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Over 50 Killed Or Injured In Israeli Attack On Gaza Refugee Camp: Hamas

Gaza: More than 50 Palestinians were killed or injured in an Israeli military operation in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, according to the Hamas-run media office on Monday. The office described the Israeli army's actions as a "horrific, brutal crime," claiming that the camp was stormed by over 17 tanks, bulldozers, military vehicles, and dozens of heavily armed soldiers, supported by drones. The statement said that the casualties were all civilians, including more than half women and children. It also reported that over 20 housing units were destroyed, as well as significant damage from shelling and explosions.

Shyam Benegal Passes Away At 90

Mumbai: Shyam Sunder S. Benegal, a multiple National Award winner and among the pioneers of 'parallel cinema' - with silver screen classics like "Junoor", "Ankur", "Manthan", "Zubeida" and "The Making of the Mahatma" - passed away after a long battle with a kidney disease, his family said here on Monday. A second-cousin brother of the late legend, actor-film-maker Guru Dutt, Benegal was 90 and breathed his last at a private hospital in Mumbai. He is survived by his wife Nira and their daughter Pia.

Major Fire Razes Warehouse

BHUBANESWAR (Correspondence): A major fire broke out this evening at a warehouse in the Satyanagar area of Bhubaneswar, causing damage worth lakhs. As per reports, locals first spotted the fire at the pressure cooker warehouse but were unable to extinguish it because the facility was closed. Eyewitnesses said that the flames had engulfed the entire godown within a few minutes while the locals promptly informed the fire department, and two fire tenders arrived at the scene. As of the latest updates, efforts to control the fire were still ongoing and the fire personnel have deployed a robotic fire fighter to control the blaze.

EAM Jaishankar To Visit US Ahead Of Trump's Second Term

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar will visit the United States of America from December 24-29, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated on Monday. "He will be meeting counterparts to discuss key bilateral, regional and global issues. During the visit, EAM will also chair a conference of the Consul Generals of India in the USA," mentioned a statement issued by the MEA. The significant visit takes place before US President-elect Donald Trump takes the oath of office to start his second term on January



20. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had dialled Trump and said that he is looking forward to working closely together once again with the Republican Party leader who emerged victorious in the Presidential elections by defeating his Democratic Party rival Kamala Harris. "Had a great conversation with my friend, President

Donald Trump, congratulating him on his spectacular victory. Looking forward to working closely together once again to further strengthen India-US relations across technology, defence, energy, space and several other sectors," PM Modi, among the first foreign leaders to congratulate Trump on his election triumph, posted on X.

3-Year-Old Girl Falls Into 700-Foot Borewell; Rescue Ops Underway

Jaipur: A 3-year-old girl on Monday fell into a 700-feet-deep borewell in Badiyali Dhani, located in the Kiratpura area of Rajasthan's Kotputli, an official said, adding that she is stuck at a depth of 150 feet. A rescue operation is currently underway to save her. Excavation work is being carried out near the borewell with the help of a JCB, while oxygen is being supplied to the girl through a pipe, an official said. The rescue team has observed the girl's movements through a camera lowered into the borewell, and her cries have also been recorded. The SDRF (State Disaster Response Force) is being assisted by the personnel of the NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) to rescue the girl. The incident happened on Monday afternoon at around 1.50 p.m., when the 3-year-old minor girl, Chetna Chaudhary, daughter of Bhupendra Chaudhary, was playing outside her house. She slipped and fell into the borewell. Hearing her cries, the family immediately alerted the police. Soon, a team of police and officials from the local administration rushed to the scene.

23 Palestinians Killed By Israeli Airstrikes Across Gaza

Gaza: At least 23 Palestinians were killed by Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian official news agency Wafa reported. At least nine people, including three children and two women, were killed, and some others were injured as a result of the Israeli bombing of the Musa bin Nusayr School on Sunday, which houses displaced people in the Al-Daraj neighborhood of Gaza City, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Wafa. Four more people were killed when the Israeli army bombed a vehicle on the Al-Jalaa Street in Gaza City, it added. Five citizens, including four children, were killed on Sunday morning in Israel's shelling of the Jabalia town, north of Gaza City, Wafa said in a separate report. In the southern Gaza Strip, two people were killed when the Israeli army bombed their apartment west of Khan Yunis, and three others died in the Israeli bombing of the city of Rafah, Wafa said. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a statement on Sunday that with the direction of intelligence, the air force conducted a "precise strike" on Hamas militants who were operating inside a command-and-control center in the Gaza Strip. The command-and-control center, which was embedded inside a compound that previously served as the Musa bin Nusayr School, was used by the militants to plan and execute attacks against IDF troops and the State of Israel, it added.

Defamation Case: Delhi HC Issues Contempt Notice To Trinamool MP Saket Gokhale

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Monday issued a notice to Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale over his failure to pay Rs 50 lakh damages to former diplomat Lakshmi Puri, wife of Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. A bench of Justice Manoj Jain was hearing a contempt plea filed by Lakshmi Puri against Saket Gokhale for the latter's "wilful and deliberate non-compliance" of the Delhi HC judgment. Issuing notice, Justice Jain-led Bench ordered Saket Gokhale to file an affidavit disclosing all his assets, properties, and bank accounts and deposits

within the next four weeks. The matter will be heard next on February 5 next year. In its July 1 decision, the Delhi High Court had ordered the Trinamool Congress leader to pay Rs 50 lakh damages in a defamation case filed by former diplomat Lakshmi Puri. It had also directed Saket Gokhale to publish an apology in a newspaper and on his social media platform "X" handle within four weeks for publishing wrong and unverified allegations. Further, the Delhi HC had directed that the apology tweet published on Saket Gokhale's X account should be retained for six months. In the latest plea, Lakshmi Puri contended that Saket Gokhale should be punished for his non-compliance and willful disobedience of the court's decision. The contempt plea added that Saket Gokhale was completely aware of the July 1 judgment passed against him, and he had also published related tweets on his social media handle. The defamation suit was filed following Saket Gokhale's successive X posts accusing Lakshmi Puri of purchasing property in Switzerland disproportionate to her income. He also named Hardeep Puri in the tweets.

Healthcare Makes Substantial Progress In India In 2024

New Delhi: From expanding health coverage to all elderly above 70 years of age to promoting cervical cancer vaccination among young girls to slashing customs duty on cancer drugs and improving several disease rates, India has made substantial progress in healthcare in 2024. In 2024, the Union government continued its emphasis on tackling non-communicable diseases and allocating funds for research in the healthcare sector. The Union Budget 2024-25's total outlay for the health sector was Rs 89,287 crore, amounting to 1.85 per cent of the budget expenditure. While it remains below the 2 per cent mark for health outlays from FY18 to FY22, it



is marginally up from 1.76 per cent, and Rs 79,221 crore in the revised estimate for budget 2023-24. It exempted customs duty on three crucial cancer drugs - Trastuzumab deruxtecan (for breast cancer), Osimertinib (lung cancer drug for EGFR mutation), and Durvalumab (for lung and biliary tract cancers). In addition, GST rates for these drugs were also slashed - from 12 per cent to 5 per cent; the maximum retail price (MRP) was reduced for these drugs. Further, the flagship health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) was expanded to provide health coverage to all senior citizens above 70 years irrespective of their income. The government has also worked towards medical education and infrastructure. In his address

to the nation on Independence Day, PM Narendra Modi promised to create 75,000 more medical seats in the next five years, from the current over one lakh in the country to reduce foreign dependence in medical education. The government added 5,150 more seats for MBBS courses in 2024. Over two lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have been established across the country to facilitate early diagnosis and treatment. More than 14,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras have also been launched across the country where medicines are available at an 80 per cent discount - a significant reduction in the cost of treatment for both poor and middle-class families. Further,

emphasising the vision of 'Swasth Bharat' (Healthy India) for 'Viksit Bharat 2047', the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) also introduced the Rashtriya Poshan Mission to enhance the nutritional status of children, pregnant women, lactating mothers, and adolescent girls. Parallely, India's digital health infrastructure has seen remarkable advancements through the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) initiative - a hassle-free method of accessing and sharing your health records digitally. Till December 22, more than 71.81 crore ABHA numbers have been generated and 46.53 crore health records have been linked with ABHA.

Former SC Judge V. Ramasubramanian Appointed As NHRC Chairperson

New Delhi: After being without a regular designated head for over six months, the Centre on Monday cleared the appointment of retired Supreme Court judge Justice V. Ramasubramanian as the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Under the Protection of Human Rights (PHR) Act, 1993, the apex human rights body consists of a Chairperson, five full-time members and seven deemed members. NHRC has been waiting for a full-time Chairperson since June 1, after former Supreme Court judge and the eighth Chairman of the rights panel, Justice

Arun Mishra, retired on completion of his tenure in office. Since then, NHRC has been functioning with just one member in five positions, Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, also the Acting Chairperson. As per Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the PHR Act, the Chairman and other members are appointed by the President upon the recommendation of a committee consisting of the Prime Minister (who serves as the committee's Chairperson), Home Minister, Leaders of the Opposition in both Houses of the Parliament, the Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha.



Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Monday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and discussed various important issues.

