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## PM Modi Expresses Confidence In Yogasana's Future Olympic Prospects

Ahmedabad/New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday expressed confidence that Yogasana could eventually secure a place in international multi-sport competitions, including the Olympics, as he virtually inaugurated the first World Yogasana Championship in Ahmedabad. Addressing athletes from more than 60 countries, PM Modi said the championship marked the beginning of a new phase in yoga's evolution by providing Yogasana with a competitive platform as a sport. "Through this championship, Yogasana will gain a new identity as a competitive sport. I am confident that in the future, Yogasana will also secure its place in international sports. Whether it is the Olympics or multi-sport events, if we work hard enough, positive results can certainly be achieved," he added. He said that the inaugural championship in Ahmedabad would play a major role in advancing those ambitions. The event, being held from June 4 to 8, is the first-ever World Yogasana Championship and has brought together more than 400 athletes from over 60 nations. It is considered a significant step in efforts to establish Yogasana as a recognised global sporting discipline. Prime Minister Modi also highlighted the wider economic opportunities associated with the growth of Yogasana as a sport. "We know that every major sport brings with it an entire ecosystem. It creates new employment opportunities.



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## ICU Horror in Bihar: Massive Hospital Fire Kills 3, Several Feared

NEW DELHI: A major tragedy unfolded in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district after a massive fire broke out inside the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a private hospital early Thursday morning. Officials have confirmed the deaths of three people, while concerns remain that the final toll could rise as rescue and

verification efforts continue. The incident occurred at Prasad Hospital in Muzaffarpur, triggering panic among patients, attendants and medical staff. According to local authorities, the blaze erupted inside the ICU section of the hospital, one of the most critical areas where seriously ill patients were undergoing

treatment. Emergency response teams and firefighters rushed to the scene shortly after receiving information about the fire. After several hours of operation, firefighters managed to bring the flames under control and prevent the fire from spreading to other sections of the building.

## Odisha CM Lays Foundation Stone For Rs 80 Cr Pipili Chandua Handicraft Hub

Bhubaneswar (Correspondent) In a major initiative to preserve and promote Odisha's iconic Pipili Chandua craft, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday laid the foundation stone for the ultra-modern 'Pipili Chandua Handicraft Hub' at Pipili in Puri district. The project, to be developed at an estimated cost of around ₹80 crore, is aimed at strengthening the traditional appliqué craft sector and connecting it with national and international markets. Describing Pipili Chandua as more than just a handicraft, the Chief Minister said it represents the pride of the Odia people and embodies 'Odia Asmita' (Odia identity). He noted that the centuries-old art form shares a deep and inseparable



connection with the traditions of Lord Jagannath and the world-famous Rath Yatra. Majhi said the state government's objective is to position Pipili Chandua in the global marketplace while ensuring sustainable livelihoods for artisans engaged in the craft. According to official estimates, the project will directly

benefit more than 6,000 artisans from Pipili and nearby areas. A dedicated Raw Material Bank will be established under the project to ensure the availability of quality raw materials at affordable prices. The Chief Minister also highlighted plans to equip artisans with skills required for the digital economy. Special training programmes in

digital marketing, branding and packaging will be provided, with a focus on empowering women artisans and members of self-help groups. The proposed handicraft hub is expected to serve as a comprehensive ecosystem for production, marketing, skill development and promotion of the traditional craft.

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AHSE 2026 Results

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+9 ବୋର୍ଡ୍ ଏବଂ ଏଣ୍ଟ୍ରାନ୍ସ ପରୀକ୍ଷାରେ ସଫଳତା ପାଇଁ କ୍ରୀଷ୍ଣା ବିକାଶ, ବରଗଡ଼ର ଉଚ୍ଚ ମାଧ୍ୟମିକ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ଏକମାତ୍ର ନିର୍ଭରଯୋଗ୍ୟ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ।



**592** Marks  
**98.7%**

ATTABIRA, BARGARH



**591** Marks  
**98.5%**

BHEDEN, BARGARH

97.5%  
**585** Marks

RASHESWARI  
Sarsara, Bargarh

97.5%  
**585** Marks

SONALI  
Khuripali, Bargarh

97.5%  
**585** Marks

SOUVASHREE  
Patrapali, Attabira

97.2%  
**583** Marks

SUCHISMITA  
Sonepur

97.0%  
**582** Marks

DIPIKA  
Mandoli, Paikmal

97.0%  
**582** Marks

OM PRAKASH  
Birka

97.0%  
**582** Marks

RUTURAJ  
Kambar, Bargarh

97.0%  
**582** Marks

SHREEYANSH  
Bargarh

97.0%  
**582** Marks

SHUBHANKAR  
Ruhunia, Bargarh

96.8%  
**581** Marks

SARITA  
Baunsuni, Boudh

96.7%  
**580** Marks

ALIVA  
Bhukta

96.5%  
**579** Marks

DIBYANSHU  
Bargarh

96.5%  
**579** Marks

RASHMI RANJAN  
Bargarh

96.5%  
**579** Marks

SMITILIKA  
Bheden

96.0%  
**576** Marks

SHUBHANKAR  
Debahal, Bargarh

96.0%  
**576** Marks

TAPNESWAR  
Brajnagar

95.8%  
**575** Marks

DUKITA  
Ambabhona

95.7%  
**574** Marks

PRACHI PARIMITA  
Brajnagar

95.7%  
**574** Marks

DHARMANANDA  
Dhanarpur, Kalahandi

95.3%  
**572** Marks

PRATYUSHA  
Titlagar, Bolangir

- Tremendous growth from 10th to +2 Results -

CHSE +2 Result Analysis	>95%	>90%	>80%	>60%	Total Appeared
SCIENCE	20	51	86	105	204
COMMERCE	02	06	11	12	26

94.8%  
**569** Marks

RAM SHANKAR  
Ulunda, Sonepur

94.3%  
**566** Marks

JATIN  
Titmal, Ambabhona

94.2%  
**565** Marks

AMAN  
Sundargarh

93.8%  
**563** Marks

NIRMAL  
Lekhanpur, Jharsuguda

93.5%  
**561** Marks

SARASWATI  
Jamia, Bargarh

93.5%  
**561** Marks

SWAYAMABHA  
Bhali

93.2%  
**559** Marks

SEEMA  
Sundargarh

93.0%  
**558** Marks

PREMKUMAR  
Ambabhona

92.8%  
**557** Marks

ASHPRUHA  
Melchamunda

92.7%  
**556** Marks

PRACHI  
Brajnagar

92.5%  
**555** Marks

AYUSH  
Bijpur

92.5%  
**555** Marks

ROSHNI  
Attabira, Bargarh

92.3%  
**554** Marks

JYOTI  
Bhukta

92.3%  
**554** Marks

SOUVARNANJAN  
Bargarh

92.2%  
**553** Marks

AYUSH  
Bargarh

92.0%  
**552** Marks

BINAYA  
Bargarh

92.0%  
**552** Marks

PRINCE  
Jamia

92.0%  
**552** Marks

SAMIKSHYA  
Bheden

92.0%  
**552** Marks

SWASTIK  
Kesinga

91.8%  
**551** Marks

BARSHA  
Sambalpur

91.7%  
**550** Marks

TIKESWAR  
Jamia

91.5%  
**549** Marks

OM PRAKASH  
Tarbha

91.5%  
**549** Marks

TANMAYA  
Kesinga

91.3%  
**548** Marks

SHREEANSH  
Bargarh

91.2%  
**547** Marks

PRIYA  
Bheden

90.7%  
**544** Marks

AGRIM  
Bhukta

90.7%  
**544** Marks

SASHWAT  
Kesinga

90.5%  
**543** Marks

ARIYAN  
Remunda

90.5%  
**543** Marks

AYUSH  
Sundargarh

90.2%  
**541** Marks

PRITESH  
Agalpur, Balangir

90.0%  
**540** Marks

PREMANANDA  
Melchamunda

94.8%  
**569** Marks

ALOK  
Naraynprasad, Boudh

93.7%  
**562** Marks

HIMESH  
Bhali

92.7%  
**556** Marks

ARIYAN  
Ulunda, Sonepur

91.0%  
**548** Marks

ROHAN  
Sambalpur

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## KALABAISAKHI LIGHTNING CLAIMS 1 LIFE IN GAJAPATI

Paralakhemundi: (Correspondent):- A Kalbaisakhi storm accompanied by heavy rain, gusty winds and lightning claimed the life of a farmer and left another person injured in two separate incidents in Gajapati district on Tuesday evening, highlighting the dangers posed by the pre-monsoon weather phenomenon. The deceased was identified as Narayan Sabar (54) of Ambajhiri village under Rampa panchayat in Gosani block. He

was returning home after working in his agricultural field when lightning struck during the sudden storm. Villagers rescued him from the field and rushed him to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) at Paralakhemundi, where doctors declared him dead. In another incident, Saranti Raita of Judur village under Paratada panchayat in Kashinagar block sustained serious injuries after being struck by lightning during the same storm. Local residents immediately

shifted the injured person to the DHH at Paralakhemundi for treatment. Hospital sources said Saranti responded well to treatment and is now in stable condition. The Kalbaisakhi storm swept across several parts of the district on Wednesday evening, bringing intense rainfall, strong winds and lightning activity. Local authorities have advised people to remain indoors and avoid open fields during thunderstorms to prevent such tragedies.

## Bihar: New Video Adds Fresh Twist To Khan Sir Coaching Centre Attack Case, Two Guards Detained

Patna: The investigation into the attack on the coaching institute run by educator Khan Sir in Patna has taken a fresh turn after representatives of Gyan Bindu Coaching released a video that they claim shows the alleged firing during the incident. Following the footage's emergence, Patna Police expanded its investigation and

took two security guards associated with Khan Sir's coaching centre into custody for questioning. Police officials clarified that the inquiry is ongoing and that further action will depend on the evidence collected. At a press conference on Thursday, Adarsh Kumar of Gyan Bindu Coaching alleged that the firing was carried out by Khan Sir's own

security personnel and that the incident was part of a pre-planned conspiracy intended to divert the investigation. Gyan Bindu Coaching also questioned the arrest of its director, Roshan Anand, arguing that he does not appear in the video released by the institution. The coaching centre further demanded that the police also investigate

Khan Sir's role in the matter. A 38-second video released by Gyan Bindu Coaching purportedly shows two individuals handling and firing a weapon. The institution alleged that these individuals are security guards employed by Khan Sir's coaching centre, although this has not been officially confirmed by investigators.

