

## 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' had no impact in Dhamnagar bypoll

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): At a time when the state leadership of Congress is busy in

his deposit but also polled one of the lowest ever votes. Result of the bypoll

bypoll result has once again exposed the inherent weaknesses of the party in

eral elections. The history of elections to Dhamnagar Assembly constituency indicates that Congress once had a decent base in the area. The party's candidate Jagannath Rout had won from the constituency way back in 1995.

But after that the party gradually lost its base to its rivals BJD and BJP. Congress candidate Hrudananda Sethi got 12,046 votes in the 2014 elections while Netranand Mallick got 29,844 votes in the 2009 Assembly polls.

Leader of Congress Legislature Party (CLP) Narasingha Jena in the 2019 gen-



the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', the party's performance in the recently concluded Dhamnagar bypoll can only be termed disappointing. The party's candidate Baba Harekrushna Sethi not only lost

to Brajrajnagar Assembly seat held in May this year in which the Congress had relegated BJP to the third position had raised hopes for revival of the party's fortunes in the state. But the Dhamnagar

coastal regions of the state. The Congress candidate could only secure 3,561 votes in the bypoll which was less than half of the 7,303 polled by party candidate Bidyadhar Jena in the 2019 gen-

## Suryabanshi Suraj urges Naveen to fulfill his Dhamnagar promise

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): With good wishes still pouring in after his emphatic

ensure the development of the constituency and see that all the pending works are completed in the next 18 months," Suraj told mediapersons.



'He (Naveen) is my chief minister and chief minister of the entire state. I appealed him to stick to his pledges notwithstanding the defeat of his party candidate,' Suraj said.

win in Dhamnagar bypoll, the newly-elected BJP MLA

Describing the people of the constituency

Suryabanshi Suraj on Monday made a humble request to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to keep his word and take responsibility for the overall development of the constituency. "The chief minister during his virtual poll campaign had promised the people of Dhamnagar that it was his responsibility to

**'He (Naveen) is my chief minister and chief minister of the entire state. I appealed him to stick to his pledges notwithstanding the defeat of his party candidate,' Suraj said.**

as a big family, Suraj said, "I had gone to them as a son to seek their blessings and they showered their love. Now it is my responsibility to fulfil the

## Florence Nightingale honour for three Odisha nurses

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Three nurses from Odisha received the National Florence Nightingale Nurses Award for the year 2021 from President of India Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhawan on

Both Das and Barik have two decades of experience in nursing and have handled lakhs of patients so far. Rout, since 2003, has been conducting immunisation and village health and nutrition day



Monday for outstanding service in the field of healthcare. They are Damayanti Rout, Khulana Barik and Shivani Das. While Rout works as an ANM at the public health sub-centre of Gounighasa in Keonjhar district, Barik is posted at the district headquarters hospital of Jagatsinghpur and Das at the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

sessions in inaccessible areas of Ghasipura block in Keonjhar. She has been visiting households in her bi-cycle for the last 19 years. Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan congratulated the awardees. The Indian Nursing Council, a statutory body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, grants the Florence Nightingale Award to recognise the contribution of healthcare workers.

## PM Modi unveils logo, theme website of India's G20 presidency

NEW DELHI(KCN): India's upcoming presidency of the G20 grouping is a matter of pride and a great opportunity for the country in its 75th year of Independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday. Modi made the remarks after unveiling the logo, theme and website of India's G20 presidency during an online event. India will assume the presidency of the powerful grouping from the current chair Indonesia on December 1. The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies. In his remarks, Modi delved into India's development journey

and said all governments and people contributed in their own way in taking India forward after the Independence. He also said that India can show the

able development. "It is a matter of pride for all Indians; it will bring greater glory for all Indians," Modi said on India's upcoming presidency of G20.

sia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU).



world that the scope of conflict can come to an end when democracy becomes a culture. The prime minister also said that development and the environment (Pragati and Prakriti) can walk together while emphasising sustain-

The logo, theme and website of India's G20 presidency reflected the country's "message and overarching priorities" to the world. The G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indone-

The G20 summit is taking place on November 15 and 16 in Bali and Modi is set to be among top leaders attending it. The G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation representing around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population. India is currently part of the G20 Troika (current, previous and incoming G20 presidencies) comprising Indonesia, Italy and India.

## Last lunar eclipse of year on Tuesday, fleeting sight likely

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Odisha will witness the last lunar eclipse of 2022 on Tuesday. This phenomenon is also called the 'blood moon'. According to the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Positional Astronomy Centre in Kolkata, the estimated time of moonrise in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday is 5.06 pm, Cuttack 5.05 pm, Puri 5.07 pm, Sambalpur 5.12 pm and Koraput 5.21 pm. Lunar eclipses have an umbral and penumbral phase because of the way the moon's shadow falls on the earth. The umbra is the darkest region of the earth's shadow on the moon, while the penumbra is the lighter outer part of the shadow. The umbral phase is expected to commence at 2.39 pm. The Positional Astronomy Centre informed that the beginning phase of the partial and total



eclipse will not be visible because both events will begin before the moonrise across the country. The total eclipse is expected to take place at 3.46 pm.

However, there is something to cheer for the sky gazers as the ending of the total and partial phases of the eclipse will be visible in the country. The total eclipse will end at 5.12 pm and umbral phase will conclude at 6.19 pm. The ending of the eclipse and the umbral phase will be visible in Odisha, it said. Duration of eclipse from moonrise time up to the end of the umbral phase in Bhubaneswar will be 1 hour and 13 minutes, in Cuttack 1 hour and 14 minutes, in Koraput 58 minutes, in Puri 1 hour and 12 minutes and in Sambalpur 1 hour and seven minutes. Sky gazers should use binoculars or a telescope for the best viewing.

## BJD to rework strategy for Padampur bypoll

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): As BJD prepares to put aside the Dhamnagar defeat and move on to the next bypoll for Padampur Assembly constituency on December 5, several questions have cropped up over the first defeat of the ruling party since 2019. While the process to rework strategy to get back to winning ways at Padampur has started, a demand is growing within the ruling party for a thorough review of the bypoll defeat so that the mistakes are not repeated. Despite the public positioning of the BJD leaders following the defeat, fingers are being pointed at selection of the candidate for Dhamnagar which many feel led to such a result. The selection of party candidate led to an open revolt by Rajendra Kumar Das, a heavyweight and former MLA of the constituency against

the leadership. The BJD managers failed to make up for the wrong committed at the initial stages despite repeated efforts. This is for the first time that there was an open revolt against party leadership over the selection of a candidate which proved costly. Because of this, not only a sizeable section of the party and rank file did not come out in support of the official candidate, at many places they worked against



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the BJD. What else can explain the party's poor performance in Tihidi block, the home of BJD candidate Abanti Das. The result has also proved that the women card played by the BJD

CONTINUED ON: P-7



## “Boita Bandan” festival celebrated at Barbil



Barbil (KCN): Kartika Purnima (Boita Bandana) is celebrated across Barbil and the festival is well marked in Karubaki area at the bank of Karo river in Keonjhar district of Odisha. People across Barbil gathered near river Karo to set afloat tiny banana, paper or thermocol boats with diyas, betel leaves, crackers, fruits and coins to mark as a commemorative pledge to the glorious history of Odisha when it was known as Kalinga and tradesmen and mariners known as sadhabas travelled on boitas to trade with

