



IYA NEWS

- The Media Helpline

“An Association Based Community Media Organization”
R.N.I Reg. No.- ODIENG/2017/72682 ; POSTAL REGD. NO. BN/301/23-25

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ନବୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମ୍ୟାଜିକ୍ କାର୍ଡ ସରଳ ହେଉଛି ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଗଢ଼ିବାର ରାସ୍ତା



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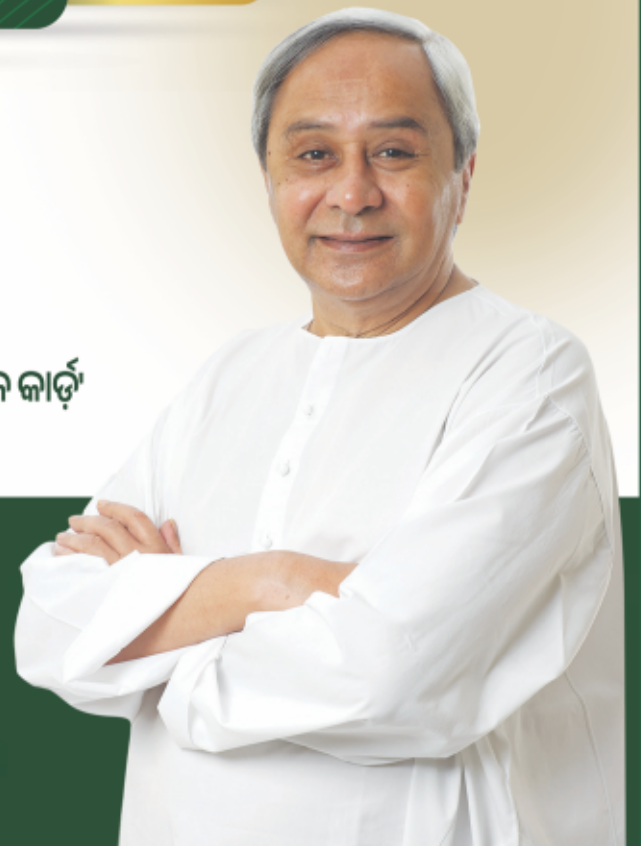
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ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗ

Naveen Patnaik sets sights on becoming longest serving Chief Minister in country

Naveen Patnaik, who has been the Chief Minister of Odisha for 24 straight years, will seek a sixth consecutive term in the eastern state during the assembly



elections in May-June and set his sights on becoming the longest serving chief minister of any province in the country.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) announced the schedule for the four-phase assembly elections, which will be held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha polls and is likely to be fought on issues like unemployment, inflation, corruption, inequality, communal riots, law and order etc.

There are 147 assembly constituencies and 21 Lok Sabha seats in the state. The poll body said voting will be held on May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1. The results will be declared on June 4.

As he addressed his last cabinet meeting during the day, Patnaik, who is also the president of the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD), said the people of the state are going to create a new record in the political history of the country in the upcoming assembly elections.

“In a few months, the people of Odisha are going to create a new

record in the political history of this country. I always feel profoundly blessed and humbled by the intense faith of the people which also inspires me to work harder,” the Chief Minister said.

He is the second longest serving Chief Minister in the country's history and if re-elected, would surpass former Sikkim chief minister Pawan Kumar Chamling's record. The latter was in power for 24 years and 167 days – from December 12, 1994, to May 27, 2019.

Patnaik, on the other hand, has been at the helm of Odisha since March 5, 2000 and his term is scheduled to end on June 2, by which time he would have completed 24 years and 89 days in power. He will have to complete another 78 days to break the record.

“I always feel profoundly blessed and humbled by the intense faith of the people which also inspires me to work harder. The next 10 years will be decisive for Odisha's future. We will herald an empowered Odisha – modern, dynamic and responsive, primarily for our youngsters,” he told the cabinet, according to a government statement.

In the 2019 assembly elections, the BJD bagged 112 seats, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 23 seats, the Congress secured nine seats and the CPI(M) won one. An independent candidate also won the polls. In the Lok Sabha, the BJD won 12 seats, while the BJP secured eight and Congress managed one seat.

The key assembly seats are Hinjili, Sambalpur, Chandbali, Jajpur, and Jeypore while the important Lok Sabha

constituencies Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar, Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj, Puri and Koraput.

Patnaik won the Hinjili assembly seat five times since 2000. Though Patnaik was elected from the seat in five Vidhan Sabha polls. In the last three polls held in 2009, 2014 and 2019, the BJD's vote share was 76%, 73% and 66%, respectively.

People aware of the matter said

Misra of the BJD by less than 12,000 votes.

The Lok Sabha elections would determine the fate of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who has been fielded from Sambalpur Lok Sabha constituency. He was last elected to the Lok Sabha from Deogarh in Odisha in 2004.

“India is the biggest democracy in the world. We welcome the

elections. “This time, the battle will be intense. Congress will fight the polls with full vigor,” he said.

More than 33.2 million voters are eligible to exercise their franchise this year. Of those, 16.8 million are male and 16.4 million female.

On May 13, polling will be held for 28 assembly seats and four Lok Sabha constituencies. In the next phase on May 20, voting



the BJD's focus on the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, which is currently represented by the BJP. The two parties have also locked their horns over Puri—the religious capital of Odisha and home to the famous Jagannath temple. In 2019, the BJP's Sambit Patra lost to Pinaki

EC's announcement. This is an opportunity for the people to exercise their rights. The SCs, STs, women and all should participate in this biggest festival of democracy,” Pradhan said.

State Congress vice-president Shivananda Ray claimed his party is well-prepared for the

will be held for 35 assembly seats and five Lok Sabha constituencies. On May 25, voting for 42 assembly segments and six Lok Sabha seats will be held. The polling for the remaining 42 assembly seats and six Lok Sabha constituencies will be held on June 1.





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▶ ଅଙ୍ଗନବାଡ଼ି କର୍ମୀଙ୍କ ମାସିକ ମାନଦେୟ
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▶ ଅଙ୍ଗନବାଡ଼ି ସହାୟିକାଙ୍କ ମାସିକ ମାନଦେୟ
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ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗ

NATION

India ranks 134 in Human Development Index among 193 nations

Pradeep Kumar Panda, Economist, Bhubaneswar

As per latest Human Development Index, India ranks 134 among 193 nations and India falls behind Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and China. Categorized as 'Very High', 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low Human Development', China and Sri Lanka, ranked at 75 and 78, respectively, in the High Human Development category compared to India, which stands at 134. India also ranks below Bhutan (125) and Bangladesh (129), despite all three being categorised under 'Medium Human Development'.

The 2023/24 Human Development Report (HDR) is titled, "Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World. Following a stagnation in its HDI value in 2021, India's HDI value surged to 0.644 in 2022, showcasing improvements across vital indicators including life expectancy, education, and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. Life expectancy in India rose from 67.2 to 67.7 years, while expected years of schooling reached 12.6, and

mean years of schooling increased to 6.57. Additionally, GNI per capita saw a rise from \$6,542 to \$6,951.

Despite global gains, the HDR highlights persistent challenges, noting that the world has yet to fully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises. The report warns of a 'partial, incomplete and unequal' recovery, exacerbating global inequality and polarisation.

Furthermore, the HDR outlines a concerning trend of rising global inequality, with the gap between the wealthiest and poorest countries widening since 2020. India, along with other countries in South Asia, faces significant losses in HDI due to inequality.

According to the report, while nine in 10 people worldwide endorse democracy, over half of the respondents expressed support for leaders that may undermine it by bypassing fundamental rules of the democratic process.

In addition to this paradox, half of the people surveyed reported

having no or limited control over their lives, and over two-thirds believed that they have little influence on their government's decisions.

Political polarisation in countries is also responsible for protectionist or inward-turning policy approaches which is "starkly at odds with the global cooperation needed to address urgent issues like the decarbonisation of our economies, misuse of digital technologies, and conflict," the report says while emphasising on the need for united action to tackle global issues.

In a world marked by increasing polarisation and division, neglecting to invest in each other poses a serious threat to our wellbeing and security. Protectionist approaches cannot address the complex, interconnected challenges we face, including pandemic prevention, climate change, and digital regulation.

Our problems are intertwined, requiring equally interconnected solutions. By adopting an

opportunity-driven agenda that emphasises the benefits of the energy transition and of artificial intelligence for human development, we have a chance to break through the current deadlock and reignite a commitment to a shared future.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions.

The health dimension is assessed by life expectancy at birth, the education dimension is measured by mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age. The standard of living dimension is measured by gross national income per capita. The HDI uses the logarithm of income, to reflect the diminishing importance of income with increasing GNI. The

scores for the three HDI dimension indices are then aggregated into a composite index using geometric mean. Refer to Technical notes for more details.

The HDI can be used to question national policy choices, asking how two countries with the same level of GNI per capita can end up with different human development outcomes. These contrasts can stimulate debate about government policy priorities.

The HDI simplifies and captures only part of what human development entails. It does not reflect on inequalities, poverty, human security, empowerment, etc. The HDRO provides other composite indices as broader proxy on some of the key issues of human development, inequality, gender disparity and poverty.

Over the years, India's rank in Human Development Index is worsening which is a big cause of concern. Human Force is becoming liability than asset. We are not able to reap the advantage of demographic dividend.

Human Development Index





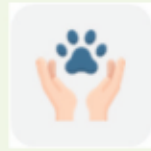
ମହ୍ୟ ଓ ପ୍ରାଣୀସମ୍ପଦ ବିକାଶ ବିଭାଗ



ଗୋଲ୍ ଫ୍ରି ନମ୍ବର

1962

ରାଜ୍ୟବ୍ୟାପୀ ଆନିମାଲ୍ ହେଲ୍ପଲାଇନ୍



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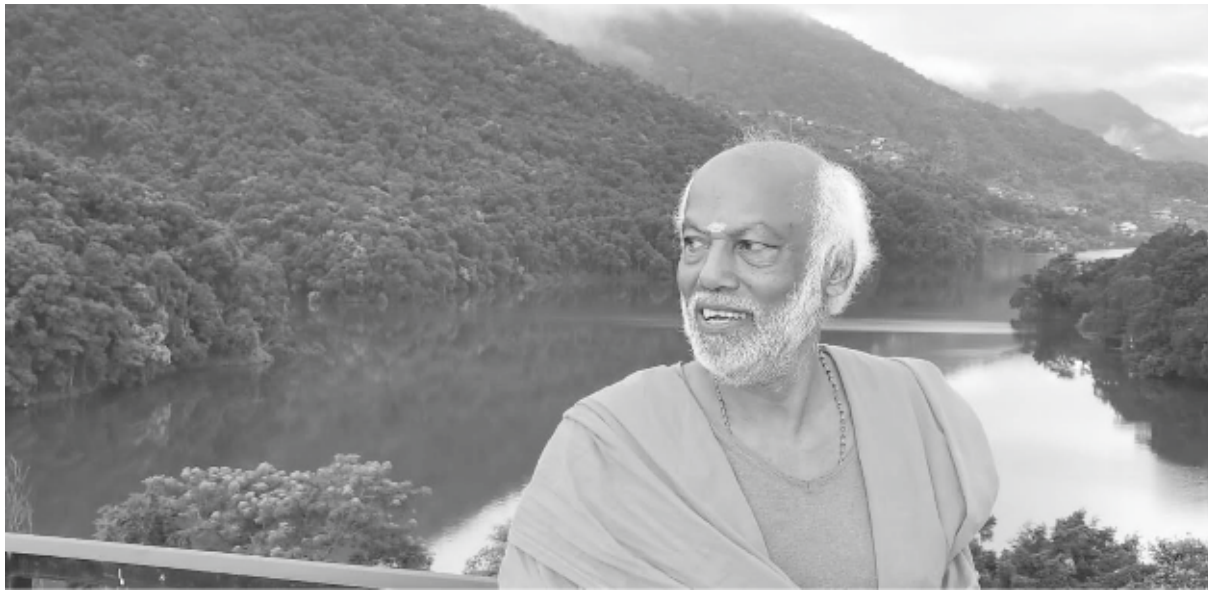
1962 ରେ କଲ୍ କରି ବୁଲା ଓ ଅସହାୟ ପ୍ରାଣୀଙ୍କ ଚିକିତ୍ସାରେ ସହାୟତା କରନ୍ତୁ



SELF KNOWLEDGE

Live The Full Life

Swami Suddhananda



When life is full of excitement and celebrations there seems to be no need to question anything or analyse anything. But when a crisis is precipitated, a road block is encountered and the smooth traffic is interrupted, everybody looks for the way out to continue the smooth travel.

That is where a person has to be absolutely clear in analysing the situation and there is no place for sentiment, bias or any type of vagueness. If we ask ourselves or anybody else to point out the source of the problems or the conflicts in life, then everybody will provide a small or big list of people and situations that cause the conflict in life.

That list may include parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins - the immediate family, or the extended family and the neighbours around, or the government, the educational system, the religious belief or disbelief and every such external person or things except the individual himself. Everybody thinks that he or she 'has' a problem but he or she 'is' innocent! Ultimately, in the

'I' the Absolute has no limitations but the limitations of mortality, death of the body is imposed on 'I'. The Limitlessness of the 'I' is imposed on the limited body. That is why man wants to be immortal with the body.

