

State govt seeks MEA’s intervention

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

THE Odisha government on Tuesday urged the Ministry of External Affairs to take immediate steps for the safe release of a man from the State who has been taken hostage by a group involved in Sudan’s ongoing civil war. The State government wrote to the MEA after the family members of Adarsh Behera appealed to the government to ensure his early release.

A CMO statement said that Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has directed senior officials to take immediate action. As per his instructions, the Director General of Intelligence wrote to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) requesting intervention to secure Adarsh’s release. The State’s Resident Commissioner in New Delhi has also contacted the ministry, seeking coordination with the Indian Embassy in Sudan for timely updates and

ODISHA YOUTH ABDUCTED IN SUDAN



safe repatriation, the CMO said.

Majhi has urged the family members to have patience and assured them that all necessary measures are being taken to resolve the situation. Adarsh Behera (36), who hails from Kotakana

village under Tirtol police station limits of Jagatsinghpur district, has been working at Sukarati Plastic Factory in Sudan since 2022. He was abducted last week and is in the captivity of the rebels. Adarsh’s wife, Susmita Behera, said she

received a phone call from her husband, who informed her about his abduction. They have taken away his mobile phone and personal belongings. Her husband had told her that he would be released soon. But, he has not returned so far, she said. Susmita, a mother of two sons aged eight and three, has appealed to both the State and the Central governments to intervene.

“I am told that my husband would be released if the Indian Embassy or the Red Cross take up the matter with the rebels. They have not demanded any money,” she said. Adarsh’s father, Khetrabasi Behera, said the family has no contact with their son for the past eight days.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly and BJD president Naveen Patnaik expressed concern over the incident and sought the government’s intervention. “Deep-

ly concerned to know that Adarsh Behera from Jagatsinghpur district of #Odisha has been kidnapped by paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan’s Al Fashir. Urge Indian government and the Ministry of External Affairs (@MEAIndia) to intervene into the matter with urgency and coordinate with the officials of Sudan for his early release,” Patnaik said in a post on X.

Jagatsinghpur SP Ankit Kumar Verma said Odisha police have already informed the matter to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs. “Discussions have been held regarding Adarsh Behera’s abduction, and further talks will take place on Tuesday,” the SP said.

Family sources said that Adarsh was working as a machine operator in a plastic factory in Sudan since 2022. He was abducted at gunpoint from Al-Fashir, about 1,000 km from the Sudanese capital Khartoum.

Pravati counters Naveen’s allegation of ‘betrayal’

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

ODISHA Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida on Tuesday hit back at Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik over his allegations of betrayal by the BJP-led State government, saying that the people of Nuapada and the women associated with Mission Shakti would give a befitting reply to the Biju Janata Dal for the neglecting the region during its 24-year rule.

“It seems he has now realised what betrayal feels like! The people of Nuapada are preparing to give a fitting reply to @Naveen_Odisha for betraying their trust over his 24 years in power. The Subhadra sisters (women beneficiaries under the flagship Subhadra scheme) will surely give their response to Naveen Patnaik in the upcoming election for always betraying the women of Mission Shakti,” posted Pravati on her X handle on Tuesday.

Targeting the Leader of Opposition, Pravati further wrote that the BJP government has not made any false promises and the residents of Nuapada will cast their votes keeping trust and faith in the 500-day government.

She said the voters will choose the double engine, Captain fit BJP government in the ensuing Nuapada by-election, which is scheduled to be held on November 11. The by-poll was necessitated following the death of Rajen-



dra Dholakia on September 8.

While addressing the gathering during a public meeting in Komna block of Nuapada district on Monday, BJD president Naveen Patnaik questioned the government over its unfulfilled promises, including 300 units of free electricity, Rs 3,500 pension for all elderly people, employment to 100 youths in every panchayat, timely supply of urea fertiliser to farmers, an end to the menace of ‘Katni Chatni’, the illegal deduction during procurement of crops.

Patnaik also alleged, “The BJP formed the government in the State through ‘vote theft’. Now, it has stolen our candidate. This is a betrayal of the people of Nuapada, of the Biju Janata Dal. There is deep anger among people over this. The people of Nuapada will give a befitting reply to this betrayal through their votes.”