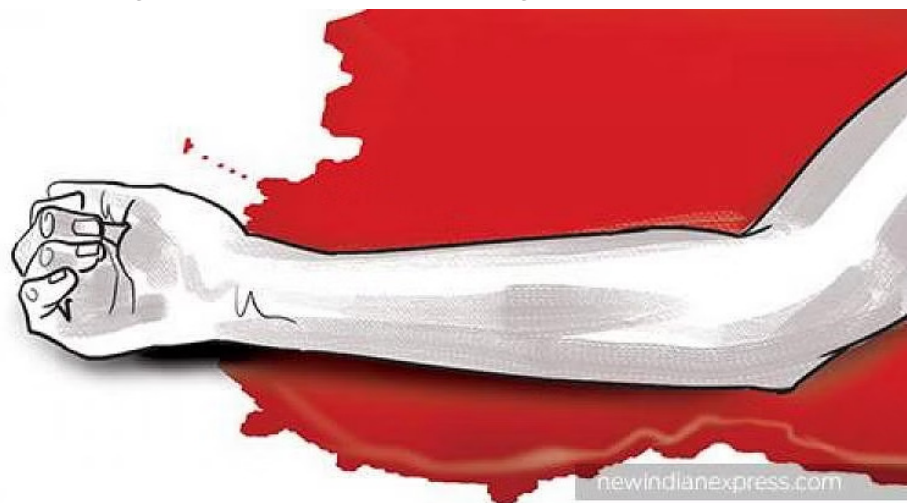
distant island nations that share borders with the Bay of Bengal like Indonesia, Java, Sumatra and Bali. Two organisations namely Niladri and Kala Kalpana have been taking the responsibility to organise the festival. They too organised competition of paper boat sailing among devotees to add more festive colour to the occasion. The traditional and cultural rhyme also hummed “aa ka ma boi, pana gua thoi, pana gua tora, masaka dharama mora” during sailing their boats in Karo river.

## Cuttack: Man kills brother over parking dispute

CUTTACK(KCN): A man allegedly stabbed his younger brother to death over a parking dispute near their residence in Dargha Bazaar police limits here on Monday. Deceased was identified as Safiullah Khan (42). Police said the siblings were engaged in a long-standing dispute over distribution of property. On the day of the incident, Safiullah parked his motorcycle in front of his house at around 10 am.

When his brother Azimullah arrived, he yelled at him for parking the two-wheeler on the spot. The spat soon turned ugly and

Azimullah stabbed Safiullah with a scissor. Safiullah was rushed to the city hospital and died while being shifted to SCB Medical Col-



lege and Hospital. The scissor used in the crime was recovered from Azimullah.

## Two jumbos killed in Keonjhar; leopard in Athmallik

BHUBANESWAR/KOENJHAR/ANGUL: A fresh spate of wildlife hunting has rocked the state with forest officials recovering carcasses of two elephants in Keonjhar even as four persons were arrested in connection with recovery of a leopard carcass and skin from Athmallik division in Angul.

Poaching is said to be the primary cause of death of the wild animals in both the cases while forest officials said they are investigating the matter in Keonjhar to ascertain the exact cause. The carcasses of the female elephant and calf were recovered near Kuliapal village close to Kalapat reserve forest in Talapada beat of Telkoi range. Sources said, villagers tracing a strong foul smell from the nearby forest found the carcasses. On being informed, a team of forest officials led by Keonjhar DFO Jadumani Rana,



launched a search operation and found the carcasses of the female elephant and the calf. Telkoi Ranger Shivaji Mohan Rao and Keonjhar DFO Dhamdhare Dhanraj

Hanumant and ranger Shibaji Mohan Rao and others rushed to the spot to probe the incident. Following preliminary investigation, forest officials have reportedly found the age of the female elephant to be around 40 years. The jumbos are said to have died at least a week back. Poaching is suspected as a 5-inch arrow has been found in the stomach of the female elephant. Sources

## Traffic restrictions imposed in Cuttack for Baliyatra

CUTTACK(KCN): The Commissionerate Police has imposed restrictions in Cuttack city for crowd management and smooth flow of vehicular traffic during Baliyatra from November 8 to 16. The traffic restrictions will be in force from 3 pm till late at night daily. As per the advisory, three-wheelers and four-wheelers coming from Madhusudan bridge side are required to be parked on Bhuasuni field from where people can use vehicles arranged by the administration to reach the Baliyatra ground.

Three-wheelers and two-wheelers coming from Satichoura can ply through Shelter Chhak and Kanika Chhak and park on the field in front of Daya Ashram and the field situated to the left of Kartikeswar Gada. Vehicles coming from Deer Park will have to park on Christian field. From there, people can take vehicles arranged by the administration to reach the fair ground.

Two-wheelers coming from Bhuasuni field and Chahata can ply up to Deer Park and park on Kartikeswar Gada field. Similarly, restrictions have been imposed on plying of vehicles from Girnar Hotel Square to Chief Justice Bungalow, from Nari Seva Sangha Square to stadium and Killa Fort Gate to Baliyatra ground. Vehicles will have to take diversion up to the nearest parking spots. The police has also tightened security arrangements from

Baliyatra ground to Cuttack railway station. Apart from deployment of 50 platoons of police force, as many as 20 police aid and six traffic aid posts have been set up for



crowd management. Similarly, eight watch towers have been set up on both the upper and lower Baliyatra grounds to keep a tab on trouble makers. As nomads often indulge in criminal activities during the fair, a decision has been taken to not permit them to travel to Cuttack railway station and detain them enroute.

Elaborate protection and safety measures have been taken by Odisha Fire Service for the fair. Apart from setting up five temporary fire stations with provision of four source pumps including one at Gadakhai and the other in Mahanadi river for uninterrupted water supply to the fire fighting units in case of emergency, as many as five rescue teams equipped with power boats have been deployed on the banks of the river. This apart, while two control rooms have been set up, 280 fire personnel will be deployed on the grounds.

## Guru Nanak Jayanti celebrated at Barbil with religious fervor

Barbil(KCN):Guru Nanak Jayanti or Gurburab is being celebrated with



religious fervour in Barbil city today. It marks the birth of the first Sikh

Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, who laid the foundation of Sikhism. This year marks the 553rd birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. On this day, The Sikh community of Barbil carry out huge processions with immense enthusiasm. They visit Gurdwaras to offer prayers, conduct langars and meet people to celebrate Gurupurab every year. The programme began with the rendition of Sikh devotional music, known as Gurbani Kirtan. A group from Jamshedpur displayed various marshal art on the occasion. “The tolerance and harmony between different religions in this city, as preached by Guru Nanak, does not go unnoticed.” said on devotee.

## Kalinga Baliyatra kicks off in Paradip

PARADIP(KCN): Kalinga Baliyatra, a symbolic festival to recall Odisha’s maritime trade with South-East Asia, kicked off from here on Monday. The festival was inaugurated

by Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallick who said Kalinga Baliyatra is the symbol of Odisha’s age-old



traditional, cultural and economic relationship with Balidweep (modern day Indonesia). The festival symbolises the glorious maritime trade and prosperity of ancient Odisha, then known as Kalinga.

Mallick lauded the efforts of the organisers for highlighting the state’s maritime glory through the festival. School and Mass Education Minister Samir Das also spoke on the festival and its relevance in the present times. The organizers said apart from a range of cultural programmes by troupes from across the state, a gramshree mela and other events would be held during the festival which was started by former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik in 1992.

Among others, MP Rajshree Mallick, chief whip Prasant Muduli and local legislator Sambit Routray attended the inaugural function.



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# Disney's Marvel unit files lawsuits to keep rights to 'Avengers' characters from copyright termination

WASHINGTON: Stan Lee, Steve Ditko and Gene Colan. Marvel has filed lawsuits to law, authors or their heirs can reclaim rights once granted



acquire full control of 'Avengers' characters including Spider-Man, Iron Man, Black Widow and others. According to The Hollywood Reporter, the complaints come against the heirs of some late comic book geniuses including

Larry Lieber's (who worked at Marvel as a writer, too) estate. In August, the administrator of Ditko's estate filed a notice of termination on Spider-Man, which first appeared in comic book form in 1962. Under the termination provisions of copyright

mination notices to Marvel in May. The heirs of the comic book creators (including Black Widow creator Don Rico) are being represented by Marc Toberoff, who had also represented Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster in an unsuccessful termination attempt against DC which saved off termination by counterclaiming against Toberoff. As per The Hollywood Reporter, Dan Petrocelli represented the publisher at that time and will be representing Disney for the new case. Petrocelli has already filed several lawsuits against Lieber, Don Heck, Patrick Ditko, Don Rico and Keith Dettwiler. The cases will focus on the creation of famous comic book characters and who should be deemed the statutory author. One of the complaints filed on Friday asserted, "Marvel had the right to exercise creative control over Lieber's contributions and paid Lieber a per-page rate for his work." If the plaintiffs win, Disney would have to share profits with the others and hold on to at least a share of character rights as co-owners. As per The Hollywood Reporter, the termination provisions of copyright law only apply in the United States, allowing Disney to continue to control and profit from foreign exploitation.