Absolute, that is the truth. But immediately in the beginning of life, a person has to do a little more observation or analysis than to simply dump the whole responsibility for crises on other people and things.

It is extremely important to observe as even a patient is kept under hours or days of observation before the doctor concludes about the patient or gives the final diagnosis. When a patient is suffering from fever, it may have any number of possible reasons. Usually, everybody thinks of the cold, headache, indigestion or any such cause for the fever but when the fever lingers, they look for other reasons. They take the blood sample and try to find the cause by the process of elimination. When they eliminate the common causes like malaria, jaundice or any such disease, they go further into brain fever or even blood cancer or AIDS!

The simple fever can have any number of causes. Similarly, in life, a very simple emotion of fear, anxiety, love, hatred or jealousy can have any number of causes. At least, that is how it appears to be and everybody provides a big list of things or people who cause or invoke these emotions. That sounds very realistic and the whole world is busy blaming everything and everybody around except of course himself/herself. Each person

presents himself/herself as the innocent victim.

Yes, victims we are if there is a disease like malaria, small pox or allergy of some kind. Because airborne, waterborne diseases, mosquitoes and flies can reach us even if we don't wish to. But, with our intelligence, even some such bugs can be destroyed or kept off. But when we look at the diseases like obesity, sugar, cholesterol we definitely have no external virus to cause the disorder. Neither can we blame the food as the food does not get into our system all by itself. The individual 'eats'. The 'individuality' eats and the body or the mouth is a simple instrument, Emotions too come under the same category. Physical disorders like sugar, obesity, cholesterol and the subtle mental disturbances like anger, hatred, jealousy, etc. are caused by the individual himself - unless the person is brainwashed to live a particular lifestyle and is taught to react in a particular way. Sometimes, a child can learn to behave in a particular way as even he learns to eat a particular type of food from childhood itself. Long before the child learns to choose, he is fed with many different foods. He grows up to be vegetarian or non-vegetarian.

The conflict comes when suddenly the type of food is associated with morality, holiness, purity or divinity. The same person may drop the non-vegetarian for reasons of health and survival, but many find it difficult to drop it in the name of a religious faith. Especially so, when there are many religions where the high priests and the followers consume all types of meat and their holiness seems unaffected! Similarly, there are many faiths where cruelty to others in the name of God, faith or honour is given divine sanction. Hence, a child growing up in such a society will have no conflict in relation to certain types of behaviour, food or emotions. But he or she becomes a problem to others with opposite conditioning or upbringing.

Both types of behaviour, more or less, have their own problems. When poverty has a set of problems, prosperity has another set of problems. Illiteracy may not solve all the problems, but literacy too does not solve all problems. If illiteracy precipitates certain problems, literacy causes some other types of complications. Hatred may not solve problems; love too does not solve. Both emotions can cause different sorts of problems.

That is the reason why, in an objective analysis, we can see that the individual himself is the real problem. He is the one who can use and abuse any type of food, power, emotions or riches. He can manipulate any type of faith. If a particular faith or a type of thinking has not suppressed the individual once and for all and there is even the slightest scope to challenge, question or analyse, then the individual can turn the whole experience upside down and learn to look at everything afresh.

It is the 'individuality', who 'is' the problem and does not 'have' the problem. As long as he is conditioned to believe in a particular way, the opposite way will invoke conflict. Not only the whole external world is full of people with opposing views, even the memories of 'an individual' have many contradictory experiences and ideas within.

Therefore to solve the problem of the individual - the 'I' - we cannot afford to condition him or train him to have a particular approach but must help him to understand his own nature. The earlier we understand that the pairs of opposites cause different types of problems, the better it is to focus on the individual I! The sense of the opposite, the conflict is invoked with reference to the individual. There is no sense of absolute direction without a point of reference. The directionlessness is the absolute where a relative point must be marked to name the east, west, south or north. Similarly there is no consideration of poverty,

prosperity, ignorance, knowledge, love or hatred without the reference to 'the individuality, the 'I'!

With a strong sense of 'I', sense of you, he, others, creation, a creator or the absence of the creator is speculation. Some individuals like a creator or God. Some others do not feel comfortable accepting a creator or God. Some are comfortable with values, morality, and definite law. Some are comfortable with the absence of any such formal laws, disciplines and enjoy a sense of total permissiveness in the name of openness.

We see the presence of both attitudes not only in the world but also in the life of 'a' given individual. There are some who follow the dotted lines. There are also some who hate the dotted lines and drive as they choose. There are yet some others, who are sometimes on the dotted lines and often cut the lines. Or there are some who sometimes go haywire but often are on the dotted lines.

That clearly shows the individuality - the 'I's of many in action and that creates all the conflicts in the world. Land

To be free is - to teach, yet not be a teacher, to learn yet not be learner, to talk of 'freedom' yet not be a merchant of freedom, to listen yet not be a perpetual buyer of that strange yet familiar commodity called 'freedom'. Free from nothing reminds one of what his freedom is, or where everything, every little thing in the universe talks in eloquent silence about WHAT IT IS and WHAT IT IS NOT

masses or countries don't fight. The individuals fight. The cars do not collide. The drivers collide. The bodies don't embrace or fight. The individualities embrace or fight with the bodies. The thoughts are not emotions. The individuality's built up in relation to the thoughts creates emotions. The objects don't attract or distract. The individuality feels so. The body is not afraid of old age or death. The 'I' - the individuality is

afraid of old age, death and enjoys the youth and the strength.

Hence, to solve the so-called problems of life, the person must solve the problem of the 'I'! When the 'I' falls asleep, when the 'I' is suspended in the moments of happiness or forgetfulness or when the 'I' is suspended momentarily with a surrender to a faith in a God or in love, everybody feels comfortable. But soon the sleep comes to an end. When the reverie ends the

intensity of the faith and the individuality returns with a sense of greater emptiness. It returns with a memory of an ecstasy that could not be his, but he somehow had temporary access there. The person struggles more to relive that experience and the spiritual chase, the wanderings begin. He goes on blaming other thoughts, memories, people and experiences as something that prevents him from being ecstatic or restful.

He never understands that the presence or absence of anything or the thought is immaterial. It is the suspension of the 'I' that matters and that can happen once for all with the understanding of the source of the 'I', the recognition of the nameless source that remains the same forever and ever. With that recognition, the person plays the roles of all kinds and no emotion, possession or dispossession creates any type of conflict. Hence, the path to the solution of all problems is:

Educate the children about the world around including one's own body. When physics, chemistry, etc. will give insight into the material world, medicine will give insight into the body. Art, music, painting, etc. will enrich the material possession and the quality of life. Let the children begin with such noble emotions like love, kindness, sensitivity, consideration of others, helping others, etc. Then at a stage, when they are young enough to taste the conflict, they must be told that hatred may not pay, but love too does not pay. The lies never make life easy. The truth too sometimes complicates it. But the love and the truth and any such noble emotions backed by the understanding of one's own self can become the bedrock of one's built up called life. Then there will be nothing to cause remorse even when one's love is thwarted or kindness and the truthfulness are misunderstood.

Every person must know himself and shall never compromise with the values that consciously or unconsciously reflect the Absolute. But it is impossible to live practising values without the Absolute self-knowledge as the vices seem to overwhelm the virtues too often. Therefore "Be' yourself and live the FULL LIFE!

SPECIAL REPORTS

Cyber Fraudsters' new tricks

Since a large number of people are going digital these days, cyber fraudsters are using innovative ways to dupe vulnerable users. Many users are falling prey to scams that steal sensitive data and their hard-earned money.

Cybercrimes like phishing, malware, OTP frauds, fake UPI links have almost become the things of the past. As people have become gradually aware of these old tricks, cyber fraudsters are adopting newer tricks to rob people digitally.

Have you ever faced a situation when you insert your debit card in an ATM in an unguarded area and then your card gets stuck in the machine? If yes, you are under threat from the cyber fraudsters.

In a recent incident, Chinmay Kumar Sarangi from the Chandaka area of Bhubaneswar was targeted by cyber criminals. As per reports, Asad Ali and his gang had looted Sarangi by applying new tricks. On the basis



seized from his possession. Police are trying to nab the other members of the gang.

As per police sources, the gang mainly targets ATMs located on the outskirts where there is less crowd. They fix a remote-controlled chip on the machine and put a fake customer care number near it. As a result, when the customer puts the ATM card in the machine, it gets locked. Taking advantage of the situation, the fraudsters come forward to help the customer. They ask the customer to call the fake customer care number. By keeping the customer engaged in the process, they remove the card by opening the machine lock with the remote. Subsequently, they replace the original chip in the card with a duplicate one and put it in the machine. When the customer goes away with the card having a duplicate chip, they put the original chip in another

card and withdraw money from the account.

"The cyber fraudsters were using a remote control device and as a result, the ATM cards were getting locked in the machine. Then they were taking the original chip from the card and withdrawing money from the customer's account," said Bhubaneswar Zone-5 ACP, Goutam Kisan.

"Though people are being made aware of cyber fraudsters, the miscreants are adopting newer tricks. Hence, people need to be more careful," said cyber expert, Lingaraj Sethi.

In another technique, cyber fraudsters are duping customers during online hotel bookings. Sameer Sarangi from Bhubaneswar fell victim to this new trick adopted by the fraudsters.

As per reports, Sameer found a number for booking a hotel after a Google search. However, the number belonged to a cyber



of Sarangi's complaint, Asad was arrested during the investigation into the incident. As many as 11 ATM cards and net cash amounting Rs 40,000 were

RI to Chit Fund firm's staff

PID court in Balasore has recently awarded seven-year rigorous imprisonment to a person from Gwalior who allegedly cheated as many as 500 people in MLM scheme. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 3.4 lakh on him.

The accused has been identified as Babu Singh Kushwaha who is the Director and promoter of M/s Auroxa Deal Multitrade (OPC) Pvt. Ltd.

Similarly, up-line members Sarat Kumar Nayak and Pravat Ranjan Das were also held guilty and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for five years and slapped a fine of Rs 1.25 lakh on each.

As per the order of the court, on default of fine all the convicts will undergo further imprisonment of one year each. Further, the company represented through Khushwaha was found guilty and sentenced to pay fine of Rs 2 lakh.

As per reports, the case was registered pursuant to an enquiry conducted by EOW on a petition filed by Chandra Kanta Dash and others against the company and its Director on the allegation of duping as many as 500 gullible depositors of more than Rs 10 crore



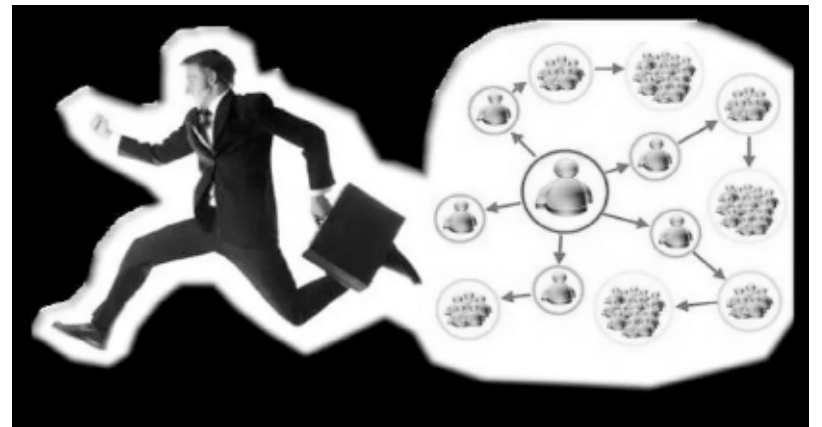
under false promise of high returns on their deposits and investment in different schemes launched by the company.

The company is registered with ROC, Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh. The convict Kushwaha is its lone Director. The company under various lucrative schemes and packages promoted direct selling of various household goods and electronic goods with high returns having cash back offers. The collection of deposits by the company under the cover or mask of direct selling was nothing but running of Ponzi schemes. The business model of the company is pyramidal MLM in nature, working as a MLM in which the early entrants are profited, and as the number of investors and depositors increases, the scheme collapses at certain point. Thus, the new and down line members are made to suffer. Thus the fraud was camouflaged under the name of direct selling and marketing of different commodities.

The company had floated various lucrative schemes and packages under which products like LED TV, smart TV, trolley bag, mixture grinder, LED smart fan are being offered to the public under direct selling with high returns having cash back offers like 10% matching income and bonus for enrolling investors downline.

As per the offers, there was daily cash back for 250 days and booster income and bonus for every two direct sponsors. As per the brochures circulated by the company, there are eight number of schemes ranging from the investment amount of Rs 1500 to Rs 1,00,000- carrying daily cash back offer of Rs 11 to Rs 800 for a period of 250 days. Besides, the company also offered various reward incomes like star achiever to Emerald star achiever with reward income of Rs 5000, mobile phone, furniture depending upon the target achievement within 30 days to 150 days for enrolling down line depositors.

However, as found on investigation, the company through its Director Kushwaha and up-line members Sarat Nayak and Pravat Ranjan Das has collected Rs 10 crore from more than 500 investors. The



Company had its activities mainly in Balasore and Bhadrak districts and their peripheral areas.

During investigation, Kushwaha was arrested from Gwalior whereas Nayak and Das were arrested from Balasore. Two charge sheets were filed in the case on June 8, 2022 and December 12, 2023.

Incredible Artist!

An ultra-talented artist in Subarnapur district is turning heads with his incredible drawing skills.