PM Modi Condemns Germany Market Attack, Centre Appoints Presiding Officers In 11 DRTs

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday condemned attempts to incite violence in society, highlighting that the teachings of Jesus Christ promote love, harmony, and brotherhood. While speaking at the Christmas event hosted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) at its headquarters here, PM Modi stressed the need to work together to embody the values taught by Jesus and strengthen this spirit of unity. He also condemned last week's terror attack at Germany's

Magdeburg Christmas Market, where an SUV drove into a crowd, resulting in the deaths of four women and a nine-year-old child, while injuring 205 people. Among the injured were seven Indians. PM Modi stressed the importance of prioritising human interests alongside national interests, stating that India's foreign policy reflects this approach. He highlighted India's humanitarian efforts during the Covid-19 pandemic, where the country helped over 150 nations by providing medicines



and vaccines. This approach, centred on human welfare, had a positive global impact, with countries like Guyana and several island nations expressing deep gratitude. "India went beyond its capabilities to help other countries during the Covid-19 pan-

demic, providing medicines to over 150 nations," he said. He also highlighted the evacuation of Indians stranded in war-torn nations, saying that no matter where they are or what crisis they face, today's India sees it as its duty to bring its citizens to safety. "We

brought back our nurses who got stuck in the Gulf countries. It was a very satisfactory moment for me when we safely brought Father Alexis Prem Kumar from war-torn Afghanistan, a decade back. He was stuck there for 8 months and was in hostage... for us, all these missions are not mere diplomatic missions but an emotional commitment to bring back family members," he said. The Prime Minister further expressed pride in George Koovakad's elevation as a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

New Delhi: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has cleared the appointment of Presiding Officers in 11 Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRTs). Following proposals of the Department of Financial Services, these persons have been appointed for a period of four years, or till attaining the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier. As per the notification of the Department of Personnel & Training, Chandrashekhar U and SV Gowamma will preside over Chennai's DRT-2 and DRT-3, re-

spectively, N Soma Sundar Coimbatore will preside over DRT Coimbatore and T Rajesh will preside over Bengaluru's DRT-2. Jhamman Ram Chauhan will preside over Aurangabad's DRT, Sreekala Suresh and Harish Kumar Kaushik will preside over Mumbai's DRT-1 and DRT-2, respectively. Pankaj Kumar Upadhyay will preside over Ahmedabad's DRT-2, Pravas Kumar Singh will preside over Lucknow's DRT, Vimal Gupta will preside over Jaipur's DRT and Vinod

Kumar Srivastava will preside over Ranchi's DRT, the notification added. Last month, a bench of CJJ Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar of the Supreme Court issued notice on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking direction to the Centre to fill vacancies in the DRTs across the country. Asking the Central Government to respond within five weeks, the CJJ-led Bench took note of the submission that the selection process commenced in September 2023 and thereafter.

Dilishaa Behera from Odisha Crowned KIIT NanhiPari Little Miss India 2024

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondence):: Dilishaa Behera from home state Odisha has been crowned as KIIT NanhiPari Little Miss India 2024 at a glittering show held at the KIIT campus here this evening. She was crowned in the presence of Femina Miss India World 2024 Nikita Porwal; 1st Runner-up Rekha Pandey and 2nd Runner-up Aayushi Dholakia. The KIIT NanhiPari winner takes home the crown and prizes worth Rs 21 lakh, including cash prize of Rs 3 lakh. Besides, the winner gets a 100 percent fee waiver at KIIT if she wishes to pursue her higher studies at the University. Style, talent, intelligence, elegance, and compassion defined the teenage sensations



as they took the ramp at the 24th edition of the beauty pageant. Twenty-three participants between 13-15 years were shortlisted for the semi-final from regional auditions held across the country. In the Grand Finale, Hemanya Burhagohain of Arunachal Pradesh was crowned as the first runner and Esha Dangi from Madhya Pradesh was adjudged as the 2nd runner-up. They received a cash award of Rs 1 lakh and Rs.

50,000 respectively, along with other gifts and substantial fee waivers for their studies at KIIT. Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Chief Patron of KIIT NanhiPari and Founder of KIIT and KISS; Malay Mohapatra, Patron along with the other guests, crowned the winners. Dr Samanta announced that the prize money for NanhiPari 2025 would be increased to Rs 10 lakh, Rs 7 lakh, and Rs 5 lakh respectively.

Bihar STF Arrested 123 Maoist Operatives This Year: Official

Patna: The Special Task Force (STF) of the Bihar Police has made significant progress in curbing Maoist activities in 2024, arresting 123 operatives, including 11 high-profile individuals with rewards on their heads, a top official said. Amrit Raj, Additional Director General (ADG) of STF, said that northern Bihar is free from Maoist activities. The STF has effectively eradicated Maoist movements in North Bihar, he said. ADG Amrit Raj credited this to the arrest of prominent operative Ram Babu Ram in 2023, which marked a turning point. "Security forces have restricted



Maoist activities to eight districts of Bihar, like Gaya, Nawada, Aurangabad, Rohtas, Kaimur, Munger, Lakhisarai, and Sheikhpura. We are making efforts to stop their revenue generation," he said. Amrit Raj pointed out that the STF destroyed opium plantations spanning 2,523

acres in these districts, targeting a critical source of Maoist funding. The STF has recovered Rs 56 lakh in extorted funds during raids across affected districts. "Under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 32 cases have been registered, leading to the attachment of movable

and immovable assets worth Rs 6.75 crore. We have also recommended to the Enforcement Directorate to attach properties valued at Rs 8.97 crore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). So far, assets worth Rs 4.9 crore have been successfully attached," Amrit Raj said. "We have constituted a dedicated team for the investigation of 18 specific cases involving Maoist operatives. Legal proceedings are progressing smoothly," he said. Under the surrender and rehabilitation programme, 22 Maoist operatives have surrendered before Bihar Po-

lice since 2020. In a bid to improve infrastructure for the security forces in the Maoist-affected districts, a total of 85 police station buildings were completed in the first phase. Under the second phase, 27 buildings were proposed, of which 25 have been constructed. The Bihar government has constructed 1,814 km of roads in Maoist-affected regions and established 93 mobile towers. 35 additional mobile towers are under construction to enhance communication in remote areas. The STF has established 11 Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) at strategic locations in deep forests and hilly terrain.

BJP Confirms Nitish Kumar as NDA's Face for Bihar Polls

NEW DELHI: The NDA will contest the assembly polls in Bihar next year under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary said on Sunday. "There is no confusion," he said during a press conference at the BJP headquarters when asked to comment on speculation that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) could re-think projecting Kumar as its leader in the polls. He was responding to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent interview with a news channel in which he was asked if the NDA could go to the polls in Bihar without declaring a chief ministerial candidate like it recently did with great success in Maharashtra. Shah, a former BJP president who is still regarded as the party's principal

strategist, had replied after a pause, "We will sit together and decide. We will let you know after we have made a decision." The cryptic response had led to furious speculation that the BJP could insist on not projecting Kumar in the 2025 polls. Dismissing the speculation, Choudhary said, "The NDA is working under the leadership of Nitish Kumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bihar and we will continue to contest elections under the leadership of both leaders." "In 2020, we contested after announcing (Kumar as the NDA's chief ministerial face) and, to date, we have considered Chief Minister Nitish Kumar only (as the NDA leader in Bihar). In future also, we will contest elections under the leadership of Nitish Kumar and Narendra Modi," the Bihar deputy chief minister added.

Congress slams govt over 'caramel popcorn GST' social media debate

New Delhi: Congress has criticised the government for the growing complexity of the GST system and said differing tax rates on popcorn has sparked confusion. It has called for a comprehensive overhaul to address 'widespread evasion and fraud'. The Congress has fiercely reacted to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's remarks on the different tax slabs for popcorn under the Goods and Services Tax (GST), calling it an example of "absurdity" and "complexity". The principal Opposition party lashed out at the government's handling of the tax system and coming up with three different tax slabs for popcorn under GST.

CISF Unveils New HR Policy To Make Force Future Ready



New Delhi: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has introduced a new human resource policy to nurture personnel as domain experts in cyber security and data science, aviation security, anti-drone solutions, weapons and tactics and fire management. The new HR policy supersedes the policy of 2017 and encourages force members to bring new knowledge, technology and skills. It will impact over 98 per cent of the Force members (out of a sanctioned strength of 1,94,053) over their entire service cycle of nearly 38 years, said a statement. As per the new HR policy, the pool of domain experts proposed to be created in the CISF

will train with the best institutions and be tasked with developing and implementing a world-class security solution. "International Security standards in different Sectors like aviation and port security will be identified for ensuring world-class Security solutions. A beginning has already been made by setting up the Internal Quality Control Unit in the Aviation Sector that will ensure new aviation technology solutions and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) security standards are incorporated in Airport Sector Security duties," as per a statement. Focusing on specialised skills, training Instructors, SSG Personnel, K9 Experts, Bandsmen, and Sports Personnel

will be imparted enhanced quality training through a rigorous process of selection and Annual Performance Review, it said. For the first time in CISF's history, the force is introducing choice-based postings. Each personnel will have the opportunity to list 10 preferred posting locations, giving them a voice in decisions that profoundly affect their lives and families. For personnel retiring within two years, the CISF will give them a posting out of three choices of location. "They will be given first priority in allotment of vacancies during the issue of posting orders. This will help them plan for marriage of children and post-retirement settlement issues," the statement said.

UPSC cheating case: Ex-trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar denied anticipatory bail



NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar's anticipatory bail request in a criminal case accusing her of cheating and misusing OBC and disability quota benefits during the civil services examination. "Anticipatory bail plea is dismissed. Interim protection from arrest is vacated," stated Justice Chandra Dhari Singh while delivering the verdict. Justice Singh highlighted that a strong prima facie case existed against Khedkar and emphasised the need for investigation to uncover the conspiracy. Calling it a clear instance of fraud against both a constitutional body and society, the judge underlined the seriousness of the matter. Khedkar allegedly misrepresented information in her 2022 UPSC Civil Services Examination application to claim reservation benefits. Delhi Police and the complainant, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), opposed her plea for pre-arrest bail. Senior advocate Naresh Kaushik and lawyer Vardhman Kaushik appeared on behalf of the UPSC. Khedkar has denied all accusations. In July, the UPSC began taking action against Khedkar, including filing a criminal case, for allegedly faking her identity to avail additional attempts in the civil services exam. The Delhi Police subsequently filed an FIR under the Indian Penal Code, the Information Technology Act, and the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act.