## 'Kanyadaan' an outdated ritual or important custom? Alia Bhatt's ad sparks debate

The bride, pretty, radiant and in red, sits in front of the sacred fire, her family, the groom and his parents around her, the love flowing like a balmy breeze. And in that arguably most precious moment, she looks into the camera and asks, "why must a woman be commodified through the custom of 'kanyadaan' literally 'donating a daughter'." The ad for a lehenga brand featuring Bollywood star Alia Bhatt as the much-indulged daughter and granddaughter has fired debate on social media platforms and elsewhere on the age-old tradition of giving away the daughter.

Many term it Hindu phobic for casting aspersions on a ritual that is part of the warp and weft of society, others appreciate it for calling out the patriarchy that underderscores the custom and there are those that feel it should have gone even further in its rejection.

"There is a growing number of young women who are beginning to think about the issue, especially as increasing number joins the workforce, has access to ideas (via social media etc) that are critical of 'women as property' concept. This ad reflects that," sociologist Sanjay Srivastava told PTI. In the 1.41 minute ad, Bhatt, the self-assured woman of today who also does a selfie pout with her father while at the 'mandap', recalls her lifetime of 'othering' in a monologue - her fond grandmother saying she would one day go to her own home, her father not reacting when people called her "paraya dhan" (alien property) and her mother calling her a 'chidiya' which would fly away one day. The Manyawar ad ends with the grooms' parent also joining in in the ritual (though it is unclear whether they too are giving away their son) and Bhatt's bride saying it should be 'kanyamaan' (respect for the girl child) and not 'kanyadaan', and asking, "Am I a thing to be given away?" Her angst finds a wide echo. Actor Dia Mirza, who decided to do away with the rituals of both "bidai" and "kanyadaan" when she got married to businessman Vaibhav Rekhi, said they wanted the wedding to reflect their "beliefs and not outmoded ideas." "Neither of us believes that women are com-

modities to be given away or 'donated.' Women have agency, selfhood and can make decisions about their lives on their own so my wedding reflected exactly that by not including a ritual like 'kanyadaan'," the actor told PTI. She even engaged a female priest for her wedding to emphasise gender equality. "It is time for young couples to define how they want to get married and if their ceremony is truly representative of their personalities and love for each other," said the actor, who is also the United Nation's National Goodwill Ambassador from India. The ritual of giving away the bride is, of

married. 'Kanyadaan' is like you're giving me away and you have nothing to do with me anymore. You're severing ties like I'm some object basically that you're giving away. My parents did understand it but the issue was 'this is how it is, has been and will be.'" Actor Kangana Ranaut was among those who disagreed. Criticising the ad in an Instagram post, she said, "Humble request to all brands. Don't use religion, minority, majority politics to sell things. Stop manipulating naive consumers with shrewd divisive concepts and advertising. Please stop mocking Hindus and their rituals." One of the Twitter users echoed similar sentiments.



"Our traditions are not regressive, your mindsets surely are! Kanyadaan is a sacred tradition, where a father/parent parts with their most precious and cherished daughter, a bitter-sweet emotional moment filled with hopes, promises and dreams," the user wrote. Women's rights activist Shabnam Hashmi said the attacks on the ad "reflects the highly patriarchal mindsets of our society".

"It is a very progressive advertisement and raises important questions of women's dignity and equality," Hashmi told PTI. Sociologist Shrivastava added that people reacted negatively because there is an increasing intolerance against anything that is seen to question 'Indian traditions'. The reaction, he said, also reflects a "male anxiety" about the changes that are happening in addition to the current climate where it has become difficult to question anything Indian/Hindu. There were also those who felt the ad didn't go far enough. "The idea should not be to perpetuate the custom but to break away from it," said a young woman, who welcomed the ad and the questioning of traditions but would have preferred that it didn't end with the parents of both sides taking part in it. A radical break would have been more effective in sending out the message, she said. However, a debate reflects a churn. And in that sense, any discussion is welcome, even if it has unlikely beginnings in an ad for a bridal lehenga.



# A deliberately disruptive analogy

Senior Congress leader Shivraj Patil's discovery of Jihad in Bhagavad Gita was not in tune with what his party understands about the holy text. This was probably visible when his party distanced itself from his statement and agreed to term his assertion on the Hindu holy text as unwarranted and baseless. It is improper to cross check the Congress sentiments on what the Gita professes.

But the party's sensibility to outrightly reject its leader's senseless clamour on the Hindu religious text should be seen as an approach it began to feel appropriate and secular. Patil served as union minister in the Manmohan-led UPA government from 2004 to 2008.

The statement of the veteran that caught the ire of the moment was obviously an ill-equipped assertion deliberately meant to stir the hornet's nest. "The concept of Jihad is not limited to the Quran but also the Bhagavad Gita, which is part of Mahabharat," he declared at a book releasing event. To emphasize his view further, he claimed that Lord Krishna taught Arjuna about Jihad in the battlefield; therefore, essentially the Gita accentuates the authority of Jihad. His insinuation did not stop with his reference to Hinduism and Islam. But he was vocal about elements of Jihad in Christianity as well. For him, Lord Krishna, in essence and practice justified war and promoted use of weapons and appreciated bloodshed when threatened.

A comparison of Islamic Jihad with the Kurukshetra war by the Congress veteran was a

balancing act to cover up terrorism. This was almost in line with the

Hindu terror narrative that the Congress had unsuccessfully launched during the UPA regime. The party thought that such a narrative could be an effortless makeover presenting Jihad and terror in a dim light. The saffron terror jargon by the Congress turned out to be a sharp weapon that the BJP met the 2014 National Elections with. The Congress had this remark haunting it throughout the elections and the result of 2014 was a culmination of the discontent that the majority in India registered against the party vigorously. The prospects of the Congress began to dispel with the party sensing its significance being terribly capsized.

The Bhagavad Gita is known to have been delivered amid a terrible war that was fought for eighteen days between two groups in the same family. The principal reason that pushed the Pandavas and Kauravas into a ruthless bloodshed was the dispute on the share of a rightful portion of the country that the Panadavas had a genuine stake on and when the Kauravas refused to concede. Krishna's arbitration for a peaceful settlement failed though he attempted multiple times amicably trying to dissuade the warmongering sons of the blind king. Throughout the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna seems to be playing the role of a friend and a mentor and his efforts to enlighten the warrior prince Arjuna was mainly by tutoring him on the elements of dharma or duty based on righteousness. Therefore, the philosophy of Bhagavad Gita unequivocally parades the reader through the essential principles of dharma and the importance of being dharmic. Despite his

**M. R. LALU**

being the divine, Lord Krishna, the benign friend of the Pandavas, had to undergo remorseful moments and the imprecations by the blindfolded mother Gandhari in the battlefield had brought disaster in his life. His clan was totally wiped out and his kingdom got submerged in water. The Mahabharata epic, through the battle portion, is obviously suggesting the need of following one's own dharma and the deliberations of Krishna is a solid proof of the great Indian philosophy that advocates liberal coexistence of multiplicity.

