is simplistic and naive. It is important that before jumping on to output-based, pre-decided programmes, we invest in iden-

tity issues around government schemes. Today, donors—especially corporate funders—sitting in Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore are deciding what families and

individuals in eastern Uttar Pradesh need, without considering the priorities of the families themselves.

I understand that it is challenging for CSR teams to convince the boards about the value of helping communities with identity documents. Funding access to 7,000 birth certificates might seem irrelevant or insignificant to the boards because it's hard to assign a monetary benefit to a document. It's easier instead to insist that their nonprofit partners show tangible financial improvements. But they must realise that this is almost impossible to do.

Funders should start looking beyond just money in the citizen's bank account; they need to think about outcomes—how many women are getting access to a simple bank account that is usable? How many are using UPI or availing of the Ayushman Bharat health insurance, even though many of them are enrolled in the scheme? How many individuals whose names are listed for pension schemes are contributing INR 12 to be able to sustain that scheme so that they actually get INR 3,000 when they turn 60? In so many of these schemes, you can onboard people but you need to encourage them to keep paying for that social security programme.

With the onset of the pandemic and its devastating impact on livelihoods, a lot of funding in the country has shifted towards the social security sector. Over the last two–three years, funds worth more than INR 100 crore have been raised for social security programming. But almost no one is focusing on the importance of helping communities with identity documents.

We need to give choice back to the people. I truly believe that we have to move towards a ground-up choice matrix. We need to give the choice to the citizen as the end user, customer, and recipient of the services, and channel that choice upwards to the grassroots worker, community-based organisation, nonprofit, and then to the funders. Today it's the reverse, where the choice is being made by the funder, which then percolates through the civil society chain to the citizen.

Getting citizens' Aadhaar verified or PAN card updated is as important as ensuring that they get money in their bank accounts.

Can we design more programmes and funding and base the entire narrative on the choices made by the citizen? Why should their needs and demands not matter? If we middle- and upper-income citizens need a PAN card to apply for an IPO or open a bank account, the poorer households have just as many use cases for their PAN cards—a construction worker may want a PAN and Aadhaar because it simplifies them getting their UPI in Gurgaon. Getting their Aadhaar verified or PAN card updated is as important as ensuring that they get money in their bank accounts.

We must think of moving the ecosystem to build around citizens' choices versus funder decisions—only then will we see a marked improvement in outcomes.

Aniket Doegar is the CEO and co-founder of Haqdarshak. He has over 8 years of experience in the development sector. He was a Teach For India fellow, and has worked with the Gyan Prakash Foundation and Indus Action. He was also an Acumen India Fellow 2018. Aniket is an alumnus of SRCC, Delhi.

Structural and fundamental changes in Talcher-Bimalagarh New Line project-in-experiment inscientific project management

Rourkela (KCN): Social Activist and Core Member of Talcher Bimalagarh Rail Action Committee Bimal Kumar Bisi writes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that "Was the TMC MP, Nusrat Jahan, stating the Reality when She stated on the floor of parliament that the bullet train project in India is a bluff as the soil in the country is not fit to set up railway tracks to run high-speed trains. She further stated that India lacked capabilities to run high-speed trains, unlike Japan. This statement may be made by a private Individual with limited means but such statements made as part of the



Nation's Governance Machinery, even when made in opposition to the ruling party, is not acceptable as Indian Railway Engineers are second to none at the Global level and are capable of running Bullet trains even under the sea bed, if the push comes to shove. Obviously, the statement was due to abject ignorance because all types of soil are suitable for an Engineer worth his salt. The second statement of lack of capability again needs to be viewed from the wider perspective that the capabilities of a Nation are not static and are continuously evolving. However, there is definitely a lot of realism in the statement about capabilities as unlike Highways, Railway projects are high precision Linear projects and encounter several external uncertainties and project risks such as Changing socio-economic situation, Weak Law Enforcement, Slack Governance, Litigations etc". Bimal Bisi said that "Going by the case of Talcher -Bimalagarh New Line project where the delay in land acquisition is extra ordinary. Even after depositing more than Rs 422 Cr against Land and acquisition costs with the Odisha government, only 41% of private land and 51% of Government land could be acquired till date. The first parcel of land was acquired in the year 2012. Ten years have passed since then and 60% land is still to be acquired. In the mean time the share of land cost to overall project cost has increased from 5% to 30%. The overall cost overrun is 37% and time overrun is 525%. Even the 41% private land acquisition is not encumbrance free as in several locations, the transfer is only on paper and the original landowners have yet not vacated the land after taking the sanctioned payment of land cost, claiming enhanced costs. Typical cases are that of Keshabpur and Bilinda villages of district Angul. Here the dispute about compensation ended up as stays from Hon'ble High Court Cuttack since 2013. Considering that the applications were also filed for early listing of the cases in the year 2021 Jan/Feb and the wait is still continuing, the whole affair needs to be addressed with a different perspective of capacity enhancement. The concern of the Hon'ble MP about Lack of capability to construct complex high precision Infrastructure in time and in cost needs to be taken in the

Techno-Managerial perspective and requires a serious thinking.

Democracy is precious, it comes at huge price. Road rolling the democratic rights of the public is not acceptable. Circumventing the authority of any of the democratic Institutions viz Executive, Judiciary and Legislature shall result into Infraction, vitiate the fine balance and may lead to emergency as the equilibrium is disturbed".