NTPC, GRIDCO, & CRUT Join Forces For Hydrogen Bus Initiative

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): Marking a significant development in eco-friendly transport solutions in Odisha, a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Monday between NTPC Limited, GRIDCO Limited and Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) for implementation of Green Energy Technologies in Odisha. According to an official press release, this collaborative effort aims to implement innovative green energy technologies in the state with a primary focus on revolutionizing the public transport system. The



MoU, effective for the next five years, outlines the roles and responsibilities of the three parties involved. NTPC will focus on hydrogen production, GRIDCO will ensure renewable energy supply, and CRUT will

manage the operations of the hydrogen-powered buses. The "Scheme Guidelines for implementation of Pilot Projects for use of Green Hydrogen in the Transport Sector", have been issued by the Ministry of New

& Renewable Energy (MNRE) under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. The pilot project, with an investment of Rs. 19.5 crores by Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), will facilitate the

transition from fossil fuel-based buses to eco-friendly hydrogen-powered buses. CRUT, under the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), Govt. of Odisha in association with GRIDCO (Energy Department, Govt. of Odisha) is spearheading the shift to a zero-emission policy. This initiative aims to reduce carbon emissions, enhance operational efficiency, and improve the quality of bus services in the state. This initiative aligns with Odisha Renewable Energy Policy 2022 and NTPC's diversification strategy into renewable energy, green hydrogen, and energy storage technologies.

Odisha's Migrant Worker's Body Returns From Tamil Nadu; Family Alleges Foul Play

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): The body of a migrant worker from Subarnapur district's Tarbha area, returned to his village on Monday, three days after his alleged murder in Tamil Nadu. The deceased is Dhableswar Seth, a resident of Tarbha. As per reports, Dhableswar was working at a private textile company named Raiguru Textile Private Limited at Veppadai in Tamil Nadu. His family was informed about his death on December 17. Meanwhile, Dhableswar family alleged that he was murdered on December 17, and his body was seized by local police for post-mortem. Due to the family's financial constraints, they were unable to bring Dhableswar's body back from Tamil Nadu. However, with the help of the district administration, his body finally arrived in his village on Monday. The village erupted in grief as Dhableswar's family and friends alleged foul play behind his demanding justice and compensation for their loss.

Congress To Hold Nationwide Protest Today

Bhubaneswar: The Congress party will organize nationwide protests tomorrow in response to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's comments about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, as announced by Congress MP Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka on Monday. At a press conference in the capital, the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee revealed that a petition demanding Shah's resignation will be submitted to President Droupadi Murmu through district collectors.

BJD Submits Memorandum To ECI Over Alleged Poll Data Discrepancies

New Delhi: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Monday raised concerns over "significant discrepancies" in vote counts during the 2024 Parliamentary and Assembly elections in Odisha, submitting a formal complaint to the Election Commission of India (ECI). A delegation, including all Rajya Sabha MPs of the BJD, visited the ECI headquarters to present their case. The party alleged inconsistencies between Form 17-C (used by presiding officers) and Form 20 (compiled by returning officers) and variations in vote counts between assembly constituencies and their cor-



responding parliamentary constituencies. The discrepancies ranged from 4,056 votes in Dhenkanal to 3,521 votes in Kandhamal and 2,701 votes in Balangir, according to their memorandum. Highlighting an unprecedented issue, the BJD claimed, "For the first time in Odisha's electoral history—and perhaps the country's—the

voting percentages reported at the close of polling day and those declared by the ECI two days later showed differences ranging from 15% to 30%." Addressing reporters, former MP and senior BJD leader Amar Patnaik stated that the memorandum was not politically motivated but aimed at ensuring greater transparency in India's elec-

toral process. "We have immense faith in the Election Commission's ability to conduct free and fair elections, and we are confident they will investigate this matter thoroughly," he said. When asked whether the discrepancies could be attributed to electronic voting machines (EVMs), Patnaik responded, "The differences could stem from machine errors, manual errors, process errors, or a combination of these factors." The BJD clarified that its complaint was not aligned with any opposition narrative questioning EVM reliability, nor was it seeking political leverage.

Odisha CM puts forth nine key proposals in pre-budget meeting

BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondence): Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has put forward nine key proposals for the overall development of Odisha during his participation in the pre-budget consultation meeting with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The Chief Minister emphasized the need for significant investment in basic infrastructure, particularly

in road and rail connectivity, economic corridors, port-based industries, and the tourism sector in Odisha. He urged the Union Finance Minister to ensure better allocation in the 2025-26 budget for the infrastructure sector. CM Majhi highlighted that the central government had approved several road and rail projects in the previous year's budget and stressed the importance of infrastructure

and urban development in Odisha during the upcoming budget. He noted, "Rapid urbanization will boost economic activities and create employment for the people." In addition, the Chief Minister requested central assistance to develop economic corridors and industrial townships in the western and southern regions of Odisha to foster growth. He also sought a special package of ₹10,000 crore

from the Centre to enhance the tourism sector in the state, stating, "Our state has immense potential in tourism." Furthermore, Majhi called for improved budgetary allocations for drinking water, health, and education sectors in Odisha. He also urged the Union Government to include 11 additional blocks in the aspirational block program for Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts.

Tigress Zeenat From Odisha's Similipal Spotted In West Bengal's Purulia

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): Odisha Forest Department personnel are monitoring the movement of tigress Zeenat which strayed from Odisha's Similipal Reserve Forest as been spotted in West Bengal's Purulia district. The three-year-old tigress brought from Maharashtra to Similipal Reserve Forest is fitted with a radio collar and is currently located in the Bandwan area of Purulia district. The tigress earlier strayed into West Bengal from Jharkhand and roamed around

in Jhargram and Paschim Medinipur district, West Bengal's Chief Wildlife Warden Debal Roy told the media. He said Forest personnel from Odisha are working with their Bengal counterparts in monitoring the movement of the big cat which has so far not shown any signs of aggression. The tigress had covered not less than 50 km after straying from Similipal in Odisha but such behaviour is normal for tigers who wander several kilometres in search of a new territory, the Forest official

said. "Probably the forest belt of neighbouring states, having similar habitat, became a corridor for her and she is trying to set up a new territory. We are at work to drive her away to Similipal through the same route or if she is captured, release her back into the reserve forest in Odisha. We are hopeful there is no man-animal conflict," the senior Forest official said. "The prey base is low in the areas where it is presently located. So, we hope she turns back to the reserve since there is more prey there," he said.

28th Board Meeting Of Rourkela Smart City Ltd Reviews Progress Of Ongoing Projects

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): The 28th Board of Directors meeting of Rourkela Smart City Ltd took place on Monday, chaired by Development Commissioner cum Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg. The meeting was attended by key officials including Principal Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Department Usha Padhee and CEO of Rourkela Smart City Limited Ashutosh Kulkarni. During the meeting, the Board reviewed the progress of ongoing projects, addressed significant challenges, and discussed strategies for operational maintenance and revenue generation. Also, key insights were shared on various facets of development, highlighting the commitment of the Rourkela



Smart City initiative to enhance urban development and improve the quality of life for residents. Regarding the Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC) project, the Board urged M/s BEL to accelerate their efforts to ensure timely completion. About the 'rOURkela One' project, a thorough review of the actions undertaken by Rourkela Smart City Ltd demonstrated satisfactory progress, particularly in

the construction of the City Command Center (CCC) building and the Tribal Museum building. The Board engaged in an in-depth discussion about the soft components of the Tribal Museum, focusing on content development, Tribal Huts, artefacts, and shrine crafts. In addition, updates on other ongoing initiatives, including the Big Recreation Park and Vedvyas Heritage Development, were also provided and discussed.

Former Odisha Crime Branch Chief Arun Bothra to Testify in Patnagarh Parcel Bomb Case

Bolangir (Correspondence): The Additional District Judge (ADJ) Court in Bolangir is set to record crucial testimonies today in the infamous Patnagarh parcel bomb case. Former Odisha Crime Branch chief Arun Bothra is expected to present video evidence, providing new insights into the case that has gripped the state since 2018. The Patnagarh parcel bomb incident, which occurred on February 23, 2018, resulted in the tragic deaths of Soumya Sekhar Sahoo and his grandmother, and left his wife, Reema Rani Sahoo, severely injured. The case has seen numerous twists and turns, with the involvement of high-profile investigators and extensive media

coverage. Arun Bothra, who led the investigation as the Inspector General of the Crime Branch at the time, is anticipated to be a key witness. His testimony is expected to include video evidence that could shed light on the motives and actions of the accused. Bothra's involvement in the case has been pivotal, and his insights are highly anticipated by both the prosecution and the defense. The court proceedings are being closely followed by the public and media, with many hoping for a resolution that brings justice to the victims and their families. The case has highlighted the need for stringent measures to prevent such heinous crimes and ensure the safety of citizens.

Seven Injured In Hit-And-Run Incident

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): A speeding car struck three motorcycles, injuring seven persons critically, near the Kesura Jagannath temple on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar on Monday. The driver, suspected to be under the influence of liquor, fled the scene. Eyewitnesses reported that the car first collided with an oncoming scooty, then crashed into a parked bike, and finally hit another motorcycle before speeding away. The injured, all local residents, were rushed to a nearby hospital.

SRC Directs District Collectors To Remain Prepared For Possible Heavy Rainfall During Christmas

Bhubaneswar (Correspondence): With the India Meteorological Department issuing a yellow warning for heavy rainfall alert to Ganjam, Gajapati, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Koraput districts during Christmas, the Special Relief Commissioner ordered the respective district collectors to keep administrative machinery ready to face the possible eventuality. "Districts under yellow warning to keep administrative machinery ready to face any eventuality", read the SRC order. Besides, SRC has asked people to keep watch on the weather and submit reports on the damage that occurred due to heavy rainfall immediately for the information of the government. Meanwhile, the IMD has issued a yellow alert for dense fog in five districts of Odisha for Tuesday. A warning has been issued for Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Angul and Kalahandi where visibility will drop below 50 meters.

