

**Sri Lanka's Dissanayake arrives meets President Murmu, Modi**

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who is on his first international visit after assuming the office in September this year, met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi on Monday.

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who is on his first international visit after assuming the office in September this year, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Hyderabad House in Delhi on Monday. Earlier, he was accorded a ceremonial reception at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, the second day of his state visit to India. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Sri Lankan President Dissanayake at Rashtrapati Bhavan. On his first state visit to India from December 15 to December 17, the Sri Lankan president



also inspected a Guard of Honour by the combined defence services.

On this occasion, President Droupadi Murmu and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake introduced each other to their respective ministers, diplomats, and officers.

On Sunday, Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan received the Sri Lankan President in Delhi. Upon his arrival in Delhi, the visiting leader also met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

In a post on X, Dissanayake said that on his official visit to India, he had the privilege of engaging in productive discussions with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

He added, "Our conversations focused on strengthening Indo-Sri Lanka economic cooperation, enhancing investment opportunities, fostering regional security, and advancing key sectors such as tourism and

energy. These engagements reaffirm the commitment to deepening the partnership between our two nations."

Moreover, Jaishankar in his meeting with the Sri Lankan President on Sunday acknowledged the island nation's prominent role in India's Neighbourhood First policy as well as the SAGAR Outlook. The External Affairs Minister also stressed that Dissanayake's talks with PM Modi will facilitate greater cooperation between both countries.

**CM M K Stalin lays foundation for Rs. 1,500 cr Taiwan Hong Fu group footwear factory**

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M.K. Stalin, virtually laid the foundation stone for a footwear manufacturing facility by Taiwan-based Hong Fu Group at the SIPCOT industrial park in Panapakkam, Ranipet district. The project entails an investment of Rs.1,500 crore and is expected to generate employment for 25,000 individuals.

Speaking at the event from the Secretariat, CM Stalin highlighted the state's ambition of transforming Tamil Nadu into a \$1 trillion economy by 2030. He emphasized that the government is implementing several initiatives to create employment opportunities for youth and foster industrial growth. These efforts include forging investment agreements with global companies through official visits to nations like the



UAE, Japan, Singapore, Spain, and the USA.

Hong Fu Industrial Group, a multinational conglomerate headquartered in Taiwan, operates over 20 subsidiary companies. It is the world's second-largest footwear manufacturer, specializing in the design, development, production, and sale of sports footwear. Hong Fu serves globally renowned brands such as Nike, Converse, Vans, Puma, Yeezy, and Under Armour, providing development, design, and manufacturing services.

As part of its

expansion, Hong Fu has been allocated 200 acres in the SIPCOT Panapakkam Industrial Park. The Rs.1,500 crore investment will be dedicated to setting up a state-of-the-art footwear manufacturing unit, which is poised to create 25,000 jobs, significantly boosting local employment opportunities.

The Tamil Nadu government is committed to ensuring equitable and widespread growth across the state. This project is a testament to the government's ongoing efforts to attract global investors and stimulate industrial development.

The event witnessed the participation of notable dignitaries, including Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, Handlooms and Textiles Minister R. Gandhi, Minister for Industries and Investment Promotion Dr. T.R.B. Rajaa, and several senior government officials. Representatives from Hong Fu, including Chairman and Founder T.Y. Chang and Director Jackie Chang, also attended.

This initiative marks a significant step forward in Tamil Nadu's journey toward industrial expansion, employment generation, and economic prosperity.

**IMD issues orange alert for heavy rainfall in TN on Dec 17-18**

Chennai Dec 16 2024: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday announced that a low-pressure area is likely to form over the southeast Bay of Bengal within the next 24 hours, under the influence of an

upper-air cyclonic circulation over the South Andaman Sea and adjoining areas.

"The low-pressure area is likely to become more marked and move west-northwestwards towards the Tamil Nadu coast during the

subsequent two days," the IMD stated.

Following this forecast, an orange alert has been issued for heavy to very heavy rainfall in certain parts of Tamil Nadu on 17 and 18 December.