Bisi said "The solution is therefore to engage domain experts to function as force multipliers on contract basis. Land acquisition for a Linear project such as Railways that pass through various districts and states require domain experts. The Government must accept the realities that the provisions of Land acquisition Act 2013 are very complex and unless a domain expert team is mobilized to assist the Land acquisition authorities in all aspects of Land acquisition, the process will be either very slow or shall end up in a stalemate after some time in form of disputes and litigations. The volume of administrative support work required for Land acquisition for a target project needs to be measured in terms of man-days required to meet the standards desired in the Act. Unless the minimum threshold efforts in form of domain expert man-days are put into the system, the process shall drag indefinitely. In case of the Talcher Bimalagarh New line project the 19(1) declarations for all except one village have already been done few years back. 19(1) declarations display the intent of the state government to acquire the project land. Similarly depositing Rs 422 Cr against the land acquisition cost also displays the intent of the Railways to acquire the land. Any further chasing will simply follow the Law of diminishing returns.

The issue of capability building needs to be approached from Techno-Managerial perspective and not from the conventional perspective. So, in order to complete the acquisition of full 2075 Acreland of various categories in encumbrance free state over a length of 120Kms, the requirement to engage all the stakeholders and complete the information collection and associated paperwork may require a Team of some 30 experienced experts and skilled/semiskilled manpower for Six to Nine months. This requires a total administrative workload of 30X30X9=8,100 man-days. Moreover, these man-days are spread over a length of 150 kms passing through three districts, several Tahsils and hundreds of villages. The stakeholders are in thousands. To add to the complexity, the project delivery is feasible only when at least one block section length is available to take up the construction activity. This volume of additional administrative workload is not feasible for any revenue authority without engaging a team of Experts to fill up the vacuum of administrative workload. With Revenue officials already bogged down by daily routine works, reviews and meetings, it is not possible to handle such huge administrative work load. Obviously, the normal human tendency shall be to cut corners during the reviews. As a natural consequence, Review meetings, of whatever level, usually result into another review meeting.

What is the solution? The solution is to first

recognize that the present system of British colonial administration is not fit to handle the modern-day democratic demands, transparency and civilian rights. The next step is to introduce the Structural and Fundamental change in the way the Project Land Acquisition and project itself is handled.

Structural change refers to dramatic shift in the way a country, industry, or market operates, usually brought on by major economic developments. The key to effect structural change is the dynamism that is inherent in that system. Structural change is often sparked by technological innovation, new economic developments, global shifts in the pools of capital and labor, changes in resource availability, changes in supply and demand of resources, and changes in the political landscape.

The second form of change that is required are fundamental changes. These are systemic changes that are required to achieve re-posturing in view of the changed legal-social framework. This means a fundamental, transformative, and cross-cutting form of change that entails major shifts and reorientation in system's goals, incentives, technologies, social practices and norms, as well as in knowledge systems, and governance approaches.

Project workloads are handled by flexible size Project Resource Teams. The volume of resources required for a Project may peak for a few months but once the objective is achieved, the Team needs to be disbanded or engaged in some other project. The new approach being introduced is engaging a Team of professionals and domain experts on contractual basis who will penetrate deep into the layers of bureaucratic complexities and act as force multipliers and strengthen the civil administration in achieving the professionalism in meeting the various legal compliances as well as social acceptability. Not only the financial burden in engaging the Team shall be rigorously analysed but shall also be one time expenditure. Efficient Team imply that efficiency shall replace the otherwise delayed response. Economy shall be achieved by speeding up the removal of external constraints and reducing the duration of Non-Revenue Earning stage of the project.

It is learnt that an Expert Team of highly experienced professionals is being deployed by the Railways for undertaking systematic acquisition of land and clearance of the linear work front. The Team will enable removal of all legal and administrative constraints in the project ahead of the Construction Team. This is a completely new initiative as similar contract was never given earlier in the Indian Railways.

Second new change that has been introduced is designing tailor made solutions for each stalled location. This approach has already started yielding results as out of six major external stalling issues identified in October 2021 only two issues of Keshabpur and Bilinda village are still persisting. Three of the almost decade long stalled locations have been removed and one Location in village Dangdabeda has been transformed into internal project risk by introducing new concept of giant RCC Segmental Retaining walls at the sensitive Bridge approach of Brahmani river bridge no 57. The breakthrough in the

Baruan hill Tunnel, Starting of the Brahmani Bridge girders launching work and completion of the formation in decade long stalled location in Biru village can be considered as the direct benefits emerging from the application of modern methods of software based project planning and monitoring.

The third change is that the individual contract packages are also being analysed to sync with the project objectives. The project was infested with contracts that had under gone more than dozen extensions of time. All such extensions were given on some pretext such as non-availability of land or land dispute. In the new monitoring framework, the disputed locations are removed from the contracts so that these locations do not provide a cover to extend the contract duration and cause time overrun. Similarly, introduction of joint agreed programs of work in dispute free locations and breaking down the work into small parts (WBS) has enabled to correctly assess the desired asking rates of progress. Slippages can now be monitored before it is too late to take the mitigatory action.



Key changes in the Project Team are also being affected in order to create a well synchronised highly efficient Team. Those who do not have aptitude in Project handling are being relocated in positions where their aptitudes are fruitfully utilized. The changes have been brought even at the cost of premature transfers. To strengthen the office of the Deputy Chief engineer based at Angul, a support team to handle miscellaneous project works such as short surveys, sampling, testing record keeping is also being introduced from the market source. This will free the Core project Team from avoidable diversions and their energies shall be utilized in superior project planning, monitoring, site layouts, measurements and quality checks.