For Islam, Jihad is one of the most pious duties that the religion has authenticated. And whoever stands in the opposite of the edifice of Islam is a Kaffir and Jihad is a divinely ordained struggle that every devout Muslim is supposed to live for. Jihad or 'Holy war' gives licence to a Muslim to spread his religion among the non-believers through all possible means, including violence. Who should be the Islamic Jihad declared against? The clear answer is that the holy war should be fought against the non-believers. Those who express views against the supremacy of Allah deserve to be exterminated or punished and the war declared against them is a holy manoeuvre which is seen in various forms and fashions. Islamic scriptures depicting bloodthirsty remarks on non-believers and the action plans to consolidate power for an Islamic globe are part of a long cherished dream and unsurprisingly there are young men and women ready to explode for a heaven that they would be rewarded, once they perish.

Whereas, the mega epic the Mahabharata elucidates on the difference between dharma and adharm and the battle that the epic is vocal about

is the one that was fought for the establishment of dharma or righteousness. This was probably the reason that India, as a country has always been upholding values of nonaggression and it never thought of capturing another land. Bhagavad Gita for that matter has never justified a war for the establishment of the power of any particular God. Interestingly, Lord Krishna shares his wisdom with Arjuna and in a later period suggests him to follow his words if he found them genuine and wise. Krishna's persistence on Arjuna was to follow his righteous duty as a warrior prince and war was a tool to establish that genuine morality in his kingdom. In the beginning, Arjuna was intellectually incapable to delve into the philosophy that Krishna elaborated for him and the teachings of Gita were discovered to be life fulfilling theories and master plans to live life with its fullest potential.

The war that was fought in the Mahabharata was between two branches of the same family while Jihad is a war declared against those who refuse to acknowledge Islamic religious ethos. Its aggressive invasion had toppled religious monuments of Hindus and other religions and forget not, the division of this subcontinent into two distorted pieces in 1947 was also the result of a mindset that propelled discontent and disregard for other religions. Overwhelmed by unethical political appeasement, political parties in India had almost forgotten the values that the essential Indianness is built on. Bhagavad Gita has contributed so much so that the cultural edifice of India is rock solid while many civilizations disappeared from the face of the earth.

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## Elephants and Buddhism: An intimate socio-cultural, ecological and philosophical interconnection between humans and wild animals

Elephants are a big part of traditional human society across South East Asia. In spite of being a wild animal they have been closely associated with

human history, culture, tradition and art from the dawn of civilization in this part of the world. Buddhism is intimately symbolically associated with elephants across all South East Asian countries from across Burma to Thailand, Indo-China

region, Sri Lanka and even to this date across South India (where it is revered among Hindus, Buddhists and Jain practitioners). All ancient Hindu and Buddhist temples have elaborate carvings, architectures and ornamentation with iconic elephant idols across this entire region. It suggests that elephants has been revered in this societies for several thousand years because of it's usefulness as a beast of burden, for the purpose of transportation of humans and goods, their uses in wars, as a symbolic social status (like gifting white elephants in Thailand), as a loving pet and also a very close companion of humans. Elephants are extremely intelligent animals and has been a great friend of humans since human civilizations slowly start taking shapes in these part of our planet. Gifting or donating an elephant to a temple is still considered a holy ritual in many of these countries and cultures.

Buddhism is intimately, philosophically and symbolically associated with wild animals in several forms down the ages in Buddhist teachings, scriptures, arts and crafts, folklores as well as in stories associated with both rural and urban life of people. Hence, it can be well understood

that elephants (both wild and domesticated) have been traditionally considered to be integrally associated with regular life, traditions, culture, heritage and religious practices of the people across the vast reaches of South and South East Asia. Humans across the planet have associated and integrated locally available natural resources as part of their socio-religious customs, South and South East Asia is no exception to this global observation.

Since, elephants have taken to central stage of cultural evolution even in the ore Buddha period; it is quite natural that over time with the spread of Buddhism under the monarchical support of Emperor Ashoka it spread beyond the traditional boundaries of erstwhile Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, Mayadevi's dream of a white elephant entering her womb before the birth of Lord Buddha also strongly resonates the importance of elephants in Buddhist cultures of South East Asia.

Thus elephants are both socially, culturally and symbolically associated deeply with Buddhism and Buddhist teachings across South and South East Asia. Numerous idols, architectures, statues and relics across South East



Asia connects Gautama Buddha to elephants and other wildlife. Two giant rushers on either side of meditating Buddha carrying flower garlands is a very common traditional artistic form observed across South East Asia. This is not to disrespect; but in the contrary to provide the highest respect to Lord Buddha through the cultural and traditional lens of South and South East Asia. By carrying Buddha relics on elephants signify highest respect to the divine soul who transformed the lives of millions across the globe by carrying it in on an animal like elephant that is traditionally and culturally highly revered, respected and loved. Even to these days of strict wildlife conservation and regulations, elephants are intimately associated with religious and cultural activities of South and South East Asia. Gautama Buddha sitting on the elephant is not to disrespect but to symbolize and respectfully recognize the greatest soul as the master of both humans as well as animals. Nothing happens in this world without any reason. Elephants are respected as divine animals in both Hinduism and Buddhism and has an unique place in the human society. Buddha himself wanted and himself practiced what he preached. As such he wandered from place to place on foot and even never used wheeled carts or chariots for travel. He preached against this. In India during his time, there were no practice of statue worship creating images of God's and deities. Statues came six or seven centuries after his death. So on his demise,

**Saikat Kumar Basu**

his disciples and local monarchs disputed to carry the ashes and re-deposit them. When the Brahman Drone advised to distribute the remains to eight local kings, the shares were collected and taken to respective places by them on elephants only. (Elephants were the means for royal travel). This may be the tradition followed even today of carrying the relics on elephant as a part of culture.

According to the Jatakamala of Arya Sura (fourth century c.E.), the person known historically as the Buddha was born as an elephant during one of his earlier life-times. This huge elephant lived alone like an ascetic (a preview of his later life) in a verdant forest far from human habitation. On a particular day, he heard human voices coming from the direction of the desert area. Upon investigating the source of the voices, he encountered several hundred of an original group of a thousand men, who had been abandoned by their king as they now wandered despondently, lost, starving, thirsty, and desperate. The elephant felt compassion for these

men clinging to life. After gaining their trust and hearing their sorrowful tale of hardship, the elephant told them to go in a particular direction where they would find water and the body of a dead elephant; they could use the flesh for food and the entrails for bags to collect water. The elephant went ahead of the men, threw himself off the steep cliffs, and died where he reported there would be a body. Finally, the men arrived to find the body of the elephant, and they slowly came to realize that the dead elephant was the same one with whom they had spoken earlier. Impressed by the elephant's self-sacrifice, they considered honoring the animal and cremating its body, but they realized that this would be defeating the wishes of the elephant, which sacrificed his life to save their own. Thus they made use of the elephant's body as it had intended. The elephant's original intention had been to use his body as a vehicle to save the lost men.' Although this tale represents a later addition to Buddhist literature, this narrative demonstrates six important themes in early Buddhism. It introduces the metaphor of the raft that is used to convey others to safety; we will see the metaphor of the raft equated with the teachings (Dhamma) of the Buddha. Sec-ond, the elephant plays an important role in the infancy narrative of the Buddha too.

As I feel , every situation in the real world is unique and calls for a custom response. We will all have to face the consequences of our actions, sooner or later. If we're thinking about killing another being, then we need to keep this awareness clearly in mind as we make our decision. Out of compassion, even we may find ourselves choosing to kill, and to face whatever the karmic consequences are.

Sitting on, or riding, any animal is forbidden for Buddhist monks, even touching, there is Buddha on an elephant, and it is forbidden to hurt or hurt any animal. Kandi Esela Perahera is a festival in Sri Lanka which is a colorful procession of Buddha's tooth being carried on highly decorated and ornamented elephant's back. But there is possibly no point in symbolizing the Buddha statue by placing it on the back of an elephant.