Meet Radheyshyam Rana, from Bagabar village under Birmaharajpur block in the district, who can draw two portraits with his right leg at the same time. Rana is such a gifted artist that he can draw an accurate portrait of anybody on canvas with ease.

As per reports, Rana binds two pens in a piece of wood and fixes it on his foot. With the help of the wood, he can smoothly draw two portraits of different persons or objects simultaneously. With this special skill, he has drawn lively pictures of Gods and Goddesses, cine stars, the President of India and others accurately.

"It seems almost impossible to draw two pictures simultaneously with one's leg. However, nothing is impossible in this world. With rigorous practice, I have mastered the skill. I can draw two different pictures accurately with the help of my leg," said Rana.

Rana's immense talent as an artist was apparent from his childhood



days. Though he belongs to a poor family, his family members helped him grow as an artist. Initially, he started drawing with his hands. Later, he practiced to draw portraits with his leg. Gradually, he improved and fine-tuned his special skills with rigorous practice and now he can draw two pictures simultaneously with his right leg.

Rana has recently appeared in the Plus 2 examination. Though he aspires to study in an art college, his acute poverty and severe financial constraints have emerged as a major impediment to fulfilling his ambition. His family members have requested

that the government and private sectors extend their helping hands to fulfill the ambition of Rana to pursue higher study.

"My son is a talented artist and he is eager to study in an art college after his Plus 2. However, we are very poor and not in a position to afford his study. We request the government or private institutions to extend their helping hands so that he can fulfill his dream," said Rana's mother Pankajini.

"Rana needs further training to fine-tune the subtle nuances of art. The government should help him in his higher study," urged Krushnachandra Sahu, a villager.

FINANCE

A Misleading White Paper

Pradeep Kumar Panda, Economist, Bhubaneswar

In an extraordinary move, the Ministry of Finance presented a White Paper on the Indian Economy towards the end of the final session of the 17th Lok Sabha. The white paper was ostensibly meant to inform Parliament and the nation at large of the mess the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government had inherited when it assumed office in 2014 and the measures the new government had taken to restore the health of the economy. Certainly, such a discussion could have facilitated a more informed debate on the overall performance of the two governments in the run-up to the general elections later this year.

Unfortunately, rather than sticking to the bare facts, the authors of the report go all out to not only belittle the gains made by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government during its decade in power but also go to extraordinary lengths to claim the credit for the higher growth rates achieved during the UPA rule. The reasoning is that the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government bequeathed an economy that was growing close to 8% to the new UPA government which was able to sustain the higher growth mainly due to the lagged impact of the extensive reforms initiated by the previous regime and the benign global economy. However, the fact remains that the annual average gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.8% in the two tenures of the UPA regime was

especially its inability to contain inflation which rose close to double-digit levels towards the end of its tenure. Equally true are the charges of excessive lending by the banks to boost the animal spirits of the economy, which left

UPA government remains unmatched with the ratio of union government liabilities to GDP ratio shrinking by almost 14 percentage points to 52.2% during this period. And this was achieved even while the NDA

combat the pandemic, the fact remains that the NDA government fumbled in reducing the total liabilities even in the six years before the calamity.

Moreover, the UPA performance on the fiscal front stands out even

above 3% in the recent budgets. But if one looks at the overall 10-year tenures of the UPA and NDA governments, it is clearly seen that the average capital expenditure to GDP ratio of 1.6% of the UPA government was only marginally lower than that of 1.7% achieved by the NDA government.

The NDA government's



the nation saddled with twin balance sheet deficits, an infamous legacy of the UPA government. In fact, the overleveraged corporate sector and huge non-performing assets of the banks had triggered a sharp deceleration in private

government presented relatively larger budgets, as measured by the ratio of the total budget expenditure to GDP, than the NDA government and also increased the share of funds allocated for subsidies.

This is in sharp contrast to the

if one takes other parameters like direct tax mobilisation. In the case of direct taxes, the UPA increased the direct tax to GDP ratio by one and a half percentage points to 5.4% of GDP during its tenure. In contrast, the huge corporate tax cuts provided by the NDA government squeezed the increase in direct tax to GDP ratio to just 1 percentage point, without any commensurate increase in corporate investments. Though the UPA government's resource mobilisation on the indirect tax front lagged behind that of the NDA, the fall in the indirect tax to GDP ratio during the former's tenure was certainly progressive as it reduced the tax burden on the lower income groups and also helped boost consumption demand.

So, the overall trends in fiscal parameters during the UPA regime demolish the accusation that the various scams caused colossal losses to the exchequer and pushed revenue and fiscal deficits out of control. At best, the only fiscal parameter where the NDA government can claim credit is the increase in the capital expenditure to GDP ratio to

performance on the external front is also equally, if not more, lacklustre. The most damning indictment is in the case of exports. During the UPA rule, India's share in global exports more than doubled from 0.8% in 2004 to 1.7% in 2014. In contrast, the decade of the NDA saw India's share in global exports declining marginally to 1.6% by 2020, as per the most recent Economic Survey. Clearly, India's share in global exports has fallen disproportionately faster than warranted by the recent global trends.

Even in the case of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, the gains are far from impressive. Though FDI inflows have gone up from \$34.5 billion in 2014 to \$49.4 billion in 2022, the ratio of FDI inflows in the GDP has shrunk from 1.69% to 1.42%, while its share in gross fixed capital formation has reduced from 5.3% to 5.1% during the period. The only consolation is that India's share in global FDI flows has moved up marginally from 2.4% to 3.8% between these years.



around 1 percentage point higher than that clocked by the two NDA governments.

No doubt, some of the accusations against the inefficient management of the economy by the UPA government remain valid,

investments, which is yet to be fully reversed even after a decade of sustained efforts.

But the accusations of poor financial management by the UPA government smack of malfeasance. The fiscal consolidation achieved by the

performance of the NDA government, which registered a 5 percentage point increase in the liabilities to GDP ratio to 57% during its decade in power. Though this is mainly due to the substantial increase in government borrowings to

SPORTS AFFAIRS

Question mark on Kohli's T20 credentials

BCCI secretary Jay Shah has already confirmed Rohit Sharma as the captain of the Indian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup to be held in the USA and West Indies in June. However, star batsman Virat Kohli's place in the squad is uncertain. Shah himself has stated earlier that the former captain's role in T20s will be discussed in due course.

As per reports, the selectors are in a fix about Kohli's role in T20s. Both Rohit and Kohli had decided to take a break from T20 format after India's loss in the semi-final of the T20 World Cup in Australia in 2022. Following the development, star all-rounder Hardik Pandya was given the charge of the T20I side. However, after Hardik was ruled out of the ODI World Cup with an ankle injury, there was a change in strategy.

Both Rohit and Kohli returned to the Indian team for the T20Is after about 15 months during the home series against Afghanistan.



While Rohit led India's charge with his aggressive approach as an opener throughout the ODI World Cup, Kohli stuck to his tried and tested method. In the process, Rohit showed clear signs of being an ideal opener even in T20Is. However, there was a question mark about Kohli's position in the XI.

Kohli's role as an anchor of the batting unit in ODIs is of little importance in T20s. Moreover, with talented youngsters pushing

for their case and the shortest format of the game changing course rapidly, the selectors were a bit skeptical about Kohli's role in the side.

As per reports in some section of the media, the selectors feel that Kohli hasn't been able to cope with the team's needs in the shortest format. He will only be considered if he has a 'superlative IPL' for the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB).

Sarfaraz's suitable format

After a long wait, promising batsman Sarfaraz Khan was included in the Indian team for the Test series against England. Following consistent performances in domestic cricket, Sarfaraz Khan also impressed in international cricket. In his debut, he scored two half centuries in the third Test against England.

Meanwhile, former India skipper Sourav Ganguly has been impressed with Sarfaraz's performance. As per the former southpaw, Sarfaraz's game is more suited to red-ball cricket.

Ganguly expressed his pleasure to see Sarfaraz being rewarded for his years of toil in India's premiere First Class competition.

"Sarfaraz is more of a five-day player. His game is more suited for that. The amount of runs he scored in domestic cricket is phenomenal. And as they say if you score runs in first class cricket it doesn't go to



waste and that's what happened to Sarfaraz," said Ganguly during a recent interaction.

Notably, Sarfaraz has scored 4056 runs in 47 First Class matches at an average of 68.74 while smashing 14 hundreds and 13 half-centuries. In Rajkot Test, Sarfaraz scored 62 runs in the first innings and followed it up with a 68 in the second innings to help India script a convincing win against England.

Olympics 2024: Sreejesh & Lee Mantra

As the anticipation and excitement goes up for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympics, the Indian men's hockey team goalkeeper PR Sreejesh engaged in a conversation with Bengaluru Torpedoes head coach David Lee about the pressures of an Olympic year, on the sidelines of the third season of Prime Volleyball

League. for me, and I allow positive thoughts to dominate," he added.

Lee opened up on how correct coaching methods and modules can help young athletes grow and produce better results. "We grew up in a positive environment. We did not have coaches who are telling us 'we are not good enough'. They were

involved. It is better to just turn off and focus on the team," he advised.

Sreejesh, who has been guarding the goalpost for over a decade now for India, further opened up on how he deals with the criticism that comes with the role of a goalkeeper. "It is a thankless job at times because if I made 10 saves and concede one goal, everyone will remember that one mistake. But I have accepted that and I have moved on with that. And this profession has helped me in my personal life on how to deal with pressure and criticism, as well," he said.

Meanwhile, Sreejesh praised Prime Volleyball League powered for providing a platform for youngsters to showcase their skills and recalled his experience of playing in the 'Hockey India League'.

"I was always very curious to see how the top overseas players are playing and how they train and behave. Earlier, I never used to care about my diet, preparations, or proteins. I was a good listener, but never took an initiative in meetings. But the league helped me in learning from the overseas player and helped me improve in all these aspects of my game. Now, players like you are helping our young volleyball talent with this league."

David Lee said that he hopes the volleyball league will help in developing India into a major player at the Olympics in the sport in the future and gave a few insights into his training methods with the Bengaluru franchise.

"I talk a lot about deliberate training and practicing with positive mindset to improve, not just to get sweaty and smash the ball around in training. The intention-focused training was lacking before. I also tell players to find a role model to emulate at the top of the level, and watch their videos. If they can make you one or two percent better, it will go a long way," he signed off.



League.

Sreejesh, who is regarded as arguably the best goalkeeper in the world, has already represented India at the Olympics thrice so far, and was a key figure in leading the nation to a bronze medal in the Tokyo Olympics 2020. Lee, who is regarded as one of the best players in the modern-day volleyball, also represented USA thrice at the Olympics, and led his side to a gold and a bronze medal.

While discussing how athletes can develop mental strength during competitions at an early age, Sreejesh opened up on his struggles as a young goalkeeper. "Goalkeeping is a mental game. Being a player, we understand how we want to get involved in a match. But being a goalkeeper, I just stand behind and my game is in my head," Sreejesh said.

"As a young player, my negative feelings used to dominate my positive feelings, and that would lead me to concede goals. Now, with my experience, things have changed

more interested in how much effort we are putting out. We are going to make mistakes. It's just a part of the game. What is important is we have to push through and try to adapt," Lee said.

"You can get short-term results out of negative atmosphere. But I don't think those methods are sustainable for a long period of time," he added.

As an expert in handling pressure, Lee further advised that the youngsters should stay away from the negative comments on social media ahead of the Olympics and try to take the tournament as just another day in their sporting career, despite the massive scale of the event.

"It definitely helps to have a few Olympics under your belt. You should approach it as any other tournament. Trust what you do day-in and day-out and do not put this massive weight, although it is the pinnacle of sports. It would be crazy to not understand the scale, and it gets very difficult to focus with all the media. But you cannot get too

Kasparov added to 'list of terrorists'



Russia has recently added its former Chess Grandmaster and political activist, Garry Kasparov to the list of 'terrorists and extremists'.

As per reports, the 60-year-old former World Champion has been a longtime opponent of President Vladimir Putin. The legendary chess star was added to the list by Rosfinmonitoring, a Russian watchdog, responsible for combatting money laundering and terror financing.

However, Rosfinmonitoring didn't give any reason for adding soviet-born Kasparov into its database. It is also understood that people who are labeled 'terrorists and extremists' by the watchdog can have their bank accounts.

Notably, Kasparov has repeatedly spoken in public against Russia's military offensive in Ukraine.

Kasparov is widely regarded as one of the greatest chess players of all time. During his playing career, he was the undisputed World No.1 for a record 255 months from 1984 to 2005. The former chess great also holds the record for most victories in his illustrious career—professional tournament victories (15) and Chess Oscars (11).

Kasparov has been living in the United States for over a decade. He fled Russia in 2014 for fear of persecution.

IPL 2024

CSK's next captain after Dhoni

It is most likely that 2024 edition of the cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL) is going to the last IPL for veteran wicketkeeper-batsman MS Dhoni. Though the legendry cricketer has not made any announcement about his retirement from the league, it is expected that his body may not permit him to carry on playing in the mega tournament anymore.

Dhoni has an injured knee and he will turn 43 this year. Hence, he should not be stretched any further. Moreover, Chennai Super Kings (CSK) have also to find their next generation of leader who can take the mantle from great Dhoni and guide the team properly for next few years.

In 2022, star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was named as CSK captain just before the league was to start. However, after a few losses, Dhoni was renamed the captain of the side.