## Delhi Hotel Fire: Owner Faces Interrogation As Hunt For Manager Intensifies

New Delhi: The investigation into the massive fire at a bed-and-breakfast establishment in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, which claimed 21 lives, intensified on Thursday even as a court sent owner Lavkesh Bajaj to four days' police custody. While police teams continue their search for the absconding manager, Jai Mishra, forensic experts are examining evidence from the site to assess alleged violations that may have contributed to the tragedy. Delhi Police have launched a manhunt for Mishra, the manager of the property, who has been missing since the fire broke out on Wednesday morning. Police have registered a case against Bajaj under several provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS),

including culpable homicide not amounting to murder, mischief by fire, negligence endangering human life, causing grievous hurt through negligence, damage to property, and negligent conduct related to fire safety. Police reconstructed the sequence of events that resulted in the blaze. Forensic examination of everything pertaining to the incident is being carried out, officials told the media. A team of forensic experts has collected samples and evidence from the site to determine the origin of the fire and assess whether safety lapses contributed to the scale of the disaster. Authorities are also reviewing the establishment's compliance with fire safety regulations and licensing requirements. The investigation has

increasingly focused on Mishra, the hotel's manager, who allegedly oversaw the day-to-day functioning of the property, say police officials. According to police, Bajaj informed investigators that Mishra was responsible for managing operations at the establishment. Mishra is reported to have been absconding since the incident occurred around 8.45 a.m. on Wednesday. Police teams are trying to trace and nab him, officials said. The fire erupted on Wednesday morning, trapping numerous guests inside the building and triggering a large-scale rescue operation. Among the deceased were 12 foreign nationals who were reportedly staying at the facility while accompanying relatives receiving treatment at nearby hospitals.

## India-UK Partnership Has Unlocked 'Unprecedented' Growth Opportunities: PM Modi

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the partnership between India and the United Kingdom has unlocked "unprecedented" growth opportunities for both countries. "Pleased to meet UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper. Appreciated the deepening of the India-UK partnership in recent times that has unlocked unprecedented growth opportunities for both our countries," PM Modi wrote on X after meeting the visiting UK minister. "India-UK Vision 2035 will continue to guide our partnership and strengthen our joint efforts for the global good," he added. Earlier in the day, Cooper met



External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar. "The India-UK partnership is now a forward-looking highway of shared economic ambitions and high technology! Delighted to welcome UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper on her first visit to India,"

Jaishankar wrote on X after their meeting. "We reviewed ongoing progress in our cooperation, focusing on trade, technology, supply chains, defence, climate, education and people-to-people ties. Also spoke about new opportunities in clean

energy, AI and critical minerals," he added. Both leaders exchanged views on global developments, including in Ukraine, West Asia and the Indo-Pacific. "Our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, powered by Vision 2035, continues

to advance," he highlighted. Hailing ties between India and the UK, EAM Jaishankar said that the two nations are well-positioned to build a new "future-oriented and mutually beneficial partnership". In his opening remarks ahead of his meeting with Cooper in New Delhi, EAM Jaishankar highlighted the remarkable developments in India-UK ties, which included UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's visit to India in October last year and PM Narendra Modi's visit to the UK in July last year. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, India's High Commissioner to the UK, P. Kumaran and other officials were also present during the meeting.

## RENOVATED BADMINTON INDOOR STADIUM REOPENS



Paralakhemundi: (Correspondent):- The renovated Gajapati Badminton Indoor Stadium was inaugurated at Paralakhemundi on Thursday by MLA Rupesh Kumar Panigrahi. The old stadium has been upgraded at a cost of Rs 2.4 lakh to provide

better facilities for badminton players. Gajapati ADM Falguni Majhi, Gosani Block Chairman Bir Raju, badminton players M. Prasad, P. K. Tanthi, Kondal Rao, Shyam Kumar, Mukesh, L. Sanjay, Vijay Kumar and sports enthusiasts attended the reopening ceremony.

## Asaram Gets Relief From Raj HC As Prison Authorities Order Medical Care, Hospital Access

Jaipur: The Rajasthan High Court has directed prison authorities to continue providing necessary medical treatment and essential healthcare facilities to self-styled godman Asaram, who is serving a life sentence in a case involving sexual assault on a minor. Hearing a petition filed on Asaram's behalf, the court instructed the jail administration to take his advanced age and health condition into account and ensure uninterrupted access to medical care. The court further stated that if his condition worsens or adequate treatment cannot be provided within Jodhpur Central Jail, arrangements should be made for his admission to a hospital. The petition argued that Asaram requires specialised medical attention, regular health check-ups, and certain essential facilities due to multiple age-related ailments. After reviewing previous court orders and available medical records, the High Court directed authorities to maintain the healthcare arrangements already in place. Advocates R.S. Saluja and Yashpal Rajpurohit, appearing for Asaram, informed the court that he has been suffering from several health



issues for a prolonged period and requires continuous medical monitoring. The court observed that prison authorities are responsible for safeguarding the health of inmates and ensuring timely medical treatment. It directed the jail administration to continue providing specialist consultations, appropriate dietary arrangements, and other necessary facilities without interruption. The order also stressed that prompt decisions should be taken regarding medical needs to prevent complications.

The court noted that a plea seeking relief on medical grounds had recently been considered and that Asaram had been taken to a hospital a few days earlier following a deterioration in his health. With the latest order, the jail administration has been instructed to ensure regular monitoring of his health and the continued availability of necessary medical facilities. The 86-year-old Asaram had been persistently seeking bail on grounds of advancing age and various ailments. In January 2025, the Supreme Court granted him his first interim medical bail, subject to certain conditions.

## Southwest Monsoon Arrives in Kerala, IMD Confirms

NEW DELHI: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) declared the arrival of the southwest monsoon in Kerala today, marking the start of India's crucial four-month rainy season. IMD confirmed that the southwest monsoon met all criteria for onset in Kerala. The rains signal relief from the intense heatwave affecting several states and mark the beginning of the Kharif sowing season. Farmers across India depend on this rainfall, which contributes nearly 75

percent of the country's annual precipitation. Kerala received widespread showers as the monsoon advanced into the state. Meteorologists noted favourable conditions over the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and Lakshadweep Islands. The arrival sets the stage for the monsoon's northward progress, expected to reach Odisha and other eastern states in the coming weeks. Agricultural experts emphasised that timely rainfall will boost sowing activities for

rice, pulses, and oilseeds. The southwest monsoon plays a decisive role in India's food security and economic stability. With El Niño concerns still present, IMD urged close monitoring of rainfall distribution across regions. The southwest monsoon arrival in Kerala also brings immediate relief to communities struggling with soaring temperatures. Weather officials highlighted that the rains will ease conditions in southern states before spreading further across the country.

## West Bengal: Day After Firhad Hakim's Exit, Bidhannagar Mayor Resigns

Kolkata: Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Krishna Chakraborty resigned from her post on Thursday, citing personal reasons. The development comes a day after Trinamool Congress MLA Firhad Hakim resigned as Kolkata Mayor. Trinamool Congress has now lost control of both civic bodies in the city. Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation is located in the Salt Lake area of Kolkata. Krishna Chakraborty submitted her resignation letter to the Commissioner of Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation on Thursday afternoon. It is learnt that Krishna has also sent a copy of her resignation letter to the state's Municipal and Urban

Development Minister Agnimitra Paul and the Secretary of the department. Krishna had about eight months left in her term as Bidhannagar Mayor. She served as the Mayor of Bidhannagar for two terms, from 2019 to 2022 and then from 2022 until June 4, 2026. Before 2019, Sabyasachi Dutta was the Mayor of Bidhannagar. Thereafter, Trinamool removed Sabyasachi and brought Krishna in as Mayor. Sabyasachi is currently the Chairperson of Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation. While leaving her office on Thursday, Krishna said, "I am resigning for purely personal reasons." Later, however, she said, "I could not work the way I wanted to. Board meetings

were not being held, councillors were not coming. Officers were also busy. I cannot cheat people." However, Krishna said that she would continue to work as a councillor, as she has been doing for the past 16 years. She also thanked the people of Bidhannagar for their love and support. While getting into her car, she became a little emotional and said, "Mamata Banerjee is like a mother." However, Bidhannagar BJP MLA and state minister Sharadwat Mukherjee took a dig at Krishna Chakraborty over her resignation. He said, "She was sitting on a cushion of money. I came to know about Madam's 18-19 properties in Bidhannagar. Before revealing

them, she went into hiding in shame." Krishna is known to be a "close friend" of Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee. She was once associated with the Youth Congress. That is how she first met Mamata. When Mamata Banerjee left the Congress in 1998 and formed the Trinamool Congress, Krishna joined the new party. On Wednesday, former state minister Firhad Hakim resigned as Mayor of Kolkata. Trinamool MLA Kunal Ghosh said that Firhad took the decision after taking permission from Mamata Banerjee, although Firhad himself has not commented on the matter yet. Earlier, Trinamool lost control of the Chandannagar Municipal Corporation in Hooghly district as well.

## From Mine Reclamation to Renewable Energy: VISL Nears 2.5 Million Tonnes of Carbon Impact Through Integrated Sustainability Strategy

**BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondent)** Sustainability initiatives across operations have collectively helped reduce, avoid or sequester nearly 2.5 million tonnes of carbon emissions while restoring ecosystems, advancing renewable energy adoption and accelerating cleaner industrial practices. On World Environment Day, Vedanta Iron And Steel Ltd. (VISL), a leading ferrous resource company with operations spanning across India & Africa, reaffirmed its commitment to building a lower-carbon future, showcasing how a traditional mining and metals enterprise can evolve into a leader in sustainable practices. Through cleaner technologies, renewable energy, ecological restoration, and



innovative logistics, the company is reshaping its operations to deliver long-term environmental value. Expressing his thoughts on the various sustainability initiatives undertaken by VISL, Mr Pankaj Kumar Sharma, CEO-VISL, said, "The transition to a sustainable future requires a fundamental rethinking of how industries move materials, consume energy and interact with the environment. At VISL, we are driving this transformation through cleaner logistics, RE, integrating EVs, resource

efficiency and ecological restoration. Our ambition is to leverage the sustainability interventions not only for driving of long-term value creation, but also for a 'greener' future." At the heart of VISL's decarbonisation journey is the adoption of cleaner technologies. Electric passenger vehicles, wheel loaders, and forklifts now power its operations, saving nearly 800 kilolitres of diesel annually and cutting greenhouse gas emissions significantly. Equally transformative is the company's focus on

sustainable logistics. In FY26 alone, VISL's barge fleet operations were equivalent to eliminating an estimated 2.1 lakh truck trips, helping conserve ~10.8 million litres of diesel, corresponding to a reduction of nearly 28,900 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), - an impact comparable to offsetting the annual electricity-related carbon footprint of a small to mid-sized town. Further strengthening its clean energy portfolio, VISL generates a cumulative 100MW of Waste Heat Recovery Power through operations at its pig iron plant in Amona, Goa, and at its Bokaro steel plant. This low carbon power facility has led to avoiding ~2.4 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), exemplifying the company's commitment to circular energy use and

resource efficiency. VISL's environmental stewardship extends beyond operations into ecological restoration. The Sanquelim Reclaimed Mine in Goa, spanning over 100 hectares, is home to ~750,000 trees that sequester ~16,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually. Over three decades, this reclaimed landscape has absorbed nearly 480,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, equivalent to taking ~100,000 cars off the road for a year. Complementing this, VISL has developed Miyawaki forests at Amona (Goa) and Bokaro (Jharkhand), planting over 75000 trees as part of the project, alongside ~3 lac trees planted under the regular afforestation drives to enhance biodiversity.

## Concerns Emerge Over Halt of Belt Conveyor line at Aditya Alumina Refinery Project

**Rayagada (Correspondent)** - Villagers have learnt that Aditya Alumina Refinery has halted the belt conveyor line associated with Kodingamali Bauxite mines.