Even to nurse an animal, its body cannot be touched. As a Jataka he touched many beings, saved their lives. The second question is that animals are the only means of transportation in many places in remote mountainous areas. And their rearing is one of the main means of livelihood, can't they be touched there too? Yes could be done but the intention needs to be taken into consideration as



whether an individual is trying to help an animal or his real intentions are hiring and exploitation for selfish benefits.

I think we can think of this statue in a slightly different way. Initially, at least till the time of Ashoka, the worship of Buddha images was not in vogue. Then the elephant was worshipped as a symbol of Buddha. As if that has been reflected in this statue. Buddha is not sitting here because of walking on the back of an elephant, no one sits like this because of walking on the back of an elephant. Here elephant and Buddha are shown together. (What we think). Maybe someone wanted to show it as a metaphor.

378 Prince Anwar Shah Road, Kolkata, West Bengal India



## Seeing consequences of Ukraine war, India advises return to dialogue: S Jaishankar in Moscow

NEW DELHI: India and Russia have an "exceptionally steady" and time-tested relationship and the objective now is to fashion a balanced, mutually beneficial and long-term engagement in the backdrop of the increasing economic cooperation, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday during talks with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Moscow.

In his opening remarks, he said that "we are now seeing the consequences of Ukraine." "This is not an era of war --- as Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Samarkand told Russian President Vladimir Putin. We are see-

trade difficulties had taken a toll on the global economy.

"Our talks will address the overall global situation as well as specific regional concerns," he said.

Ukraine conflict has widened scope of political leveraging: S Jaishankar

Jaishankar arrived in Moscow on Monday evening on a two-day visit amid growing global concerns over increasing hostilities between Russia and Ukraine.

"India and Russia engage each other in an increasingly multi-polar and re-balanced world. We do so as two polities who have had an exceptionally steady and time-tested relationship. In that background, I look forward to our talks," he said.

Jaishankar's visit to Russia assumes significance as it came over a week before the G20 summit in Bali which is set to extensively deliberate on the Ukraine conflict and its implications. It is his first visit to Moscow after the beginning of the Ukraine conflict.

"Our meeting today, is of course, devoted to assessing the state of our bilateral cooperation; exchanging perspectives on the international situation and what that means to our respective interests," Jaishankar said.

"Where bilateral ties are concerned, you would agree that it is our objective today to fashion a contemporary, balanced, mutually beneficial, sustainable and long-term engagement," he said.

"Especially as our economic cooperation increases, this is a significant imperative. We would be discussing how our shared goals are best achieved," the External Affairs Minister added.



ing the consequences of Ukraine. India strongly advises a return to dialogue. The global economy is simply too interdependent for significant conflict anywhere not to have major consequences elsewhere," Jaishankar said in Moscow.

"Would like to keep it going," says Jaishankar on Russian oil imports

India has not condemned Russia since the start of the conflict and has maintained its independent position. On several UN forums, New Delhi has consistently called for a cessation of violence and advocated peace through diplomacy and dialogue.

"There are also the more perennial issues of terrorism and climate change, both of which have a disruptive impact on progress and prosperity," Jaishankar said, adding that the COVID-19 pandemic, financial pressures and

## Tamil Nadu to file review petition against SC nod to EWS quota

CHENNAI: The DMK has decided to file a review petition in the Supreme Court against the verdict upholding the validity of the 103rd Amend-

Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, safeguard the basic structure of the Constitution and uphold principles of reserva-

weaken social justice and shatter the basic structure of the Constitution. He also noted that Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit had sided with

and equality and contrary to the social justice policy," a government release said about the EWS reservation. The CM has written



ment to the Constitution, thus allowing the implementation of 10 per cent reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the upper castes in employment and education, DMK general secretary Duraimurugan announced.

The move was to protect the social justice of 82 per cent of the country's population comprising people from the Scheduled

tion laid down through the judgment on the Mandal Commission case, he said.

The DMK, which had been traditionally fighting for social justice, will take up the case, Mr Duraimurugan said in a statement on Tuesday, pointing to the remarks of one of the dissenting Supreme Courts judges, Justice S. Ravindra Bhat, that the amendment will

Justice Bhat.

The Tamil Nadu government had announced earlier on Tuesday that it would convene a meeting of all legislature parties on November 12 to discuss the next course of action following the Supreme Court upholding the 10 per cent EWS quota. It said that chief minister M.K. Stalin will chair the meeting.

"This quota system is against social justice

to all legislature party leaders on the matter and each party can nominate two representatives for the meeting, it said. Stalin had on Monday said the Supreme Court verdict on EWS was a setback to century-long social justice struggle. Tamil Nadu has 69 per cent quota in education and jobs and a case is currently pending in the apex court against the reservation system.

## 'The Statue of Prosperity' soon to be unveiled in Karnataka

NEW DELHI: Bengaluru will soon witness the unveiling of the statue of its founder, Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, at the International Airport in Devanahalli.

Called the "Statue of Prosperity", it towers 108-feet-high and is likely to be recorded as the World's Tallest Statue of a Founder of a City. Initially, the statue was conceived of in miniature terms and the proposed location was outside the limits of the airport. Even the proposed height was around 15 feet, just to signal government intent.

But that idea never took off. When the B S Yeddyurappa government assumed office in 2019, he and his Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Ashwathnarayan CN, a Vokkaliga leader, felt that credit to Nadaprabhu was long overdue and that efforts to host his statue on a grand scale should be expedited without delay.

The government considered several areas before deciding to install the monument near the airport, where it will be visible to the millions of passengers that enter and exit the land each day. The two leaders believed that this would be the ideal setting for letting the

The Minister also imagines a system in which technologists, culture and history enthusiasts, and others are highly interested in researching Kempegowda's life and disseminating his approach to infrastructure. Kempegowda envisioned Bengaluru as being productive, entrepreneurial, infrastructure- and culture-rich, and today's residents are receiving the benefits in spades.

When asked how Karnataka managed this project despite time and mobility constraints induced by Covid-19, Dr Ashwathnarayan said: "Since it is a very big structure, it had to be created part-by-part, with precision planning. Due care was taken to ensure that it was immune to heavy winds and other natural forces. Some parts had to be transported in trailers that rolled on as many as 12 wheels. Transportation was by no means an easy task. But because the sculptors have had previous experience in logistics, it was smoothly managed."

Kempegowda is not just a person, for the residents of Karnataka. He is a living force, and therefore, it was increasingly being felt



world know about the city and, most importantly, its history.

It was therefore agreed that the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda statue would be located on the grounds of the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA). 23 acres of central park area inside the airport grounds were allotted for the project after lengthy consultations with the relevant authorities.

Ram V. Sutar, a renowned sculptor who sculpted the Statue of Unity in Gujarat and whose family has been involved in this scientific craft for three generations, was chosen for the job.

The government is also constructing a theme park at the location of the statue that would reflect Kempegowda's idea of Bengaluru. The theme park would have a model of Bengaluru that includes tiny lakes, cultural symbols, museums, and other elements.

According to Dr Ashwathnarayan, Vice-Chairman of the Kempegowda Heritage Area Development Authority and Minister for Higher Education, IT&BT, Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, and Livelihood, the entire project should be finished in six months. The Ramanagara district's Kempapura property, which is five and a half acres and is thought to be Kempegowda's Veera Samadhi, has been purchased by the Karnataka government. With this, the groundwork for the area's development has been laid.

that his story needed to be told to the world, especially when Bengaluru is now an internationally known tech city, welcoming people from across the globe and cultures.

The reason behind the giant statue is the fact that while several global cities have icons they publicly celebrate - and that often attract international praise for 'rootedness' and 'civilizational pride', Bengaluru, despite having so many rich facets, did not have one in the monument.

This statue, therefore, is an effort to unite residents of Bengaluru and inspire them to 'own the city, just as Kempegowda did, with his vision. Bengaluru is one of the very rare cities in the world that boasts richness across spectra such as education, technology, culture, and cuisine, to name a few.

According to Indian tradition, people are profoundly attached to their country on both an emotional and a spiritual level. Therefore, it was believed that for this initiative to succeed, Karnataka's people and soil needed to be fully committed.