CM expresses grief over loss of lives in train accident

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday expressed grief over the death of several people in a train accident near Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh. At least seven persons were killed and 14 others injured after a passenger train collided with a goods train from behind near Bilaspur station in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday. The incident took place around 4 pm when the MEMU (mainline electric multiple unit) passenger train was heading to Bilaspur from Gevra (in neighbouring Korba district). “Deeply saddened by the tragic train accident near Bilaspur resulting in the loss of several precious lives and injuries to many,” Majhi said in a



post on X. The Chief Minister paid his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured and strength to the families affected by the incident. Leader of Opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik said he was deeply saddened to know about the loss of precious lives in the train accident in Chhattisgarh. “My thoughts and prayers are with the grieving families who

lost their near and dear ones. Prayer for the early rescue of those who are trapped under debris and swift recovery of those who have sustained injuries,” the former chief minister wrote on X. Odisha Congress president Bhakta Charan Das too expressed sorrow over the death and injury of several people in the tragic rail accident. “In this difficult time, our thoughts and prayers are with all the affected families,” Das said.

Two sisters selected for Youth Exchange prog

ARADHANA DASH
DHENKANAL

Two sisters, Bibharani Patra and Sandhyarani Patra, have been selected as delegates for India-Sri Lanka Youth Exchange Programme 2025. The programme is organised by project Point Odisha and Commonwealth Youth Council in association with My Bharat under the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Sources said they were selected based on their active involvement in youth development, cultural exchange and social leadership activities in Odisha. The programme aims to promote bilateral friendship, cultural understanding and cooperation between the youth of India and Sri Lanka.

Bibharani said she will represent India by dem-



onstrating leadership and contributing ideas. Sandhyarani said this is a big opportunity to represent India at the international level. Bibharani is a mountaineer who scaled Mount Kilimanjaro via the Machame Route in 2023 in the African

continent. She has taken part in several sports events such as National taekwondo, 1st Dan black belt, IFMA India National Muaythai championship, National Choi-Kwang Do championship and National Kickboxing championship.

Ghatsila by-poll result will show people want change: Majhi

GHATSILA: Asserting that the BJP will win the by-election in Jharkhand’s Ghatsila seat, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday claimed the results will reflect the people’s desire for a change. Addressing a rally at Dampara for BJP candidate Babulal Soren, Majhi claimed that people are disillusioned with the government in Jharkhand within one year of the Assembly elections and are seeking change.

“This shows the poor performance of the present government. The BJP’s victory in Ghatsila by-poll will exhibit people’s desire for change,” he said. Majhi, who spoke mostly in Santhali, criticised the Hemant Soren government in the State for failing to implement the Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas Act or PESA, which grants self-governance to tribal communities in the scheduled areas of the country.

“The government here claims to be espousing the cause of tribals, whereas it has failed to implement PESA even after being in power for more than six years. This has deprived tribes of their rights and villagers of the benefits enshrined in the Constitution,” he said.

Asserting that the BJP is committed to the upliftment of tribals, Majhi



hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for ensuring Odisha and Chhattisgarh get tribal chief ministers, and the nation gets a tribal President. “The BJP has become synonymous with development,” he said, noting that plans are afoot in Odisha to auction 22 mines and foundation stones have been laid for several factories. “We would like to see similar development in Jharkhand under the BJP’s rule,” he added.

Majhi said Odisha and Jharkhand share similar culture and heritage, especially the Santhals.

Altogether, 13 candidates are in the fray in the by-election, the polling for which will take place on November 11. The by-poll was necessitated by the death of Education Minister Ramdas Soren in August. The votes will be counted on November 12.

ED conducts search in Odisha in Rs 73 cr bank loan fraud case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted multi-State searches across Odisha, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Punjab, and seized incriminating documents in connection with a Rs 73 crore bank loan fraud involving a private company, an official said on Monday.

During the search operations by ED’s Bhubaneswar zonal unit, various incriminating documents and documents related to property worth several crores of rupees were recovered and seized in the case against S R Alcobev Private Limited and others, the official said in a statement.