Meanwhile, CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan has finally broken silence over who can lead CSK after Dhoni calls it quits. As per



Viswanathan, the next skipper of the team will not be decided by him or any other top official, rather the captain and coach will take this call.

“See, there have been internal talks. But, Mr. Srinivasan has made it very clear. Let's not talk about captain and vice-captain appointments. Let's leave it to the coach and the captain to decide. Let them decide and convey the information to me, and then I will convey it to you all. He has said that 'the captain and the coach

will decide and give us a directive, till then let's all keep quiet,” said Viswanathan.

As per sources, among the candidates who can lead CSK after Dhoni are Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ajinkya Rahane, Daryl Mitchell and Moeen Ali. The biggest contender of them all is Gaikwad, who is young and is also growing into a mature cricketer. He has also gained much experience and picked Dhoni's brain by playing under the Captain Cool.

Big Controversy!

Mumbai Indians (MI) have replaced veteran batsman Rohit Sharma with star all-rounder Hardik Pandya as the captain for the 2024 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

There was a lot of hue and cry among the fans about the step taken by MI. With less than 10 days to go for the start of the marquee event, fans and experts are yet to get over it.

Meanwhile, former South African cricketer AB de Villiers, who has been part of the IPL, termed it as a 'big controversy'. Hailing MI as an 'extremely successful' team, De Villiers said they seemed to have moved on from Rohit.

“Incredibly successful team of the IPL. They have won five titles. Big controversy over the last few months was that Hardik Pandya coming



Question mark over Cummins' captaincy



Australia are likely to hand over the T20 captaincy to all-rounder Mitchell Marsh officially ahead of the T20 World Cup 2024 to be held in the West Indies and the USA. Since the last T20 World Cup at home, Marsh has led the side in three of the four assignments. Marsh, who was rested from the India series immediately after the World Cup, led the side in South Africa, against the West Indies and then recently in New Zealand.

Australia head coach Andrew McDonald has thrown his weight behind Marsh to continue as Australia captain even in the T20 World Cup. Following Australia's 2-0 Test series win against New Zealand, McDonald who forms the selection panel alongside chairman George Bailey and Tony Dodemaide, said, “I think all roads will lead to Mitch, so just got to get that ticked off in certain areas. We are happy and comfortable with the way he has been able to operate with that T20 team. We think he's the leader for the World Cup, and I think that will just be a matter of due course.”

Pat Cummins, who has led Australia in ODIs and Tests rather successfully, played under Marsh in the three-match T20 series against New Zealand. And even though he has been a sensational leader in the longer formats, he is yet to set the world stage on fire in the shortest format and may not even be a starter in the playing XI and that may have forced the selectors' hand.

Cummins is set to lead the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) while Marsh is likely to play under David Warner or Rishabh Pant for the Delhi Capitals.

After handing over the captaincy to South African Aiden Markram for just one season (2023), SRH replaced him with Cummins as the new skipper of the team. The 30-year-old pacer was bought for a whopping amount of Rs 20.50 crore in the last auction as he became the second-costliest player in the event's history.

However, several experts and fans have raised questions over this move by SRH. As per them, even when Australia don't have belief on the T20 credentials of Cummins, how SRH can give such a huge responsibility on him?

Going by the record, Cummins' T20 captaincy is not that impressive and his performances in IPL are nothing spectacular either.

Moreover, Cummins playing as the captain of the team will also affect its balance severely as only four overseas players are allowed in the playing XI in IPL.

With frequent chopping and changing in the leadership role and putting a square peg like Cummins in a round hole like T20 cricket is not going to help SRH's cause at all. Under the circumstance, the SRH think tank must consider their permutation and combination about captaincy and team structure seriously, believe experts.

in as captain in place of Rohit Sharma. They seem to be happy though. They seemed to have moved on. It is great to have Hardik in blue at his home team Mumbai Indians. They will be starting against Gujarat Titans, how ironic is that,” said the former Mr 360 degree batsman on his official YouTube channel.

Notably, MI will lock horns with Gujarat Titans in their campaign opener of IPL 2024 at the Narendra Modi Stadium on March 24.

Gambhir's expectation from Starc

Former captain of Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) Gautam Gambhir has made a comeback to the franchise in a new role as mentor. KKR also broke the bank for Australian pacer Mitchell Starc to land a successful bid of ₹24.75 crore in the last auction for the mega event.

Expectations will be high of both. Gambhir is expected to help KKR reclaim the lost glory. However, the pressure will be more on Starc because of the whopping amount in which he has been bought by the franchise.

Meanwhile, Gambhir's expectation from Starc is crystal clear.

“I had already said on the auction table that Starc is an X-factor and I am sure he is going to deliver. And there is no such pressure of a price



tag. I hope that what he has done in international cricket, he can do the same for KKR,” said Gambhir after arriving in Kolkata.

“KKR is not a franchise, it's an emotion for me. I hope I live up to the expectation, and I am sure we'll try and make Kolkata proud and that's what we are going to do,” he added.

POLLUTION

India has third worst air quality out of 134 countries

The World Air Quality Report 2023 by Swiss organisation IQAir reveals India had the third worst air quality out of 134 countries in 2023 with an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 54.4 micrograms per cubic metre after Bangladesh (79.9 micrograms per cubic metre) and Pakistan (73.7 micrograms per cubic metre). Bihar's Begusarai emerged as the world's most polluted metropolitan area while Delhi was identified as the capital

countries, regions and territories. Causing an estimated one in every nine deaths worldwide, air pollution is the greatest environmental threat to human health. According to the WHO, air pollution is responsible for an estimated seven million premature deaths worldwide every year.

Exposure to PM2.5 air pollution leads to and exacerbates

These organic compounds can be emitted by both natural sources, such as trees and vegetation, as well as from man-made (anthropogenic) sources, such as industrial processes and motor vehicle exhaust.

Whole World is concerned about air-borne particles because of their effects on the health of Californians and the environment. Both PM2.5 and PM10 can be inhaled, with some depositing throughout the airways, though the locations of particle deposition in the lung depend on particle size. PM2.5 is more likely to travel into and deposit on the surface of the deeper parts of the lung, while PM10 is more likely to deposit on the surfaces of the larger airways of the upper region of the lung. Particles deposited on the lung surface can induce tissue damage, and lung inflammation.

A number of adverse health impacts have been associated with exposure to both PM2.5 and PM10. For PM2.5, short-term exposures (up to 24-hours duration) have been associated with premature mortality, increased hospital admissions for heart or lung causes, acute and chronic bronchitis, asthma

linked to premature death, particularly in people who have chronic heart or lung diseases, and reduced lung function growth in children. The effects of long-term exposure to PM10 are less clear, although several studies suggest a link between long-term PM10 exposure and respiratory mortality. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published a review in 2015 that concluded that particulate matter in outdoor air pollution causes lung cancer.

Diesel PM is a special class of particulates. The solid material in diesel exhaust is known as diesel particulate matter (DPM). More than 90% of DPM is less than 1 µm in diameter (about 1/70th the diameter of a human hair), and thus is a subset of PM2.5.

Research points to older adults with chronic heart or lung disease, children and asthmatics as the groups most likely to experience adverse health effects with exposure to PM10 and PM2.5. Also, children and infants are susceptible to harm from inhaling pollutants such as PM because they inhale more air per pound of body weight than do adults - they breathe faster, spend

warming (e.g., black carbon), while others have a cooling influence (e.g., nitrate and sulfate), and so ambient PM has both climate warming and cooling properties. PM can adversely affect ecosystems, including plants, soil and water through deposition of PM and its subsequent uptake by plants or its deposition into water where it can affect water quality and clarity. The metal and organic compounds in PM have the greatest potential to alter plant growth and yield. PM deposition on surfaces leads to soiling of materials.

Some of the particulate matter found indoors originates from the outdoors, especially PM2.5. These particles enter indoor spaces through doors, windows, and "leakiness" in building structures. Particles can also originate from indoor sources. Particles of indoor origin include components derived from biological sources, many of which are known allergens, such as pollens, mold spores, dust mites and cockroaches. Indoor activities generate particles, as well, including smoking tobacco, cooking and burning wood, candles or incense. Particles also can form indoors from complex reactions of gaseous pollutants



city with the poorest air quality.

In 2022, India was ranked as the eighth most polluted country with an average PM2.5 concentration of 53.3 micrograms per cubic metre.

Begusarai stood out as the most polluted metropolitan area globally with an average PM2.5 concentration of 118.9 micrograms per cubic metre. The city did not even figure in the 2022 rankings. Delhi's PM2.5 levels worsened from 89.1 micrograms per cubic metre in 2022 to 92.7 micrograms per cubic metre in 2023.

The national capital was ranked the most polluted capital city in the world four times on the trot starting 2018.

It is estimated that 1.36 billion people in India experience PM2.5 concentrations exceeding the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended annual guideline level of 5 micrograms per cubic metre, the report said. Also, 1.33 billion people, 96 per cent of the Indian population, experience PM2.5 levels more than seven times the WHO annual PM2.5 guideline.

This trend is reflected in city-level data, with more than 66 per cent of the country's cities reporting annual averages greater than 35 micrograms per cubic metre.

IQAir said the data utilised to create this report was aggregated from the global distribution of more than 30,000 regulatory air quality monitoring stations and low-cost air quality sensors operated by research institutions, governmental bodies, universities and educational facilities, non-profit non-governmental organisations, private companies and citizen scientists.

The 2022 World Air Quality Report included data from 7,323 locations in 131 countries, regions and territories. In 2023, those numbers have grown to include 7,812 locations in 134

numerous health conditions, including but not limited to asthma, cancer, stroke and lung disease. Exposure to elevated levels of fine particles can impair cognitive development in children, lead to mental health issues, and complicate existing illnesses, including diabetes.

Airborne particulate matter (PM) is not a single pollutant, but rather is a mixture of many chemical species. It is a complex mixture of solids and aerosols composed of small droplets of liquid, dry solid fragments, and solid cores with liquid coatings. Particles vary widely in size, shape and chemical composition, and may contain inorganic ions, metallic compounds, elemental carbon, organic compounds, and compounds from the earth's crust. Particles are defined by their diameter for air quality regulatory purposes. Those with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM10) are inhalable into the lungs and can induce adverse health effects. Fine particulate matter is defined as particles that are 2.5 microns or less in diameter (PM2.5). Therefore, PM2.5 comprises a portion of PM10.

PM10 and PM2.5 often derive from different emissions sources, and also have different chemical compositions. Emissions from combustion of gasoline, oil, diesel fuel or wood produce much of the PM2.5 pollution found in outdoor air, as well as a significant proportion of PM10. PM10 also includes dust from construction sites, landfills and agriculture, wildfires and brush/waste burning, industrial sources, wind-blown dust from open lands, pollen and fragments of bacteria.

PM may be either directly emitted from sources (primary particles) or formed in the atmosphere through chemical reactions of gases (secondary particles) such as sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and certain organic compounds.

attacks, emergency room visits, respiratory symptoms, and restricted activity days. These adverse health effects have been reported primarily in infants, children, and older adults with preexisting heart or lung diseases. In addition, of all of the common air pollutants, PM2.5 is associated with the greatest proportion of adverse health effects related to air pollution, both in the United States and world-wide based on the World Health Organization's Global Burden of Disease Project.

Short-term exposures to PM10 have been associated primarily with worsening of respiratory diseases, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), leading to hospitalization and emergency department visits.

Long-term (months to years) exposure to PM2.5 has been

more time outdoors and have smaller body sizes. In addition, children's immature immune systems may cause them to be more susceptible to PM than healthy adults.

Research on Children's Health Study found that children living in communities with high levels of PM2.5 had slower lung growth, and had smaller lungs at age 18 compared to children who lived in communities with low PM2.5 levels.

Particulate matter has been shown in many scientific studies to reduce visibility, and also to adversely affect climate, ecosystems and materials. PM, primarily PM2.5, affects visibility by altering the way light is absorbed and scattered in the atmosphere. With reference to climate change, some constituents of the ambient PM mixture promote climate

emitted from such sources as household cleaning products and air fresheners.

Ambient air quality standards define the maximum amount of pollutant that can be present in outdoor air without harming human health. In 2002, after an extensive review of the scientific literature, the Board adopted a new annual average standard for PM2.5, and retained the existing annual and 24-hour standard average standards for PM10. The national annual average PM2.5 standard was most recently revised in 2012 following an exhaustive review of new literature pointed to evidence for increased risk of premature mortality at lower PM2.5 concentrations than the existing standard. The 2012 review resulted in retention of the existing 24-hour average PM2.5 and PM10 standards.



INSPIRING TALES

Real Leg Spinner !



Fans in the sports world often stumble upon with many inspiring stories of players defying all odds in order to climb up the ladder of success. One such story about Jammu and Kashmir cricketer Amir Hussain Lone has recently stunned several fans in India and across the globe.

Amir is an armless cricketer from Jammu and Kashmir and currently captains the state's Para cricket team. He is recently making waves in internet after the video of him batting in the nets went viral over various social media platforms.

Amir, who hails from Waghama village in Kashmir, met with a tragic accident at his parents bandsaw mill which cost him both arms. However, the 34-year-old has kept his passion for cricket alive and relentlessly pursued the game to become a

professional in it.

Despite losing both his arms, Amir began playing cricket with legs and quickly became famous



for his innovative style of playing. Amir's school teacher played an important role in his success as he discovered his talent and introduced him to Para cricket.