According to Dr Ashwathnarayan, this way of thinking also permeates the Bharatiya Janata Party, which is why this campaign is taking a grassroots approach and collecting soil from all around the state to utilize in the theme park's Gopuras. This story has been provided by SRV. ANI will not be responsible in any way for the content of this article.

## 15 injured in Nagaland clash, govt appeals for calm

KOHIMA: At least 15 people were injured as two communities clashed over the disputed area between Chumoukedima and Peren districts in Nagaland, police said on Tuesday.

Of those injured, nine people sustained pellet wounds and were undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dimapur, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Sandeep M Tamgadge told here.

The condition of one of the persons who received pellet wounds was stated to be critical, he said.

Eight-ten kutcha houses were also burnt down in the violence, he added. Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton, who holds the Home portfolio, visited the violence-hit Namhailamdi village during the day along with senior police officers.

He took stock of the situation in the area where violence broke out on Monday. During the visit, Patton urged the people to maintain peace and refrain from any act that might es-

calate the situation, said a statement issued by the Department of Information and Public Relations.

He also urged everyone to adhere to the status quo order of the government on the land, which is claimed by both the communities at the border of the two districts.

Patton said the government has urged the Central Nagaland Tribes Council and Tenymia Peoples' Organisation leaders to take up the matter with the two communities for maintaining peace, and resolve their issues.

He said adequate forces have been deployed in the area to maintain law and order.

ADGP Tamgadge said the Police Headquarters is awaiting a detailed report from the field officers posted in the area.

At least two high-level Special Investigation Teams (SITs) would probe the incident, he said.

The situation is at present under control, Tamgadge said.

Prohibitory orders under section 144 of the CrPC were imposed in the area on Monday.





## Auditions for Dhanu Yatra roles kick-off

SAMBALPUR: Ahead of the 75th edition of Dhanu Yatra, auditions for selection of artistes to play different roles in the open-air theatre festival kicked-off at Biju Patnaik Town Hall in Bargarh on Monday. The audition will conclude on November 10. Sources said at least 223 applications were received this year for 11 different roles in Dhanu Yatra. The applications include 60 for

Bohidar of Padampur. In the second phase, auditions will be held for the roles of Satarki, Chandura, Mustika and Akrura. Audition for King Kansa's role is scheduled on the last day on November 10. Convener of Dhanu Yatra festival committee Sureswar Satpathy said, "It is great to see many new and young artistes turning up for the auditions this time. The selection is a tough



the role of King Kansa. On the first day, auditions were held for the roles of Ugrasen, Basudev, Devaki, Narada and Senapati. While six aspirants turned up for the role of Ugrasen, 14 were auditioned for Basudev. Similarly, four aspirants auditioned for Devaki, 24 for Senapati and seven for role of Narad. The artistes were auditioned by a seven-member expert team comprising theatre directors Dr Pradip Majhi of Kalahandi and Jamal Khan of Balangir besides play writer and director Brajendra Nayak of Sambalpur, theatre actor-cum-director Hemanta Mohapatra of Deogarh, film director Litu Mohanty of Bargarh, actor, director and writer Siblala Sagar of Bijepur writer and director Ashok

task as several good artistes have applied for the roles. We have faith in our expert team and it will select the best artistes for the characters." The Dhanu Yatra will be held this time after a gap of two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, the festival will commence on December 27 and conclude on January 6. During the yatra, the entire Bargarh town will turn into a stage. While the town will become Mathura under the rule of demon king Kansa, the 'Balya Leela' of Lord Krishna will take place at Ambapali (Gopapura) on the other side of Jeera river. Started during 1947-48, the 11-day-long festival Dhanu Yatra is considered the world's largest open-air theatre. It is organised in an area of five sq km.

## Tata Power partners with SBI for payment of power bills

BHUBANESWAR: Tata Power has partnered with State Bank of India

Arvind Singh. He said the utility has already partnered with various pay-

MobiKwik, PayU, Tata Neu and several other platforms like OCAC, EBIX Cash, Public Sector Banks, BHIM to ensure customers' convenience and digital adoption. The customers paying through digital modes are given a digital rebate of three per cent on their bill. They can also make direct payments through the company's website. "We have partnered with the nation's largest bank as another step towards customer convenience," Singh said.



(SBI) to facilitate electricity bill payment for customers of Southern Odisha Distribution Limited. All customers of TPSODL will now

spread across eight districts. Customers will get payment receipts for bills paid at these collection points, said chief executive officer

## Baripada: Section 144 to prevent illegal sand mining

BARIPADA: Raruan police and officials of Sukruli tehsil on Sunday imposed Section 144 of CrPC around Khairi-Bhandan river bed to

been imposed at Oskipal and Gambharipal on the banks of the river. The two locations, in the middle of Raruan and Sukruli blocks,



check illegal sand mining and put up a red flag to warn the people from entering the area. The restriction has

for lifting of sand. Apart from this, lack of vigilance has emboldened the sand mafia who operate with impunity in the areas. Locals, who said the illegal sand mining has been causing erosion of river banks and also affecting farmland, alleged they frequently receive threats from mafia. They said the local administration had been informed of the mafia's illegal activities. In a bid to check the activity, the district

administration imposed the restriction. Sukruli tehsildar Jyotshna Rani Nayak and Raruan IIC Dayanidhi Das visited the sites to put the red flag on Monday. Das said locals are aware of the section 144 of CrPC imposed in the area. If anyone is found indulging in illegal sand mining on the river bed, criminal proceedings will be initiated against him. The restrictions shall remain in force until further orders.

## Assam Police officer, govt doctors arrested for cover-up of tribal girl's rape, murder

GUWAHATI: A senior officer of the Assam Police and three doctors of a state-run hospital were arrested in Darrang district for allegedly covering up the rape and murder of a 13-year-old tribal girl, police said on Tuesday.

The then additional superintendent of police of Darrang Rupam Phukan was arrested for allegedly taking a bribe from the accused, said a statement issued by the state CID.

Three doctors of the Mangaldai Civil Hospital -- Arun Chandra Deka, Ajanta Bordoloi and Anupam Sharma -- who had conducted the first post-mortem examination on the victim's body were arrested for "several commissions and omissions", it said. The girl was found dead in June at a house in Dhula police station area where she worked as a domestic help. The main accused, Krishna Kamal Baruah -- the owner of the house, was ar-

rested and is at present in judicial custody. Phukan, an Assam Police Service officer who was sus-

three doctors had written in their report that there were "no injuries except the ligature mark", and had "not men-

"The doctors have clearly conspired to cause disappearance of the evidence with an intention to screen the offender



ended earlier, had allegedly received Rs 1.5 lakh as bribe from the kin of the accused through the then officer-in-charge of Dhula police station Utpal Bora, the CID said. He had tried to "screen" the accused person, it said. The houses of Phukan and then SP of Darrang Rajmohan Ray are also being searched, it added. Ray was earlier suspended, while Dhula's then officer-in-charge was arrested. The CID said that the

tioned about the continuations on the skull and the neck which were clearly brought out during the second post-mortem" of the body. The second post-mortem, which was conducted after the body was exhumed on August 25, found that the death was "due to homicidal strangulation and not suicide". The CID said no videography was done, and no proper procedure was followed during the first post-mortem examination.

and also to frame an incorrect record to save the accused," it said. The CID had taken over the investigation after the intervention of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma who visited the girl's house on August 12 and met her family. The girl's family alleged that Dhula's then OC had put pressure on them to not file a complaint over the death. The CID had filed a detailed charge sheet in the case on September 25.