The search operations on October 29 were conducted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. S R Alcobev Private Limited and



others allegedly duped Punjab National Bank and Indian Bank (erstwhile Allahabad Bank) of Rs 73 crore after seeking a bank loan by diverting the money for unauthorised use in other companies.

The ED initiated investigation on the basis of an FIR registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) invoking scheduled offences under PMLA, 2002. During the searches, the ED recov-

ered and seized incriminating documents which showed systematic diversion of loan funds from S R Alcobev Private Limited to Brewforce Technologies and other associated companies, entities and business associates.

Additionally, multiple documents related to property worth several crores of rupees were recovered and seized, indicating acquisition of assets using diverted funds, the state-

ment said. The ED investigation revealed that S R Alcobev Private Limited had availed credit facilities aggregating Rs 73 crore from the banks, but its officials misused the facility to acquire illegal assets and fund business activities of other associates.

In collusion with sister concerns and related entities, the company siphoned off the sanctioned funds for purposes other than those approved, thereby defrauding the lending institutions and causing substantial loss to the government exchequer, said the complaint registered against the company.

The ED has initiated a detailed probe into the role of individuals, directors and beneficiary entities linked to the fraud and more evidence against the suspects are likely to be collected in due course, the statement added.

Minor raped by cousin

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANGUL

A 14-year-old girl, a student of Class 10, was allegedly raped by her cousin on Sunday at Chhendipada village. Chhendipada police, on the complaint of the victim, arrested the 26-year-old accused on Tuesday and forwarded him to court. This incident has created widespread resentment in the area.

Inspector in-charge Bibhudatta Chotray said the accused called the girl to his house for some household works when his mother was away. As the girl went to his house, he allegedly raped her.

The girl narrated the incident to her parents who then filed a complaint at the police station against the accused.

The IIC said the accused was arrested under POCSO Act. The victim was sent for medical examination.

Ahead of COP30, polluters urged to pay for climate crisis

SUNIL MOHAN PATNAIK
BERHAMPUR

AMIDST the roar of the sea and the whispers of rising tides, the coastal hamlet of Podampeta in Ganjam district turned into a powerful stage for climate justice. In a dramatic and evocative act ahead of the COP30 global climate summit, Greenpeace India, alongside local fishermen, women and youth, unfurled a giant “Climate Bill”—a symbolic charge sheet demanding accountability from the world’s big-

gest fossil fuel corporations. Towering against the azure sky, the massive installation bore a bold message: “Make Climate Polluters Pay.” It encapsulated the anguish of millions and the staggering reality that economic damage from the carbon dioxide emissions of five global oil and gas giants since the Paris Agreement (2016–2025) exceeds US\$ 5.36 trillion—a debt of destruction that continues to engulf vulnerable communities. Ironically, this sum dwarfs

the modest global commitments to the UN’s “Loss and Damage Fund,” exposing the profound inequity between those who cause the crisis and those who endure it. The installation also traced a grim timeline of cyclones, floods and heatwaves ravaging South Asia since 2015, turning the “bill” into a chilling climate ledger. “We have lost homes, boats and the rhythm of our lives to cyclones that return each year with greater fury,” lamented Chandragiri Tiki, a resident of Podampeta, her

voice trembling with both sorrow and resolve. “It’s time those who profit from pollution pay their dues to the people they have imperiled.” Selomi Gar naik, Climate and Energy Campaigner at Greenpeace India, asserted, “Communities like those in coastal Odisha are paying daily for a crisis they did not create. This bill is a reminder of the unpaid debt owed by the world’s polluters. True justice means making them pay and channelling those funds toward protecting both people and the planet.”

Podampeta was chosen because it is a climate-vulnerable area where coastal erosion and frequent cyclones have already led to loss of homes and livelihoods for the fishing community. As the sea breeze carried the echoes of their plea, Podampeta emerged not merely as a coastal village but as the conscience of a climate-battered world, urging global leaders heading to COP30: “Climate justice is not charity—it’s accountability.”