Amir first ventured into Para

cricket during the college days. He not only scored runs but also went on to lead Jammu and Kashmir Para team. Ever since Amir was appointed J&K captain, he has been local hero.

The armless cricketer grabbed headlines for his performance against Delhi, wherein he put his bat in between neck and chin and bowl with his legs in 2013.

Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar hailed Amir and called him an inspiration to all. Sachin also terms him as the 'Real Leg Spinner'.

“Defying odds with every delivery, Amir stands out as the

“REAL LEG SPINNER”! You're an inspiration to all,” Sachin wrote on x.

Sachin and Amir shared the field in the opening match of the Indian Street Premier League 2024 (ISPL).

Padikkal's Inspiring Journey

Promising batter Devdutt Padikkal has made his Test debut for Team India in the fifth and final Test against England in Dharamsala. The left-handed batsman replaced injured Rajat Patidar, who caught up an injury on the eve of the match.



The Karnataka batter was called up to the Indian team as a replacement for his state team-mate KL Rahul. Rahul was ruled out after the second Test following a quadricep injury.

It has been an inspiring journey for Padikkal who a few months ago was appeared lost among India's vast talent pool of batsmen.

Padikkal was in and out of hospital for months in 2022 due to a health issue. In the process, he lost a few kilos and eventually struggled to find his feet in the middle. His performance in Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 was also not that impressive. However, he has taken a long stride since then.

Following an exceptional Ranji Trophy season this year, the aggressive southpaw has been rewarded for his consistency. He has garnered a total of 556 runs in six innings at an average of 92.66 this Ranji season. He has also hit three centuries, with a highest score of 193 in the season opener against Punjab.

Padikkal impressed the selectors when he scored 151 against Tamil Nadu at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. With the chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar from the stands, the left-handed batter notched up his third Ranji Trophy century of the season.

Earlier, the Karnataka batsman had also impressed the selectors with scores of 65, 21 and 105 for India A against the touring England Lions in Ahmedabad. He also has a very good first class record with an average of 44.54 across 31 matches.

Well, behind the unprecedented emergence of Padikkal, there is a unique training programme designed by a best cricketing brain and he is no other than Rajasthan Royals Team Director Zubin Bharucha.

“Devdutt was the guy, who just used to play 15-20 minutes, that was his philosophy. He started batting for two or three hours, started working on the various aspects of his game. You can see the difference in his performance in the domestic cricket,” said Bharucha.

From Page 12 (Love: The Exploration...)

And to take the other for granted is insulting, disrespectful. To think that you know your wife is very very ungrateful. How can you know the woman? How can you know the man? They are processes, they are not things. The woman that you knew yesterday is not there today. So much water has gone down the Ganges; she is somebody else, totally different. Relate again, start again, don't take it for granted. And the man that you slept with last night, look at his face again in the morning. He is no more the same person, so much has changed. So much, incalculably much, has changed. That is the difference between a thing and a person. The furniture in the room is the same, but the man and the woman, they are no more the same.

In relationship both persons become blind to each other. Just think, how long has it been since you saw your wife eye to eye? How long has it been since you looked at your husband? Maybe years. Who looks at one's own wife? You have already taken it for granted that you know her. What more is there to look at? You are more interested in strangers than in the people you know — you know the whole topography of their bodies, you know how they respond, you know everything that has happened is going to happen again and again. It is a repetitive circle.

It is not so, it is not really so. Nothing ever repeats; everything is new every day. Just your eyes become old, your assumptions become old, your mirror gathers dust and you become incapable of reflecting the other.

And each person is such an infinite mystery, inexhaustible, unfathomable, that it is not possible that you can ever say, “I have known her,” or, “I have known him.” At the most you can say, “I have tried my best, but the mystery remains a mystery.” In fact the more you know, the more mysterious the other becomes. Then love is a constant adventure.

Siraj's Struggle

Team India speedster Mohammad Siraj has come a long way in his international career. However, Siraj's cricketing journey is not bed of roses and he had to struggle hard to come to this stage.

On his 30th birthday, Siraj revealed that before making his international debut he was planning to quit cricket back in 2019-20 to do something useful for himself.

In a recent video posted by BCCI, Siraj took fans on a tour of his hometown Hyderabad. He showed the pitch where it all began for him and his favourite hangout areas. Siraj stated that the ground Eidgah is where he feels tranquil despite going all over the world these days.

“In 2019-20 I had thought I am giving myself this last year and after that, I will leave the game for good. As soon as I land in Hyderabad, my first thought is



that I will go home. After home, I will go to Eidgah. Wherever in the world I go. I don't get so much peace anywhere, to be honest. Whenever I go there, I get so much peace,” said Siraj.

The pacer further revealed that he used to work as a caterer to support his father, who drove an autorickshaw and was the family's primary source of income at the time. The pacer admitted that he used to burn his hands trying to flip roomali roti.

“I used to go to do a catering job. My family members used to say that son, please study. I liked playing cricket very much because we used to live on rent also. My dad was the only earning member in the house. If I got a hundred or two hundred rupees, I was happy with it. I used to give 100 or 150 rupees at home and keep 50 for myself. My hands would burn as I had to flip roomali roti. But that's ok. I have reached here after having my fair share of struggles,” he added.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

C V Raman and Raman Effect

Er Mayadhar Swain

C. V. Raman

C.V. Raman or Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman was born on 7 November 1888 in a South Indian Brahmin family in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. His father's name was Chandrasekhara Ramanathan Iyer and he was a lecturer in Mathematics and Physics at a college in Vishakhapatnam. His mother's name was Parvathi Ammal.

C. V. Raman was an intelligent student since his early childhood. At the age of 11, he passed his matriculation and 12th class at the age of 13 on a scholarship. In 1902, he joined the Presidency College and received his graduate degree in 1904. At that time, he was the only student who received the first division. He has done his Master's in Physics from the same college and broke all the previous records. In 1907, he married Lokasundari Ammal and had two sons namely Chandrasekhar and Radhakrishnan.



C. V. Raman

Because of his father's interest, he appeared for the Financial Civil Services (FCS) examination and topped it. In 1907, he went to Calcutta (now Kolkata) and joined as Assistant

Accountant General. But in his spare time, he went to the laboratory to do research at the Indian Association for Cultivation of Sciences. Let us tell you that, his job was very hectic then also he continued his research work at night due to his core interest in science.

Though the facilities available in the laboratory were very limited, he continued his research and published his findings in leading international journals including 'Nature', 'The Philosophical Magazine', 'Physics Review', etc. At that time, his research was focused on the areas of vibrations and acoustics.

He was appointed the first Palit Professor of Physics by Ashutosh Mukherje in University of Calcutta in 1917. After 15 years at Calcutta, he became a Professor at the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore from 1933 to 1948 and since 1948, he became the Director of the Raman Institute of Research at Bangalore which was established and endowed by him only.

He established the Indian Journal of Physics in 1926 where he was the Editor. He also sponsored the establishment of the Indian Academy of Sciences and served as the President since its inception. He was the President of the Current Science Association in Bangalore, which publishes Current Science (India). He died on 21 November 1970 at the age of 82.

Works and Researches

In 1928, he wrote an article on the theory of musical instruments for the 8th Volume of the Handbuch der Physik. He published his work on the "Molecular

Diffraction of Light" in 1922 which led to his ultimate discovery of the radiation effect on the 28th of February 1928 and gained him receive Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930. He became the first Asian to receive a Nobel Prize in any field of science.

Other research carried out by C.V. Raman was the diffraction of light by acoustic waves of ultrasonic and hypersonic frequencies and effects produced by X-rays on infrared vibrations in crystals exposed to ordinary light.

In 1948, he also studied the fundamental problems of crystal dynamics. His laboratory has been dealing with the structure and properties of diamonds, and the structure and optical behaviour of numerous iridescent substances like pearls, agate, opal, etc. He was also interested in the optics of colloids, electrical and magnetic anisotropy, and the physiology of human vision.

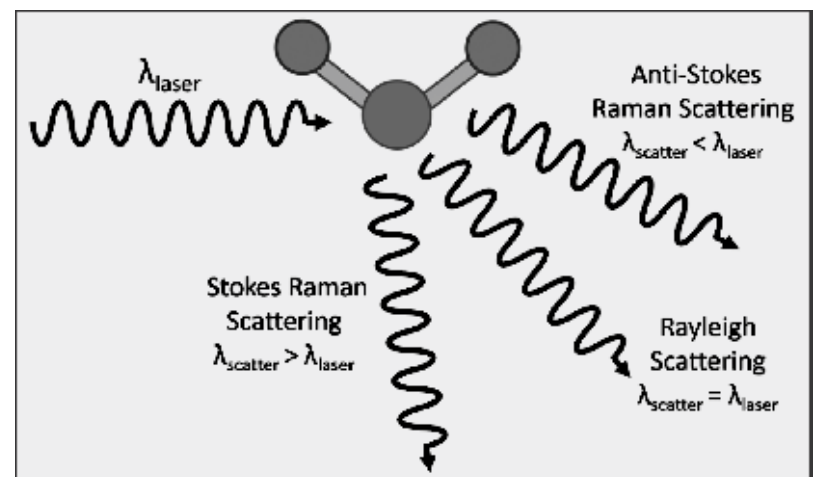
Awards and Honours

C. V. Raman was honoured with a large number of doctorates and memberships in scientific societies. In 1924, he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society early in his career and was knighted in 1929. He received the 1930 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on the scattering of light and for the discovery of the effect named after him. In 1930, he received the Hughes Medal of the Royal Society. In 1941, he was awarded the Franklin Medal by the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Government of India honoured him with Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award of the country in 1954. In 1957, he was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize.

Raman Effect

CV Raman discovered the Raman Effect while working in the laboratory of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science in Kolkata. It is a phenomenon in spectroscopy (the study of the absorption and emission of light and other radiation by matter, and the dependence of these processes on the wavelength of the radiation). Raman

Effect, in a nutshell, refers to the change in the wavelength of light that occurs when a light beam is scattered and deflected by molecules of matter.



Raman Effect

When a light beam passes through a dust-free, transparent sample of a chemical compound, a small percentage of it escapes in directions other than the incident beam. The wavelength of most of the scattered light remains constant. However, a small portion has wavelengths that differ from those of the incident light. This phenomenon happens due to the Raman Effect.

When a monochromatic beam of light traverses a dust-free, transparent sample of any substance, its light photons undergo inelastic collisions with the molecules of the substance. These collisions make a part of the incident light scatter in directions other than that of the incident beam. Based on the energy exchange during the light-molecule interaction, the scattered light consists of one of the following types of light waves:

- **Rayleigh Lines:** Most of the light bounce back unchanged. Thus, a large portion of the scattered light has the wavelength same as that of the incident light. This is called Rayleigh Scattering.
- **Stokes Raman Lines:** A small part of the scattered light loses energy to the molecules of the substance, bouncing back with a lower energy. Thus, it has a wavelength higher than that of the incident light. This is known as Stokes Raman Scattering.
- **Anti-Stokes Raman Lines:** Very rarely, some portion of the scattered light gains energy from the interacted molecule, bouncing back with a higher energy. Thus, it

has a wavelength shorter than that of the incident light. This is called Anti-Stokes Raman Scattering.

Thus, Stokes Raman Lines and Anti-Stokes Raman Lines have wavelengths different from that of the incident light. This phenomenon of the change in

wavelength of some part of the scattered light is called Raman Effect.

Applications of Raman Effect

- Raman Effect is utilized in Raman Spectroscopy, a method employed for determining and examining the chemical composition of substances.
- The basis of this technique is that the amount and nature of changes caused in the wavelength of the scattered light is unique to each molecule and provides information about its vibrational and rotational energy states. By analyzing this change, scientists can identify the molecule and study its structure, composition, and other properties.

National Science Day

National Science Day is observed annually on February 28 in India to honour the discovery of the 'Raman Effect'. The goals include spreading a message about the importance of scientific applications in people's daily lives, displaying the activities, efforts, and achievements of Indian scientists for human welfare, discussing scientific issues, implementing new technologies for scientific development, and encouraging and popularising science and technology, among others. National Science Day was observed for the first time on February 28, 1987.

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Indian postal stamp on C V Raman released in 1971

SPECIAL STORIES

Decline in number of leopards

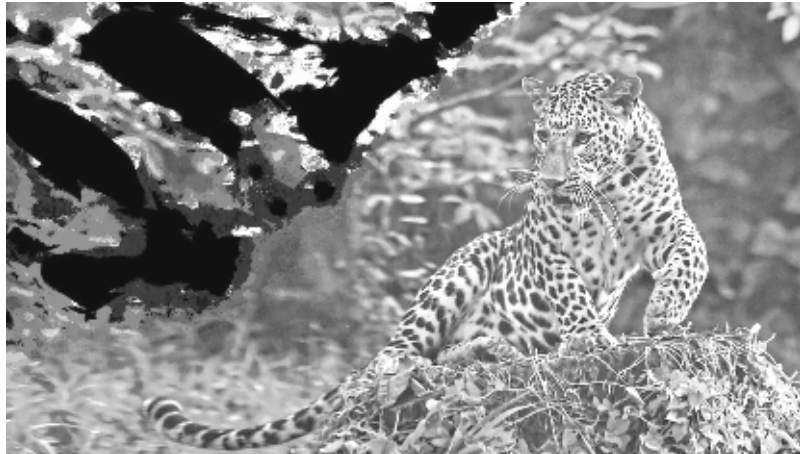
Questions are being raised over the huge decline in the number of leopards in Odisha after the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) report revealed that as many as 192 leopards have vanished from the State in the last four years.