In such a scenario, plans are reportedly being considered to procure bauxite through road transportation. While this could create income opportunities for local transporters, it also introduces significant operational challenges and increased logistics dependence. The uncertainty surrounding the continuity of bauxite supply from Kodingamali Mines has led to apprehensions about the long-term viability of the project in its current form. Industry observers indicate that, in view of these uncertainties, the

company may explore alternatives, including shifting refinery to site closer to a future mine wherever available. This is being felt as a neck-breaking blow to the local tribal and underprivileged communities of the area, who have spent their youth in the hope of a refinery factory, and now face uncertainty just when the plant is under construction. More

importantly, the potential uncertainty of raw material supply has raised serious concerns among displaced persons (DPs) and land losers (LLs), whose livelihoods and prospects are closely linked to the project. Any slowdown or halt in operations could adversely affect their socio-economic stability for them as well as future generations.

### Fire in Oil Factory

**SUBARNAPUR (Correspondent)** -- We have received reports of a fire at the Sri Jagadamba Oil Factory located in Ulunda Sahanidih, Subarnapur district. On receiving the report, fire brigades from Binika and Ulunda reached the spot and doused the fire. The fire was seen burning in the sacks kept inside the rice bran oil factory. However, it is not known how and under what circumstances the fire broke out. Till the time of writing this report, no further details have been received.

## TEMPORARY CANCELLATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS FOR BRIDGE REBUILDING WORK IN DHANMANDAL-KAPILAS ROAD SECTION

**BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondent)** :To facilitate rebuilding of stone slab bridges in the Dhanmandal-Kapilas Road section under Khurda Road Division, East Coast Railway will undertake essential infrastructure works aimed at enhancing safety and improving the reliability of rail operations during the month of June and July 2026. As a result, the following MEMU train services will remain cancelled on the dates



indicated below: Train No. 68424/68423 Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack MEMU - Cancelled on 05.06.2026, 12.06.2026, 19.06.2026, 26.06.2026 and 03.07.2026. Train No. 68438/68437 Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack MEMU - Cancelled on 05.06.2026, 12.06.2026, 19.06.2026, 26.06.2026 and 03.07.2026. Passengers are advised to take note of the above changes and plan their journeys accordingly. For updated train information, passengers may visit the National Train Enquiry System (NTES) or use official railway enquiry services before commencing their journey.

### A' grade in audit

## Mathili Lamps, one of the income earners in the district

**Malkangiri correspondent** :Mathili Lamps is a well-known name in the cooperative sector of Malkangiri district. While this organization, which has become the center of hope of thousands of farmers, has recently been in the headlines due to some complaints and discussions, the Lamps authorities have refuted all the complaints and given a detailed explanation about the success, clean management and financial strength of the organization. According to the authorities, Mathili Lamps has achieved 'A' grade in the regular audit. It has also occupied one of the leading positions in the field of income collection among all the cooperative societies in Malkangiri district. The authorities claim that this is a great proof of the financial discipline and successful management of the

organization. For many years, Lamps has been playing an important role in providing low-interest loans to farmers, timely distribution of fertilizers, procurement of paddy, management of mandis and providing benefits of various government schemes. While thousands of farmers are directly associated with this organization, its financial condition and performance are said to have improved significantly in the last few years. When asked about the allegations of irregularities and financial manipulation in fertilizer distribution, Lamps authorities said that no such allegations have been substantiated by any competent investigating agency so far.

## Odisha Govt Makes EV Hiring Mandatory For Official Use From June 1

**Bhubaneswar (Correspondent)**: In a major step towards promoting green mobility and reducing government expenditure on fuel, the Odisha government has made it mandatory for all departments and state-supported institutions to hire Electric Vehicles (EVs) for official purposes from June 1, 2026. The Finance Department issued an Office Memorandum on Thursday, directing all government departments, public sector undertakings, universities, autonomous institutions and societies receiving state support to switch to EVs while hiring vehicles for official use. The decision comes against the backdrop of rising fuel costs and prevailing energy challenges linked to the

ongoing crisis in West Asia, which has increased the financial burden on the state exchequer. Under the new policy, all vehicles hired after June 1, 2026, for official duties must be electric vehicles. The government has also prescribed category-wise maximum monthly hiring charges for EVs, excluding taxes and charging costs. As per the revised rates, EVs hired at the Block and Tahasil levels can be engaged at a maximum monthly charge of ₹55,000. The ceiling has been fixed at ₹50,000 for pool vehicles of administrative departments, Special Secretaries, Directors and district-level officers. District Collectors, Superintendents of Police and District Judges will be entitled to vehicles

costing up to ₹60,000 per month, while Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries and equivalent officers can hire EVs up to ₹65,000 per month. The highest hiring ceiling of ₹80,000 per month has been approved for the Governor, Chief Minister, Chief Justice, Ministers and Ministers of State. The Chief Secretary, Development Commissioner and officers of equivalent rank will be eligible for EVs costing up to ₹70,000 per month. The memorandum further provides for a charging cost reimbursement of ₹2 per kilometre to service providers. However, no separate charging payment will be made if the government itself bears the charging expenses. To facilitate implementation,

departments have been allowed to hire EVs through the Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) at tendered rates. OREDA has been authorised to supply up to 300 electric vehicles on a rental basis. The prescribed rates will remain effective for two years and will be reviewed thereafter, the order stated. The government has instructed all departments, Heads of Offices, District Collectors, Superintendents of Police and other competent authorities to ensure strict compliance with the new guidelines. Existing terms and conditions governing vehicle hiring under the Finance Department's memorandum dated May 27, 2025, will continue to remain in force.

## BJP Fields Debashish Samantray For June 18 Rajya Sabha Election

**Bhubaneswar (Correspondent)**: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday announced Debashish Samantray as its candidate for the upcoming Rajya Sabha by-election from Odisha, officially fielding him for the lone seat going to polls in the state. Reacting after being named the party's candidate, Samantray expressed gratitude to the BJP leadership for reposing faith in him. "The BJP has placed faith in me. I will do whatever is required for the development of the state," he told reporters. The

announcement comes after the Election Commission of India (ECI) issued the schedule for biennial elections to 24 Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states and by-elections to three Rajya Sabha seats in Odisha, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. According to the ECI notification, polling for the Rajya Sabha elections will be held on June 18 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., while counting of votes will commence at 5 p.m. on the same day. The nomination process began on June 1. Candidates can file their nomination papers until June 8, while

scrutiny of nominations will take place on June 9. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is June 11. Apart from the Rajya Sabha elections, biennial elections for nine seats and one by-election to the Bihar Legislative Council, along with elections to seven seats of the Karnataka Legislative Council, will also be conducted during the same period. With the BJP naming Samantray as its nominee, the focus now shifts to the filing of nominations and the electoral process leading up to the June 18 poll.

### Fire Breaks Out In SCB Surgery Ward, No Damage Reported

**Cuttack (Correspondent)**: A fire broke out in the Surgery Ward of SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack on Thursday, triggering fresh concerns over fire safety measures at Odisha's premier government health care institution. According to preliminary information, the fire was caused by a short circuit in the electrical wiring inside the ward. Hospital authorities suspect that excessive load on electrical cables amid the prevailing

heatwave conditions may have contributed to the incident. The blaze originated from electric cables within the ward, prompting an immediate response from hospital staff and security personnel. Their swift action helped contain and extinguish the fire before it could spread further. A fire brigade team rushed to the spot after receiving information about the incident. However, by the time firefighters arrived, the flames had already been brought under control by hospital

personnel. No casualties, injuries, or property damage were reported in the incident, officials said. The latest episode comes amid a series of fire incidents reported from different departments of SCB Medical College and Hospital in recent years. The recurrence of such incidents has raised questions about the adequacy of fire prevention systems and the condition of electrical infrastructure within the sprawling healthcare facility.

## Thunderstorms, Strong Winds to Lash Parts of Odisha; Orange Alert in Six Districts

**Bhubaneswar (Correspondent)**: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange Alert for six districts of Odisha, warning of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty surface winds reaching 50-60 kmph over the next 24 hours, even as the Southwest Monsoon continues its steady advance across the country. According to the Midday Weather Bulletin issued by the Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar on Thursday, thunderstorms with lightning and strong winds are likely at one or two places in Balasore, Keonjhar,

Mayurbhanj, Gajapati, Ganjam and Nayagarh districts till 08:30 AM on June 5. A Yellow Warning has also been issued for several other districts where thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds of 40-50 kmph are expected. Hot and humid weather conditions may prevail at isolated places in some coastal and interior districts. The weather office advised people to remain indoors during thunderstorms, avoid taking shelter under trees, unplug electrical appliances and stay away from water bodies and conductive objects. Strong winds may cause damage to

plantations, horticultural crops, banana trees, power and communication lines, and vulnerable kutcha structures. Meanwhile, the Southwest Monsoon has advanced further into additional parts of the Arabian Sea, Lakshadweep Islands, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and the Bay of Bengal. The Northern Limit of Monsoon currently passes through Mangalore, Uthagamandalam and extends eastwards across the Bay of Bengal. Conditions remain favourable for its further advance into Goa, parts of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh

and more areas of southern India and the Bay of Bengal during the next two to three days. In Odisha, light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms occurred at several places during the past 24 hours. Heavy rainfall of 7 cm each was recorded at Buguda in Ganjam district and Gondia in Dhenkanal district. Banpur in Khurda district received 5 cm rainfall, while Ranpur in Nayagarh district recorded 4 cm. Several other locations reported light rainfall. Day temperatures witnessed an appreciable fall of 2-3 degrees Celsius over South Coastal Odisha.

## EDITORIAL

### The Silent Collapse Beneath Our Feet: India's Earthworm Crisis

Beneath the surface of India's farms, forests, and gardens lives a quiet workforce that has supported civilization for centuries — earthworms. Often called the "engineers of the soil," these tiny creatures play a vital role in maintaining soil fertility, recycling organic matter, improving water retention, and supporting healthy plant growth. Yet today, India faces a silent ecological crisis: the alarming decline of earthworm populations.

Unlike floods, droughts, or pollution, the disappearance of earthworms attracts little public attention. There are no dramatic headlines or visible disasters. However, the consequences are profound. When earthworms disappear, soil slowly loses its life, productivity, and resilience.

Earthworms naturally aerate the soil by creating tunnels that allow air and water to penetrate deep underground. Their movement improves soil structure and helps roots grow more effectively. They also break down dead leaves, crop residues, and organic waste into nutrient-rich humus, which nourishes crops naturally. In many ways, earthworms act as unpaid farmers working continuously beneath our feet.

India's agricultural system, however, has increasingly become hostile to these organisms. Excessive use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides has damaged soil biodiversity. Modern intensive farming practices, deep ploughing, stubble burning, and monoculture cultivation disturb the natural habitat of earthworms. Climate change, rising temperatures, and irregular rainfall patterns further worsen the problem.

Punjab, Haryana, and other Green Revolution states provide an important example. While these regions helped India achieve food security, decades of heavy chemical dependence have degraded soil health significantly. Many farmers now report hardened soils, declining fertility, and reduced natural productivity. Scientific studies increasingly point toward shrinking microbial and earthworm populations as one of the hidden causes.