On 17 December,

heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected at isolated locations in the districts of Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, and Tiruvarur. Heavy rainfall is also likely in isolated areas of Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur, and Pudukkottai.

On 18 December, heavy to very heavy rainfall is anticipated at isolated locations in Cuddalore and Villupuram. Heavy rainfall is also likely at isolated locations in Tiruvallur, Chennai, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, Ranipet, Tiruvannamalai, Kallakurichi, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, and Tiruvarur.

The IMD also warned of continued heavy rainfall on 19 December in Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Ranipet, and Vellore.

**India collapse to 48/4 in Brisbane, rain stops play**

Chennai Dec 16 2024: India endured a dismal Day 3 in the third Test at the Gabba, collapsing to 48/4 in 14.1 overs and trailing Australia's commanding first-innings total of 445 by 397 runs. Rain disruptions compounded their struggles, with the looming threat of a follow-on adding to the pressure.

The day began with Australia's lower order chipping in 40 valuable runs, as Alex Carey reached a gritty half-century before Jasprit Bumrah wrapped up the innings with figures of

6/76. This effort extended the hosts' already imposing total, setting the stage for a daunting task ahead for India. India's reply got off to a nightmare start, with Mitchell Starc setting the tone by striking twice in his fiery opening overs. Yashasvi Jaiswal (4) was the first to fall, flicking a half-volley straight to Mitchell Marsh at short mid-wicket.

Shubman Gill (1) followed soon after, edging a full delivery to gully. Starc then claimed the prized scalp of Virat Kohli (3), who nicked an expansive drive to

Alex Carey behind the stumps.

Pat Cummins added to India's misery, dismissing Rishabh Pant (9) with a textbook outswinger. Amid the collapse, KL Rahul showed some resilience with a composed 30 off 52 balls, playing a few crisp strokes to keep India's hopes alive. However, his partner, captain Rohit Sharma, is yet to open his account, having faced only one delivery. Australia's bowlers, led by Starc (2/24) and Cummins (1/7), exploited the overcast conditions to a devastating effect.

With India needing 246 runs to avoid the follow-on, the task ahead looks increasingly difficult, particularly with the Gabba pitch offering assistance to the bowlers.

Rain interruptions were a recurring feature of the day, forcing an early tea break and causing multiple delays. Despite the ground staff's best efforts to keep the field playable, the damp conditions favoured the Australian pacers, who maintained unrelenting pressure throughout India's innings.

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## Tabla maestro Zakir Hussain passes away

Chennai, Dec 16 2024: Legendary table virtuoso Zakir Hussain breathes his last on Monday. Hussain, who is regarded as the greatest tabla player of his generation, is survived by his wife, Antonia Minnecola and his daughters, Anisa Qureshi and Isabella Qureshi. Born on March 9, 1951, he is the son of legendary tabla master Ustad Alla Rakha. He was 73.

He had been hospitalized for the last two weeks and was later taken to the ICU after his condition deteriorated. As per statement released by his family, Husain died due to complications arising out of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

Zakir Hussain was born famous as the son of Ustad Allah Rakha, a renowned tabla player. Quite naturally, he was inclined towards Tabla from a very young age. Zakir was a child prodigy and started touring to perform at concerts by the time he was just twelve. This gave him recognition and fame at a very young age.

Along with his stage shows, he also focused on his education and went to St. Michael's High School in Mahim and eventually graduated from St. Xavier's in Mumbai. He also did his PhD and received a doctorate in music from the University of Washington. In his early twenties, he started touring the United States frequently and performed in not less than 150 concerts per year.

## Qatar Embassy to reopen in Syria after 2011

Chennai Dec 16 2024: A delegation of Qatari diplomats arrived in Syria to complete preparations for reopening of the Qatari Embassy in Damascus, the Qatari news agency QNA reports, citing Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majid Al Ansari.

During meetings with the transitional government in Syria, the delegation once again stated that Qatar fully supported the brotherly Syrian people in achieving peace, security, development and prosperity, the spokesman said.