As per the Status of Leopards in India-2022 report prepared by the NTCA, as many as 760 leopards used to reside in the forests of Odisha in 2018. However, the number has come down to 568 in 2022. The number of leopards has declined by 25 per cent in Odisha forests in the last four years.

The report has raised concerns of the Forest Department and wildlife activists while a number of seizures of leopard hides have been made in various parts of the State recently.

However, Odisha Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF), Susanta Nanda refused to accept the authenticity of the report regarding the huge decline in the number of leopards in the State. As per Nanda, the report stated a huge decline in the number of leopards in Odisha as less number of camera traps have been used in the tiger census carried out by the NTCA in 2022 in comparison to 2018.

"NTCA had installed cameras in as many as 14 places of the State during the 2018 leopard census. However, in 2022, cameras have been installed only in three places - Simlipal, Satkosia, and Sunabeda. Even no cameras were



installed in the buffer area of Simlipal where maximum numbers of leopards are found. It is the main reason why a huge decline in the numbers of leopards in the State has been shown in the NTCA report," said Nanda.

Nanda informed that Odisha will conduct its own leopard census and a simultaneous census of elephants and leopards will be conducted in May this year.

"A simultaneous census of elephants and leopards will be conducted in Odisha in May 2024 to know the exact number of leopards in the State. The census will be conducted by installing trap cameras in every forest of the State," Nanda added.

However, former Odisha PCCF, Anup Nayak refuted the claim made by Nanda. As per Nayak, there is nothing wrong with the census process carried out by the NTCA.

"The NTCA has been following

the same process since 2006. The process has been accepted in different international forums and there have been no errors in the method," said Nayak.

"Leopards also need corridors like the tigers. However, there are no proper corridors for the free movement of leopards in the State. As a result, their numbers are declining due to conflict with humans. We have to take proper steps to maintain leopard corridors in the State. We have to strengthen our information network and stop poaching," said Nayak.

Meanwhile, as per the report by the Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch, as many as 21 leopard skins have been seized in Odisha from the beginning of 2023 till date. Against the backdrop of these statistics, the result of the upcoming leopard census to be conducted by the Odisha government will be eagerly awaited.

What is 'chinaman' bowler?



Promising bowler Kuldeep Yadav is the first 'chinaman' bowler to play for Indian men's cricket team. Having said this, Indian women's team had a 'chinaman' bowler in Priti Dimri who played 26 matches from 2006-2010.

What is 'chinaman'?

'Chinaman' is an art in which a left-arm bowler bowls wrist spin just like right-arm bowlers bowl leg spin. It is an unorthodox bowling style as the bowler uses his wrist to generate spin rather than his fingers. The direction of the turn after pitching the ball is the same as that of a traditional

right-handed off spin bowler. But, why are these kind of bowlers called a 'chinaman' instead of slow left-arm wrist or unorthodox spin?

Its origin

The origin of the term 'chinaman' traces back to 1933 during the Test match between hosts England and West Indies at Old Trafford. After being dismissed for 375 in the first innings, West Indian pacer Manny Martindale ran through England's top-order. However, captain Douglas Jardine and Walter Robins put on a 140-run partnership for the seventh wicket. When he was

looked set for a century, West Indies' left-arm orthodox spinner, Ellis Achong bowled an unorthodox delivery that turned from off to the leg and got Robins stumped.

Incidentally, Achong was the first Test cricketer of Chinese ancestry. It is believed that when Robins walked back to the pavilion, he said 'fancy being done by a bloody Chinaman'. Hence, this unorthodox left-arm delivery since then was associated with the term 'chinaman'.

Other 'chinaman' bowlers

Even though the Indian team got its first 'chinaman' bowler in 2017, the teams around the world have seen quite a few bowlers who are mastered this art. Australia's Brad Hogg is one name that comes to our mind while talking about 'chinaman' bowling. Some of the other 'chinaman' bowlers are South Africa's Paul Adams, West Indian legend Sir Gary Sobers, Aussie Michael Bevan, England's Johnny Wardle and Denis Compton.

Odisha cricketers in IPL

With so many cricketers playing competitive cricket in the country amid cut-throat competition, it is ostensibly pretty tough to play for the Indian team. Only three players from the State- spin all-rounder Sanjay Raul, swing bowler Debasish Mohanty and Test batsman Shiv Sunder Das from Odisha have so far managed to play for the Indian team.

However, with the resurgence of the cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL), many aspiring cricketers across India get the opportunity to play in a top-level platform and have a lucrative career option. Even many cricketers from a poor state like Bihar have cashed in the opportunity to play top-notch cricket in the marquee event.

Among the cricketers from Bihar, wicketkeeper-batsman Ishan Kishan, medium pacers like Akash Deep and Mukesh Kumar have really impressed with their performances by playing for Team India and different franchises in IPL. Hard-hitting all-rounder Shivam Singh's domestic exploit also earned him an IPL deal after being part of the Punjab Kings.

Even talented cricketers like Umran Malik, Abdul Samad and Parvez Rasool from lesser-known cricket boards like Jammu and Kashmir have played in the cash-rich league.

However, fans in Odisha are always intrigued by the question that why the milch cow of Indian cricket has not proved much rewarding for the State cricketers.

Only two Odia players have had the opportunity to play in the mega tournament so far. While Haladhar Das was the first cricketer from Odisha to make an IPL debut playing for Deccan Chargers in 2008, four years later, all-rounder Biplab Samantaray was bought by the same franchise. Odia cricketers Pragnan Ojha and Abhishek Rout have played in the mega event. However, they have represented Hyderabad and Maharashtra cricket associations respectively.

Fortunately, Odisha's No.1 batsman Subhranshu Senapati was bought by Chennai Super Kings in IPL 2023. However, the attacking right-handed batsman didn't feature in a single game. Unfortunately, he was released by the franchise ahead of the IPL 2024 auction.

As many as 16 cricketers from Odisha were registered for IPL 2024. They were Govind Poddar, Prayash Singh, Sunil Roul, Rakesh Pattanaik, Harshit Rathod, Swastik Samal, Debabrata Samal, Abhishek Yadav, Sobhagya Rout, Shantanu Mishra, Subhranshu Senapati, Rajesh Dhuper, Mushtaq Beg, Ashirwad Swain, Rajesh Mohanty and Sandeep Pattanaik. However, not a single cricketer was bought by any of the franchises in the last auction held in Dubai.

There is no dearth of talented cricketers in the State. They also don't lack passion and commitment. Under the circumstances, the million dollar question is why not many Odia players are making it to the IPL teams?

As per a former Odia cricketer, who doesn't want to be named, the reason behind IPL snub of the cricketers from the State could be lack of proper infrastructure, lack of finance, performance and clout.

"Lack of infrastructure has emerged as a major impediment for the aspiring cricketers in the State. There aren't many stadiums here. Most of the cricket clubs are mainly concentrated in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. The game in the State also suffers from lack of finances. The local clubs are not maintained properly due to lack of resources. Lack of 'turf wicket' deprives cricketers of getting a taste of real pitches. Odisha cricket is mainly dominated by 'matting wickets' which is not where the Ranji and international matches take place. Lack of turf wickets makes the transition a difficult task for those who have played the entire season on matting wickets," he said.

According to a former coach and cricketer, performance of Odisha players in various domestic level tournaments is not consistent enough to attract the attention of Indian selectors and the talent scouts of any cricket franchise.

"Consistent and stellar performances in prestigious domestic tournaments like Ranji Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy really count. It can surely bring any cricketer into reckoning. However, the Odia cricketers have failed to impress due to their inconsistent performances. Some players have shown flashes of brilliance by hitting an odd century here and there, but they are mostly inconsistent," he said under the condition of anonymity.

He is also of the opinion that Odisha has never won any major domestic titles. In his opinion, most of the players in the team suffer from lack of self belief. Their background and psychology prevent them from dreaming big.

"This lack of self-confidence and aspiration needs to change. Odisha cricketers should dream big and must not be complacent at any point of time," he pointed out.

"There is a considerable clout exerted by other State boards in BCCI administration and in the selection process. However, Odisha belongs to the most neglected group. The State cricket is run by the whims and fancies of a few officials having feudal mindset. This kind of autocratic culture should be changed. The sooner it happens, the better it will be for the future of Odisha cricket," he signed off.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women Empowerment Makes Global Economic Sense

Pradeep Kumar Panda, Economist, Bhubaneswar

No household, no society, no state and no country can progress without empowering its women. Women constitute half of the world's population. Still we witness wide spread gender discrimination in every sphere. Sustainable Development Goal 5 gives clarion call to world for achieving gender equality.

World's largest economies are lagging behind in developing female leaders. Recent global study of almost 22,000 organizations worldwide shows that very few have reached 30% on boards. Recent data from EY & The Peterson Institute for International Economics reveals that companies in just five countries have at least 30% senior women executives, with only Norway exceeding the 30% mark for women on company boards. The research also shows that companies with at least 30% women in leadership can achieve up to a 6 percentage point increase in net margin. In the largest global study of its kind, the research focused on data from almost 22,000 publicly traded firms across 91 countries.

World Bank Data reveals 70% of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty are female. Women do more than 67% of the hours of work done in the world but earn only 10% of the world's income and own only 1% of the world's property. The value of unremunerated work was estimated at about \$16 billion, from which \$11 billion represents the invisible contribution of women. Women are paid 30-40% less than men for comparable work on an average. 60-80% of the food in most developing countries is produced by women. Women hold between 10-20% managerial and administrative jobs. Women make up less than 5% of the world's heads of state.

Although men still have the most privileges with regard to access to land, credits and other agricultural inputs, one can't speak of Agriculture without Women. Women play a pivotal role in the agriculture all over the world, thus there is no people's Agriculture without a central and leadership role for women. It is well received that Women are strong drivers of Agriculture change in farming and consumer communities. It is interesting to introspect what role Agriculture play in improving the lives of women? Data reveals that there are 500 million small scale farm families around the world, and 70% of the agricultural work on these farms is done by women.

Data of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) illustrates that women could increase their productivity by up to 30% if they had the same access as men to productive resources. Closing the gender gap, during the 2014 International Year of Family Farming, could reduce the number of the world's undernourished people by 12-

17%. It is long known that women hold important agriculture and food knowledge, and that they are a force pushing for agro-ecological changes that lead to resilient farming. Where men tend to focus more on economic gains, women's ultimate concerns tend to food sovereignty and nutrition, social stability and peace, and the conservation of biodiversity and natural resources. Women, who dominate small-scale farming in communities, can be empowered in several ways. Agro-ecology agriculture is economical, making use of available resources, meaning women who often do not have access to financial resources can have a debt free livelihood. Women are integral part of agriculture and make major contribution to environment and economy. Their indomitable urge to explore into unknown is the key to their success. They always thrive for innovation and quickly adapt to new technology.

The reality of women's lives remains invisible to men and women alike and this invisibility persists at all levels beginning with the family to the nation. Although geographically men and women share the same space, they live in different worlds. The mere fact that "Women hold up half the sky" does not appear to give them a position of dignity and equality. True, that over the years women have made great strides in many areas with notable progress in reducing some gender gaps. Yet, the afflicted world in which we live is characterised by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men. Sprawling inequalities persist in their access to education, health care, physical and financial resources and opportunities in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. Gender inequality holds back the growth of individuals, the development of nations and the evolution of societies to the disadvantage of both men and women. Gender issues are not simply talking about women's issues. Understanding gender means understanding opportunities, constraints and the impact of change as they affect both men and women. The impact of inequality is reflected in the status of women worldwide and in India.

A gender and empowerment framework has to depart from the distinction between the concepts of gender and women. 'Women'

is not gender, but women are a category of people. Gender is the socially constructed difference between women and men; it is not so much about biological differences between women and men, but about how society gives meanings to these differences in femininity and masculinity, and the power relations and dynamics that come about as a result of this. Knowing what women do in a chain or



household, or how women or men spend their income is a first starting point, but does not necessarily say anything about gender. Bearing the woman/gender distinction in mind, empowerment can be defined as "a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire the ability to do so. Empowerment is about changing gender relations in order to enhance women's ability to shape their lives. Empowerment is hence about a process of change, and encompasses both the question of what is changing and the question how that change is being valued.

A substantial literature has studied these issues and found clear evidence of a correlation between mothers' education and earnings, and child welfare, particularly child health. Moreover, the correlation with mothers' education and earnings is almost always found to be stronger than the corresponding correlation with fathers' education and earnings. However, correlations are often misleading. In this instance, there are two fundamental problems with the interpretation of the results. First, a woman's education, earnings, or political participation may be correlated with unobserved dimensions of

her ability, family, or community background. To the extent that these unobserved factors directly determine child health, the correlation does not indicate the causal effect of raising a woman's education, earnings, or political participation. It is important to recognize that the very fact that women are typically less likely to get an education, earn an income, and participate in political decisions is likely to make this

bias stronger for women than for men. Likewise, children might do better in countries or regions where women's political participation is greater because these places are otherwise more favorable environments. Second, the comparison between the coefficients of husbands' and wives' education or earnings might be obscured by a correlation between wives' education or earnings and unobserved characteristics of husbands for two reasons: On the one hand, more educated or richer women may be able to marry men who care more about their children. On the other hand, the observation that, after controlling for total resources, income in the hands of women is associated with more desirable

outcomes than income in the hands of men may reflect unobserved attributes of a man that directly influence child outcomes. For example, if he is progressive enough to allow his wife to seek employment, then this same progressive attitude may make him treat his children better. To get around these problems, researchers have exploited specific circumstances where the distribution of power, education, or earnings of women and men changed for reasons that had nothing to do with their individual choices. These situations allow us to approximate what would happen if women's empowerment policies were put in place and applied to everyone, not only to very special families.