Government of Odisha
Office of the Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division-I, Nabarangpur.
e-mail: serwngp@rediffmail.com

O-924

Letter No: 4811 Date: 18/12/24

e-Procurement Notice

Name of the work :- Building Works
Total No. of works :- 29 (Twenty Nine) No's.
Approx. Estimated Cost :- Rs. 1.69 lakhs to Rs. 10.17 lakhs
Class of Contractor :- "C" & "D" Class Contractor
Period of completion :- 01 (One) Calendar Month

Procurement officer	Bid Identification No:	No of works	Availability of tender online for bidding		Date & Time of Opening of Tender	
			From	To	Technical	Financial
Rural Works Division-I, Nabarangpur	EERWNGP - Online -06/2024-25	29 (Twenty Nine) No's.	26.12.2024 at 10.00 AM	02.01.2025 up to 03.00 PM		03.01.2025 at 11.00 AM

For Details can be seen from the Government website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

OIPR-25092/11/0006/2425

Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division-I,
Nabarangpur

EDITORIAL

Are you comparing yourself to others?

A flower does not think of competing with the flower next to it, it just blooms. There is also a saying, that the only person you should try to be better than is who you were yesterday. In a competitive world, where social media is a popular platform for news and views, we are tempted to constantly compare ourselves to others. We get bothered by what others think of us, and when we see their achievements, we feel inadequate. This is because we are not sufficiently aware of our own self-worth. The trouble with being preoccupied with the achievements of others is that we tend to ignore our own accomplishments. We don't grow grass by focusing on our neighbour's garden; we do it by nurturing our own. That is why she advocates self-acceptance, in which we love our past, because it has made us – with all the mistakes we have made – into a better, wiser and more courageous version of ourselves. By embracing our own story and the way we have grown from it, we change our mindsets, attitudes and the direction we take in life.

The measure the world uses today to gauge our successes is based on material achievements and peak performances and not on what we have overcome. People are endowed with many gifts. While one person may be a good writer, another may be a good cook, or an orator, mason or carpenter. The secret is to develop the talents we have and to put them to good use. If we are content with who we are, that is the best antidote to making comparisons. Serving others is yet another way of overcoming the tendency to make comparisons. When we serve others, we focus on our strengths and what we have to offer to the other. Service increases our value, both in our own eyes and in the eyes of others. When we serve, we do not focus on the accomplishments of others, but on our own talents and ability to reach out to them. Social media often makes us restless, unable to perceive the underlying reality of our own lives. We are challenged daily to discover our own unique path in life. The business world thrives on competition; it makes them manufacture better products at lower cost. Sports persons compete for titles and organisations compete to render better service. In the process, people do make comparisons. If we use the high standards set by others as a benchmark to improve our own act, there is no harm in making comparisons. But, if we use comparisons to switch lanes and to take on ourselves what we are not comfortable with, we may make a serious mistake. It is only when you recognise your own potential and strive to better yourself that you gain confidence and improve the quality of your actions.

Character and the language of virtues

Amongst educational thought leaders around the world, there is an increasing realisation that true, modern education must consist not just 'material education' we receive through classroom subjects, but also the holistic, character development of a child. Educators have a unique responsibility towards the moral empowerment of their students. This concept has traditionally been captured predominantly through 'moral education' classes in which ideas of morality and standards of conduct are discussed in abstract. There is recognition that this approach is insufficient for effecting meaningful moral development of children, and that "moral education" must be infused in the very teaching methodology of all educators.

By speaking to our students in a way that recognises their true character – rather than simply their academic achievement or 'marks' – all educators can be catalysts for the moral development of children. An exemplar methodology can be found in the "language of virtues" espoused by

Dr. Bijayalaxmi Bhuyan

educators and organisations such as The Virtues Project. It is often unrealistic to expect even the most innovative educators to perform new classroom practices or change their subject pedagogy when they already face immense pressure to complete their regular syllabus. The beauty of the language of virtues is that it can have a positive impact without time-consuming practice changes: simply through the language that we use, it is possible to establish a connection of love and trust that will support students in their moral development. As one sees students demonstrating their virtues such as patience, friendliness, or justice, they can be acknowledged for exhibiting these noble qualities. Likewise, as they are observed struggling to call on their virtues, they can be supported to recognise the virtues that they need to be called to. For example, instead of telling a child to "be quiet and listen to your classmate", we can invite them to

"be respectful when listening to what each person says". Students can also be guided to understand that they have the opportunity to uplift one another in every interaction they have amongst themselves, whether it be practising generosity and kindness in sharing stationery with a fellow student who has forgotten theirs, or helpfulness and humility in assisting a friend who is struggling with their exam preparation. Students can be encouraged to demonstrate moral leadership amongst their peers by striving to distinguish themselves by how virtuously they treat one another. Over time, a school environment of encouragement can be created that is based not only on academic success, but also the virtues latent in all of us. Learning to use the language of virtues is possible for any educator who sees value in doing so. The shift toward the language of virtues would advance moral education through a gradual cultural shift in schools, in which teachers and students alike are able to recognise each other for the virtues that all human beings possess.

God is Supreme Energy

God is Supreme Energy and the individual being is deluding power; He is the genuine, the individual being is but the shadow, the appearance, the delusion. Even I have to put on deluding power to come into your midst, like the policeman who is compelled to wear the dress of the thief so that he can get entry into the gang of thieves to apprehend them and bring them to book! The Lord cannot come down with His Supreme Energy unimpaired; He has to come with diminished splendour and limited effulgence, so that He can become the object of devotion and dedicated service. In this world, which is impermanent and ever transforming, the Immanent Power of the Lord is the only permanent and fixed entity. In order to realise the eternal and the true, one has perforce to attach oneself to that Source and Sustenance. There is no escape from this path. It is the destiny of one and all, irrespective of age or scholarship, clime or caste, sex or status. While proceeding along the road, you can watch your shadow falling on mud or dirt,

Dr. Dillip Kumar Moharana

hollow or mound, thorn or sand, wet or dry patches of land. You are unaffected by the fate of your shadow, is it not? Nor is the shadow made dirty thereby. It does not worry in the least where it falls or what it wades through. We know that the shadow and its experiences are not eternal or true. Similarly, you must get convinced that "you" are but the shadow of the Absolute; you are essentially not this "you" but the absolute itself. That is the remedy for sorrow, travail, and pain.

Everyone has to make their exit some day. That moment should not be a moment of anguish; one should depart gracefully, with a smile and a bow. In order to do that, a lot of preparation is necessary. To depart, leaving all that has been accumulated during a long lifetime, is a hard task; so prepare for it by discarding attachment to one thing after another from now on. You see many things

in dreams, and many things are acquired by you during dreams: power, pelf, status, reputation. But when you awake, you do not weep over the loss, even though for the duration of the dream all that was very real and gave you real satisfaction and joy. That was a "dream", you tell yourself; what prevents you from treating with similar nonchalance the possessions gathered during the waking stage of your life? Cultivate that attitude, and you can depart with a smile whenever the curtain falls on this dreamland stage. The mind must become the servant of the intellect, not the slave of the senses. It must discriminate and detach itself from the body. Like the ripe tamarind fruit, which becomes loose inside the shell, it must be unattached to this shell, this casement called body. Strike a green tamarind fruit with a stone and you cause harm to the pulp inside, but strike the ripe fruit and see what happens. It is the dry rind that falls off; nothing affects the pulp or the seed. The ripe aspirant does not feel the blows of fate or fortune; it is the unripe man who is wounded by every blow.

The Environmental Crisis in Odisha

Odisha, a state rich in mineral resources like coal, iron ore, bauxite, chromite, and manganese, has long been an industrial powerhouse. Its vast mineral wealth has powered economic growth, provided jobs, and fueled the country's steel, power, and manufacturing industries. Yet, this boom has come at a heavy price. The rapid and often reckless expansion of mining activities has led to widespread environmental harm-damaging ecosystems, polluting water and air, and putting the health of local communities at serious risk.

Today, Odisha is home to more than 150 operational mines, spread across its districts. From the sprawling coal mines of Angul to the iron ore pits of Keonjhar and Sundargarh, both public and private sector companies, including Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), Tata Steel, JSW Steel, and Vedanta, have set up shop. These mines play a crucial role in the state's economy, but the heavy price of this industrial progress is increasingly hard to ignore.

Environmental Clearances: A Paper Tiger
A common thread runs through almost all of Odisha's mines: while environmental clearances and mining plans are obtained, they are often reduced to meaningless formalities. According to locals and experts, the reality is far from the promises made on paper. Whether it's a mine owned by a state-run company or renowned private companies, environmental conditions are frequently ignored.

What's even more troubling is the role of Mine Developers & Operators (MDOs)-companies that sub-contract the actual mining work. These contractors often focus solely on profits and take little regard for the environmental consequences. Despite laws meant to protect air, water, and land, many mining operations continue to operate with minimal oversight, knowing that the chances of facing serious penalties are slim.

Swarup Mohanty

In recent years, the Supreme Court of India cracked down on illegal mining following the Shah Commission's findings, but the visible change on the ground is subtle. While mines now secure environmental clearances, the conditions attached to these clearances are routinely violated. This is largely due to the weak enforcement by state pollution control boards and other regulatory bodies, who fail to follow through on their monitoring responsibilities.

In many mining areas, a simple walk through the local villages is enough to reveal the reality: air pollution, dust, and toxic fumes are the order of the day, while regulatory compliance is largely ignored.

Sukinda: A Toxic Legacy
If there's one place in Odisha that encapsulates the devastating environmental cost of mining, it's Sukinda. Located in Jajpur District, Sukinda holds 98% of India's chromite ore deposits, and is home to one of the world's largest open-cast chromite mines. The toll it has taken on both the environment and the health of local residents is harrowing.

Mines in Sukinda continue to discharge untreated or partially treated wastewater into the surrounding environment, poisoning nearby rivers, streams, and even the groundwater. The process used to treat the wastewater-using ferrous sulphate to convert hexavalent chromium (a highly toxic and carcinogenic substance) into a safer form simply isn't enough. The volume of waste is too great, and the treatment process is inadequate, leaving much of the water still contaminated.