The delegation



Interestingly, he took the sounds of Tabla to many international festivals and shows. This eventually flooded him with opportunities to work in many international movies as well. This led to the creation of brilliant works of fusion, which was new to both Indian and overseas audiences. Overall, his contribution towards popularizing Indian percussion is immense.

Notably, he collaborated with western musicians and remained that way throughout. He mostly worked with American bands. His partnership with the famous band, 'The Beatles' deserves a special mention. He also recorded with an American psychedelic band 'Shanti' in the year 1971. Zakir Hussain has composed music for many movies like 'In Custody', 'The Mystic Masseur', 'Heat and Dust' etc.

His composition for the Malayalam movie 'Vanaprastham', which was screened at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival, earned him accolades. Some of the other films, for which he has worked on the musical score include, 'Apocalypse Now', 'Little

Buddha', 'Saaz', 'Mr. and Mrs. Iyer' and 'One Dollar Curry'. Zakir has also acted in many movies, mostly showcasing his musical performances. His portrayal of the character 'Inder Lal' in the film 'Heat and Dust' is unforgettable.

He also starred in a couple of brilliant documentaries like 'The Speaking Hand: Zakir Hussain and the Art of the Indian Drum' and 'Zakir and His Friends'. While 'Zakir and His Friends' was released in 1998, 'The Speaking Hand' was released in 2003. He is often credited for taking the Tabla to the world stage, thanks to his numerous collaborations. He also showed to a world that Tabla, which was considered a mere percussion instrument at concerts. This belief that he instilled in many, changed the way we looked at concerts. His achievements as a Tabla player inspired many young aspiring percussionists and opened the doors for many Indo-Western collaborations.

Born Genius Zakir Hussain learned to play Mridangam (a classical percussion) from his father when

he was just three years old. Tabla Beat Science This unique musical group was founded by Zakir Hussain and Bill Laswell in 1999. This gave rise to 'Tala Matrix' which is said to be one of the greatest explorations of tabla fusion in the modern era.

An invitation from the President in 2016, Zakir Hussain became the first Indian musician to be invited by the then American president Barack Obama. An elite list of musicians were chosen and invited to attend the All-Star Global Concert held in the White House. Zakir Hussain married an Italian-American Kathak dancer and teacher, Antonia Minnecola.

She earlier worked as his manager for some time. The couple has two daughters, Anisa Qureshi and Isabella Qureshi. Anisa Qureshi, after graduating from UCLA, is now trying her luck in filmmaking and video production. Zakir's other daughter, Isabella, is doing her major in dance at a college in Manhattan. Zakir recently became a proud grandfather and is currently residing in San Francisco, USA.

mission in Damascus and the sending of humanitarian aid to Syria.

Syria's armed opposition captured the Syrian capital of Damascus on December 8. Russian officials said that Assad had stepped down as president after holding negotiations with participants in the Syrian conflict and left Syria for Russia, where he was granted asylum.

Mohammed al-Bashir, who ran an Idlib-based administration formed by opposition groups, was named interim prime minister on December 10.



discussed with the Syrian side a possible increase in the volume of humanitarian aid supplies to Syria, he noted.

According to the agency, the embassy will reopen on Tuesday, with Khalifa Abdullah Al Mahmoud Al Sharif as the charge d'affaires.

Earlier, Al Ansari reported that the emirate would soon reopen its embassy in

## Gukesh in Chennai to rousing reception

Chennai Dec 16 2024: With a match-clinching win in a decisive game 14 with the black pieces, Gukesh D won the FIDE World World Chess Championship in Singapore over China's Ding Liren to become the youngest champion in the history of chess' ultimate tournament.

Gukesh became India's second world chess champion, following in the footsteps of four-time world champion Viswanathan Anand by beating defending champion Ding over the course of two weeks in Singapore.