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## Mahindra Group joins hands with Gates Foundation to support women's empowerment in India

NEW DELHI: Mahindra group has inked a memorandum of understanding with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support women's economic empowerment in India.

million women annually from 2026. The partnership will work in the area of gender equality, focused on programmes enabling women's economic empowerment targeted towards

change in the lives of our communities. Together, we will create a collaborative platform that will provide holistic solutions to underprivileged women across the country leveraging

India's national vision for gender equality and women's economic empowerment. "It is exciting to see the ambitious goals of this partnership towards increasing women's workforce participation and



In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Mumbai-based diversified group said the two-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) marks a significant step towards achieving its environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitment of impacting one

underprivileged women. The scope will entail both organisations collaborating on joint programmes and with key stakeholders such as the government, institutions, NGOs, corporates, etc. "This partnership is core to our Rise philosophy of driving positive

the power of technology," Mahindra Group Managing Director & CEO Anish Shah said. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation India Country Office Director Hari Menon said the tie-up will help in accelerating the progress towards

building greater empowerment in the economy and in society," he added. Under the MoU, both organisations will work jointly to undertake research and analysis, implement programmes and measure outcomes, focused on advancing women's empowerment.

## Renault unveils sweeping overhaul for electric future

PARIS: French automaker Renault unveiled a sweeping overhaul on Tuesday in a bid to attract investors as it expands its electric vehicle business amid an accelerating market. Under the green revamp, Renault is to split its operations in two, with a new electric vehicle unit and a subsidiary for petrol, diesel and hybrid cars that will pair up with China's Geely.

The carmaker's flagship division following the reorganisation will be Ampere, which aims to produce a million electric vehicles by 2031, the



group said ahead of an investor day in Paris. The new division will employ around 10,000 staff in France. Renault is the latest automaker seeking to finance a shift towards electric.

The market for greener vehicles is expected to grow rapidly in response to consumers' worries about climate change, putting pressure on manufacturers to develop less polluting products.

The European Union last month agreed to phase out new CO<sub>2</sub>-emitting vehicles by 2035, a move set to turbo-charge the production of electric prototypes on the continent. Renault follows the likes of US automaker Ford and Germany's Volkswagen.

The latter launched its premium sports brand Porsche on the stock market in September to finance its investment in electric, connected and autonomous cars.

Ampere will produce the new Renault 5 and Renault 4 among other models in northern France and will target more than 30 per cent growth annually over the next eight years and break even by 2025.

Renault said it would list Ampere on the Euronext Paris stock exchange in the latter half of 2023 and invite investment but will retain "a strong majority".

The group -- in which the French state and carmaker Nissan each own 15 per cent -- has still to outline the part that its Japanese partner will play in the new electric division.

Financing electric drive

For hybrid and internal-combustion vehicles, Renault plans to combine its technological, manufacturing and research and development

activities with Chinese automaker Geely.

The 50-50 partnership with the Chinese group -- owner of Volvo -- will develop and produce engines, gearboxes and other components for hybrid and petrol and diesel vehicles.

It will employ 19,000 people across Europe, China and South America, and have 17 factories and five research and development centres.

Turnover for the division is expected to grow by four per cent by 2027, the group said.

"We are designing an agile and innovative organisation to manage the volatility and accelerated technological evolution of our time," said Renault chief executive Luca de Meo.

ALSO READ | New Kiger compact SUV from Renault India roars like a tiger

The group aims to see an operating margin -- a key profitability yardstick -- of above eight per cent in 2025.

Shares in Renault fell on the Paris exchange shortly after trading began on Tuesday, before regaining ground by mid-morning.

The group's financial targets are "more ambitious than expected" but "raise questions", analyst Tom Narayan of RBC said.

The company suffered a historic loss in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its recovery was destabilised by its withdrawal from Russia following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

In late July, Renault said that its decision to quit the Russian market had pushed it deep into the red in the first half of 2022.

Two months earlier, it had sold its 100-per cent stake in Renault Russia and its 68-per cent stake in AVTOVAZ.

But with its new revamp, Renault said it planned to resume paying shareholders a dividend next year for the first time since 2019.

The value of traditional car manufacturers pales in comparison to new players on the market specialising in electric vehicles such as Elon Musk's Tesla or Chinese firm BYD.

US giant Ford has taken similar steps, announcing the creation of the "Model E" electric subsidiary earlier this year.

Renault's sales of traditional internal-combustion vehicles are falling.

In the first nine months of 2022, hybrid and electric vehicles represented 38 per cent of the brand's registrations in Europe, a year-on-year increase of 12 per cent.

The separation of Renault's electric and conventional production has concerned trade unions after several waves of job cuts.

## IOC, HPCL, BPCL loss at Rs 2,749 crore in Q2; total loss in H1 reaches Rs 21,201 crore

NEW DELHI: State-owned oil marketing companies IOC, BPCL and HPCL posted a second consecutive quarterly loss totalling Rs 2,748.66 crore in July-September as a one-time LPG payout by the government could not mask the losses from petrol and diesel prices freeze. According to stock exchange filings by the three fuel retailers, the losses were due to erosion in the marketing margin on



petrol, diesel and domestic LPG.

The losses would have been higher but for the Rs 22,000 crore, a one-time government grant was paid to make up for losses incurred on selling cooking gas LPG at rates below cost in the last two years.

Losses were despite robust refining margin extending into the second quarter.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), which are supposed to revise petrol and diesel prices daily in line with cost, have not changed rates for record seven months in a row.

IOC on October 29 reported a net loss of Rs 272.35 crore for the July-September quarter, which came on the back of Rs 1,995.3 crore loss in the previous three months.

On November 3, HPCL reported a loss of Rs 2,172.14 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal, on the back of its highest-ever quarterly loss of Rs 10,196.94 crore in April-June. BPCL on Monday posted a loss of Rs 304.17 crore in July-September, according to a company's stock exchange filing. In the first quarter, it posted a loss of Rs 6,263.05 crore. The combined loss for the first half of the current fiscal year that began on April 1 now stands at Rs 21,201.18 crore -- the highest ever for any six-month period including the era when petrol and diesel prices were regulated and the government used to give subsidies to the three retailers. During July-September, IOC accounted for Rs 10,800 crore LPG subsidy received from the government after the quarter had ended while HPCL booked Rs 5,617 crore. BPCL got a Rs 5,582 crore one-time grant.

Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had last week indicated that his ministry will seek assistance from the finance ministry to cover the losses incurred on holding petrol and diesel prices since the Ukraine war to help the government fight inflation.

"OMCs (oil marketing companies) still have under-recoveries on diesel," he had told reporters on November 2 when asked if there is a price reduction in the offing in line with softening international oil prices.

Domestic retail rates were put on hold at levels which are lower than the current international oil price of USD 97.75 per barrel.

The under-recovery -- the difference between the retail selling price and the international rate -- currently is about Rs 27 per litre on diesel but the actual cash loss (the loss based on the actual cost of procurement of crude oil and turning it into fuel) is about Rs 3-4 per litre.

Puri had said oil companies moderated prices during extreme volatility to help consumers.

Asked if his ministry will seek financial assistance

'Bharat Jodo Yatra' had no impact in Dhamnagar bypoll

Continued from page-1

Mishra admitted that the party's performance in the bypoll disappointed him. The result of the Brajrajnagar bypoll had raised some hopes, but in Dhamnagar the party could not even poll half of what it had got in the 2019 elections.

The CLP leader said the party leadership should immediately analyse the result and take corrective actions. "The leadership should not remain silent and let the party again slide back to zero," he added.

However, president of Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Sarat Pattanayak said there was almost no Congress organisation in the constituency.

7 NSUI activists taken into preventive custody

Bhubaneswar: The city police took at least seven activists of National Students' Union of India (NSUI) into preventive custody for attempting to protest close to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's cavalcade near Keshari Talkies in Bhubaneswar on Monday evening.

The protesters had gathered to demonstrate over the alleged lapses in the police investigation related to BJD Zilla Parishad member Dharmendra Sahoo's death and in Archana Nag's case.

along the lines of the LPG grant, Puri said, "emphatic yes. The question is will you try for it and my answer is yes," he said, refusing to discuss what relief will be sought. The government is ceased of the issue." The losses the three firms have posted in the first half compared with record earnings in the previous year.