The project authorities have indicated that there is a fresh cooperation at a very different level from the revenue authorities. Regular reviews by Chief Secretary in PMG meetings, Reviews at the level of RDC and Collectors are bringing sea change in the working environment as the Government's Pro-Infra Posturing is visible. The Project is seeing very positive response from the key administrative functionaries such as ADMS, Spl LAO, Tahsildars etc who are visiting the dispute sites along with project authorities to remove the obstacles.

When the performance is visible the support from the local public automatically evolves. On prodding, the Project authorities indicated that except the Legal Court Stays, all the other issues previously marring the project have been brought into significant control and barring unforeseen issues, the Part Project of Sunakhani-Samal-Parbil shall be completed around August 2022. It is felt that recent efforts in getting early listing of the cases will yield result in a very short time. Similarly, activation of the Railway Estate office will be a major deterrent to those who overstay after taking the compensation money and seek litigations. Considering the Project commissioning uncertainties in the month of October 2021, this statement displays a very positive sentiment.

What would paying for natural gas in rubles mean?

BERLIN: Europe's already high gas prices have gyrated since Russian President Vladimir Putin announced plans to have importers pay for Russian natural gas in rubles instead of dollars and euros.

Europe imports large amounts of Russian natural gas to heat homes, generate electricity and fuel industry, and those imports have continued despite the war in Ukraine.

Around 60 per cent of imports are paid in euros, and the rest in dollars. Putin wants to change that by requiring foreign gas importers to purchase rubles and use them to pay state-owned supplier Gazprom. Putin told the Russian central bank last Wednesday to come up with a workable system.

Importers would have to find a bank that would exchange euros and dollars for rubles. That could be cumbersome because some Russian banks have been either blocked or cut off from the SWIFT messaging system that facilitates international payments.

Still, there are some banks that have not been cut off, and for now, sanctions imposed by the US Treasury barring bank transactions con-



tain exceptions for energy payments.

That's a concession to European allies that are much more reliant on Russian oil and gas and fear a total cutoff could throw their economy into recession.

Russia getting paid for gas in their currency would at best help marginally in getting around financial sanctions, propping up the ruble's value or protecting the Russian

economy, said Eswar Prasad, professor of trade policy at Cornell University and a former official at the International Monetary Fund.

"Either Putin is getting terrible economic advice or he is going further off the rails in his hatred for the West," Prasad said.

"It would be cheaper for foreign importers to pay for Russia's exports in a currency that is collapsing in value, but it is difficult to acquire rubles and make payments in a manner that avoids the sanctions." He warned that the move "could further roil global energy markets by exacerbating current supply disruptions and adding to uncertainty about future supplies, which could all add up to more price spikes." European governments and energy companies have rejected the idea, saying gas import contracts specify the currency and that one side can't change it overnight. They say they intend to keep paying in euros and dollars. More broadly, the Group of Seven major economies including Japan, the US and

Canada as well as Germany, France, Italy and Britain have agreed to reject Moscow's demand. The European Union's energy commissioner also agreed, a G-7 statement said.

German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck told reporters on Monday that "all G-7 ministers agreed completely" that such a step would be "a one-sided and clear breach of the existing contracts". In theory, requiring ruble payments could support demand for the currency and its exchange rate, but not by much, Prasad said.

As it stands, euros and dollars are already being used to purchase rubles when Gazprom exchanges its foreign earnings.

The Centre for Eastern Studies in Warsaw has suggested that by moving the flow of foreign currency from Gazprom to the largely state-controlled banking system, the Kremlin will gain added control over foreign currency that has become scarcer since Western countries froze much of Russia's reserves abroad.

Government faces flak over BSKY smart cards

BHUBANESWAR: The state government came up in the assembly during the question hour with minister said the government is keen to



on Monday came in for sharp criticism in the assembly over the failure of the smart cards issued to people under the flagship programme Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) to benefit the needy at various hospitals in the State. The issue

tion hour with minister of state for health and family welfare Naba Kishore Das admitting the lapse. He, however, shifted the blame on the 'communication gaps' with various hospitals as the primary reason behind the anomalies. The

address the issue by including more hospitals for empanelment under the scheme. A total of 315 hospitals in Odisha and 15 hospitals outside the State have been empanelled under the scheme, he added. Congress MLA

Adhiraj Panigrahy alleged that many patients are facing difficulties as they are unable to reap the benefits of the BSKY cards at various hospitals in the State and outside.

Citing some instances in Nuapada district, Panigrahy said many well-known private hospitals have been denying people availing treatment using BSKY facilities because of problems in getting disbursement from the Odisha government.

Similarly, BJP MLA Mukesh Mahaling alleged that patients are not being able to avail OPD services using the BSKY cards.