At just 18 years old, Gukesh has become a hero in India for his



exploits at the Candidates tournament, where he outlasted some of the biggest names in chess, before he held his nerve to pull off a famous win over a much more experienced player in the Chinese

grandmaster. With those accolades under his belt, Gukesh returned to his hometown of Chennai, where he has grown up and loved throughout his life. Befitting of his achievements at the

FIDE championships, a new local hero was swarmed upon his return, with cameras capturing the crush of fans congratulating and receiving the teenaged world champion at the airport in Chennai.

## 39 Ministers added to Maharashtra Cabinet

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Thirty-nine newly elected legislators of Maharashtra Assembly, which is due to commence here from Monday.

The much-awaited cabinet expansion finally took place on

eve of the winter session of Maharashtra Assembly, which is due to commence here from Monday.

It has created a history as the oath taking ceremony was held in Nagpur, the second capital of the State, after a gap of more than 30 years.

Out of 39 ministers, 33 are of the Cabinet

rank while the remaining are ministers of state. Among them 20 are new ministers including three women.

Of 39 inductees, 19 are from BJP, 11 from Shiv Sena (Shinde) and nine from NCP (AP).

State BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule had

personally called up many MLAs this morning and informed them about their ministerial positions, said BJP state spokesperson Sandeep Khardekar.

Interestingly, two senior NCP (AP) leaders and former ministers like Chhagan Bhujbal and Dilip Walse-Patil, were not inducted in the ministry.

## Lanka Prez in India on first overseas visit holds talks with FM Nirmala, EAM Jaishankar

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Sunday held productive talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on ways to strengthen the bilateral ties.

The Sri Lankan President, who arrived here earlier in the evening on a three-day state visit in his first overseas visit after being sworn-in president in September, said in posts on X that these engagements reaffirm the commitment to deepening the partnership between the two nations.

In posts on X, the Sri Lankan President posted: "During my official visit to India, I had the privilege of engaging in productive discussions with Finance Minister @nsitharaman, External Affairs Minister @DrSJaishankar, and National Security Advisor Shri Ajit Doval.

"Our conversations focused on



strengthening Indo-Sri Lanka economic cooperation, enhancing investment opportunities, fostering regional security, and advancing key sectors such as tourism and energy. These engagements reaffirm the commitment to deepening the partnership between our two nations." In another post he said: "Arrived in New Delhi today (15th) at approximately 5:30 PM, warmly welcomed by Dr. L. Murugan, Hon. State Minister of Information & Broadcasting, and other distinguished officials. Held fruitful discussions tonight with @DrSJaishankar and Shri Ajit Doval on matters of mutual interest." EAM Jaishankar posted on X: "Pleased to call on President @anuradisanayake at the start of his first State Visit to India.

"Sri Lanka is key to

both India's Neighborhood First policy and SAGAR Outlook.

"Confident that the talks with PM @narendramodi tomorrow will lead to greater trust and deeper cooperation." Earlier in the evening, Sri Lankan President Dissanayake arrived on a three-day state visit to India. It is President Dissanayake's first bilateral visit to India since being elected President in September this year.

The MEA spokesperson said on X: "Warm and special welcome! President @anuradisanayake of Sri Lanka was warmly received by MoS @Murugan MoS as he arrived in New Delhi. This is President Dissanayake's first bilateral visit to India since he assumed Presidency.

"An opportunity to further deepen India-Sri

Lanka ties and add momentum to the people-centric partnership." This is the first overseas visit undertaken by President Dissanayake after his assumption of office.

On Monday morning he will be accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhawan, after which he will go to Rajghat for the wreath laying. His meeting with PM Modi at noon at Hyderabad House will be followed by the Exchange of Agreements and press statements by the two leaders.

In the evening, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will call on the Sri Lankan President at Hotel ITC Maurya.

Later in the evening, the Sri Lankan President will meet with President Draupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

President Dissanayake will also participate in a business event in Delhi to promote investment and commercial linkages between India and Sri Lanka. He will visit Bodh Gaya as part of the visit.