Urbanization also contributes to the crisis. Expanding cities cover fertile land with concrete, reducing natural ecosystems where earthworms thrive. Plastic pollution, industrial waste, and contaminated water further poison the soil environment.

The decline of earthworms directly affects food security. Healthy soil rich in organic life produces healthier crops with better nutritional value. Without earthworms, soil becomes compact, less fertile, and more dependent on artificial chemical inputs. This creates a dangerous cycle where farmers use more fertilizers to compensate for declining natural fertility, causing even greater ecological damage.

The crisis is not irreversible. Sustainable farming practices can restore soil life. Organic farming, composting, reduced chemical use, crop rotation, natural mulching, and vermiculture can help revive earthworm populations. Farmers who adopt natural farming methods often observe softer soils, improved moisture retention, and reduced cultivation costs over time.

## Raigarh's Forgotten Tribals: Citizenship, Vote-Bank Politics, and the Unfinished Quest for Justice:



**MONOHAR MOHANTY**

As India moves forward with the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act

(CAA), a troubling question continues to echo through the tribal villages of Raigarh in Odisha's Nabarangpur district: Why do the original inhabitants of the region remain among the most underdeveloped communities despite decades of constitutional safeguards, welfare schemes, and political promises? The debate over citizenship has largely focused on humanitarian concerns and legal recognition for persecuted minorities who migrated to India from neighboring countries. While these objectives are undoubtedly important, the situation in Raigarh highlights another reality that deserves equal attention—the continuing socio-economic deprivation of tribal communities who have lived on this land for generations. Nabarangpur is one of Odisha's most tribal-dominated districts. Yet many tribal families continue to struggle with poverty, unemployment, poor educational outcomes, inadequate healthcare facilities and limited access to economic opportunities. Despite numerous government programmes aimed at tribal welfare, the benefits of development have often failed to reach those who need them the most. The issue becomes more sensitive when viewed against the backdrop of demographic and political changes witnessed in parts of Raigarh and adjoining areas over the past several decades. Following the rehabilitation of refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan under the Dandakaranya Project, substantial Bengali-speaking

settlements emerged in the region. Over time, these communities became an integral part of the local social and economic landscape. However, many tribal activists and community leaders have long argued that the rapid growth of settler populations altered the socio-economic balance in the region. A perception persists among sections of the tribal population that while settler communities have progressed in agriculture, trade, education, and economic prosperity, many indigenous families continue to remain on the margins of development. Equally significant is the political dimension of the issue. There is a growing sentiment among tribal communities that successive political parties, irrespective of ideological affiliation, have often viewed settler populations through the prism of electoral arithmetic. Critics argue that vote-bank considerations have frequently overshadowed the urgent need to address tribal land rights, livelihood security, and economic empowerment. Whether such perceptions are entirely justified or not, they reflect a deep trust deficit that policymakers cannot afford to ignore. No discussion on tribal rights in Raigarh can be complete without recalling the contribution of former MLA Jagabandhu Majhi. Long before he entered electoral politics, Majhi emerged as one of the strongest voices for tribal land rights and indigenous empowerment in the region. He consistently raised concerns regarding the protection of tribal lands and advocated for policies that would ensure economic and social justice for Scheduled Tribes. For many tribal families, Jagabandhu Majhi represented more than a political leader; he symbolized resistance against the marginalization of indigenous communities. His campaigns highlighted the need to protect tribal identity, preserve traditional land

rights, and ensure that development benefits reached the original inhabitants of the region. Even years after his death, his legacy continues to resonate among those who believe that tribal welfare must remain at the center of public policy. The implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act has once again brought these issues into public discourse. While lawful beneficiaries of citizenship are entitled to constitutional rights and protections, the state must simultaneously ensure that the interests of Scheduled Tribes are not diluted or neglected. Development cannot be measured merely by the prosperity of one section of society while another continues to struggle for basic necessities. The challenge before policymakers is not to create divisions between communities. India has always thrived on its diversity and pluralism. The real challenge is to ensure that tribal communities receive secure land rights, quality education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and meaningful participation in economic growth. Constitutional protections for Scheduled Tribes must translate into tangible improvements in their lives. The story of Raigarh is not merely about citizenship or migration. It is fundamentally about justice, equity, and the fulfillment of promises made to India's indigenous people. If the original inhabitants of the land continue to remain among the poorest and most vulnerable sections of society, then the development narrative remains incomplete. The time has come for governments, political parties, and civil society to move beyond electoral calculations and place tribal welfare at the heart of policy-making. Only then can the aspirations of Raigarh's tribal communities be fulfilled, and only then can the vision championed by leaders like Jagabandhu Majhi truly become a reality.

## The Environment is the Foundation of Life



**Ramesh Sarraf Dhamora**

World Environment Day is celebrated annually across the globe on June 5th. On this day, various programs are organized to raise awareness among

people regarding the importance of conserving nature and refraining from tampering with it. Through these initiatives, people are encouraged to plant trees and vegetation, protect existing trees, avoid cutting down green trees, keep rivers clean, and treat nature with respect. World Environment Day serves as a global campaign. The primary objective behind launching this campaign is to draw attention to the state of the environment and to inspire people to become active participants in bringing about positive environmental changes, thereby ensuring a secure future for the Earth.

World Environment Day was first observed by the United Nations in 1972. However, its global-scale celebration officially commenced on June 5, 1974, in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. This occasion marked the hosting of an environmental conference attended by representatives from 119 nations. Furthermore, a decision was made during this conference to observe World Environment Day annually on June 5th. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was also established during this conference. Each year, a specific theme is designated for World Environment Day. The theme for World Environment Day 2026 is "Climate Now." This theme serves as a call to action, emphasizing the urgency of addressing climate change and focusing on real, tangible solutions to the crisis.

The term "Paryavaran" (Environment) is derived from the combination of two Sanskrit words: "Pari" and "Aavaran". "Pari" signifies "around us" or "in our immediate vicinity," while "Aavaran" refers to the "covering" or "surroundings" by which we are encompassed. Thus, the term "Paryavaran" essentially denotes the atmosphere and surroundings that constitute our immediate environment. The environment comprises a composite of various elements, including trees, vegetation, the air we breathe, and everything else that exists around us. The environment shares a direct and intrinsic connection with our daily lives. Human beings and the environment are inextricably linked; they are mutually interdependent and influence one another. Environmental degradation—such as the depletion of tree cover or air pollution—has a direct and profound impact on human health and well-being. Humanity's habits—both good and bad—have a direct impact on the environment. The primary objective of celebrating World Environment Day is to raise awareness among mankind regarding the environment. Its aim is to safeguard nature and the environment in their entirety.

The United Nations Environment Programme's "Making Peace with Nature" report provides a scientific blueprint for addressing the three major environmental crises looming over the Earth: climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The report highlights that climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are deeply interconnected. Together, they constitute a self-inflicted threat to human existence. Pollution causes approximately 9 million people to lose their lives prematurely every year. Furthermore, nearly one million species are on the verge of extinction.

Over the past 50 years, humanity has engaged in the excessive and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, thereby undermining the Earth's life-support capacity. For a sustainable future, it is imperative that economies and financial systems be transformed in a manner that prioritizes investing in the restoration of nature rather than its degradation.

To achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, it is mandatory to reduce global carbon dioxide emissions by 45% by 2030 (compared to 2010 levels) and to attain the target of net-zero emissions by 2050. Current methods of producing food, energy, and materials must be improved to ensure a more equitable and secure utilization of the Earth's resources. To fulfill the Sustainable Development Goals, policies related to climate, biodiversity, and pollution must be implemented in an integrated manner. The report underscores the conclusion that, in the decades to come, making peace with nature constitutes the most critical and decisive undertaking for humanity.

For years, the government has been spending billions of rupees annually in an effort to rid river waters of pollution. Yet, despite these efforts, the water in the rivers has failed to become pure. However, due to the nationwide lockdown, river waters miraculously purified themselves without a single penny being spent. According to environmentalists, the purification of these rivers—whose waters were previously associated with a risk of skin ailments—was a monumental achievement. The Ganges, historically considered the country's most polluted river, transformed into a river with the purest water. Scientists attribute the cleansing of the Ganges to a staggering 500 percent reduction in the levels of dissolved impurities within the water.

Due to rapid urbanization across the country, vast tracts of agricultural land have been encroached upon by expanding human settlements. Consequently, trees and vegetation in these areas were felled, and rivers and natural drainage channels were blocked to make way for the construction of massive buildings. As a result, the animals and birds that once inhabited these regions were forced to migrate elsewhere. In ancient times, to safeguard the environment, dense shade-giving trees such as the Banyan and Peepal were worshipped as deities to prevent them from being cut down. For this very reason, people in

villages today still refrain from cutting down Banyan and Peepal trees.

The primary objective of celebrating World Environment Day is to unite people from all nations—along with employing various other conservation strategies—to combat climate change and improve the management of forests. In essence, this global observance, dedicated to saving the Earth, requires the active participation of people from all age groups. It is imperative to halt the deterioration of the ecological balance caused by rapidly accelerating urbanization and the incessant felling of trees.

Today, our environment stands imperiled due to alarmingly high levels of pollution. Every component of the environment—the biosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere—has become entrapped within the clutches of pollution. The escalating impact of pollution is profoundly disrupting the natural environment. Natural phenomena such as volcanic eruptions and spontaneous forest fires constitute instances of natural pollution. Water contamination, vehicular emissions, industrial smoke and pollution generated by factories, and deforestation are all forms of human-induced pollution. This human-generated pollution is leading to the rapid destruction of nature and the environment. The primary forms of pollution are water pollution, air pollution, and soil pollution. Consequently, there is a pressing need for effective environmental management today. Environmental pollution is currently escalating at an alarming rate. Due to a burgeoning population and the construction of massive structures, the natural integrity of the environment is being compromised. The widespread felling of dense forests to erect large buildings constitutes a blatant interference with nature and the environment. Furthermore, vehicular exhaust, industrial machinery noise, and the discharge of toxic chemical waste are giving rise to air, water, and noise pollution—consequences that are forcing us to contend with a multitude of health ailments. Indeed, it is impossible to even conceive of life in the absence of a healthy environment.

To ensure the survival of life in the future, we must prioritize and guarantee the protection of the environment. This is a responsibility incumbent upon every individual inhabiting this planet. Every person must step forward and actively participate in the movement for environmental conservation; only then can we safeguard the Earth. On occasions such as this, we must engage the general public and impress upon them the stark reality that the repercussions of a deteriorating environmental imbalance will ultimately have to be borne by us and our future generations. Therefore, it is imperative that we become vigilant and proactive regarding the environment, starting immediately. We must work with urgency and determination toward environmental conservation; only then will we be able to restore the equilibrium of our disrupted environment. Only then will our future generations be able to breathe in pure, clean air.

## Forests are the lifeline of our world



**Er. Prabhat Kishore**

Life and pure environment on earth are complement each other and trees play the role of catalyst in this work. But unfortunately under the guise of so-called development,

achieve this goal.