What makes things even worse is that the treatment process is often done on the cheap.

Mines use low-grade ferrous sulphate, which is far less effective in removing chromium. This cuts costs but also makes the treatment process even less efficient, meaning that hexavalent chromium continues to seep into the environment, contaminating local water bodies and posing a direct health risk to residents.

Locals, who rely on these water sources for drinking, washing, and farming, say that almost every water body in Sukinda now shows signs of contamination. Tests conducted on the water often reveal dangerously high levels of hexavalent chromium, and this silent contamination is affecting the health of entire communities. Skin diseases, respiratory problems, and waterborne infections have become alarmingly common in the region.

For the people of Odisha, the environmental destruction caused by mining is not just a matter of abstract concern-it affects their daily lives. Local farmers are seeing their lands turn barren due to dust pollution, while villagers suffer from breathing difficulties and other ailments linked to airborne contaminants.

The rivers, once lifelines for communities, are now little more than channels for toxic waste. Drinking water is becoming increasingly scarce and polluted, forcing families to rely on contaminated sources. The impact is most severe on children and the elderly, who are more vulnerable to diseases caused by contaminated water and poor air quality.

A Call for Sustainable Mining
While Odisha's mineral wealth cannot and should not be ignored, it is clear that the current approach to mining is unsustainable. To ensure that the state continues to benefit from its resources while protecting the environment and public health, a major shift in mining practices is necessary.

1. **Stronger Enforcement of Regulations:** The state must ensure that environmental laws are

enforced rigorously. This includes holding both public and private companies accountable for violations and conducting regular, transparent audits of mining operations.

2. **Improved Wastewater Treatment:** Mines, particularly those in Sukinda and other chromite-rich regions, need to invest in better treatment technologies. This would involve moving away from cheap, inefficient methods and adopting advanced filtration and treatment systems that can completely remove harmful toxins from wastewater before it is discharged.

3. **Community Engagement:** Local communities must be actively involved in decisions about mining projects that affect them. Transparent dialogues, proper compensation, and initiatives to mitigate health impacts can help build trust and ensure that mining benefits everyone-not just the companies.

4. **Promote Sustainable Mining:** Odisha should encourage the use of green technologies in mining, such as closed-loop water systems and eco-friendly mining equipment. This would help reduce the environmental footprint of mining activities.

5. **Focus on Rehabilitation:** Rehabilitation of mined areas must be a priority. As mining depletes natural resources, companies must be obligated to restore affected land and provide alternatives for affected communities, including employment and agricultural support.

Odisha's mineral wealth is undeniably important, but it cannot come at the expense of the health and future of its people and the environment. A more sustainable and responsible approach to mining is urgently needed-one that balances economic growth with environmental stewardship. If we don't act now, the legacy of Odisha's mining industry will be one of pollution, displacement, and irreparable damage to both the land and its people.

Special meeting on January 10 for no-confidence motion against Kirmira Panchayat Samiti Chairperson

Jharsuguda (Correspondent):A special meeting to address no confidence motion against Kirmira Panchayat Samiti chairperson will be held on January 10 at 10:30 AM at the Kirmira Panchayat Samiti Hall. Sub-collector Sabyasachi Panda confirmed the schedule following prolonged legal disputes. The matter stems from a no-confidence motion filed on September 13, 2023, signed by nine association members and the Sarpanch. However, delays in convening a meeting to

deliberate on the motion led to dissatisfaction among members. Subsequently, Samiti member Savita Agarwal escalated the matter to the High Court. The High Court directed the district administration to expedite the process as per the Panchayat Samiti Act. Initially, the Deputy District Collector scheduled a special meeting for November 18, but the court later intervened, rejecting a petition filed by Kirmira Panchayat Samiti chairperson Krishnapriya Sahu. The court

ordered the cancellation of the earlier meeting and instructed the administration to set a fresh date. As per the High Court's directive, the Deputy District Collector has now rescheduled the meeting for January 10. PA ITDA Sanjib Patel will preside over the proceedings on behalf of the district administration. This meeting is expected to bring clarity and resolution to the allegations, marking a significant step in addressing governance issues within the Panchayat Samiti.

Block level Collector & S.P. joint grievance hearing camp held at Birmaharajpur

SUBARNAPUR (Correspondence): District Chief Development Officer Zilla Parishad Ashwini Kumar Meher, Additional District Magistrate Rajendra Majhi and Additional Superintendent of Police K.K.Hari Prasad joined the Joint Grievance Hearing Camp and various objections and problems of the public. Received registered 51 complaints out of



which 39 individual complaints were received and 12 Collective applications have been received. The ap-

plications have been given to various departmental officers concerned to resolve the applications within the

stipulated time. In the joint grievance hearing camp held under the supervision of BDO Birmaharajpur Priyadarshini Mirdha, Sub Collector Birmaharajpur Lalatendu C along with Tehsildar Birmaharajpur Punam Mahapatre, various district level officers, tehsils and Block Level Officer, Journalist Major present.

Joint Public Grievance Hearing Camp Resolves Issues in Laikera

Jharsuguda (Correspondent): A Joint Public Grievance Hearing Camp was held at the Laikera Block Office Meeting Hall under the chairmanship of District Collector Aboli Sunil Naravane. The session was attended by Superintendent of Police Smit P Parmar, Zilla Parishad CEO Prabeer Kumar Nayak, Sub-collector Sabyasachi Panda, Chief Medical and Public Health Officer Dr. Mahesh Mohan Panda, and other district-level officials, including Group Development Officer George Dungdung and Assistant collector Umakant Pradhan. During the camp, a total of 17 complaints were lodged, comprising 14 individual and three collective grievances. The collective issues raised included granting access to tree plantations in Sahaspur, curbing gambling activities in Laikera block and surrounding rural areas, and ensuring food distribution to migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic in Aitapalli. Individual grievances were also addressed, with prompt directions issued to concerned authorities for speedy resolution. In a significant gesture, two individuals were provided medical assistance of ₹10,000 each from the Red Cross Fund during the camp. The event served as an important platform for addressing public concerns and ensuring the accountability of local administration.

Odisha Solar Investor Conclave: IREDA Sanctions Over Rs. 3,000 Crore; CMD Commits Support for State 10 GW RE Target

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondent): Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman and Managing Director, Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA), delivered a special address at the Odisha Solar Investor Conclave, organized by GRIDCO, in Bhubaneswar today. Shri Das emphasized the pivotal role of accessible financing in accelerating renewable energy (RE) projects. He highlighted IREDA's unique position as a competitive financier with fully paperless, digitized and borrower-friendly operations, fostering seamless support for green energy



projects. CMD, IREDA reaffirmed its commitment to Odisha's ambitious renewable energy target, with the state setting its visions on achieving 10 GW capacity by 2030. Highlighting its support, IREDA has already sanctioned over Rs. 3,000 crores for green

energy projects across Odisha, covering solar, hydro, ethanol and renewable energy manufacturing sectors. Shri Das also spotlighted Odisha's potential to emerge as a leading solar power producer and a hub for solar equipment manufacturing. Sharing IREDA's national contributions, he noted that the company has sanctioned over 2.08 lakh crore and disbursed 1.36 lakh crore towards renewable energy projects, positioning itself as a catalyst for market formation in emerging RE technologies such as ethanol, EV fleet financing, pumped storage hydropower and green ammonia, etc.

ICAR-CIFA celebrated Kisan Diwas as a part of Swachhata Pakhwada

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondent): ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar, celebrated Kisan Saman Diwas, also known as National Farmer's Day, on December 23, 2024, at Barijanga village, Baliaanta block, Khordha district, Odisha. The event, which commemorates the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister and a staunch advocate for farmers, witnessed the enthusiastic participation of approximately 150 beneficiaries, including 110 women and 40 men farmers. This celebration is a part of ICAR-CIFA's Swachhata Pakhwada observance from December 16 to 31 and was organized this year in collaboration with KVK, Khordha. A team of ICAR-CIFA and KVK scientists, including Dr. G. S. Saha, Dr. U. L. Mohanty, Mr. S Singh, and Mrs. H. Banu, actively engaged with the farmers, addressing their challenges in fish farming. They emphasized adopting organic farming practices for agriculture, horticulture, and aquaculture, and encouraged women to play an active role in farming, particularly in biofloc-based fish farming.



SOA PRESENTED GOLDEN STAR ICON AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondent): Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) has been presented the Golden Star Icon Award for 2024 after being adjudged the 'Leader in Educational Development and Social Impact' by Aviva Keeon at a function held in New Delhi on Saturday. Mr. Pritam Nayak, Officer-on-Special Duty to the SOA Founder President Prof. (Dr.) Manojranjan Nayak received the award on SOA's behalf. The program was graced by Acharya



Pramod Krishnan, Kalki Pithadhishwar, Shri Kalki Dham, Mr. Sunil Sharma, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Anil Agarwal, former MP, Ms. Satya Sharma, Municipal Councillor,

Accidents are increasing due to grass on the main road

SUBARNAPUR, (Correspondent): --- Narayanpur Rural Development Department road from Bishimunda RMC Chhak to Mallikmunda, Gadia of Sonepur block has become accident prone. Although the road was wide, it has now become narrow due to grass, especially at the roundabout where the grass is two to three feet tall. It is not possible to see the vehicle coming from the opposite direction. So there is a lot of face-to-face collision. As the road is very bumpy, sometimes the driver loses control and goes to the side of the road causing an acci-



dent. Especially the road near Gadia village has narrowed due to grass on both sides. As a result, in the evening of October 29, a young man lost his balance and died because he could not see the traffic coming from the opposite direction. Similarly, Sialjhuri Chhak No. 57 connects Sonepur-Balangir National Highway through Kasurpali,

Gadia, Deuli, Talfabasi, Mahule from Kainful Chhak on Arjunpur-Burda road. Deciduous forests have been created on both sides of the road, reducing road hazards. So both the two roads are roads under Rural Development Department. Public of the area have demanded that the department clean it up immediately.