## ZEISS India, in collaboration with Image Optical Co., inaugurates the first ZEISS VISION CENTER of Tamil Nadu, in Chennai

Chennai Dec 16 2024: ZEISS, pioneer of science in optics and optoelectronics with a rich heritage of 175+ years, in collaboration with Image Optical Co., proudly announces first ZEISS VISION CENTER in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The latest ZEISS VISION CENTER is housed in Phoenix Market City the biggest mall in Chennai, known for its vibrant commercial presence. This strategic inauguration marks a significant milestone for ZEISS India in providing residents based in Chennai with cutting-edge, premium eye-care solutions.

Image Optical Co., well-known for its unwavering commitment to providing high-quality eye care products and services, is excited to partner with ZEISS India on this venture. The ZEISS VISION CENTER will provide convenient access for customers looking for branded eyeglasses



and top-notch eye care services catered to their specific requirements.

Commenting on the inauguration event Mr. M.S. Abul Hasan, Founder, Image Optical Co Vision Expert., said, "We are proud to bring ZEISS VISION CENTER Phoenix Market City, one of Chennai's prime shopping destinations. Our joint effort with ZEISS India will help provide world-class eyecare solutions to Chennai residents, setting new standards for quality for our clients, with the best facilities. With cutting-edge technology and our commitment to exceptional service, we aim to transform the eyecare experience for our customers in

the city. We look forward to building a new benchmark in optical excellence for our customers."

Mr. Rohan Paul, Business Head, India, and Neighboring Markets - Vision Care, ZEISS India, added, "We commemorate a major milestone in our journey in Chennai with the launch of this first store. This is a significant turning point for us, and the launch of ZEISS VISION CENTER in Chennai is a prime example of our efforts to provide a good experience for our partners and customers. ZEISS's state-of-the-art optical technology combined with Image Optical Co's commitment to

customer satisfaction will transform the Chennai eyewear market by providing customers with a comfortable, stylish, and precise combination."

The ZEISS VISION CENTER offers a wide range of ZEISS lenses known for their precision and advanced technology. It also provides ZEISS Outdoor Lenses with customizable options like tints, photochromic, and polarized lenses alongside a selection of premium eyewear brands for children and adults. Customers can enjoy comprehensive eye exams conducted by certified optometrists using state-of-the-art diagnostic tools.

## Kauvery Hospital Launches Centre of Excellence for the Management of Diabetes Complications (COE-MDC)

Chennai, Dec 16 2024: Kauvery Hospital, a leading multispecialty healthcare provider, has launched the Centre of Excellence for the Management of Diabetes Complications, dedicated to addressing the rising burden of diabetes-related complications in India. The centre was inaugurated by Dr. J Radhakrishnan, Additional Chief Secretary to Government and Principal Secretary to Civil Supplies Department Tamil Nadu. This state-of-the-art facility brings together experts from multiple specialties, including neurology, cardiology, nephrology, vascular surgery, foot care, dietetics, and physiotherapy, to deliver comprehensive and specialized care for individuals suffering from diabetes complications.

Diabetes is a growing epidemic in India, with over 100 million people diagnosed with the condition, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research. A significant proportion of these individuals face debilitating complications. Diabetic patients experience neuropathy, which can lead to chronic pain and loss of sensation,



cardiovascular diseases with a two- to fourfold increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. Chronic Kidney Disease is another major complication in India where Diabetes is a risk factor, often requiring dialysis or kidney transplantation. Additionally, vascular complications and poor wound healing often result in amputations.

Speaking at the launch, Dr. Baraneedharan, Senior Diabetologist at Kauvery Hospital said, "Diabetes does not affect just one organ—it affects the entire body, and its complications can significantly reduce the quality of life. At Kauvery Hospital, we recognize the urgent need to address these challenges. With our Centre for Excellence, we aim to provide a multidisciplinary,

evidence-based approach that focuses on early intervention, specialized care, and prevention of long-term damage. This centre is a testament to our commitment to empowering individuals to manage their health effectively and live fuller lives."

The centre will offer a wide range of services, including advanced diagnostics for early detection of complications, personalized treatment plans, wound care for diabetic foot ulcers, nephrology services for kidney health, and targeted therapies for managing cardiac and neurological issues. A team of experienced dietitians and physiotherapists will work closely with patients to promote sustainable lifestyle changes, ensuring

better health outcomes.