Trees & plants are the major components of the environment. They balance the proportion of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere. Gradual rise of temperature on earth is not a natural disaster, but a scientific and environmental problem. There is a certain proportion of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, carbon mono-oxide and other gases in the air. Steep growth of factories & motor vehicles, rapid pace of urbanization, population rise and indiscriminate reaping of forests have led to unexpected increase in the proportion of Carbon di-oxide in the atmosphere. With the rise in population, the consumption of oxygen and the production of carbon di-oxide have also increased. There has been gradual rise in carbon di-oxide gas due to conventional source of energy such as burning of coal, wood, petroleum, cowdung etc. This gas has a tendency to pass sunlight through it, increasing the temperature of the atmosphere and resulting in unwanted geographic & seasonal changes.

The emitting smoke from factories & vehicles not only contains carbon di-oxide but also harmful carbon mono-oxide, nitrogen oxide, lead oxide, carbon particles, heavy hydro-carbon, formaldehyde, benzene, which pollutes the atmosphere and affects the cells in the human's lungs to become cancerous. The Ozone-layer protects us from the harmful ultra-violet rays of the Sun. Industrial chemicals, particularly chloro-carbon and nitrogen oxides from nuclear

and atomic explosions, damage the Ozone-layer. If these chemicals are not controlled, then the Ozone-layer of the earth will be damaged upto 25 to 30% in the coming 50 years, resulting in rapid increase in atmospheric temperature and danger of cancer to human and animal bodies. A report reveals that at present, pollution from municipality is 45.62%, Bio-medical/chemical - 20%, Various mode of transport - 14%, Industry - 6.4%, Thermal power station - 6.4% and from other sources is 6.7%.

In various religious literatures, the importance of trees has been highlighted. In Sanskrit literature, trees like Peepal, Neem, Tulsi, Bargad/Vat, Anwala have been worshipped and cutting of green trees have been prohibited. Obviously, the Holy literatures have glorified the trees due to its life-supporting quality. In the MatasyaPuran, a tree has been mentioned as equivalent to ten sons (Dash KoopSamavapi/Dashvapi/Samohridah. Dash Hridsamah Putron Dash Putra SamoDrumah). In the Bhagwad Gita (10.26), Bhagwan Krishna have glorified the Vat/Bargad tree as "Ashvatthah Sarva Vrikshanam". In Yayurved, the tree has been said to be the reflection of Bhagwan Shiva. As Shiva ingested the poison and released the Amrit, in the same way trees desiccate the poison (poisonous gases like Carbon dioxide) and pump out Amrit in the form of oxygen.

Gautam Buddha has attained enlightenment under the Peepal tree called Bodhi Vriksh in Bodh Gaya. As per

Buddhist scriptures, nature creates as well as preserves life and it is the duty of the people to preserve the plant considering it as living being. All the 24 Jain Tirthankars meditated under the tree to attain enlightenment. Islamic literature mentions that "whoever plants a tree and diligently looks after it until it matures and bears fruit, will be rewarded by Allah as charity". Holy Bible says "God made trees with seed bearing fruits. He gave us the possibility to increase their numbers by planting seeds." Actually all these aspects have been emphasized keeping in mind the social concern regarding the importance of trees & plants for the conservation of the environment.

Forests are not just densely covered areas of trees & plants, but are the source of livelihood of human as well as other biological creatures. It is responsible for rain, reduces the effects of natural calamities like tsunami, prevents soil erosion, minimizes air pollution, produce shelter for birds and wild animals, availability of food etc. It is the source of numerous herbal plants for the manufacture of medicines. In other words, it is the lifeline for millions of people and other living creatures.

Conservation of the environment is not possible only through some government initiatives; civil societies too have to come forward. Otherwise, in coming days, due to the unexpected rise of carbon di-oxide and damage to Ozone-layer, the earth would be so much heated that existence of life on the earth will be in danger mode.

natural resources are being exploited and trees are being cut indiscriminately by humans, which has adversely affected the environmental balance.

Presently the whole world is suffering from Pandemic Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), one of the major cause of which is the disturbance of nature and ecological imbalance. Currently the main thrust to combat the pandemic is the production of artificial oxygen in laboratories, which is nothing but result of neglecting natural source of this life supporting gas, i.e trees. Ideally a country must have at least 33% of its areas covered with forest, but currently it is just 20% in India. The Central as well as State governments have separate jumbo-sized ministries and departments for this purpose; but despite huge expenditure of public money, even after 79 years of independence all have failed to

# Review Meeting on Ayushman Bharat and Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana

**JAJPUR** (Correspondent) : A review meeting on the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) and Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY) was held under the chairmanship of Jajpur Collector Ambar Kumar Kar. During the meeting, the progress of card distribution under GJAY and Ayushman Vayo Vandana Cards was reviewed block-wise. Officials informed that after the addition of nearly 3 lakh new beneficiaries, the district's achievement rate dropped from 71% to 50%, while the



distribution of Ayushman Vayo Vandana Cards stands at only 32%. The Collector directed officials to achieve 100% card distribution within the next 10 to 15 days. Around 5.77 lakh cards are yet to be distributed. He also instructed the district manager of Common Service Centres

(CSCs) to closely monitor the performance of Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). Currently, 749 active VLEs are working in the district, and another 250-300 are expected to join within the next few days. Strict action has been proposed against VLEs who fail to support the card

distribution drive. Block Programme Managers, Public Health Extension Officers, ASHA workers, CHOs, and ANMs have been assigned specific responsibilities to accelerate enrollment and card generation, especially for senior citizens under the Ayushman Vayo Vandana scheme. The Collector directed

supervisors to conduct daily field inspections and visit at least five to six CSC centres every day. Panchayat-level micro plans will also be prepared to identify and support low-performing centres. A follow-up review meeting will be held next Monday to assess progress. The responsibility for overall monitoring and achievement of targets has been entrusted to the Chief District Medical and Public Health Officer, Dr. Bijay Kumar Mishra. Senior officials from the Health Department, National Health Mission, SHAAS programme, and Common Service Centres attended the meeting.

# Subarnapur District Supply Department raids: 407 trucks and 58 quintals of 28 KG of paddy seized

**SUBARNAPUR** (Correspondent) --- Subarnapur District Supply Department raided Dunguripali No. 26 National Highway Khuntali Petrol Pump Mangalram & Co. and seized 407 trucks and 58 quintals of 28 KG of paddy. In this incident, the driver of the 407 truck Himanshu Sandha of Satlama village, Barpali police station, Bargarh district, has been informed in writing and the supply department has released him. According to the information received, on Wednesday at 6 am, Dunguripali Block Supply Inspector Suryakanta Parida, while going to Bargarh, noticed a 407 truck OD-17 G 2085 loaded with paddy



parked in front of Khuntali petrol pump and asked the driver where it was going. However, the driver could not give a correct answer and could not even show the paddy paper. Later, the Supply Department team stopped the OD-17 G2085 and found 174 bags of paddy. After weighing, its weight was found to be 58 quintals 28

kg. After it was found that the said paddy was illegally coming from Bargarh district to Dunguripali in Subarnapur district, the department seized 407 truck and paddy from the driver. The seized paddy and 407 truck have been handed over to Umashankar Rice Mill of Dunguripali Block. A case has been registered by the District Supply Department.

# LONG-PENDING MINI STADIUM IN KANTABANJI STILL INCOMPLETE

**KANTABANJI**, correspondence : Members of Rajendra Nagar Club, Kantabanji, led by BJD State Youth General Secretary Ajit Joshi, on Friday submitted a memorandum to the Executive Officer of Kantabanji NAC demanding early completion of the long-pending Mini Stadium in Ward No. 14. As per the memorandum, construction of the

stadium began several years ago but remains incomplete. Due to the delay, local youth and sports enthusiasts continue to lack proper infrastructure for training and practice. Speaking on the issue, Ajit Joshi said the Odisha government has been pushing sports development across the state. "It is unfortunate that the Mini Stadium in an important town like Kantabanji remains

unfinished," he stated, adding that completing it would give local athletes a major boost and encourage sports growth in the region. The club urged NAC authorities to take immediate steps to finish the remaining work. Rajendra Nagar Club members and local residents expressed hope that the administration would respond positively and make the facility available to youth at the earliest.

# DANGER LOOMS LARGE AS OLD ELECTRIC WIRES DANGLE OVER HOMES

**Paralakhemundi**, (Correspondent) :: Residents of Kushapalli village under Mahendragada Panchayat in Gajapati district's R. Udayagiri block are living in constant fear as old and damaged electric wires continue to hang precariously over houses, posing a serious threat to life and property. Villagers have accused the Electricity Department and Tata Power of ignoring repeated complaints

despite the looming danger. The decades-old power line supplying electricity to the village has deteriorated significantly, with portions of the protective insulation peeling off and exposing live conductors. The wires are reportedly hanging at a dangerously low level above residential areas, raising concerns of electrocution and accidents, particularly during the ongoing monsoon season.



Local residents said they have informed the authorities several times about the hazardous condition, but no permanent measures have been taken so far. They alleged that the continued negligence of the concerned agencies has left them vulnerable

to a major tragedy at any time. With rain, strong winds, and storms increasing the risk of snapped power lines, villagers fear that a mishap could occur without warning. They pointed out that several incidents of electrocution linked to

faulty power infrastructure have been reported in the district in the past. Demanding urgent intervention, the villagers have called upon the Electricity Department and Tata Power officials to replace the damaged wires immediately and install a new, safe power line to prevent any loss of life. They warned that further delay could lead to a serious accident for which the authorities would be held responsible.

# Helpless Jayakrishna: Demand for help from the Collector

**SUBARNAPUR** (Correspondent):--- Two years ago, the one who was running his family with his own hands, today he is helpless due to lack of medical treatment. Jayakrishna Karna of Tithipali village, Birmaharajpur block, Subarnapur district is living in a dark place today. But in this time of crisis, 'Maa' Maheshwari Sena' has stood as a ray of hope for him. Jayakrishna, who is a common wage earner and supports his family, had a tragic accident two years ago. He was seriously injured when a wall fell while he was working. He had to run to several hospitals from Subarnapur district headquarters hospital to Bhubaneswar due to a broken leg. It is true that he took out a loan to get treatment, but due to lack of money, the treatment was stopped halfway. As a result, today he is unable to walk and is struggling with life in a very miserable condition. Jayakrishna is deprived of government assistance even though he is 80 percent disabled. "Who will give me a handful to eat?"—This question has kept him awake at night. While it has become impossible to work due to his physical disability, not being included in the government scheme has further increased his struggle. In this difficult time, the volunteer organization 'Maa' Maheshwari Sena' has come forward to help Jayakrishna. Showing sensitivity, the members of the Sena took Jayakrishna to the office of the Subarnapur Collector on their bikes. They have appealed to the Collector for his treatment and government assistance. The local public, including Jayakrishna, are now waiting for urgent action at the administrative level. Will Jayakrishna get government assistance after the intervention of the Collector? That is the most important thing now.