Over 40 Odia Workers Stranded In Maldives Seek Urgent Rescue

Bhubaneswar (Correspondent): A group of laborers from Odisha, who were allegedly assaulted at Renaatus Company in the Maldives, have appealed to the Odisha government for help in rescuing them. Some of the workers have shared videos on social media, urging for assistance. According to reports, 15 workers from the Khallikote area, along with over 40 others from Odisha, had gone to the Maldives about six months ago to support their families. They were paid their salaries for the first month, but after that, the company stopped paying them. When they demanded their wages, they were allegedly assaulted. The workers also claim that the company cut off the electricity in their rooms and made it difficult for them to get food. In the video, the workers can be seen expressing their distress. One of the laborers said, "We are working at Renaatus Company, and the agent, Kishor Barik, from Patrapur village, took 35,000 to 40,000 rupees from each of us to send us here for work. We have faced many problems since arriving. While we received one payment on time, the others have been delayed, and when we go to the office to ask for our money, they threaten us. If anyone tries to take action, they assault us and even cut off the electricity in our rooms. We are now forced to spend our own money to buy food, as the company is not providing for us." In the video, another laborer pleads, "Please help us and send us back safely to our village." Another worker added, "We spoke to our village Sarpanch, who advised us to post this video on social media. He also promised to take the matter to the labor commission department with our family members and file a complaint."



'GRAND HOME COMING' OF EX-STUDENTS HELD AT SOA

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondence): Alumnis of an educational institution should keep in touch with their alma mater and always strive to contribute so that its standard could go up, Prof. Damodar Acharya, Chairman of the Advisory Committee of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) here said. "After passing out of the institute, the student's relationship continues with the institution and the student has a responsibility towards his or her alma



mater," Prof. Acharya, former Chairman of AICTE and former Director of IIT-Kharagpur, said while addressing a gathering of SOA alumnis on Saturday. The gathering, dubbed as 'Grand Home Coming', was also addressed by Dipanwit Dash mohapatra, actor and former student of the Institute of Technical Education and Research (ITER), faculty of engineering and technology of SOA, as guest of honour. SOA Vice-Chancellor Prof.

Pradipta Kumar Nanda, presided. Prof. Acharya described himself as a 'former student' of SOA recalling that he had received an honorary doctorate from the university at its first convocation. Students who had passed out from the university since 2001 at-

tended the event organised by SOA Alumniz. Mohapatra, who passed out of ITER in 2013, said that the foundation of his career in acting had been laid while he was a student of SOA. He was an active member of SOA drama club

'Toneelstuk' and it led him to choose a career in acting. Dashmohapatra's role in the Odia film 'Daman' was highly acclaimed and he has since acted in other films including in 'Pratiksha'. He has won several accolades for his acting skills. Addressing

Allu Arjun's House Vandalised by Protestors in Hyderabad

Hyderabad police have detained six individuals who claimed to be affiliated with the Osmania University Joint Action Committee (OUJAC). They unlawfully entered Telugu actor Allu Arjun's residence in Jubilee Hills, where they vandalized flower pots and other property. The Hyderabad DGP announced that a case has been registered against these six individuals and others involved in the incident, with strict legal action being initiated against all of them. According to the DCP of West Zone, the incident occurred around 4:45 PM when a group of individuals holding placards rushed to Allu Arjun's residence. They began shouting slogans, and one person climbed over the property's boundary wall and started throwing tomatoes. When the security staff confronted them and urged them to come down, an altercation ensued. The protesters eventually climbed down, physically assaulted the security staff, and damaged several flower pots along the ramp. Upon receiving reports of the disturbance, the Jubilee Hills police arrived at the scene and took the six individuals into custody. They all assert their connection to the Osmania University Joint Action Committee (OUJAC). The intruders not only climbed the wall but also entered the grounds, damaging ornamental plants while chanting slogans, which created a tense atmosphere. They protested against the actor, demanding justice for a woman who tragically died in a stampede at a movie theater earlier this month during a screening of Allu Arjun's latest film, 'Pushpa-2'. Law enforcement arrived shortly after and detained the protesters.



Bake dessert

Ingredients

1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs
 ½ cup packed brown sugar
 ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
 ½ cup butter, melted
 226.8 gm cream cheese
 2 teaspoons lemon juice
 475 ml heavy whipping cream
 ½ cup white sugar
 1 can cherry pie filling or fresh berries

Method

Mix graham cracker crumbs, brown sugar, and cinnamon in a bowl. Now to it, add melted butter and combine. Press the mixture into the bottom of an 8- or 10-inch springform pan. Let it chill until the mixture becomes firm.

Whisk cheese cream and lemon together until it becomes very soft. To it then add whipping cream and use an electric mixer to beat. Add sugar till the mixture becomes stiff.

Next pour atop the chilled base that was kept aside earlier then again refrigerate for hours or overnight.



You can serve with the toppings of your choice- from fresh fruits to biscuit crumbs.

10 vegetarian sources of Vitamin B12 you must include in the diet



Vitamin B12 or cobalamin is an important nutrient for production of red blood cells, DNA and brain and nerve function. Vitamin B12 binds to the protein in

the foods we eat. It is naturally found in animal foods and vegetarians are at an increased risk of its deficiency. Dairy items like milk and yoghurt, and fortified foods must be consumed by vegetarians for sufficient levels of Vitamin B12. Fish, shellfish, liver, red meat, eggs, poultry, milk, cheese and yoghurt are primary sources of Vitamin B12. The deficiency of this Vitamin B12 can lead to shortness of breath, headaches, indigestion, loss of appetite, palpitations, trouble with vision, memory issues, numbness, weakness, diarrhoea and other neurological issues

While animal products are the richest sources of Vitamin B12, there are several vegetarian options that can help you meet your daily needs. Dr Rohini Patil, MBBS & Nutritionist Founder Of Nutrace Lifestyle shares a list of foods that vegetarians can have to meet their Vitamin B12 requirement.

Top vegetarian sources of Vitamin B12

1. Fortified cereals are a convenient source of vitamin B12 for vegetarians. Consuming fortified cereals regularly provides a direct and good intake of this essential nutrient, supporting nerve function, DNA synthesis, and red blood cell formation.

2. Fortified fruit juices are a good source of vitamin B12 for vegetarians. Drinking fortified juices can help maintain adequate B12 levels, supporting overall health and preventing deficiency-related issues such as anaemia and neurological problems.

3. Soymilk fortified with vitamin B12 serves as a dairy-free alternative for vegetarians. Incorporating unsweetened soymilk into the diet ensures a consistent intake of this essential nutrient, vital for energy metabolism and maintaining healthy nerve function.

4. Plain yogurt provides vegetarians with a source of vitamin B12. Including yogurt in the diet helps meet B12 requirements, supporting red blood cell production and promoting optimal neurological function.

5. Cow's milk naturally contains vitamin B12, making it an essential component of a vegetarian diet. Drinking milk regularly ensures an adequate intake of B12, which is crucial for DNA synthesis and preventing deficiency-related health issues.

6. Swiss cheese is a good source of vitamin B12 among dairy products. Incorporating cheese into meals helps maintain optimal B12 levels, supporting cardiovascular health and promoting overall well-being.

7. Eggs are a versatile source of vitamin B12 for vegetarians. Including eggs in the diet provides a significant amount of B12, essential for neurological function and preventing deficiency-related symptoms such as fatigue and weakness.

8. Nutritional yeast fortified with vitamin B12 is a flavorful ingredient commonly used in vegetarian cooking. Adding fortified nutritional yeast to dishes ensures a direct intake of B12, supporting red blood cell formation.

9. Dried seaweed like nori contains natural vitamin B12. Consuming nori regularly provides vegetarians with an alternative source of B12, essential for DNA synthesis and preventing neurological disorders associated with deficiency.

10. Fermented foods like tempeh, miso, and sauerkraut may contain small amounts of vitamin B12 due to bacterial synthesis during the fermentation process.

10 wonderful benefits of stretching every day for your body and mind

Sometimes the smallest of movements can help reap great rewards if done regularly and mindfully. Stretching for instance on a daily basis can work wonders for your flexibility, posture, energy levels, and even heart health. In today's modern lifestyle, stretching not only helps release stress, but also reverse ill effects of sedentary lifestyle. Stretching requires putting a body part in a certain position that helps in the lengthening and elongation of the muscle or muscle group, enhancing its flexibility and elasticity. Daily stretching can make your body more flexible, increase your range of motion, improve your posture, keep your muscles agile as you age and make you feel happier, more confident and relaxed.

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2. Better blood circulation: By widening blood vessels, stretching promotes blood circulation, which makes it possible for muscles to remove waste products and receive nutrients more effectively. Improved circulation aids in a quicker recovery from exercise or injury in addition to providing nutrition to the tissues. Enhancing blood flow also benefits general cardiovascular health, which enhances physical and mental well-being.

3. Lowers muscle tension: By loosening up tense muscles, stretching helps people relax and feel less tense.



4. Relieves stress:

Endorphins are naturally occurring stress relievers that are released as you stretch. Stretching encourages relaxation and lowers cortisol levels, the stress hormone, by emphasising deep breathing and gentle movements. Furthermore, stretching facilitates the release of physical tension brought on by extended sitting or repeated motions, which supports mental and physical well-being.

5. Improved posture: Stretching can help fix alignment problems and muscular imbalances, which improves posture.

6. Better performance: By improving range of motion and flexibility, regular stretching can improve sports performance.

7. Boost energy: Stretching makes your muscles receive more blood and oxygen, which raises your energy levels.

8. Improved mind-body connection: Stretching promotes body awareness and mindfulness, which strengthens the mind-body bond.

9. Helps avoid injuries: By increasing muscular coordination, flexibility, and mobility, stretching helps avoid injuries.