Anganwadi centres reopen after one year across Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: After a gap of around one year, anganwadi centres were re-opened for children below six years of age across Odisha from Monday. As per the guidelines of the Women and Child Development department, the centres were reopened for two hours from 7.30 am to 9.30 am. Children were seen to be enthusiastic to attend classes in offline mode on the first day. They were greeted in the traditional way with tilak and flowers in some of the centres in the State Capital and other districts. are unable to attend the centres, provision of rations including hot-cooked meals cases of Covid-19 in the last 24 hours. Khurda reported the highest number of 10



opened for children below six years of age across Odisha from Monday. As per the guidelines of the Women and Child Development department, the centres were reopened for two hours from 7.30 am to 9.30 am. Children were seen to be enthusiastic to attend classes in offline mode on the first day. They were greeted in the traditional way

The centres had opened for a brief period last year and remained closed since April 2021 with the second wave of the pandemic. The centres will function from 7.30 am to 9.30 am for 25 days a month. Snacks and hot-cooked meals will be served to the preschoolers in 3 to 6 years age group with a social distance of 6 ft. For students who

and eggs have also been made at their doorsteps, officials said. Meanwhile, Odisha reported 43 new

Lukewarm response to trade union bandh in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: The two-day Bharat Bandh called by the trade and labour unions received lukewarm support in the State on Monday, only leading to minor disruption of road transportation, rail and other services on the first day. The protest that began at 6 am, however, remained peaceful by and large. Members of various trade unions staged a 'rail roko' at Bhubaneswar Railway Station for a short period affecting the schedule of a few trains, while a road blockade on National Highway (NH)-16 at Acharya Vihar led to disruption of road transport during noon. A number of buses and trucks remained stranded on both sides of the National Highway at Jayadev Vihar.

Why mental health of police force is no one's business in Odisha?

BHUBANESWAR: The alleged suicide of Gangapur police station inspector-in-charge Dev Kumar Gamang has once again raised the alarming question - Is Odisha government concerned about the mental and physical well-being of its police force?

Forty-year-old Gamang reportedly shot himself with his service gun in his official residence on Friday in the presence of three officers. Ganjam Police claimed he was suffering from mental health issue over the last few years.

Police personnel work under tremendous pressure. The nature of work aside, the poor working conditions, long hours of duty, lack of leave and regulated off-days, leave them vulnerable to stress. Only it is not addressed in a structured manner.

Apart from putting in 12 to 14 hours a day, they do not have the luxury to spend time with their families and this leads to conflicts. The police personnel also give a miss to festivals to ensure they are on duty.

A major reason is the staff shortage in the workforce and vacancies. Odisha Police's current strength is about 70,000 but there are at least 10,000 vacancies in different wings of the force.

A Bureau of Police Research and Development's (BPR&D) 2019 data on police-population ratio says Odisha has 67 cops to man one lakh population. In Andhra Pradesh, it is 85, Gujarat (87), Uttarakhand (95) and West Bengal (97) and they are part of the bottom 10 States.

At the inspector levels, the State suffers from vacancies. Odisha's sanctioned strength for inspectors/reserve inspectors is 1,150 where there are 100 vacancies. As per BPR&D, the sanctioned strength of sub-inspectors/reserve sub-inspectors is 3,498 and for assistant sub-inspector/reserve ASIs is 4,673 but there are 1,080 and 1,488 vacancies respectively.

The IICs, SIs and ASIs who take up investigation of important cases besides carrying out law and order duties face an increased workload that triggers mental stress among them. A senior officer pointed out that forces like Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Border Security Force (BSF) have come up with organised responses to regularly check their personnel's mental and physical health.

"In Odisha, we have to cover some distance in this regard. We have police hospitals where the doctors attend to the cops and their family members. However, they mostly provide curative treatment. In terms of providing preventive treatment including counselling to the personnel, more needs to be done in the State," he added.

Former DGP GC Nanda agrees. If police's work overload is not managed immediately, their mental and physical well-being will deteriorate further in the coming days, he says. "About a

decade back, resources were not adequate but still manageable. However, infrastructure and resources are highly inadequate in current times adversely affecting the State police force," he said.

Addressing issues of mental well-being apart, there is a lack of up-gradation of skill and training. According to the Status of Policing in India report 2019 by Common Cause and Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), only 14.3 per cent SIs/ASIs of the State received in-service training as against the national average of 17 per cent.

Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Maharashtra and Gujarat are the states that neither has been able to provide in-service training to a large proportion of personnel nor have they incurred significant expenditure on training. According to Anuradha Mahapatra, founder of Manam Foundation, a non-

profit facilitating mental wellness, an outbreak of coronavirus pandemic put a severe toll on the well-being of the police personnel across the country. "Police personnel's work has always been very challenging, and the demanding working hours during the pandemic to enforce lockdown/shutdown and assist authorities to manage the containment zones added to their stress. This led to work overload and the police personnel were hardly able to spend time with their families," she said.

Government should form batches of police stations in every region and set-up one counselling station for each group. "The counselling stations should be outsourced and not linked with police department. This will ensure police personnel are able to share their problems comfortably and confidentiality is maintained. Besides, senior officers should also organise sessions on mental awareness for their subordinates every three or six months," she added. DGP Sunil Kumar Bansal said Odisha Police has facilities to check and look after the health issues of the cops. "We are a large force but incidents like Gangapur IIC can never be ignored. It was a very unfortunate incident, and efforts have always been made to reach out to officers/personnel who show any sign of depression or anxiety. We are mulling to set up camps to check health parameters (physical and psychological) of the police personnel," he added.

Force under stress Odisha Police's current strength is about 70,000 but there are at least 10,000 vacancies in different wings of the force. 2019 data on police-population ratio says Odisha has 67 cops to man one lakh population. Odisha's strength of inspectors/reserve inspectors is 1,150, and there are 100 vacancies





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Oil prices sink, stocks soar on Ukraine talks 'progress'

LONDON: World oil prices dived and European equities rallied Tuesday as apparent progress in peace talks between Moscow and Kyiv sparked hope of an end to the Ukraine conflict. Europe's benchmark Brent crude and New York's WTI sank by about 6.5 percent as traders eyed easing Russian oil supply fears amid face-to-face Istanbul talks aimed at resolving the nearly five-week-old war.