# Young woman's body recovered from Kathajodi River

**Cuttack** (Correspondent): In a shocking incident, a young woman's body was seen floating in Kathajodi River in Trishulia area of Cuttack City this morning. According to reports, some local residents saw the body and informed the police and fire firefighters. Immediately the Barang police reached the spot and recovered the body with help of the firefighters. The police also found a mobile phone from the bag, which was found on the spot. However, the identity of the young woman has not been established yet. Besides, it is unclear whether the young woman died or was killed by someone, who dumped her body in the river. Meanwhile, Barang police sent the woman's body to Cuttack SCB Medical College and Hospital for her postmortem.

# Deputy Chief Minister inaugurates "Utkarsh Nimapada 2.0" conference, promises continued development

**Nimapada**, (Correspondent): The Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated the "Utkarsh Nimapada 2.0 - 2026" conference held in front of the local Purneswari Temple today. She stated that she would continue working "as long as I am alive, I will keep working until I see smiles on your faces." The inauguration ceremony was attended by Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, Odisha State team coach Prabhajan Mallik, Nimapada BDO Dr. Abhijit Sadan, Gop BDO Suryashankar Das, and Nimapada NAC officer Chinmay Das, among others. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Chief Minister and local MLA Pravati Parida said that efforts are being



made for the development of a "Developed Nimapada." She mentioned that Nimapada has been officially declared under revenue department recognition and emphasized that the region will be made drug-free. She added that these initiatives will promote sustainable and overall development, accelerate economic growth, and improve the quality of education and healthcare in the region. She further stated that the programme will create a favourable environment

for industrial growth and employment generation, helping transform Nimapada into a developed region. She also said that "Utkarsh Nimapada 2026" will contribute significantly towards Odisha's aspiration of becoming one of India's leading economic states. The main objectives of Utkarsh Nimapada 2026 include "Developed Villages, Healthy Nimapada, Women Empowerment, Farmer Empowerment, Tourism, Industrial Growth, Crime-Free

Nimapada, and Smart Nimapada," along with 11 key focus areas. Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, in his address, highlighted that the "Utkarsh initiative" is a matter of pride for Nimapada. He said that achieving a developed Odisha by 2036, marking the centenary of the state's formation, is a key responsibility of the BJP government. He emphasized that a "double-engine government" is working to make Odisha an industrially strong and prosperous state, and development of every village, town, and constituency is essential for achieving this vision. The second edition of Utkarsh Nimapada is being organized with this vision. The Deputy Chief

Minister also presented a two-year progress report, highlighting allocations in various sectors including education (?38.90 crore), health (?17.74 crore), transport (?325.11 crore), housing (?622 crore), drinking water (?213 crore), social security benefits covering 13,165 beneficiaries, urban development (?77.26 crore), agriculture (?188 crore), women empowerment (?216.12 crore), SHG support (?511.80 crore), water resources and flood management (337 crore), tourism, art and culture (50 crore), sports (30 crore), labour welfare (?4.85 crore), and rural development (?24 crore).

**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, WATCO DIVISION, CUTTACK.** 13001/761/2627  
Te le phone / e- m ail I/ F AX: 067 L-2547 115/gmwatcoctc@gmail.com

**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT**

**Bid identification No. G MWATCO (W)-06 | 2026-27 Dtd.03.06.2026**

**Name of the work:-** Construction of "DRINKING WATER KIOSK" at Ranihat Canal Road near Chhatrabazar Ganesh Temple Ward No- 31 (Zone-27) under WATCO Section, Ranihat, Cuttack

**1. Estimated cost:-** Rs.7.3t Lakh (Approx.)  
**2. Period of completion:-** (Three) months.  
**3. Date & time of availability of bid document** :- From 11A.M of dt 8.06 2026 to 5.00 P.M. of dt.18.06.2026.  
**4. Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal** :- 18.06.2026 up to 0500 P'M'  
**5. Date & time of opening of bids** :- 19.06.2026 at 12.30 P.M.  
**6. Name and address of the officer Inviting Bid** :- The General Manager, WATCO Division, Cuttack-753003, Odisha, Ph.(0671)2547115, email :gmwatcoctc@gmail.com  
**7. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only'**  
Further details can be seen from the web site [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

**General Manger**  
OIPR-13001/13170/1/26-27/0007 **WATCO Division, Cuttack**

32001/322/2627  
**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**  
Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar  
Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com  
e-Procurement Notice- Bid Identification No.- ACEM/MDC-08/2026-27

**1. Name of the Work** : Mechanical Gate Works  
**2. No. of Works** : 01 (One)  
**3. Category of executors** : SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters / Hydro mechanical gates.  
**4. Bid Identification No.** : ACEM/MDC-08/2026-27  
**5. Estimated Cost** : Rs. 12,19,989 /-  
**6. Period of Completion** : 01 (One) calendar month.  
**7. Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal** : From dt.06.06.2026(10.00 AM) to dt.19.06.2026(5.30 PM)  
**8. Last date/ time for receipt of bid in the Portal** : dt.19.06.2026 (up to 5.30 PM)  
**9. Date and Place of opening of Bid** : dt.20.06.2026(11.00 AM onwards in the O/O the undersigned)  
**10. Name of the Officer inviting bid** : Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any further issue of Addenda/ Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.

**Addl.Chief Engineer**  
**Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar**  
OIPR-32001/32405/1/26-27/0009

## Aishwarya Rai Bachchan named Global Brand Ambassador for JW Marriott



Bollywood icon and former Miss World Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has taken on a new global role, becoming the Global Brand Ambassador for JW Marriott. The partnership will see the actress front the luxury hotel brand's "Stay in the Moment" platform, which promotes mindfulness, presence, and meaningful travel experiences. Part of the global hospitality giant Marriott Bonvoy, JW Marriott announced the collaboration as it continues to strengthen its position in the luxury travel segment. Through the partnership, Aishwarya will help amplify the brand's message of intentional and experience-led travel, encouraging guests to embrace the present moment during their journeys. The collaboration comes at a time when India has emerged as one of JW Marriott's key growth markets. With more than 130 properties worldwide, the brand is witnessing increasing demand from Indian travellers seeking immersive and luxury travel experiences, both within the country and abroad. As the face of the campaign, Aishwarya will feature in JW Marriott's global marketing and storytelling initiatives across digital, print, and experiential platforms. Her role will also include participation in curated brand experiences in select markets, further promoting the "Stay in the Moment" philosophy centered on calm, mindfulness, and authentic travel. Speaking about the association, Aishwarya said the concept of being fully present resonates deeply with her personal outlook on life and travel, where simplicity, awareness, and meaningful experiences hold significant value.

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## Bollywood star Aamir Khan locks July 5 for his intimate wedding with partner Gauri Spratt

Bollywood icon Aamir Khan is ready to exchange wedding vows with his partner Gauri Spratt during an intimate ceremony scheduled for July 5. Internal sources confirmed the upcoming nuptials, marking a new chapter for the veteran actor. He publicly introduced his partner during his landmark birthday celebration last year, ending months of speculation about his relationship status. The couple managed to stay out of the spotlight for nearly a year and a half before revealing their connection to public eyes. His bride-to-be comes from Bengaluru and possesses a strong background in the styling industry. She pursued higher studies in fashion photography and styling at the University of the Arts London before establishing her professional footprint. Currently, she manages a branch of the prominent

salon chain BBlunt in Mumbai and looks after her young child from a previous relationship. The pair deliberately avoided media attention during the early stages of their courtship. The actor frequently traveled to Bengaluru to meet her, using the geographical distance from Mumbai to shield their bond from intense celebrity tracking.

## JACKFRUIT Plant-Based Meat Alternative Is Healthy And Hydrating



Jackfruit is increasingly becoming popular as a healthy food. Celebrity Nutritionist Ryan Fernando unpacks the health benefits of jackfruit, who should avoid eating and the best ways to eat it. Jackfruit is becoming a favourite in wellness food trends. A common food in India and other South Asian countries, the chewy fruit is now increasingly becoming a go-to plant-based meat alternative in the West. The world is recognising the health benefits of jackfruit. It is high in fibre, beta-carotene, and manganese, as well as has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, anticarcinogenic, antifungal, antineoplastic and more healthy properties, as shared in The Harvard Gazette.

**Benefits of this fruit** along with explaining who should avoid it and the best ways to consume this fruit. **Hydrating And Cooling Properties** Jackfruits are packed with water, fibre and potassium - three things our body craves when the heat hits, explains the nutritionist. It keeps us hydrated, supports digestion, and naturally cools the body. Summer is a good time to include jackfruit in your diet. Raw jackfruit has a low glycemic index (low GI) when eaten in moderation. Low-GI foods are digested and absorbed slowly, leading to a slower and smaller rise in blood sugar levels. Studies have shown that a low GI diet may result in weight loss and lower risk of heart disease. **Everyone's Eating Jackfruit, But Should You?** While jackfruit has several health benefits, it may not be for everyone. Nutritionist Fernando cautions that if you're diabetic, you should check with your doctor first before including jackfruit in your diet. If you have kidney issues or are on a low-potassium diet, jackfruit might not be the best choice. **How Much Jackfruit Should We Eat** The health expert advises sticking to one cup of jackfruit a day. Excessive jackfruit consumption may spike your sugar levels. Toss it in your salad, smoothies or snack on it fresh but skip frying. Eat it in the morning or at lunch for the best possible digestion. **Here Are 5 Healthy Jackfruit Recipes You Can Try:** 1. Jackfruit Salad Dice raw jackfruit and toss it

with chopped cucumber, tomatoes, onions, lemon juice, and a pinch of chaat masala. Add some roasted peanuts for crunch and garnish with coriander. This hydrating salad is refreshing, light, and perfect for summer snacking. 2. Jackfruit Smoothie Blend ripe jackfruit pieces with chilled yoghurt, some milk, honey, and cardamom powder. This creamy smoothie is a great breakfast drink, packed with nutrients and natural sweetness. You can also blend in some oats for extra fibre. 3. Jackfruit Flour Dry jackfruit seeds in the sun and grind them to make gluten-free flour. Mix some of this nutritious flour with your wheat flour to make chapatis or mix in with dosa batter. It's a healthy alternative to refined flour, rich in protein and B vitamins. 4. Jackfruit Strips Cut ripe jackfruit into thin strips and dry them in the sun or oven. These chewy, subtly sweet strips make a tasty snack that has a similar taste to mango. Sprinkle a pinch of salt or chaat masala for a tangy twist. 5. Jackfruit Paniyarams Mix jackfruit pulp with ragi flour, grated coconut, jaggery, cardamom powder, and salt. Pour the batter into a paniyaram pan and cook until golden brown. These mini dumplings are crisp outside and soft inside - a great breakfast or tea-time snack. When was the last time you ate a jackfruit? Try these healthy recipes and eat jackfruit in moderation, as advised by nutritionist Fernando.