Joao Fonseca Beats Learner Tien in Next Gen ATP Finals to Become 2nd Youngest Champion

NEWDELHI: Joao Fonseca became the second youngest champion of the Next Gen ATP tournament on Sunday when he defied his lowly ranking of 145 to defeat Learner Tien in the final. Brazil's Fonseca, 18, came through 2-4, 4-3 (10/8), 4-0, 4-2 to see off his left-handed American opponent. He is the youngest champion at the event since current world number one Jannik Sinner claimed the title also at the age



of 18 five years ago. "I was really nervous before the match. I knew it was going to be so difficult," Fonseca said before lifting the trophy with tennis legend Rafael Nadal watching on from the stands. "I played a

final against Learner in juniors at the 2023 US Open and I know the way he can play. He is such a nice guy and a great player, so I knew it was going to be difficult, mentally and physically. But I got through," he added. Fonseca, the lowest-ranked player in the eight-man field, won all five matches he played this week at the Red Sea venue. He began the year ranked at 730 in the world and having made a maiden ATP quarter-final in Rio this year, he will be aiming to make significant progress in 2025. "I need to believe when I go before a tournament that I can win. But now I have won it I am thinking, 'Wow, I made it'. I am very proud of myself," Fonseca said.

Mumbai's Tanush Kotian Added To National Team Ahead Of Melbourne Test: BCCI

New Delhi/Mumbai: Mumbai's off-spin all-rounder Tanush Kotian has earned a surprise call-up to join the Indian team as an additional player ahead of the Boxing Day Test in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) informed on Monday. Sources have earlier in the day told IANS that Kotian, who's currently representing Mumbai in the league stage matches of the Vijay Hazare Trophy in Ahmedabad, will depart for Australia on Tuesday afternoon. "Axar Patel was supposed to go to Australia, but with the birth of his first child, he's gone back home and Kotian has been asked to join the Test team in Melbourne," the source said. Kotian is currently one of the best off-spin all-rounders in the



Indian domestic circuit. He was previously part of the India A team which toured Australia for two four-day matches in Mackay and Melbourne ahead of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, currently tied at 1-1. The BCCI confirmed the news later in the evening via a statement issued by Joint Secretary Devajit Saikia. "The Men's Selection Committee has named all-rounder Tanush Kotian as an addition to India's squad for

the fourth and fifth Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "The off-spinner from Mumbai has played 33 first-class matches, taking 101 wickets at an average of 25.70. In addition to his bowling achievements, Kotian has three five-wicket hauls and has scored two centuries and 13 half-centuries. He was part of the India A squad and participated in the second first-class game against Australia A at the Melbourne Cricket Ground," Saikia said in

the statement. Kotian's first call-up to the Test team comes after veteran off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin retired from international cricket following the rain-hit third Test ending in a draw at the Gabba, Brisbane. He will now be one of the three spin-bowling all-rounder options for India alongside the off-spin of Washington Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja's left-arm spin. While Sundar played the first Test in Perth, Jadeja featured in the third match of the series in Brisbane. In the 2023/24 Ranji Trophy season, Kotian picked 29 wickets in 10 matches at an average of 16.96. He also amassed 502 runs with the bat, including five half-centuries and one century to earn Player of the Tournament in Mumbai's 42nd Ranji title triumph.

India vs Pakistan: Champions Trophy 2025 clash to take place in UAE on February 23

NEWDELHI: India will play their Champions Trophy 2025 group-stage matches in the UAE, with the highly anticipated India vs Pakistan encounter scheduled for February 23, 2025. This decision comes after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) finalized arrangements with the UAE, designating it as the neutral venue for the tournament. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman, Mohsin Naqvi, met with Sheikh Nahyan Al Mubarak, a senior UAE minister and head of the Emirates Cricket Board, to finalize the plans. Following the meeting, PCB spokesperson Amir Mir confirmed that the UAE would host India's group-stage



games. India's group also includes Bangladesh and New Zealand. India's first match will be against Bangladesh on February 20, followed by a clash with New Zealand on March 2. All of India's group-stage matches are likely to be held in Dubai. Pakistan, the defending champions, will open the tournament on February 19, 2025, with a match against New Zealand in Karachi.

Pakistan's final group match will take place in Rawalpindi on February 27, against Bangladesh. The second group in the tournament comprises Afghanistan, Australia, England, and South Africa, with matches scheduled across Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi. The semi-finals will be held on March 4 and 5, 2025, with the first semi-final set to take place in the UAE if In-

dia qualifies. If India does not progress to the semi-finals, the game will be held in Pakistan. The final is set for March 9, 2025, in Lahore, though it will be moved to the UAE if India reaches the final. This hybrid model for the Champions Trophy, which has received approval from all parties involved, will also be applied to future ICC events. In exchange, Pakistan's matches at ICC events hosted by India until 2027 will also be held at neutral venues. This agreement also applies to the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup in India, the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, and the 2028 Women's T20 World Cup in Pakistan.

ISL 2024-25: NEUFC's Forward Alaaeddine Ajaraie Wins Third Consecutive POTM Honour

Guwahati: NorthEast United FC's forward Alaaeddine Ajaraie has been crowned the Indian Super League's (ISL) Player of the Month for November. This is the third consecutive Player of the Month award he has received since the start of the season, making him the first player to do so. The Moroccan has been a shining star for the Highlanders since his arrival this season, consistently delivering s t a n d o u t

performances. These standout performances resonated with fans and analysts alike, as reflected in the Player of the Month voting results. The award is decided through a selection process where fan votes and expert opinions contribute 50% to the final result. Ajaraie earned an overwhelming 51.30% of the final votes, leaving other contenders far behind. Vishal Kaith (21.38%), Jesus Jimenez (12.78%), Manvir Singh

(8.46%), Sandesh Jhingan (5.67%), and Diego Mauricio (0.42%) were the other contenders for the award. Ajaraie played 357 minutes across the month. In November, he netted four goals and provided one assist, cementing his role as NorthEast United FC's talisman up front. The Moroccan forward maintained an attacking presence with 18 shots on goal, consistently testing o p p o s i t i o n defences. He was in-

strumental in NorthEast United FC's win against Odisha FC, scoring a brace that helped them secure a 3-2 win at home. Despite the 2-2 draw with Bengaluru FC that followed, he helped the team bag a point, scoring both goals. Ajaraie has scored a total of 11 goals, making him the leading goal scorer at the stage, and four assists since the start of the season, contributing to more than half of the Highlanders goals.

BGT: 'Rohit Is Short Of Confidence With Self-Doubts', Opines Manjrekar

New Delhi: As the Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) approaches, former Indian cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar has cautioned under fire skipper Rohit Sharma to reconsider his aggressive batting style against Australia's formidable bowling attack. Sharma, who has been struggling for consistency in Test cricket this year, needs to recalibrate his approach to make a meaningful contribution to India's campaign in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, currently tied at 1-1. Rohit's form in Test cricket has been underwhelming in 2024. From 13 matches, he averages a modest 26.39, a sharp decline from his usually reliable standards. He missed the first Test of the series due to the birth of his second child but returned for the pink-ball Test in Adelaide, only to score a meagre nine



runs across two innings. In Brisbane's rain-affected third Test, he batted at No. 6 and managed just 10 runs in his sole outing. "He has got that big game. In South Africa, he had that one innings where it was a small target and they went after the bowling, and Rohit Sharma looked really good. But in a Test match in Australia with the kind of bowlers he is contended with, all bowling superbly, it is not easy to take those guys on because his shots are really high-risk shots. He tried that in the home series against New Zealand as

well, just to put the bowlers off but got out playing the attacking shot," Manjrekar told ESPNcricinfo. While Rohit started the year strongly in the home series against England, his form took a significant hit during the Bangladesh series in September and the subsequent New Zealand series. "He is short of confidence with self-doubts. And it was a bit of a rude shock when he played in that home series against New Zealand and his defence was getting breached on Indian pitches," Manjrekar added.

Harmanpreet Kaur Becomes Second Indian Women After Mithali Raj to Score 1000 Runs in ODIs As Skipper

NEWDELHI: Harmanpreet Kaur has made her mark in Indian cricket history by becoming only the second woman from India to score over 1,000 runs as captain in One Day Internationals (ODIs). She achieved this milestone during the first ODI of a three-match series against the West Indies on December 22 at the Kotambi Stadium in V a d o d a r a . K a u r reached this landmark in just 26 matches,



making her the second Indian woman, after the legendary Mithali Raj, to accomplish it. Mithali Raj, considered one of the greatest women cricketers, has scored 5,319 runs in 155 ODI matches as captain—a

record that remains unmatched in Indian women's cricket. As of now, Harmanpreet Kaur has accumulated 1,012 runs as captain, maintaining an impressive average of 53.26, which includes three centuries

and five fifties. Her highest score as captain is an outstanding 143*, achieved against England in September 2022 at Canterbury. Kaur's ability to perform consistently under pressure has solidified her status as a leader of the Indian women's team, and this latest achievement further highlights her significance to the team. Notably, while her accomplishment is historic in women's cricket, she has also become the 10th Indian batter to reach

this milestone in ODIs across both men's and women's cricket. The list of male cricketers who have also crossed the 1,000-run mark as captain includes icons such as MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli, and Sourav Ganguly, all of whom are prominent figures in Indian cricket. Earlier in the match, Harmanpreet, returning after a knee injury, made a quick contribution of 34 runs off 23 balls, helping India set a solid total of 314/9.

Champions Trophy 2025: PCB Confirms UAE As Neutral Venue

New Delhi: Pakistan Cricket Board has chosen the United Arab Emirates as the neutral venue to host India's matches as per the hybrid model for the 2025 C h a m p i o n s Trophy. "The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has chosen the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

as the neutral venue for the 2025 Champions Trophy," said PCB spokesperson Amir Mir in a statement to IANS. "The PCB has formally informed the ICC about the neutral venue decision. Now, India and Pakistan's Champions Trophy matches will be held in

the UAE. The decision regarding the neutral venue for the Champions Trophy was to be made by the host, Pakistan. The final decision on the venue was made after a meeting between Mohsin Naqvi and Sheikh Al Nahyan. Sheikh Al Nahyan, currently in Pakistan, is also

the Chairman of the UAE Cricket Board," he added. Previously the executive board of the International Cricket Council confirmed that matches between India and Pakistan in upcoming ICC events till 2027, including next year's Champions Trophy 2025, will be played at

neutral venues. The neutral venue arrangements will apply to the upcoming ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 (hosted by Pakistan) as well as the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 (hosted by India) and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 (hosted by India and Sri Lanka).