IOC's April-September loss of Rs 2,264.88 crore compares with Rs 12,301.42 crore profit in the same period a year back and Rs 24,184.10 crore in the full 2021-22 fiscal (April 2021 to March 2022).

Similarly, BPCL's Rs 6,567.22 crore loss compares with Rs 6,033.82 crore profit in April-September 2021 and Rs 11,363.55 crore profit in 2021-22.

HPCL's Rs 12,369.08 crore loss in April-September is almost double the Rs 6,282.63 crore profit it had earned in the full 2021-22 fiscal.

In April-September 2021 it had a profit of Rs 3,718.51 crore.

Petrol and diesel prices are supposed to be revised daily but state-owned fuel retailers have not exercised their rights since April 6.

Rates have been on freeze since then, except on May 22 when prices were reduced following a cut in excise duty.

Prior to the April freeze, petrol and diesel prices had gone up by Rs 10 per litre each. Petrol currently costs Rs 96.72 a litre in the national capital and diesel is priced at Rs 89.62.

## BJD to rework strategy for Padampur bypoll

Continued from page-1

basing on its strength of self help groups (SHGs) under the Mission Shakti initiative did not work as expected. A senior party leader said the calculation based on SHG vote bank of the party did not work. "Fielding anybody as a candidate when there are strong contenders does not always work. It worked in Balasore, but failed in Dhamnagar," he said.

Moreover, the dominance of outside leaders, particularly nearby constituencies in the affairs of Dhamnagar during the bypoll also backfired. A majority of party leaders were of the opinion that there should be a course correction by the leadership so that these mistakes are not repeated.

After Dhamnagar loss, BJD to rework strategy for Padampur bypoll

The party should move ahead and concentrate on Padampur, but before that there should be a move for a consensus for selection of candidate. The BJD has lost three bypolls during its 22 years rule in the state. But the first two defeats at Talsara and Laxmipur in 2006 and 2008 respectively, was when the party was in coalition government in the state.

The Dhamnagar defeat is only defeat after 2009 when the party severed its ties with the BJD. Before Dhamnagar, the party had won Tirtol, Pipili, Balasore, Bijepur and Brajanagar byelections, all after 2019 Assembly elections. In three seats, sympathy wave played a major part where kin of deceased MLAs were given tickets.

This has led to a demand among the party leaders to give ticket for the Padampur seat to Tilottama Singh Bariha, wife of deceased MLA Bijay Ranjan Singh Bariha whose recent passing away has led to the bypoll. Another serious contender for ticket is an OAS officer Mahendra Badhei who is now serving as deputy collector at Nuapada. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is reported to have discussed with some key western Odisha leaders about the Padampur bypoll and selection of candidates on Sunday.

Suryabanshi Suraj urges Naveen to fulfill his Dhamnagar promise

Continued from page-1

unfinished agenda of my father."

On the support of the women self help group (SHG) members, Suraj said that the BJD has been using SHGs as a vote bank while the BJP is working for their economic empowerment. There is huge difference in the approach of the BJP and BJD towards the SHGs.

A computer engineer by profession and a politician by choice, Suraj said the circumstance made him to chose the latter. "The only advise of my mother after winning the election is to retain the goodwill my father earned during his political career," he said.

On this success of BJP, state BJP general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said, this is the beginning of a revolution. The rebellion within the BJD will be more prominent in the coming days. As power has gone to the head of BJD leaders and corruption rampant, people have made up their mind for a change.



## Newspapers should reflect issues of society: Naveen

BHUBANESWAR: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday said reflecting the issues of society which concern all section of society, especially the weaker section, is a critical factor that every newspaper should strive for. Addressing a function marking the golden jubilee year celebrations of Odia daily The Pragativadi along with the birth anniversary

time and has become the voice of the voiceless. "I am glad that following the footsteps of Pradyumna Babu, the newspaper has been making great endeavours to preserve Gandhian values in the society," he added. Addressing the function as guest of honour, Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Ranendra Pratap Swain said that



of its founder Pradyumna Bal, the chief minister said that the most essential factor which works for a newspaper is the trust it creates among its readers.

Stating that Pradyumna Babu was a man of strong determination and high principles, the CM said all through his life, he endeavoured to establish democratic values in society. His uncompromising struggle to establish probity in public life, freedom of speech and journalistic ethics will continue to inspire the journalists of the current and future generations, he added.

The chief minister said The Pragativadi, in its fifty years of existence, has stood the test of

Pradyumna Bal has created a special place for him in Odisha's history by his fight to establish democratic values and social justice. Leader of the Congress Legislature Party Narasingha Mishra said Pradyumna Babu had never compromised with his ideals in his life. Presiding over the function, trustee of Pradyuma Bal Memorial Trust and BJD MP Achyuta Samant said, The Pragavati has not strayed from the ideals espoused by Pradyuma Babu. Director of The Pragativadi, Monalisa Bal gave the welcome address while chairman Saswati Bal welcomed the CM. Birupaksha Tripathy, executive editor proposed the vote of thanks.

## Delhi Capitals set to release Shardul, Seifert, K S Bharat among others

NEW DELHI: Delhi Capitals are set to release five players including Shardul Thakur, K S Bharat and New Zealander Tim Seifert ahead of the player retention deadline on November 15. The other two likely

scored 120 runs at an average of 10.81 and a strike rate of 137.93. Delhi Capitals wanted to trade him to other teams but that deal could not go through. Considering that he comes with a high

source told PTI. New Zealand batter Seifert will have the option to go back into the auction pool, having played only two games for Delhi earlier this year, scoring 24 runs. With skipper Rishabh Pant keep-

play much in the previous season in 2021. Andhra batter Ashwin Hebbar did not get a game in the latest edition and the player getting released doesn't come as a surprise. U-19 World Cup-



to be released are Mandeep Singh and Andhra opener Ashwin Hebbar. Thakur, who was bought by Delhi Capitals for Rs 10.75 crore, had taken 15 wickets in 14 games in the 2022 edition but leaked close to 10 runs per over. With the bat, he

price tag, the franchise is set to release him ahead of the mini-auction in December. "Shardul is a premium all-rounder but his price tag was an issue. The others who are set to be released are Hebbar, Mandeep, Seifert and Bharat," an IPL

ing the wickets, Bharat could only be tried in a couple of games in which he could not make an impact with the bat. Punjab veteran Mandeep Singh looked out of sorts in the three games he played for the team, totalling 18 runs. He also did not get to

winning captain Yash Dhull, who could not get a game last season, is set to be retained by the franchise. Delhi finished fifth out of 10 teams in 2022 after performing consistently to make the playoffs for the previous three seasons.

## World Cup ambassador from Qatar denounces homosexuality

BERLIN: An ambassador for the World Cup in Qatar has described homosexuality as "damage in the mind" in an interview with German public broadcaster ZDF only two weeks before the opening of the soccer tournament in the Gulf state, highlighting concerns about the conservative country's treatment of gays and lesbians.

Former Qatari national team player Khalid Salman told a German reporter in an interview that being gay is "haram," or forbidden in Arabic, and that he has a problem with children seeing gay people. Excerpts of the tele-

vision interview were shown Monday on the ZDF news program Heute Journal. The full interview, which is

lected as a host by FIFA in December 2010. Concerns about LGBTQ tourists attending the World Cup have also

glish, which is simultaneously dubbed into German in the TV segment. "The most important thing is, everybody



part of a documentary, will be shown Tuesday on ZDF. About 1.2 million international visitors are expected in Qatar for the tournament, which has faced criticism and skepticism ever since the gas-rich emirate was se-

been expressed for a long time. In the interview, Salman also said that homosexuality "is a spiritual harm." "During the World Cup, many things will come here to the country. Let's talk about gays," Salman said in En-

will accept that they come here. But they will have to accept our rules." The interview was cut short by a media officer of the World Cup organizing committee after Salman expressed his views on homosexuals, ZDF reported.

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