Dr. Aravindan Selvaraj, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Kauvery Group of Hospitals said "India is witnessing a surge in diabetes-related complications, and it's critical to address this challenge through a holistic and patient-centered approach. The incidence of diabetes related complications are also on the rise and it becomes important to effectively manage the complications. With our in-house team of specialists, we will be providing multidisciplinary approach to complications that arise due to Diabetes. With the integration of multidisciplinary expertise and a patient-first philosophy, the centre aims to set a benchmark in diabetes care."

## China spy gained access to Buckingham Palace: UK

Chennai, Dec 16 2024: The scandal surrounding an alleged Chinese spy who managed to gain access to Buckingham Palace as a "close confidant" of Prince Andrew, the younger brother of King Charles III, intensified on Sunday as it emerged that he also met former Prime Ministers David Cameron and Theresa May.

While Cameron and May distanced themselves from any knowledge of his espionage links, the row involving the businessman, known only as "H6" for legal reasons, continues to dominate the headlines after a tribunal judge noted that he had an "unusual" degree of trust from the senior royal.

Earlier, Andrew, the Duke of York, said in a statement that he had "ceased all contact" with the alleged spy.

"David Cameron was leader of the Conservative Party for over a decade and PM for six years. He met thousands of people during that time at hundreds of functions and events. We don't



have any further information about this individual," a source close to Cameron, now Lord Cameron, was quoted as saying by 'Sky News'.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Theresa May said "as such, she doesn't remember when or where this particular photograph was taken or the man in question".

The revelations come after it emerged earlier this week that H6 had been barred from entering the UK due to national security risks. A Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) went on to hear in July that the man was invited to Prince Andrew's birthday party in 2020 and was told by a royal aide that he could

act on the Duke's behalf when dealing with potential investors in China.

According to SIAC case details, H6 was first excluded from entering the country in 2023 over national security fears by Suella Braverman, who was then home secretary. In July last year, the Home Office said H6 was considered to have engaged in "covert and deceptive activity" on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. H6 denied the allegations and appealed that decision in the SIAC, which ruled against him on Thursday.

In a statement, Prince Andrew's office said the Duke had met the man "through official channels" and there was

"nothing of a sensitive nature ever discussed".

The Chinese Embassy in the UK has denied the espionage allegations, saying "some individuals in the UK are always eager to fabricate baseless 'spy' stories targeting China".

"Their purpose is to smear China and disrupt normal exchanges between Chinese and British personnel," a spokesperson said. However, former Tory Cabinet Minister Gillian Keegan said on Sunday that the UK should "always be vigilant", and it is "surprising that people are surprised" by China's activities because security advice has been given to people visiting China going back 30 years.

## Nepal to amend Constitution after talks: Minister

Chennai, Dec 16 2024: Nepal's Minister for Home Affairs Ramesh Lekhak on Sunday said a consensus of all political parties will be ensured to amend the Constitution, a media report said.

Lekhak, speaking at a press meet, stressed on the need for the Constitution amendment for strengthening the federal democratic republic, The Himalayan Times newspaper reported.

"The preliminary dialogue on this issue has commenced. But the constitution amendment will not be determined by two political parties," he said.

Lekhak said that the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN UML), the largest parties in Parliament, had decided to form the incumbent coalition government to promote stability, prevent corruption, strengthen good governance and economic activities and accelerate the pace of development.

The minister further said that the existing political alliance between the NC and CPN (UML) has no issues and it will continue until the next general election. Responding to a question about the arrest

of opposition leader Rabi Lamichhane, he claimed that the government is highly aware of the guarantee of human rights for each citizen.

He stated that the Government has no feeling of "revenge" against Lamichhane, the chair of Rastriya Swatantra Party, as the current investigation against him is a legal issue.

Meanwhile, Nepali Congress spokesperson Prakash Sharan Mahat advised the government to seek and accept foreign loans only on the need-basis as it has been very challenging for the country to repay loans taken after Covid-19.