ALSO READ: Russia to 'radically' reduce military activity around Kyiv

Europe's major stock markets jumped higher, with Frankfurt soaring 3.5 percent, Paris winning 3.1 percent and London adding 1.2 percent. The Russian ruble soared by 10 percent against the dollar and by 1.2 percent versus the euro. Ukraine's top negotiator declared Tuesday that enough

progress had been made at talks to resolve the conflict with Russia to enable a meeting between the presidents of the two countries. Russia will "radically" reduce its military activity in northern Ukraine, including near the capital Kyiv, after "mean-



ingful" talks in Istanbul. Moscow's negotiators said. "It is the first time in this conflict where we have seen any indications for any form of easing of military action from the Russian side," SEB analyst Bjarne Schieldrop told AFP. "Until this point the Russian stand has

been very firm of its goals. Now for the first time the market is hoping that there might actually be a way forward not being a full destruction and takeover of Ukraine." Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on February 24, sending world oil prices

rocketing and stock markets slumping. The ruble had plunged to an unprecedented level of 150 to the greenback in recent weeks. Tuesday's progress raises the possibility of a meeting between presidents Volodymyr Zelensky and Vladimir Putin that Moscow had shot

down as recently as Monday. Later on Tuesday, Brent shed 5.0 percent to \$106.88 per barrel. WTI stood at \$99.58, down 6.0 percent from Monday. "News coming from Turkey is looking increasingly promising, from the significant progress claimed by both sides to reports of Russia pledging to sharply reduce military operations," OANDA foreign exchange platform analyst Craig Erlam told AFP.

"It's looking more promising than at any stage since the invasion. Oil prices have fallen sharply on the latest headlines and with talks continuing tonight, there is potential for even more substantial progress to be made. While the removal of sanctions is unlikely as part of the peace process, it could remove further risks to Russian exports."

Naveen Patnaik is asked about his stand on presidential election

Continued from page-1
meets Congress leaders to reach consensus on leader of opposition post

Himanta Sarma slams Kejriwal over remarks on The Kashmir Files
Himanta Sarma slams Kejriwal over remarks on 'The Kashmir Files'

50 Pak ministers 'missing' days ahead of no-trust vote against PM Imran Khan: Report 'PM Modi has extraordinary...': Why NCP's Majeed Memon asked Oppn to introspect Sonu Nigam receives Padma Shri from President Ram Nath Kovind, days after saying 'it is too late'. Watch

Asked if there should be a consensus between the government and opposition this time, Patnaik, a five-time chief minister, said, "I have neither thought anything about it nor do I have any proposal so far."

He also clarified that he is not in Delhi to meet any opposition leader. Asked if his party will be part of any opposition coalition to take on the BJP, Patnaik said, "... We have not looked into that yet."

In 2017, Patnaik's BJD supported the BJP-led national coalition's candidate Ram Nath Kovind over the Opposition's Meira Kumar after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to the Odisha chief minister.

The BJD, which is considered to be friendly toward the BJP in Parliament, has kept a distance from a coalition of opposition parties that want to ally as a combined front against the BJP.

On West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee's letter on Sunday to her counterparts in non-BJP ruled states, Patnaik asserted he has not seen the letter.

State economy grows 10.1%, per capita income rises 16.78% in 2021-22 fiscal

Continued from page-1
capita income of the State was Rs 1,10,081 in 2019-20. The Finance Minister said that the average per capita income of the country in 2021-22 was Rs 1,49,848.

Data shared by him reveals there has been a three-fold increase in State's per capita income in the last 12 years as the average individual income of the State was Rs 39,537 in 2010-11. Goa has the highest per capita income of Rs 4,91,352 followed by Sikkim at Rs 4,80,593 while neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has Rs 2,07,771. Apart from the per capita income, the Finance Minister stated that Odisha's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) as of 2021-22 fiscal stands at Rs 6.38 lakh crore.

KALIA scheme extended
The KALIA scheme has been extended for three more years. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha announced the decision in the Assembly on Monday. The decision was approved by the Cabinet on Sunday. The scheme launched before the 2019 general elections was to end on March 31 this year.

PCI scales double digit

Continued from page-1
dropped in per capita income ranking, the Report says.

"State economy registered a sharp recovery in 2021-22 as per the advance estimate of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Real GSDP has grown at a rate of 10.1 per cent," it said.

It is one of the fastest growing states in the country and registered a growth rate much higher than India's GDP growth rate of 8.8 per cent as per the first advance estimate.

Like the rest of the world, Odisha also faced the adverse impact of Covid-19 and the State's GSDP contracted by 5.3 per cent in 2020-21 against a contraction of 6.6 per cent in India's GDP.

According to the report, Odisha economy has demonstrated far more resilience vis-à-vis all India. The State economy reverted to the pre-Covid level much faster. While India's real GDP grew by 1.6 per cent between 2019-20 and 2021-22 leaving aside the Covid year of 2020-21, the comparable figure for Odisha is 4.2 per cent.

Not only Odisha's recovery process is faster, but it is also more broad-based. Assuming normal monsoon, no furthermore damaging waves of corona virus mutations and induced economic disruption, stable oil prices, and steadily easing of supply chain, GSDP may grow in real terms by 9.0-9.5 per cent in 2022-23, claims the survey.

However, the Russia and Ukraine conflict has brought in further uncertainty. It is likely to impact global trade and businesses with its ramifications on domestic price level, exchange rate, commodity supplies and supply chain operations, it pointed out.