## Diet Cola Chicken Recipe



**Ingredients of Diet Cola Chicken** 500 gms chicken 2 medium-sized onion, finely chopped Oil (as per requirement) 1 can diet Coke (300 ml) 1 cup tomato puree 2 tsp vinegar 2 cups chicken stock Red, yellow and green pepper, chopped into bite-sized chunks 3 garlic cloves, chopped Mixed herbs Salt (as per taste levels) Black pepper (as per taste levels) Coriander leaves, chopped (for garnish) **How to Make Diet Cola Chicken** 1. Take the washed chicken and

season it with salt and black pepper. Make sure to coat the meat well. Now take a pan and heat some oil in it. Gently place the seasoned chicken meat in the pan and cook it for 6-7 minutes. Make sure not to cook the chicken fully but only until it changes colour. 2. Take the semi-cooked chicken out on a plate and set it aside. In the same pan, add some oil along with chopped onions, peppers, and garlic. Stir fry it for 4-5 minutes until they lose

their rawness. Then take the veggies out on a plate. 3. In the same pan, pour one can of diet cola along with tomato paste and vinegar and give it a mix. Add mix herbs and mix well. Now add the semi-cooked chicken along with the sauteed veggies. Give it a mix so that all the ingredients are soaked in the diet cola. 4. Cover the pan with a lid and let it cook for 15 minutes on medium-high flame. Cook until the sauce becomes thick, veggies become soft and the chicken gets tender. 5. Add salt and black pepper as per taste levels. Garnish with coriander leaves and viola! Your diet cola chicken recipe is ready to serve!

## tips for navigating crowds and booking affordable getaways

### 1. Book Your Accommodation in Advance

Extended Eid celebrations are often hectic and packed with activities, with hotels, resorts and other hospitality venues booking up well in advance. We recommend that you book your accommodation as far in advance as possible if you want to be sure that your family will have a place to stay when they come to visit. This will help to avoid disappointment at the hotel of your choice. Similarly, if you are planning to visit another country in the Middle East or further afield, it is essential that you make your reservations well in advance.

### 2. Take Care of Your Personal Belongings

The Eid holidays offer a welcome break from our daily routines, which often involve long periods away from home. If you are travelling, you may be away from home for several days. Make sure your home is safe. Remember to switch off the oven and secure doors and gates.



## Zonals of 1st Chief Minister's Trophy U-14 Inter-District Volleyball Championship 2026 Begins at KIIT University, Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondent): The Zonal phase of the inaugural edition of the Chief Minister's Trophy U-14 Volleyball Championship 2026 (Boys & Girls) commenced today across Odisha, marking a significant step towards strengthening grassroots volleyball development in the State. The championship is being organized by the Odisha Volleyball Association (OVA) under the aegis of the Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha. The tournament is being conducted in four zones—Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Boudh, and Bhadrak. While the Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur Zone competitions began on June 4, the Boudh Zone matches will commence



on June 5 and the Bhadrak Zone matches on June 6. The opening ceremony of the Bhubaneswar Zone was held at the Multipurpose Indoor Stadium, KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, in the presence of distinguished guests, sports administrators, officials, coaches, and young athletes representing districts from across the zone. Welcoming the gathering, Prof. (Dr.) Gaganendu Dash, Honorary General Secretary, Odisha Volleyball Association,

introduced the guests and presented a brief report on the championship. He highlighted the objective of the tournament in identifying and nurturing young volleyball talent from every district of Odisha and expressed gratitude to the Government of Odisha for launching this landmark initiative. Addressing the gathering, Smt. Sonali Chand, OAS, OSD, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha, commended the efforts

being undertaken to strengthen grassroots sports and encouraged the young players to make the most of the opportunity. The ceremony was graced by Smt. Geeta Das, OFS, AFA-cum-Joint Secretary, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha, who emphasized the State Government's commitment to promoting sports among youth and creating pathways for talented athletes to excel at higher levels. On the occasion, Prof. (Dr.) Achyuta Samanta,

President, Odisha Volleyball Association, thanked the Government of Odisha, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, and the Department of Sports & Youth Services for introducing the Chief Minister's Trophy as a platform to discover and nurture future sporting talent. He lauded all participating boys and girls for earning the honour of representing their respective districts at the zonal level and encouraged them to compete with dedication, discipline, and sportsmanship. Dr. Samanta further reiterated OVA's commitment to supporting the Government's vision of making Odisha a leading sporting destination and strengthening volleyball development at the grassroots level.

## Sabalenka Crashes Out of French Open Quarter-Finals



NEWDELHI: World number one Aryna Sabalenka suffered a stunning defeat to Russian 25th seed Diana Shnaider in the French Open quarter-finals, ending her bid for a maiden Roland Garros crown. Sabalenka started strongly, taking the first set 6-3 and racing to a double-break lead in the second. However, her game collapsed under blustery conditions on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Shnaider fought back to claim the second set 7-5 and dominated the decider 6-0. Sabalenka committed 57 unforced errors, a tally that proved decisive. The Belarusian, who was the only Grand Slam champion left in either singles draw, failed to capitalise on her advantage and exited in dramatic fashion. Shnaider, a left-hander playing her first major quarter-final, now advances to face

Polish qualifier Maja Chwalinska in the semi-finals. With this victory, she emerges as a strong contender for a place in the final. Sabalenka's defeat echoed her collapse in last year's final against Coco Gauff. She was aiming to become the first woman since Serena Williams to reach seven consecutive Grand Slam semi-finals, but fell short in her 14th straight quarter-final appearance.

## Jaismine Climbs To No. 1; Vishva, Priya Burst Into Top 3 In World Boxing Rankings

New Delhi: Jaismine Lamboria climbed to World No. 1 in the women's 57kg category while Asian champions Priya Ghanghas (60kg) and Vishvanath Suresh (50kg) surged into the top three of their respective categories, as India retained its strong presence in the latest World Boxing Rankings. Notably, Indian boxers featured in the Top 10 across nine of the 10 women's weight categories and eight of the 10 men's divisions. In the women's section, Minakshi extended her reign as World No. 1 in the 48kg category, while Preeti rose to No. 3. Arundhati Choudhary (70kg), Pooja Rani

(80kg), and Nupur (+80kg) were all ranked World No. 2, highlighting India's growing strength in the heavier divisions. Established stars Nikhat Zareen (51kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) also retained their places among the world's elite. The men's contingent mirrored that consistency. Sachin and Narendra broke into the Top 5 following a sustained run of international success, while Hitesh Gulia (70kg) retained his No. 6 ranking and Abhinash Jamwal (65kg) was placed eighth in the world. Akash (75kg) and Lokesh (85kg) also entered the Top 10, further underlining India's

increasing competitiveness across weight categories. Ajay Singh, President, Boxing Federation of India, said, "These rankings are a reflection of the strong structures and systems that have been put in place over the past few years. From grassroots development to high-performance training, our focus has been on building a sustainable pipeline of talent. It is encouraging to see that today, almost every weight category features a strong Indian presence at the global level, firmly establishing India as one of the leading boxing nations in the world." India currently stands third overall in

terms of Top-10 ranked athletes globally, while emerging as a dominant force in women's boxing, where it is placed second, and holding a strong fourth position in the men's category. Notably, in the elite Top-3 bracket, India is ranked third overall but leads the world in the women's category. The depth extends well beyond the Top 10. On the women's side, Parveen (60kg) is ranked 13th, Ankushita Boro (65kg) narrowly misses the Top 10 at No. 11, while Saweety (75kg), Sakshi (54kg), Sanju (60kg), and Neeraj Phogat (65kg) continue to hold competitive positions in the global rankings.

## Virat Kohli Ruled Out of India's ODI Series Against Afghanistan

NEWDELHI: Star batter Virat Kohli will miss India's three-match ODI series against Afghanistan starting June 13 due to a hamstring injury, according to a BCCI source. The Board of Control for Cricket in India confirmed that Kohli sustained the injury recently, ruling him out of the upcoming series. His absence compounds India's fitness worries, as Rohit Sharma's availability remains uncertain following his IPL 2026 injury. Kohli's setback comes just days after his match-winning



performance in the IPL 2026 final, where he scored an unbeaten 75 to guide Royal Challengers Bengaluru to their second consecutive title. He

finished the season with 675 runs in 16 matches at a strike rate of 166, showcasing remarkable form at 37. The BCCI source stated, "He is out of the ODI series due to

a hamstring injury." The timing of the injury remains unclear, though it may have occurred during the IPL final in Ahmedabad. Kohli's absence opens opportunities for young players to step up ahead of the ICC 2027 World Cup preparations. Team management will look to test new combinations while monitoring the recovery of senior players. Despite the setback, Kohli's recent comments reflected his determination: "I take pride in getting better and figuring out areas to improve."

## FIFA Updates Stadium Code: Reusable Plastic Water Bottles Banned A Week Before WC Kickoff

New Delhi: Just a week before the start of the World Cup, which will be held from June 11 to July 19 at locations in the United States, Canada and Mexico, FIFA has updated its stadium policy, banning the use of reusable plastic water bottles inside the stadium. The global governing body also said other types of bottles are also not permitted due to the risk of causing injury when thrown. Last month, FIFA in its official Stadium Code of Conduct mentioned that, "For the avoidance of doubt, empty, transparent, reusable plastic bottles, up to (1 liter in) capacity, may be brought into the stadium." Now according to the updated Stadium Code of Conduct, which was updated on June 2, FIFA said, "reusable

water bottles may not be brought into the Stadium." As per the clause 3.1.11 of the official Stadium Code of Conduct, "bottles, cups, jars, cans or any other form of closed or capped receptacle that may be thrown or cause injury, as well as other objects made of glass or any other breakable material or especially hard packages or hard thermal boxes (for the avoidance of doubt, reusable water bottles may not be brought into the Stadium)." Clause 3.1.20 suggests, "With the exception of hand sanitizers, no larger than 100ml/3.38 oz., any liquids containing alcohol, including any alcoholic beverages, unless purchased and consumed within designated areas of the Stadium and in strict accordance with any additional alcohol

consumption rules imposed by the Event Organisers." 3.1.21 adds, "any other liquids exceeding 100ml/3.38 oz. unless such liquids are purchased inside the Stadium, with the exception of (i) baby milk and sterilised water in containers (including in glass containers) not exceeding 1 litre/33.8 oz. per child, and (ii) liquids up to 500 millilitres/16.9 oz. that are required for medical reasons but only if presented with a medical certificate in English, French or Spanish and in the presence of the person for whom they are intended." According to The Athletic, FIFA, in a statement on Thursday, said, "The organisation made the decision to prohibit bottles to prevent risk and injury to players and attendees.

## Pranav Adani Hails Praggnanandhaa's Double Win Over World No.1 Carlsen In Norway Chess As 'A Rare Achievement'

Ahmedabad: 4/6 After Praggnanandhaa R continued his remarkable run at Norway Chess by defeating World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen for the second time in the tournament, Pranav Adani, Director, Adani Enterprises Limited, lauded the Indian Grandmaster's effort, saying the double win reflects "the confidence, maturity and competitive spirit" Praggnanandhaa brings to the event. The 20-year-old, who is supported by Adani Sportsline's 'Garv Hai' initiative, produced another composed performance in Round 8, overcoming Carlsen with the black pieces after having earlier defeated him with white in the tournament. Widely



regarded as one of the world's strongest chess tournaments, Norway Chess features many of the game's highest-ranked players. Praggnanandhaa's latest victory places him in elite company. He has now become only the second Indian after Viswanathan Anand to record two classical

wins over Carlsen in the same year. Against a five-time World Champion and one of the greatest players in chess history, the result further underlines Praggnanandhaa's growing stature on the global stage while reflecting the continued rise of Indian chess. Pranav Adani,

Director, Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL), said, "Praggnanandhaa's performance at Norway Chess 2026 has been truly exceptional. Defeating Magnus Carlsen twice in the same tournament is a rare achievement and reflects the confidence, maturity and competitive

spirit he brings to the board. He continues to inspire a new generation of Indian players and demonstrates the growing strength of Indian chess on the global stage. We congratulate him on this remarkable milestone and wish him success in the final rounds." Praggnanandhaa is part of Adani Sportsline's 'Garv Hai' initiative, which supports emerging Indian athletes through financial assistance, access to world-class training and competitive exposure, helping them realise their potential on the international stage. With two rounds remaining before the tournament concludes on 6 June, Praggnanandhaa currently sits third in the standings with 12 points.