In July, K P Sharma Oli was sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister for the fourth time to lead a new coalition government.

The leader of Nepal's largest communist party was appointed as Prime Minister by President Ram Chandra Paudel to lead the coalition Government with Nepali Congress (NC), the largest party in Parliament, apart from other smaller parties. Oli, 72, succeeded Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda,' who lost the vote of confidence in the House of Representatives (HoR), leading to the formation of the new Government.

## CONCORD ENVIRO SYSTEMS LIMITED INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING TO OPEN ON THURSDAY DECEMBER 19, 2024

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Concord Enviro Systems Limited ("CESL" or "The Company"), shall open the Bid / Offer Period in relation to its initial public offer of the Equity Shares on Thursday, December 19, 2024.

The Anchor Investor Bid/Offer Period opens and closes on Wednesday, December 18, 2024. The Bid/Offer Period will close on Monday, December 23, 2024. ("Bid Details")

The Price Band of the Offer has been fixed at Rs. 665 to Rs. 701 per Equity Share ("Price Band"). Bids can be made for a minimum of 21 Equity Shares and in multiples of 21 Equity Shares thereafter. ("Bid Lot").

The Company proposes to utilize the net proceeds towards funding (i) investment in its wholly owned Subsidiary, Concord



Enviro FZE ("CEF") manufacturing capital requirements for financing its facilities, storage and supporting activities of CEF estimated to Rs.200 million [Rs.20.00 crore]; (vi) requirements for the greenfield project to million [Rs.10.50 crore]; (iii) investment in its joint venture, Roserve Enviro Private Limited to grow the Company's pay per use/pay as you treat business estimated to Rs.32.07 million [Rs.3.21 crore]; (iv) investment in its wholly owned subsidiary, Rochem Separation Systems (India) Private Limited ("RSSPL") for financing its CEF estimated to Rs.500 million [Rs.50.00 crore]; (v) investment in its brown field project to expand the funding working

## Bike Taxis Face Regulatory Roadblock Amid Public Reliance Women-Focused Initiatives Threatened, Livelihoods at Stake

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Bike taxis, a critical lifeline for millions across Tamil Nadu, are under threat following the Transport Department's directive to tighten compliance with the Motor Vehicle Act. Zonal and regional officers have been instructed to conduct special audits, casting uncertainty over the future of this essential service. This move arises amidst complaints of alleged rule violations, jeopardizing a service relied upon daily by over 4 lakh residents, including 1 lakh women commuters, for affordable and accessible transport.

With over 10 lakh registered captains, including 25,000 women captains, bike taxis have transformed urban mobility by offering rides at less than Rs 10 per km — half the price of traditional options. They empower communities

economically, with 1 lakh captains earning a livelihood every day and cumulative earnings exceeding Rs 3,000 crore since inception. Initiatives like Bike Pink not only ensure safe travel for women but also create significant employment opportunities, promoting gender equity and inclusivity.

Current Challenge:

Despite their impact, bike taxis are facing backlash from auto unions accused of monopolistic practices. Their resistance has led to regulatory hurdles that threaten to dismantle

Bike Taxis are lifeline of Tamil Nadu



This service is commonly used for office commutes, travel to bus stands, and railway stations. It is also used for personal travel, as it is priced at less than ₹10/km, providing an option at half the price of the next available alternative. 'Bike Pink' as a service was launched to provide female riders for female customers and to create employment opportunities for women.

taxi operations that balances safety compliance and public benefit.

1. Recognize bike taxis as a vital component of urban mobility and an enabler of economic empowerment.

2. Safeguard the livelihoods of 1 lakh captains and ensure continued access to affordable transportation for millions of commuters.

3. Address monopolistic practices by auto unions to foster fair competition and innovation in urban transport.

4. Suspend blanket audits and provide a clear framework for bike

## Kinetic Green paves the way for Women's Empowerment through innovative program and initiatives

Chennai Dec 16 2024: Kinetic Green, a leader in the electric vehicle industry, is proud to announce its unwavering commitment to advancing women in the workplace, particularly in leadership roles and across its manufacturing operations. Guided by the vision of Ms. Sulajja Firodia Motwani, Kinetic Green is dedicated to fostering an inclusive, diverse environment where women can thrive, break barriers, and make meaningful contributions to the future of green mobility.