Industry sector grew at 14.5 per cent followed by service sector with 7.9 per cent growth rate in 2021-22. The agriculture and allied sector registered a contraction of 3.4 per cent in the year 2021-22 due to drought, unseasonal rain, and Cyclone JAWAD.

While natural calamities continue to affect agriculture in the State, agriculture and allied activities grew at an average rate of 9.5 per cent between 2018-19 and 2020-21 before the current contraction.

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), worker-population ratio (WPR) and Unemployment rate are three key parameters through which the employment situation is gauged.

As per the latest labour force survey (PLFS, 2019-20), the State's performance is better than all India in terms of LFPR and WPR while unemployment rate is a little higher than all India.

Nearly 55.3 per cent of the population aged 15+ in Odisha were part of the labour force in 2019-20. This is an increase from 48.3 per cent in 2017-18 and higher than all India LFPR of 53.5 per cent. Unemployment in the state was recorded as 6.2 per cent in 2019-20 in comparison to 4.8 per cent at India level.

India received 65 per cent more FDI during Modi regime against 10 years of UPA rule: FM

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said FDI into the country during the Modi government was USD 500.5 billion, which is 65 per cent more than the amount received in the 10 years of the UPA government, as investors have trusted the economic management of the current regime. Replying to the discussion on the Finance Bill, 2022, and Appropriation Bill, 2022, the minister said India continues to remain among the top five foreign direct investment recipient countries in the world, as per a UNCTAD report.

The FDI inflow in 2020-21 was USD 81.72 billion compared to USD 74.9 billion in the pre-

ceding financial year. Despite the covid pandemic, she said the government did not resort to taxes for resource mobilisation and no tax was increased to fund the economic recovery.

On the other hand, as per an OECD report, as many as 32 countries had resorted to an increase in their tax rates to fund their economic recoveries. Sitharaman also highlighted that the war between Russia and Ukraine is affecting all countries like the pandemic had.

The finance minister also said Rs 8.35 lakh crore has been devolved to states from central taxes in the current fiscal, higher than the revised estimate of Rs 7.45 lakh crore for 2021-22.

Ukraine-Russia peace deal soon? Moscow to 'radically' reduce military activity around Kyiv

Continued from page-1

ional sanctions, it said. In the room at the Istanbul talks was Roman Abramovich, a longtime ally of Putin who has been sanctioned by Britain and the EU.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Chelsea Football Club owner has been serving as an unofficial mediator approved by both countries, but mystery about his role has been deepened by reports that he may have been poisoned during an earlier round of talks.

In fighting that has devolved into a back-and-forth stalemate, Ukrainian forces retook Irpin, a key suburb northwest of the capital, Kyiv, Zelenskyy said late Monday.

But he warned that Russian troops were regrouping to take the area back.

He also lashed out at Western countries, which he has repeatedly accused of not going far enough to punish Moscow with sanctions or support Ukraine.

Western hesitancy in providing weapons makes those nations partially responsible for the destruction wrought, he said.

"Fear always makes you an accomplice," he said. As well as Irpin, Ukrainian forces also seized back control of Trostyanets, south of Sumy in the northeast, after weeks of Russian occupation that has left a landscape devastated by war. Arriving in the town Monday shortly afterward, The Associated Press saw the bodies of two Russian soldiers lay abandoned in the woods and Russian tanks lay burned and twisted.

A red "Z" marked a Russian truck, its windshield fractured, near stacked boxes of ammunition. Ukrainian forces piled atop a tank flashed victory signs.

Dazed residents lined up amid charred buildings seeking aid.

It was unclear where the Russian troops went, under what circumstances they fled and whether the town will remain free of them.

Ukraine, meanwhile, said it would try to evacuate civilians from three southern cities on Tuesday.

Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said humanitarian corridors would run from heavily bombed Mariupol as well as Enerhodar and Melitopol.

The latter two cities are under Russian control, but Vereshchuk didn't say whether Moscow had agreed to the corridors.

Putin's ground forces have become bogged down because of the stronger-than-expected Ukrainian resistance, combined with what Western officials say are Russian tactical missteps, poor morale, shortages of food, fuel and cold weather gear, and other problems.

In response, Russia appeared to be concentrating more on Donbas, the predominantly Russian-speaking region where Moscow-backed rebels have been waging a separatist war for eight years, the official said.

In a further indication of that shift, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday that "liberating Donbas" was Moscow's main military goal.

Shoigu, whose few public appearances this month raised questions about his health and whereabouts, told top military officials that Russia had largely completed the first stage of its operation and was shifting to "the main goal: the liberation of Donbas."

While that presents a possible face-saving exit strategy for Putin, it has also raised Ukrainian fears the Kremlin aims to split the country, forcing it to surrender a swath of its territory.

Still, Zelenskyy's comments that he was open to compromise on the region indicated a possible path for negotiations.

US markets headed higher in premarket trading on Tuesday as another round of peace talks between Russia and Ukraine got underway.

On Wall Street, the futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow industrials gained 0.6%, and global shares rose while crude oil prices fell again after sinking 7% on Monday.

Markets remain unsettled as investors try to gauge what's next for inflation and the global economy as the repercussions of Russia's invasion of Ukraine continue to play out.

The first face-to-face talks in two weeks between Russia and Ukraine began Tuesday in Turkey, raising meagre hopes of progress on ending a

war that has ground into a bloody campaign of attrition.