There is much evidence to suggest that in a world of limited resources, gender inequality indicates that an economy is operating below potential. Prof. Berta Esteve-Volart estimates that the economic costs of discrimination against women in the labour market are large: a 10% increase in the female-to-male ratio of managers increases GDP per capita by 2%, while a 10% increase in the female-to-male ratio of total workers increases GDP per capita by 8%. India's next phase of economic growth will require a productive investment, not in terms of larger

public spending but in terms of achieving gender equality. Empowering and educating girls and women and leveraging their talent and leadership fully in the global economy, in politics and in society are fundamental elements of the new models required for the country for the "take-off" (below) – that the classical economist Rostow refers to in his 'Stages of Economic Growth.'

Evidence suggests that lower access to productive inputs, such as land or capital, is one of the root causes of the productivity gender gap. Moreover, the information age (technology), has offered myriad of opportunities to women to harness their skills. Also, access to economic opportunities (labour), enhancement of progressive social norms and microfinance for women (cultural and institutional factors) all enhance capabilities. It has been observed by many economists that effective and well-chosen policies can help enhance the speed at which outcomes for women catch up to those of men. The focus of the development agenda should then be on enhancing a woman's capability. This abridges the gender gap and assures not only economic growth but economic development.

Women's empowerment and economic development are closely interrelated. While development itself will bring about women's empowerment, empowering women will bring about changes in decision-making, which will have a direct impact on development. Contrary to what is claimed by some of the more optimistic policy makers, it is, however, not clear that a one-time impulsion of women's rights will spark a virtuous circle, with women's empowerment and development mutually reinforcing each other and women eventually being equal partners in richer societies.

On the one hand, economic development alone is insufficient to ensure significant progress in important dimensions of women's empowerment, in particular, significant progress in decision making ability in the face of pervasive stereotypes against women's ability. On the other hand, women's empowerment leads to improvement in some aspects of children's welfare (health and nutrition, in particular), but at the expense of some others (education). This suggests that neither economic development nor women's empowerment is the magic bullet it is sometimes made out to be. Equity between men and women is only likely to be achieved by continuing policy actions that favor women at the expense of men, possibly for a very long time. This abridges the gender gap and assures not only economic growth but economic development.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

POLITICS – NURTURES AND FULFILS EXISTENCE

Political rule is the rule which can take a person's existence and becoming in the direction of gradual development by regulating people, individually and collectively, in health, education and character; and where this is decayed, complicated and besmirched, corruption and revolt are inevitable.

The active endurance with a dynamic equilibrium which enables and inclines into services, brings others in ability with an exuberance of faith and potency: Power resides there! Sri Sri Thakur, Message Vol.1, P-129

That which protects, nurtures and fulfils the uphold of existence is politics. The main pivot of politics is nothing but to protect, nurture and fulfil the needy. The politics that corroborates nature and its development through intelligent observation is the politics that comes down with fulfilment, nurture and protection of life and growth.

Discern the meaning of the term politics, look at its origin the source from which it comes – then its development; meditate on its course keeping a continued consistency and distinguishing between the different streaming flows of thoughts and facts; then, see if there is anything misleading; correct it keeping a normal, natural flow with honest diplomatic skill by which you can make it propitious to the existential trail of life and growth of all – individually and collectively; this meditation, this consistent go of life will make you a politician or diplomat in a normal rocket-flow.

Politics is nothing where the stand of man is not fixed; in devoted love there are politics and many other 'tics'; move on for Him with all your mighty responsibilities and cautious

careful service.

Unquivering adherence to the Love-Lord, sincere allegiance, activity to serve Him and His mission, and love for everyone with due nurture in the way of individual existential propitiousness without any conflicting attitude resisting evil

Prabhu Prasad Gadnayak

Where a particular function of stay, by which state moves on, ignores and usurps – pilfering others' normal equity of existence, with a hoax of credulous becoming and duping words to rule over and snatch their interests, State is



in everyone with psychological manipulation creating normal fellow-feeling which evolves into normal friendship and mutual helpfulness according to individual distinctiveness may be called heavenly politics which keeps the country balanced with every uphill go of life.

Politics means the policy which nurtures and fulfils the existence with enlightened uphill move making the people inter-interested and compassionate to one another – there politics peeps with a bloomy smile. Politics is the pollinated pulse of becoming. When the sufferers, the distressed and the misfortune are not managed to get rid of the heinous, foul breathing of evil by the service and solace of the noble, and are not obliged by them – Politics weeps along! Sri Sri Thakur, Message Vol.1, P-118

degenerated and begets, with a cynic abhorrence, imprudent rebel of constitutions of deformed shapes! Sri Sri Thakur, Message Vol.1, P-125

To fulfil and nurture the people according to their distinctive needs and nature with an equitable adjustment soothing their existence with beloving character and every unbiassed attentive consideration and service- infusing Ideal the Beloved, the normal running source and binding force of all fulfilling exaltment, that induces one to suffer and forbear in every go of life; this I think is the essence of politics. Sri Sri Thakur, Message Vol.4, Page-28.

The semantic change of the word “politics” from its early 15th Century meaning of “Public affairs concerning the governance of a country or people” to its later connotation,

adding the essence of “prudence and judiciousness” of rulers, characterized by policy, says a lot about what the real purpose of politics should be.

Sri Sri Thakur's all-encompassing worldview defines politics as the policy that nurtures and fulfils existence, in

The esteemed dignitary responded that their political ideology revolves around the central idea of universal well-being. He added that it is with nationalism as the foundation that individual personalities flourish.

It is absolutely so. But the nation is run as per Aadesh (instructions compliant upon precepts) [Aadesh, a synonym of Ajna (command)]. The term Aadesh stems from aadarsh (Ideal) and in its absence, the command is bereft of the core. Hence, even after so many years of independence, we still need to make the people understand that one should not throw garbage here and there and mess up the streets or violate the public resources of the country. A country operates through two means – an elected government and a selected group of officials. Just as behind government orders, as I mentioned earlier, lies the Ideal, the role of idealism

or the Ideal in those officials who shape and carry the Government or the nation ahead, is the most significant. An entire country looks upon an official. However, once engaged in the job, their first thought revolves around how to skip work and find avenues to earn extra income. In such a scenario, if the individual's personality doesn't transform, how can the Government build a nation? Let's assume that spending a significant amount, I buy a car but if each part of the car is flawed, how can the car function? Everyone present was witness to the fact that such a profoundly insightful yet easily graspable explanation of Sri Sri Thakur's philosophical foundation of patriotism can only be presented through deep introspection and intellection.

He who knows the tactics to nurture and fulfil the needs of life, and can efficiently deal with affairs to fulfil the existential requirements with enthusiastic appeasement is a politician of natural order, and politics dwells there with efficient move.

Whatever does not nurture, fulfil and protect existence with every energetic urge and active intention that goads every individual toward propitiousness that keeps his life and growth is far off from the flare of politics. Polluted argument which is harmful to people is not politics, nor is politics villainy and treachery.

keeping with the distinctive needs and nature, by making the people inter-interested and compassionate to one another. This would work only when there exists equitable adjustment between people, which can be possible only when the concerned people agree to get added to that which is just, i.e. righteous. (14th C).

When righteousness is the core of any command, a welfare state can be established. Addressing the context of ideal centric welfarism, in a discussion with an esteemed personality actively involved in the welfare of the nation, through the rendering of public service, Supremely Venerable Acharyadev said:

The work you are engaged in is an aspect of spirituality too. Assuming that your connection with people is aimed at the nation's welfare, your focus seems to be on fostering human connections. Your work starts with the mass and spreads to emphasise individual engagement. We are also engaged in the same work focused on individuals. The spiritual awakening of an individual, the development of their thoughts and consciousness, and their ideal-centric stimulative fervour enlightens families. This zeal then extends from the family to a neighbourhood, from the neighbourhood to a locality, and from the locality to the metropolis; in this way, society develops and prospers.

POLITICS--DEFINED

That which protects, nurtures and fulfils the uphold of existence is politics.

Sree Sree Thakur Anukulchandra
The Message- Vol- IV

Powers, Functions, and Responsibilities of Election Commission

The Constitution of India has established a permanent and independent body to ensure free and fair elections in the country known as the Election Commission. The commission is responsible for holding Lok Sabha elections of India. The Constitution provides the Election Commission of India with the power of direction, superintendence, and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of president of India and the office of vice-president of India. The Election Commission is an all-India body that is common to both the Central government and the State governments. It must be noted here that the commission does not deal with the elections to the Municipalities and Panchayats in the states. Hence, a separate State Election Commission is provided by the Constitution of India.

Constitutional Appointment of ECI

Since its inception in 1950 and till 15 October 1989, the election commission was a one-member body with only the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) as its sole member.

- On 16 October 1989, the voting age was changed from 21 to 18 years. So, two more election commissioners were appointed by the president in order to cope with the increased work of the election commission.
- Since then, the Election Commission was a multi-member body that consisted of 3 election commissioners.
- Later on, the two posts of election commissioners were eliminated in January 1990 and the Election Commission was reverted to the previous position.
- This was repeated again later in October 1993 when the president appointed two more election commissioners. Since then, the Election Commission functions as a multi-member body comprising of 3 commissioners.
- The chief and the two other election commissioners have the same powers and emoluments including salaries, which are the same as a Supreme Court judge.
- In case of a difference of opinion amongst the Chief Election Commissioner and/or two other election commissioners, the matter is decided by the Commission by a majority.
- The office is held by them for a term of 6 years or until they attain 65 years, whichever happens first. They can also be removed or can resign at any time before the expiry of their term.

Independence of the Election Commission

Article 324 of The Constitution Of India mentions the provisions to safeguard and ensure the independent and impartial functioning of the Election Commission which is as follows.

- The chief election commissioner is provided with security of tenure. He cannot be removed from his office except in the same manner and on the same grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court. In other words, he can be removed by the President on the basis of a resolution passed to that effect by both the Houses of Parliament with a special majority, either on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.
- Thus, he does not hold his office until the pleasure of the

president, though he is appointed by him.

- The service conditions of the chief election commissioner cannot be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.
- Any other election commissioner or a regional commissioner cannot be removed from office except on the recommendation of the chief election commissioner.
- Though the constitution has sought to safeguard and ensure the independence and impartiality of the Election Commission, some flaws can be noted, i.e.
- The Constitution has not prescribed the qualifications (legal, educational, administrative or judicial) of the members of the Election Commission.
- The Constitution has not specified the term of the members of the Election Commission.
- The Constitution has not debarred the retiring election commissioners from any further appointment by the government.

Powers, Functions, and Responsibilities of Election Commission

Among the major Constitutional Bodies in India, Election Commission is a permanent Constitutional Body. It was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950.

- The Constitution has vested to this body superintendence, direction and control of the entire process for conduct of elections.
- The Commission's functions and powers with respect to elections to the offices of the President, the Vice President, the state legislators and the Parliament are divided under three headings:

- Administrative
- Advisory
- Quasi-judicial

Powers of Election Commission of India

In details, these powers of the Election Commission of India are:

- Determining the Electoral Constituencies' territorial areas throughout the country on the basis of the Delimitation Commission Act of Parliament.
- Preparing and periodically revising electoral rolls and registering all eligible voters.
- Notifying the schedules and dates of elections and scrutinising nomination papers.
- Granting recognition to the various political parties and allocating them election symbols.
- Acting as a court to settle disputes concerning the granting of recognition to political parties and allocating election symbols to the parties.
- Appointing officers for inquiring into disputes concerning electoral arrangements.
- Determining the code of conduct to be followed by the political parties and candidates during elections.
- Preparing a program for publicising the policies of all the political parties on various media like TV and radio during elections.
- Advising the President on matters concerning the disqualification of MPs.
- Advising the Governor on

Rajani Kanta Mohapatra
(Journalist)



matters concerning the disqualification of MLAs.

- Cancelling polls in case of booth capturing, rigging, violence and other irregularities.
- Requesting the Governor or the President for requisitioning the staff required for conducting elections.
- Supervising the machinery of elections throughout the country for ensuring the conduct of free and fair elections.
- Advising the President on whether elections can be held in a state that is under the President's rule, in order to extend the period of emergency after 1 year.
- Registering political parties and granting them the status of national or state parties (depending on their poll performance).

The Commission is aided in its function by deputy election commissioners. The deputy ECs are taken from the civil services and they are appointed by the Commission. They have a fixed tenure. They are aided by the secretaries, deputy secretaries, joint secretaries and under-secretaries posted in the commission's secretariat.