IMFA Organized of On-Site Mock Drill at Therubali

Rayagada (Correspondence): As on December 21st, 2024 - In observance of Disaster Preparedness Day, a successful emergency mock drill was conducted today at IMFA, Therubali, under the guidance of Sri. Asish Kumar Ray, Vice-President & EIC. The event aimed to enhance awareness and readiness for potential disasters within and outside the factory. The drill was attended by Sri. Bineet Sarangi, Asst. Director (F & B), Rayagada, Sri Jyotirmay Patra, DPO, OSDMA, Rayagada, Sri. G.S. Sabar, Fire Officer, Kolonara, Sri Harekrushna Mundari, Officer in Charge, Therubali Out Post, Dr. Soumya Ranjan Nayak,

MO, CHC, Kolonara, and representatives from HPCL, JKPM, and UAIL Hanuman Gas. The participants engaged in a series of simulated emergency scenarios, focusing on evacuation procedures and rescue operations. "This drill is crucial for ensuring that our community is prepared for any unforeseen events," said Sri. Atanu Mishra, GM (Supply Chain). "We want to foster a culture of safety and readiness among residents," added Sri K.C. Dash, DGM (Electrical). The mock exercise involved various stakeholders, including IMFA employees and local emergency services, who collaborated to assess



response times and co-ordination efforts. Observers noted the importance of regular training exercises to reinforce skills and improve community resilience. The event concluded with a mock drill on LPG leakage

near the SUMO station and its management, where officials discussed the strengths and areas for improvement in the response strategies. The officials present emphasized the importance of community involvement in disaster preparedness. As natural disasters become increasingly common, initiatives like today's mock drill underscore the necessity for ongoing training and preparedness efforts in communities in Therubali area. The program was anchored by Pradyumna Acharya, Sr. Manager (HSE), and coordinated by Sri Deepak Kumar Ojha, Asst. Manager (PR), and Sri. Tirupati Panda, Safety Officer.

MCL to spend Rs 15.63 Cr for infra upgrade in 51 schools of Jharsuguda

Sambalpur (Correspondent) :- Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) has taken a significant step towards improving the quality of education in Jharsuguda district, Odisha, with CSR expenditure of Rs 15.63 crore for the infrastructure upgrade of 51 elementary schools. This initiative aims to enhance the learning environment and provide better facilities for both students and teachers. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for this transformative project was signed between the Jharsuguda district administration and MCL under which key areas of development include the construction of new classrooms, improved sanitation facilities, and



the provision of other essential educational amenities to create a more conducive learning environment. The project is set to be completed within a year. It will directly benefit over 5,000 students and 200 teachers and staff members in three municipalities within the district. This initiative reflects MCL's commitment to its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals, which aim to uplift local communities and contribute to their overall development.

Indian Market Opens In Green Amid Positive Mixed Global Cues

Mumbai: The Indian stock market jumped more than 600 points in early trade on Monday amid positive mixed global cues. At around 9:29 am, Sensex was trading at 78,665.83 after gaining 624.24 points or 0.80 per cent, while the Nifty was trading at 23,773.45 after gaining 185.95 points or 0.79 per cent. The market trend remained positive. On the National Stock Exchange (NSE), 1,223 stocks were trading in green, while 494 stocks were in red. According to experts, in the short run, there will be market rebounds which may be followed by renewed FII selling. "A sustained rally is possible only when we have indications of a growth revival in the economy."

Vedanta Iron Ore Odisha Brings Eye Care & Women's Health Awareness to the Door Step

NEWDELHI: Vedanta Iron Ore Odisha (IOO) continues its mission of transforming communities through impactful healthcare initiatives, benefiting around 1000 lives across various villages and communities in recent weeks. From a comprehensive eye care camp to a cervical cancer awareness session, the initiatives reflect Vedanta's unwavering commitment to giving back to society. Recognizing the critical need for accessible eye care, IOO, in collaboration with EYENOVATION Eyewear Pvt. Ltd organized a seven-day eye camp across multiple locations, screening over 750 individuals and distributing 450+ free spectacles to those in need. This effort aims to



ensure that no one's vision is left untreated due to barriers like distance or affordability. The initiative was inaugurated at the community Mandap in Nadidihi, in the presence of key stakeholders, including local leaders, elderly community members, and Vedanta employees who actively volunteered. The concluding day at Koida Police Station and Panchayat Office was graced by notable dignitaries such as BDO Ms. Rashmi Rekha Patra and Sarpanch Ms. Rani Lohar, along with government officials and local leaders, all of whom praised Vedanta's efforts in promoting better vision and healthier lives. Cervical cancer

awareness was another focus area, addressing a pressing health issue that affects hundreds of thousands of women annually, particularly in low and middle-income countries like India. To combat this, IOO's CSR team conducted multiple awareness sessions at local Schools, where students from classes 6 to 10 participated. The session, led by Dr. Ashutosh Manjhi, Vedanta MHU doctor, and employee volunteers highlighted the importance of early detection, vaccination, and preventive measures. The students expressed positive feedback, signalling the success of this educational outreach. Over 500 women community members benefitted from the initiative.

S&P Global upgrades rating of Vedanta Resources

BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondent): Vedanta Resources Limited (VRL), the parent firm of Mumbai-based mining conglomerate Vedanta Ltd, has received a rating upgrade from S&P Global Ratings. The agency upgraded VRL's corporate family rating from 'B-' to 'B'. With this, VRL's rating by S&P has gone up by five notches from 'CC' in December last year. "We raised our issuer credit rating on Vedanta Resources Ltd. to 'B' from 'B-' and raised our issue ratings on the company's guaranteed bonds to 'B-' from 'CCC+', the rating agency said. S&P said in

its report that the upgrade comes after VRL obtained the minimum acceptances needed to close its consent solicitation exercise for 2028 bonds. "The stable outlook reflects our expectation that refinancing risks will be more manageable after the transaction given a newfound funding flexibility and improved capital market access," the agency said in its report. "The stable outlook also reflects the company's sound underlying operations, which should support internal cash generation and refinancing efforts," it added. The company's focus on deleveraging and strengthening its balance

sheet also translated into upgrades by other major rating agencies. VRL's focus on deleveraging has reduced debt by USD 4.7 billion in the past two years, Chairman Anil Agarwal said in a letter to shareholders in November this year. The upgrades also reflect Vedanta's ability to consistently tap bond markets. In the past four months, VRL has raised USD 2 billion through bond issuances, achieving 300 basis point interest cost reduction and pushing out its debt maturities considerably, which has helped strengthen the company's capital structure considerably.

GMR Sports Announces Partnership with Rugby India to Launch Rugby Premier League

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondence): GMR Sports, a pioneer in India's sports ecosystem, is proud to announce a landmark 10-year strategic partnership with Rugby India, the national governing body for rugby, to launch the Rugby Premier League (RPL). Set to debut in 2025, the RPL will be one of the world's first franchise-based rugby leagues, featuring six city-based teams and showcasing elite talent from top rugby nations globally. This partnership signifies a bold step forward for GMR Sports as it extends its legacy of innovation and excellence into the realm of



Rugby 7s, one of the fastest-growing and most dynamic sports in the world. Speaking on this transformative collaboration, Mr. Kiran Kumar Grandhi, Chairman of GMR Sports, said: "At GMR Sports, we believe in driving the future of sports in India by creating platforms that inspire athletes and fans alike. The Rugby Premier League is not just a

league—it is a movement to bring world-class rugby to India while fostering grassroots development. Partnering with Rugby India reflects our commitment to creating opportunities and setting benchmarks for excellence in every sport we touch. We are excited to be at the forefront of this exciting new chapter in Indian sports. "The Rugby Premier League promises to captivate audiences while building a strong foundation for rugby's growth in India. By exposing young Indian talent to international players and top-tier coaching, the league aims to create a sustainable ecosystem for the sport."

Empowering Silk City: TPSODL Enhances Power Infrastructure in Berhampur

Berhampur, (Correspondence): TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) has achieved a significant milestone by installing its first-ever 16 MVA Power Transformer (PTR) at the Nimakhandi Primary Substation (PSS) in Berhampur. This marks a major step in strengthening the power infrastructure of the region and ensuring a reliable power supply to thousands of residents. Out of the 16 MVA capacity, 12.5 MVA is currently operational, effectively meeting the region's existing power demand while leaving room for future scalability. Prior to this



installation, the area depended on an 8 MVA PTR, which often faced challenges in handling the growing power requirements. The new PTR has resolved long-standing issues of overload and ensures reliable power supply to over 7,000 consumers in critical areas, including

Jagdarpur, Srikheta vihar, Nimakhandi, Lochapada Market, Govinda Vihar, Shakti Nagar, Ruby Eye Hospital, and surrounding regions. These areas represent some of the busiest and most vital zones of Berhampur. Mr. Amit Kumar Garg, CEO of TPSODL, said, "Meet-

ing the increasing power demand has always been our priority. We are taking timely steps to enhance infrastructure and ensure a reliable power supply. The installation of this new PTR demonstrates our commitment to addressing the evolving needs of the community." A pioneer-

ing feature of this installation is the introduction of advanced Nitrogen Injected Fire Protection System (NIFPS) technology, designed to prevent potential explosions and fires caused by internal or external faults. The NIFPS system automatically releases nitrogen to regulate abnormal heating, ensuring enhanced safety and operational reliability. This state-of-the-art upgrade has significantly improved the reliability and efficiency of Berhampur's power supply system, positioning TPSODL as a leader in delivering innovative and customer-centric energy solutions.