The CAC40 in Paris surged 2.9%, Germany's DAX jumped 2.6% and Britain's FTSE 100 gained 1.3%.

After early gains, Russia's MOEX index fell more than 5% in the second day of full trading after it was closed for about a month following the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Limits have been imposed to curb volatility. In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 rose 1.1% to 28,252.42 and the Kospi in Seoul added 0.4% to 2,740.13.

The Hang Seng in Hong Kong picked up 0.8% to 21,864.68, while the Shanghai Composite index lost 0.2% to 3,203.94 as the city entered a second day of a lockdown to combat a COVID-19 outbreak.

A two-phase lockdown on Shanghai's 26 million people is testing the limits of China's hardline "zero-COVID" strategy whose effects are being felt beyond the country's borders.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 surged 0.7% to 7,464.30 as the government said it plans to increase spending on national security while reducing costs for households, in part by reducing a tax on gasoline.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg was to present the proposed budget Tuesday.

Weaker oil prices have helped push shares higher, said Yeap Jun Rong of IG.

"China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are major oil importers, hence lower oil prices may be deemed as positive for their economies," Yeap said in a commentary.

U.S. crude oil skidded again, falling \$3.60 to \$102.36 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

On Monday, it slumped 7% on news of the lockdown in Shanghai, which could dent global demand, Brent crude, the international standard, fell 6.8%.

On Tuesday, Brent slid \$3.15 to 106.34 per barrel in London.

Oil prices are up about 40% globally over concerns about tighter supplies as demand remains strong.

Higher oil prices are also raising concerns that already persistently high inflation could be worsened, further threatening global economic growth.

Bond yields edged higher. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.50% from 2.46% late Monday.

Bond yields have been rising as Wall Street prepares for higher interest rates.

The Federal Reserve has already announced a 0.25% hike of its key benchmark interest rate and is prepared to continue raising rates to help temper the impacts of rising inflation.

Investors will get more updates this week on just how much inflation is hurting consumers and businesses.

The Conference Board will release its consumer confidence index for March on Tuesday.

The Commerce Department will release its February report for personal income and spending on Thursday and the Labour Department will release its employment report for March on Friday.

In currency trading, the dollar slipped to 123.57 Japanese yen from 123.77 yen.

The euro rose to \$1.1087 from \$1.0983.

Russia's defense minister says that "liberating" the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine is the main goal of Moscow's military operation, underlining a possible shift in strategy announced last week by another Russian military official.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, whose few public appearances this month raised questions about his health and whereabouts, held a meeting with top military officials on Tuesday and said that "overall, the main tasks of the first stage of the operation have been completed."

He said that "the combat potential of the Ukrainian armed forces has been significantly reduced, which makes it possible to focus the main attention and main efforts on achieving the main goal, the liberation of Donbas."

The minister stressed that the Russian military will continue the operation until "the set goals are achieved."

Shoigu also offered an assurance that Russia will not send conscripts recruited in the upcoming April draft to Ukraine.

Earlier this month, the Russian military admitted that a number of conscripts ended up in Ukraine and were even captured there.

Canada advances to FIFA World Cup for first time in 36 years

TORONTO: Cyle Larin, Tajon Buchanan and Junior Hoilett scored and Canada secured its first World Cup berth in 36 years with a 4-0 victory over Jamaica on Sunday. Canada has been to the World Cup just once before, in 1986. "Speechless. Dream come true," midfielder Jonathan Osorio said. "We all dreamed of this as little kids, and as a Canadian that was impossible. Today the impossible happened. It's an incredible feeling." Canada missed out a chance to secure a spot in Qatar last week with a 1-0 loss to Costa Rica. It was Canada's first loss in three World Cup qualifying rounds and it snapped a six-game winning streak.

Boosted by the home crowd at BMO Field, Canada rebounded in a big way against the Jamaicans, who were already eliminated from World Cup contention. Following the match, the fans broke into the Canadian national anthem and Osorio led the crowd for a drum chant before the team danced on the field. Buchanan circled the field waving Canada's flag.



Canada coach John Herdman became the first coach ever to lead both a men's and women's team to a World Cup berth. He coached the Canadian women's team from 2011-18.

In a post-game interview, Herdman was doused with champagne by Canadian goalkeeper Milan Borjan. "Canada is a football nation, man. We better believe it," Herdman said. "And we're going to keep coming. We've only gotten started." Canada sits atop the table in the final qualifying round with 28 points, followed by the United States (25 points), which held the edge over third-place Mexico (25) on goal difference. The United States defeated Panama 5-1 and Mexico downed Honduras 1-0 in the late games Sunday.

Costa Rica won 2-1 at El Salvador to maintain fourth place with 22 points and prevent the U.S. from being able to clinch Sunday night. Anthony Contreras scored on a bicycle kick in the 30th minute, Christian Gil tied the score one minute later and Joel Campbell put the Ticos ahead in

the first minute of first-half stoppage time. Costa Rica hosts the U.S. on Wednesday night. The top three finishers in the North and Central American and Caribbean region book the trip to Qatar. The fourth-place team goes to an intercontinental playoff against a team from Oceania.

The Canadians wrap up the qualifying round Wednesday in Panama.

Because Canada was ranked 73rd in July 2020 when the format was announced, it had to advance through two early rounds and was playing its 17th qualifier Sunday. Canada has improved to 33rd.

Snow fell at times at BMO Field. Temperatures were in the 20s at game time but its didn't daunt a red-clad crowd of more than 29,000.