Functions of Election Commission

- To direct and control the entire process of conducting elections to Parliament and Legislature of every State and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India.
- To decide the election schedules for the conduct of periodic and timely elections, whether general or bye-elections
- To decide on the location of polling stations, assignment of voters to the polling stations, location of counting centres, arrangements to be made in and around polling stations and counting centres and all allied matters
- To prepare electoral roll and issues Electronic Photo Identity Card (EPIC)
- To grant recognition to political parties & allot election symbols to them along with settling disputes related to it
- To set limits of campaign expenditure per candidate to all the political parties, and also monitors the same
- To advise in the matter of post-election disqualification of sitting members of Parliament and State Legislatures.
- To issue the Model Code of Conduct in the election for political parties and candidates so that no one indulges in unfair practice or there is no arbitrary abuse of powers by those in power.

Composition of Election Commission

Article 324 of the Constitution has

made the following provisions with regard to the composition of the election commission:

- The President appoints the Chief Election Commissioner and other election commissioners.
- When any other EC is so appointed, the CEC acts as the Election Commission's Chairman.
- The President can also appoint regional commissioners to assist the Commission, if necessary after consulting with the Election Commission.
- The tenure of office and the conditions of service of all the commissioners shall be determined by the country's President.

Importance of Election Commission for India

- The Election Commission has been successfully conducting national as well as state elections since 1952. Now, it plays an active role to ensure the greater participation of people.
- The Commission has brought discipline among the political parties with a threat of derecognizing if the parties failed in maintaining inner-party democracy.
- It supports the values preserved in the Constitution viz, equality, equity, impartiality, independence; and rule of law in superintendence, direction, and control over the electoral governance.
- ECI helps in conducting elections with the highest standard of credibility, fairness, transparency, integrity, accountability, autonomy and professionalism.
- In the electoral process, it ensures the participation of all eligible citizens in an inclusive voter-centric and voter-friendly environment.
- The Election Commission of India engages with political parties and all stakeholders in the interest of the electoral process.
- It creates awareness about the electoral process and electoral governance amongst stakeholders (political parties, voters, election functionaries, candidates and people at large) to enhance and strengthen confidence and trust in the electoral system of this country.

Challenges faced by Election Commission

- Increased violence and electoral malpractices under influence of money have resulted in political criminalization, which ECI is unable to arrest.
- Election Commission is not adequately equipped to regulate the political parties. It has no power in enforcing inner-party democracy and regulation of party finances.
- ECI is becoming lesser independent of the Executive which has impacted its image.
- Allegations of EVMs malfunctioning, getting hacked and not registering votes, corrodes the trust of the general masses in ECI.

Article 324- Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.

Article 325- No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.

Article 326- Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the

basis of adult suffrage.

Article 327- Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.

Article 328- Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.

Article 329- Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

State Election commission of Odisha

The Odisha State Election Commission is an autonomous and statutory body constituted in the Indian state of Odisha for ensuring that elections are conducted in free, fair and unbiased way. Constitution of India with provisions as per Article 243K and 243 ZA and Article 324 ensures creation and safeguarding of the powers of State Election Commission. Odisha State Election Commission is responsible for conducting elections for Urban Local Body like Municipalities, Panchayats and any other specified by ECI. Odisha State Election Commissioner is appointed by Governor of Odisha.

The then-Orissa State Election Commission was formed in accordance with powers of Election Commission of India, which was constituted in year 1950 to supervise state level elections. State election commissioner is appointed by Governor. To ensure the autonomy of the position, the state election commissioner cannot be removed from office except on the grounds and manner specified for judge of High Court.

Powers and responsibilities

The State Election Commissioner is responsible for the following:

- Issue notification containing guidelines for conducting elections for Municipal Corporations in State.
- Conducting elections for Municipal Corporations in State.
- Issue notification containing guidelines for conducting elections for conducting elections for Municipal panchayats in State.
- Conducting elections for Municipal panchayats in State.
- Laying guidelines for persons eligible to contest in elections for Municipal Corporations in State.
- Conducting elections for Municipal panchayats in State.
- Model code of conduct is following in elections for local bodies.
- Updating Electoral rolls with new additions.
- Updating Electoral rolls with removals, if any.
- Declaration of results of elections held for Municipal Corporations in State.
- Declaration of results of elections held for Municipal panchayats in State.
- Ordering repoll if needed.
- Making arrangements for State-wide polls.
- Monitoring poll expenditure for Panchayat polls.

Odisha State Election Commission is headed by Chief Electoral Officer and as many members as specified in State Act. State Election Commissioners are independent persons not holding position or office in any Central or State Government organisations.

Odisha State Election Commission was formed after amendment of Constitution with 73rd and 74th declaration. State Election Commissions were formed as per Article 243K of the Constitution, similar to setting up of the Election Commission of India as per Article 324.

NEWS & VIEWS

Will Arvind Kejriwal continue to run govt from jail and who will spearhead AAP's poll battle?

The arrest of CM Arvind Kejriwal in the excise policy case poses two big questions to the Aam Aadmi Party and its leadership: how and who will run the Delhi govt and who will lead the party's election campaign in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, and Gujarat where it has fielded candidates.

Kejriwal's arrest has come when parties are busy announcing candidates and planning election campaigns.

Delhi, which faces assembly elections early next year, is in the

"Kejriwal is CM of Delhi and he will remain CM. There is no law that prohibits him from running the govt from inside a jail," Atishi said. "Our lawyers are reaching the Supreme Court. They will request an urgent hearing of the matter tonight itself."

Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel reiterated that AAP felt Kejriwal should run the govt from jail.

In December last year, fearing that the central govt was "plotting" CM's arrest in a "false" case, AAP had launched a

The expert added that if AAP insisted on Kejriwal remaining CM, it could lead to a stalemate in which the Centre could decide to implement President's rule in Delhi.

While AAP leaders insist that in no situation will Kejriwal resign from his post, the insiders, however, said Atishi and health minister Saurabh Bharadwaj were two names who could take up the position if the need arose. Atishi holds the maximum number of portfolios, is considered close to Kejriwal and is a frontline spokesperson of the



middle of an ongoing faceoff with the bureaucracy on the rolling out of various schemes and programmes and funding of ongoing projects.

Though he does not hold a portfolio, Kejriwal not only oversees the overall governance through regular meetings with ministers and senior officers, but he also almost single-handedly works to expand the party's footprint in other parts of the country.

The arrest is likely to have a direct impact on both the campaign and the day-to-day governance, as Kejriwal's three close associates, sharp political minds and strong voices - former deputy CM Manish Sisodia, former health minister Satyendar Jain and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh - are already in jail.

Talking to reporters outside the CM residence, where the drama of his arrest was playing out and party workers from across the city had gathered to protest, minister Atishi declared that Kejriwal would run the govt from jail.

campaign to collect feedback from the public on whether Kejriwal should step down in such a scenario or run the govt from jail.

After several street corner meetings, the party claimed that the common man was of the view that Kejriwal should continue to remain CM of Delhi even if he got arrested and hold review meetings with his ministers and bureaucrats in jail.

Constitution expert SK Sharma confirmed there was no specific provision in the law that the CM of a state had to necessarily resign and pass on the baton to somebody if he or she was arrested.

Former Bihar CM Lalu Prasad Yadav made his wife Rabri Devi the CM of the state when he was arrested. More recently, Hemant Soren in Jharkhand also resigned. Calling cabinet meetings in the jail or review meetings with officials in his cell does not seem practical," said Sharma.

party. Bharadwaj too is a prominent minister holding several important portfolios and is a well-known face of the party.

Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita, who has been a revenue services officer herself and has often attended party meetings, can also be a surprise pick for the post, sources said.

It will, however, be a big task for AAP to come up with a name of a leader that at least comes close to Kejriwal's stature as national convener of the party and a three-time Delhi CM.

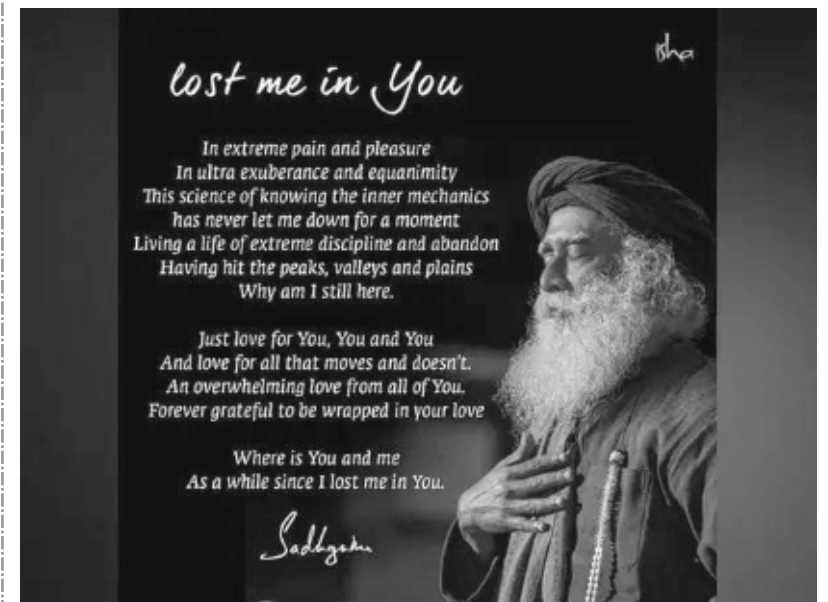
"As far as the election campaign is concerned, we have a strong cadre in all states where we are contesting, which is capable of handling the high octane electioneering this time."

Kejriwal's name is enough to convince voters to vote for the broom, our election symbol," said an optimistic party functionary, adding, "But that situation will not arise. We are confident that the Supreme Court will give us a hearing and stay Kejriwal's arrest."

"Lost me in You" : Sadhguru pens poem from hospital

Spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, who underwent emergency brain surgery at Apollo Hospital in Delhi after suffering life-threatening bleeding in the skull, has penned a poem in the hospital.

In his post on X, Sadhguru shared the poem "Lost Me in You."



"In extreme pain and pleasure, In ultra-exuberance and equanimity. This science of knowing the inner mechanics has never let me down for a moment. Living a life of extreme discipline and abandon, having hit the peaks, valleys and plains, why am I still here," the poem read.

"Just love for You, You and You and love for all that moves and doesn't. An overwhelming love from all of You. Forever grateful to be wrapped in your love. Where is You and me as a while since I lost me in You," the poem by Sadhguru stated.

Meanwhile, Isha Foundation informed earlier that Sadhguru is recovering well.

"Sadhguru is recovering well and is making steady progress. We are extremely grateful for the outpouring of love and support from everyone," the Isha Foundation said on the social media platform.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to Sadhguru and wished him good health and a speedy recovery.

On March 17, the 66-year-old spiritual leader developed a decline in his level of consciousness with drowsiness and weakness in the left leg. He was then rushed to the medical facility.



On March 20, Dr Vinit Suri, a senior consultant neurologist at Apollo Hospital who examined Sadhguru, said, "He had a headache for the last four weeks. The headache was very severe and he was ignoring it because he had to do his normal activities. He even carried out the Mahashivratri function on March 8, despite the fact that he had agonising pain. The pain became severe on March 15 and then he consulted me. At 4 pm, I advised him for an MRI, but at 6 pm, he had a very important meeting and did not want to skip it. However, the MRI was done later, and the MRI showed that he had massive bleeding in the brain. It is outside the brain and below the bone. There was massive two-time bleeding—one that happened about three weeks back and the second that happened around two-to-three days ago."

A team of doctors consisting of Dr Vinit Suri, Dr Pranav Kumar, Dr Sudheer Tyagi and Dr S Chatterjee performed the surgery within a few hours of admission to relieve the bleeding. Sadhguru was weaned off the ventilator post-surgery.

India ranked at 126 out of the 143 countries in World Happiness Index

Pradeep Kumar Panda, Economist, Bhubaneswar

Finland is named the world's happiest country for the seventh year in a row while India is ranked at 126 out of the 143 countries in the World Happiness Report 2024 released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

The report measures happiness based on GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and low corruption.

The annual report was released on March 20, which is celebrated as International Day of Happiness and the report is based

on global survey data from people in 143 countries.

India with score 4.054 ranked 126, the same as last year, in the happiness index. However, it still remains below neighbouring countries like China (60), Nepal (93), Pakistan (108), Sri Lanka (128) and Bangladesh (129).

Out of the 143 countries surveyed, Afghanistan remained at the bottom of the list, facing ongoing humanitarian crises since the Taliban regained power in 2020.

According to the World

Happiness Report 2023, the Top 10 Happiest Countries are:

1. Finland (7.741)
2. Denmark (7.583)
3. Iceland (7.525)
4. Sweden (7.344)
5. Israel (7.341)
6. Netherlands (7.319)
7. Norway (7.302)
8. Luxembourg (7.122)
9. Switzerland (7.060)
10. Australia (7.057)

Countries rankings this year are based on life evaluations from

2021-2023. Meanwhile, for the first time, since the report was

with Costa Rica securing the 12th and Kuwait securing 13th rank. Ukraine's rank has declined from



published more than a decade ago, the United States and Germany did not find a place among the list of 20 happiest countries. The US was ranked 23rd, while Germany was ranked 24th.

Countries such as Costa Rica and Kuwait entered the top 20 list

92nd last year to 105th in this year's report.

According to Jennifer De Paola, a happiness researcher at the University of Helsinki in Finland, the Finnish people's strong bond with nature and well-maintained work-life balance significantly influence their life satisfaction.