# Aditya Aluminium Observes World Environment Day 2026 with Theme "A global call for climate action"

BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondent) Aditya Aluminium celebrated World Environment Day 2026 with a series of impactful initiatives under the global theme "A Global Call for Climate Action." The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from employees, township residents, children, plant leadership, and officials from the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB). The event was inaugurated in the presence of distinguished dignitaries including Mr. Jagannath Nayak (Unit Head), Dr. Satya Narayan Nanda (Regional Officer, OSPCB), Mr. Nimai Mahapatro (VP-CPP Operations) and Mr.



Lalit Charan (Environment Head), along with the broader plant team. Officials from OSPCB, namely Er. Rakesh Panda (Assistant Environmental Engineer), Mr. Manoranjan Pradhan (Assistant Environmental Scientist), and Ms. A. Kusum Minz (Deputy Environmental Scientist), also graced the occasion. As part of the celebrations, a Cyclothon/Walkathon was organized to promote environmental awareness, sustainable lifestyles, and climate action. Participants also

took the Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) Pledge, reaffirming their commitment towards responsible and environmentally conscious living. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Satya Narayan Nanda emphasized the urgent

need to tackle climate change through collective action, environmental stewardship, and sustainable practices. He encouraged all stakeholders to contribute actively towards protecting the environment for future generations. The event concluded with a renewed commitment from all participants towards environmental conservation and sustainability. Through such initiatives, Aditya Aluminium continues to strengthen its commitment to environmental excellence and support national and global efforts for a greener and more sustainable future.

# Kunjamahula Becomes Western Odisha's First 'Surya Ghar Village', Solar Panels Installed on Rooftops of Every Eligible Household

Burla, (Correspondent) :Kunjamahula village under Pitamahula Gram Panchayat in Sonepur district, one of the remote villages of Western Odisha, has now emerged as the first 'Surya Ghar Village' in the region. With rooftop solar panels installed in every eligible household, the village is setting an example of clean energy adoption and community participation. Out of the 32 families residing in Kunjamahula village, 28 eligible families have installed rooftop solar panels under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and its Utility Led Aggregation (ULA) initiative implemented by TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL). Under the



scheme, each eligible consumer received a 1-kilowatt rooftop solar system by contributing only ₹1,875, making solar energy affordable and accessible for rural households. Commending the TPWODL efforts in implementing the consumer welfare initiative, Shri Sadananda Gaigaria, a beneficiary from Kunjamahula village, said, "Earlier, we had only heard about solar power. Today, it is installed on our own rooftop. We are happy and with this solar system, we hope to save on our electricity bills and provide a better future for our family." Speaking on the milestone, Mr. Parveen Verma, CEO, TPWODL, stated that, "Kunjamahula's journey to becoming Western Odisha's first 'Surya Ghar Village' demonstrates how clean energy can transform lives when communities actively participate in development initiatives.

# Vedanta Aluminium Commences Pride Month 2026 with Inclusive Milestones at Jharsuguda

Jharsuguda, (Correspondent): Commencing its observance of Pride Month, Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer, is reinforcing its commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workplace at its Jharsuguda plant operations. Aligned with the Pride Month 2026 theme, 'For All of Us', which highlights the importance of creating spaces where individuals can live and work with dignity and authenticity, the company is strengthening team diversity through inclusive hiring, equitable practices and a culture of respect across its operations. At its mega aluminium plant in Jharsuguda, this commitment is reflected in the diverse composition of its teams. Women constitute 21% of the



plant's employees, in critical functions such as potline operations, maintenance, engineering and power operations and in leadership roles. The company has also onboarded 19 transgender employees in various roles including security, storekeeping, housekeeping and maintenance functions. These milestones mark a steady shift towards building a more representative and inclusive workforce in a sector traditionally perceived as male

dominated. Vedanta Aluminium has put in place progressive policies and systems to support an enhanced quality of life for transgender employees and enable equitable opportunities for progress. These include a comprehensive gender affirmation policy that supports employees through their transition journey, with financial assistance of up to 2 lakh provided for gender reassignment procedures along with 30 days of paid leave and access to medical guidance.

# Odisha Emerges as India's Solar Growth Champion, Secures Top Honours at PM Surya Ghar Excellence Awards

Bhubaneswar (Correspondent) : Odisha has been recognised as one of India's leading performers in the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, securing the top position among states in the medium consumer base category at the prestigious PM Surya Ghar Excellence Awards. The recognition follows Odisha's outstanding performance during the nationwide "Month of Solar" campaign held in May 2026. The achievement is a result of the collaborative efforts of the Government of Odisha and the Tata Power-led Odisha DISCOMs. Operating as joint ventures with the state government, these DISCOMs serve as the nodal agencies for



implementing the rooftop solar programme across Odisha. Odisha earned national recognition across key implementation parameters, demonstrating excellence in consumer outreach, project execution, and operational efficiency: " 1st Rank - Highest Number of Consumer Applications

under PM Surya Ghar " 1st Rank - Maximum Rooftop Solar Installations Commissioned " 1st Rank - Highest Number of DISCOM Technical Inspections Conducted " 3rd Rank - Maximum Vendor Registrations, strengthening the state's solar ecosystem As of June 2026,

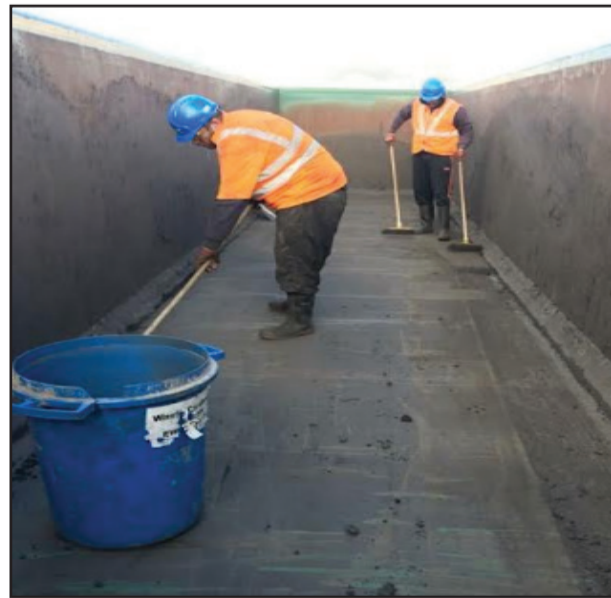
Odisha has recorded remarkable progress under the PM Surya Ghar initiative. The rapid adoption of rooftop solar is helping households reduce dependence on conventional grid power while enabling significant savings on monthly electricity expenses. The impact of the programme extends beyond clean energy generation. Thousands of

households across Odisha are witnessing substantial reductions in their electricity bills, with many consumers reporting near-zero monthly power expenses. In Western Odisha alone, nearly 11,000 households have received nearly zero bills through rooftop solar adoption. The resulting savings are being channelled towards essential household priorities, including education, healthcare, mobility, and long-term financial security. The success of Odisha's rooftop solar programme highlights the state's commitment to accelerating clean energy adoption, strengthening energy self-reliance, and advancing India's renewable energy goals.

# EAST COAST RAILWAY REGISTERS IMPRESSIVE GROWTH IN NON-FARE REVENUE THROUGH INNOVATIVE ASSET MONETISATION

BHUBANESWAR, (Correspondent): In a significant stride towards financial sustainability and customer centric development, East Coast Railway has registered impressive growth in Non-Fare Revenue (NFR) through innovative utilisation of railway assets across its network. Moving beyond conventional passenger and freight earnings, the Railway has transformed underutilised assets and service spaces into revenue generating avenues that also enhance passenger convenience, local employment and environmental sustainability. The achievement reflects East Coast Railway's vision of developing railway infrastructure

not merely as transport assets, but as community oriented spaces that create economic opportunities while improving the travel experience. Among the most visible initiatives are Rail Coach Restaurants at Khurda Road, Puri, Rayagada, Titilagarh, Muniguda and Hirakud stations. These creatively redesigned coaches have emerged as popular dining destinations, generating Rs.1,36,60,369 in revenue while enhancing station ambience, promoting tourism and creating local employment. Passenger oriented logistics services also contributed significantly, with two wheeler packing contracts at Talcher, B e r h a m p u r,



Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur stations earning Rs.35,48,606 by providing secure and convenient transportation solutions for passengers. Wagon cleaning contracts at Angul BOXN Shed and Sarla generated Rs.74,45,455, while

also supporting improved freight operations, asset maintenance and cleaner railway infrastructure. Land licensing initiatives contributed Rs.69.35 lakh to non-fare earnings, including Rs.61.00 lakh from

cargo related land licensing at Jagdalpur, Rs.6.85 lakh from land licensing for coal stacking and loading activities at Handapa, and Rs.1.50 lakh from leasing of a railway pond at Barghar Road station under Sambalpur Division. The pond leasing initiative is particularly noteworthy as it demonstrates how railway assets can generate revenue while supporting environmental sustainability. Productive utilisation of railway owned water bodies helps preserve aquatic ecosystems, prevent encroachments and promote greener surroundings, showcasing a balanced approach to asset monetisation and ecological stewardship.

# IDS Organises Walkathon to Mark World No Tobacco Day

Bhubaneswar, (Correspondent): With the objective of spreading awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and promoting a tobacco-free lifestyle, the Institute of Dental Sciences (IDS), faculty of dentals sciences of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University, organised a Walkathon on Wednesday to mark World No Tobacco Day.



The awareness rally commenced from the IDS campus and proceeded through SUM Hospital Square and APJ Abdul Kalam Park before returning to the college premises. Faculty members, interns, and students participated enthusiastically in the event, demonstrating their commitment to the cause of tobacco control and public health.

The interns of IDS played an active role in making the programme successful by disseminating awareness messages and educational materials among the public regarding the dangers of tobacco use and the benefits of a tobacco-free life. The Walkathon was flagged off by Prof. Sanat Kumar Bhuyan, Nodal Officer of the Tobacco Cessation Centre at IDS. Dr. Basant Choudhury was also present on the

occasion. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Gatha Mohanty, Dr. Smita Priyadarshini, and Dr. Sumita Mishra. The event was successfully organised under the direct supervision of Prof. (Dr.) Ruchi Bhuyan, Dean of IDS. Through this initiative, IDS conveyed a strong message advocating for a healthier and tobacco-free Odisha while encouraging the public to adopt healthier lifestyle choices.