Larin put Canada in front early with his team-leading 13th goal of the qualifying tournament. He had another clear chance in the 38th minute but the

ball went just wide.

Larin is one goal behind Ali Mabkhout of the United Arab Emirates for most goals in qualifying for Qatar. Larin, who leads the national team with a best-ever 24 goals, has had six goals in the final round. Buchanan scored in the 44th, celebrating with a backflip, to put Canada up 2-0 going into the break.

Hoilett added the final goal in the 82nd and an own goal in the 88th to round out scoring.

"Look, I'm just happy for these lads," Herdman said. "When I first took over and I said 'We're going to go to the World Cup, we'll qualify. I don't think they believed us."

Just one of Canada's players Sunday was alive when the nation was last in the World Cup: Captain Atiba Hutchinson was 3 when the Canadians lost to France, Hungary and the Soviet Union by a combined 5-0 at the 1986 tournament in Mexico.

Canada has been playing without star Alphonso Davies, who missed the previous three qualifying matches because myocarditis was discovered after he caught COVID-19 in January.

Swami Sarvapriyananda delivers Knowledge Tree lecture at KIIT

Bhubaneswar (KCN): His Holiness Swami Sarvapriyananda, Minister & Spiritual Leader, Vedanta Society of New York delivered KIIT Knowledge Tree Lecture at KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar on 29th March 2022. KIIT Knowledge Tree Lecture series is a unique initiative of KIIT-DU to host, on regular basis,



eminent scholars, spiritual leaders, celebrities, public servants, and leaders, who share their lives' experiences and wisdom with the students and staff. It seeks to bring knowledge of the world closer to the students.

Delivering the lecture, Swami Sarvapriyananda stated that India, unlike the US and other advanced countries, is undergoing transformation at a rapid pace. Young people, particularly students, are at the forefront of this transformation. "While going around the wonderful campuses of KIIT and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) this morning, my feeling was that while Harvard, a great university and one of the best in the world, is the present, this is the future".

Enlightening students on ways to achieve success and happiness in life, Swami Sarvapriyananda, who is a well-known speaker on Vedanta, said, success assumes different meanings in different fields - in Hollywood, success is connected with the celebrities; in Wall Street, success is the accumulation of wealth; while at Harvard University, success is the amount of learning. However, successful people, irrespective of their field, fail to find happiness and peace, he pointed out, emphasizing that happiness and peace remain elusive in absence of spirituality.

Summarizing Swami Vivekananda's teachings, he told students three essentials - self-confidence, focus, and selflessness - for achieving their full potential in life.

He cited the example of Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS, who has shown what one person can achieve with these three qualities. Recounting his interaction with Dr. Achyuta Samanta, he said that he asked Dr. Samanta that had he ever felt that he had sacrificed his life

for his mission. "Dr. Samanta replied, not at all. I am getting more happiness than I had imagined and I am the happiest person. This shows that the more you think for others and the more you do for others, the happier you will be immediately and lastingly so", Swami Sarvapriyananda said.

He told students, firstly, one needs to believe in oneself. Without self-confidence and self-esteem, even the best resources will not help. He elaborated that living consciously, accepting who we are, the practice of self-responsibility, the practice of self-assertiveness, living a purposeful life, and the practice of integrity are six attributes required to inculcate self-confidence. Secondly, one needs to be focused. It is seen that extraordinary people have the extraordinary power of concentration, he stated, adding that focus is more important than IQ and facilities and it removes the limit to the capacity to think, feel and work. Lastly, Swami Sarvapriyananda said, one needs to be selfless. It is true that the



more we serve others, the more fulfilled we become, he added.

He also answered queries from the audience. Swami Sarvapriyananda joined the Ramakrishna Math in 1994 and received Sannyasa in 2004. He has served as an acharya of the monastic probationers' training center at Belur Math, India. He has also served in various capacities in different educational institutes of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and as the Assistant Minister of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. He was a Nagral Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School in 2019-20.

Expressing gratitude to Swami Sarvapriyananda for enlightening the students and staff with his wisdom, Prof. Sasmita Samanta, Vice-Chancellor, KIIT-DU said, history is a witness that spiritualism and spiritual people have made a profound impact on the world. Understanding oneself and being connected to the globe is the essence of knowledge, she added. A large number of students, faculty members, and staff of KIIT-DU attended the lecture, which was held in hybrid mode.

Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami rise in ODI rankings

DUBAI: India skipper Mithali Raj climbed two places to sixth while veteran pacer Jhulan Goswami also rose a couple of spots to fifth in the latest ICC Women's ODI rankings released on Tuesday, taking into account the ongoing World Cup in New Zealand.

on 10th. In the bowlers' chart, Goswami, who missed the match against the Proteas, went past the South African duo of Marizanne Kapp and Ayabonga Khaka to be fifth. However, she lost her ninth position in the all-



Raj, who struck a half-century in India's final league match against South Africa on Sunday, surpassed Australia's Rachael Haynes and Tammy Beaumont of England. However, the match ended in heartbreak for the Indian skipper as her team crashed out of the World Cup in a last-ball thriller. Star opener Smriti Mandhana, who played a 71-run knock against South Africa, remained static

rounders' list to Katherine Brunt of England. Goswami is now 10th with 217 rating points in her kitty, while compatriot Deepti Sharma held on to her seventh position. South Africa opener Laura Wolvaardt, who has scored more runs (433) at the ongoing World Cup than any other player, moved up two places, overtaking the Australian duo of Alyssa Heu and Beth Mooney to claim the top ranking.

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