Kinetic Green recently concluded its 'World in A Room' initiative at its Supa plant in Pune, Maharashtra showcasing its commitment to diversity through community engagement, plant-level initiatives, and leadership development. The event highlighted programs like SheRise and SkillHer, empowering women with internships and specialised training, and announced the launch of Jayashree Firodia Innovation Award to recognise women driving technological advancements. Further, the presence of talented engineering students from Pune infused the event with youthful energy and optimism, symbolising a brighter and more inclusive future for the mobility industry. Distinguished speakers, including Ms. Pratiksha Tondwalkar (SBI) and Ms. Anjali Gulati (People Konnect), inspired attendees with their insights on perseverance and diversity in talent strategies. Senior leaders including Mr. Ranjit Kondeshan (CHRO), Mr. Dharendra Singh (Director, R&D), Mr. Sundareswaran S (Director, Manufacturing & Operations), and Mr. Pankaj Sharma (President, 2-Wheeler Business), reaffirmed that diversity is integral to Kinetic Green's ethos, driving innovation, sustainable growth, and a brighter future.



Kinetic Green is dedicated to gender equality, with a goal of achieving 40% female representation in mid and senior management roles and ensures equal opportunities by filling positions held by women with other women. Under Ms. Sulajja Firodia Motwani's leadership, Kinetic Green has not only achieved significant progress in advancing women's roles within the company but has also created a 100% women-led assembly line for E-Luna that exemplifies the company's commitment to gender equality and innovation in manufacturing. Kinetic Green's vision for empowering women extends beyond the company's internal operations. The company aims to attain 50% female participation on the 2 & 3-wheeler and golf cart assembly lines at its plant, demonstrating its dedication to providing opportunities for women in technical and manufacturing roles.

Further, the company empowers female talent with leadership access and opportunities to connect with founders and senior leaders. Alternative career paths and transparent mid-year evaluations are provided to support and recognise deserving female

leaders. It promotes work-life balance through flexible work options and an inclusive culture that values diversity and merit. The company also prioritises health and well-being with comprehensive programs to support women both personally and professionally.

Ms. Sulajja Firodia Motwani, Co-Founder and CEO of Kinetic Green, stated, "The emergence of electric vehicles is a game-changer, not just for sustainability but for inclusivity in the workforce. The EV revolution inherently demands new skills and innovative thinking, creating unprecedented opportunities for women in the automotive and manufacturing sectors. At Kinetic Green, we are proud to lead this transformation with initiatives like a 100% women-led assembly line for E-Luna, and SkillHer, which empowers women in the SUPA region with employability-focused training. Additionally, in collaboration with our partners, Kinetic Communications Limited and Kinetic Electric Motors Limited we are crafting an empowering ecosystem that nurtures female talent at every stage, from internships to leadership roles. As EVs redefine mobility, they also redefine who drives the industry

forward and I firmly believe women will be at the forefront of this revolution."

Mr. Ranjit Kondeshan CHRO, Kinetic Green Energy & Power Solutions Limited, said, "At Kinetic Green, we are steadfast in shaping a bold and diverse future. Guided by our unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusivity, we strive to drive meaningful change and inspire the next generation of leaders. Our initiatives are designed to create equal opportunities for all, harnessing limitless potential to accelerate progress toward a sustainable future in the mobility sector. With a clear focus on A Vision for Change, we remain dedicated to redefining possibilities and building a better tomorrow."

Kinetic Green's unwavering commitment to grassroots empowerment, skill-building, and leadership representation is transforming its organisational culture to reflect these values. By championing diversity, Kinetic Green is not only reshaping its internal culture but also paving the way for a bold, inclusive future. The company is driven by a Vision for Change, recognising diversity as the catalyst for innovation and progress.