

Govind Sahu, prime accused of Mamita Meher murder case, dies by suicide in Kantabanji Jail

Balangir(KCN): Govind Sahu, prime accused of sensational Mamita Meher murder case, reportedly died by suicide inside the Kantabanji Sub-Jail in Odisha's Balangir district, today. According to reports, Sahu was found hanging from a tree on the jail premises with a gamcha, following which he was rushed to Kantabanji Sub-divisional Hospital by the prison authorities. He was declared dead at the hospital. Sahu was scheduled to be produced before the



court of JMFC today. The murder of 24-year-old Mamita Meher of Jharni village under Turekela block of Balangir district had sent shockwaves across the state. While Mamita was working as a teacher at the Sunshine English

Medium School at Mahaling in Kalahandi district, prime accused Govind Sahu was the managing committee president of the educational institution. Mamita went missing on October 8, 2021. Alleging involvement of

Govind Sahu behind her missing, Mamita's family members had lodged a complaint with police. On October 19, 2021, bones of Mamita's body were exhumed from a stadium construction site of the school in the presence



of police. Sahu allegedly murdered Mamita, chopped off the body, set it on fire and dumped it under the ground. He also torched her bag, mobile phone and other belongings to eliminate the evidence. Police said Mamita had threatened Sahu to expose his extramarital affairs, over which he strangled her to death inside his car on October 8, 2021. Opposition BJP and Congress had demanded the resignation of the then Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra over his alleged links with the prime accused.

Not suicide, my husband has been murdered, alleges Gobinda Sahu's wife

Kalahandi(KCN): In mysterious death of Mamita Meher murder accused Gobinda Sahu inside Kantabanji Sub-Jail in Balangir district, the deceased's wife termed it as 'murder'. "My husband has been murdered. He was a strong man and cannot die by suicide. If so, he would have committed it before; why did he wait for one year to end his life?" said Gobinda Sahu's wife Sushma Sahu. Gobinda Sahu's death murder, not suicide; opposition parties in Odisha demand high-level probe. She lodged a complaint at the



Kegaon Police Station alleging pre-planned murder by the administration in judicial custody. "My husband was in the judicial custody. Those who had kept my husband in jail, they have murdered him. Should not they have protected him inside the cell?" she asked. When asked about the last conversation she had

made with her husband Gobinda Sahu, she said that she had spoken to him yesterday briefly and he had asked her about his mother and son, denying to reveal any political link behind her husband's death. Gobinda Sahu, the undertrial prisoner in sensational Mamita Meher murder case, was found hanging from a tree on premises of the Kantabanji Sub-Jail today. Taking quick action in the matter, Odisha DGP ordered crime branch probe into suicidal death of Gobinda Sahu.

Plea For Tribal Inclusion Elephant Deaths on Rise

New Delhi: A delegation of BJD MPs on Tuesday met Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda here and demanded inclusion of 160 communities of Odisha in ST list. The delegation includes Amar Patnaik, Sasmit Patra, Sujeet Kumar, Chandrani Murmu, Sulata Deo, Niranjani Bishi, Manas Mangaraj, Achyut Samant and Mamata Mahant have submitted a memorandum to Munda on the issue. There are several communities who have been recommended by the Government of Odisha for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) List of Odisha; but



have not been included in the ST list yet after many decades and these proposals are pending before the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the MPs said. Stating Odisha is the home to the largest number of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and large tribal population, the BJD MPs said the State Government has recommended the

Centre for inclusion of 160 communities in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has written letters several times to the Government of India on these issues and the Task Force under Ministry of Tribal Affairs had also recommended 9 proposals from Odisha as priority cases for inclusion in the ST list for Odisha in 2014. However, the same is yet to be notified in the Presidential Order, pointed out the MPs. "We came across a media report this morning which has inaccurately mentioned that there

haven't been any proposals from the Odisha Government for the inclusion of communities in the ST list in the past three years: It is our moral duty to inform you about the facts and truth," they said. Urging the Union Minister to consider including these 160 proposals for inclusion into the ST list at the earliest, they said their inclusion will lead to significant empowerment and opportunities for these communities who have been deprived of the ST status and its benefits for the last 75 years since Indian independence.

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As many as 91 wild elephants were killed due to various accidents, poaching and poisoning in Odisha during 2017-18 to 2021-22. This was informed by Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha on Monday. In a written statement to the Lower House, Mr. Choubey said 17 jumbos were killed after being hit by train during crossing while electrocution led to the death of another 63 elephants. Similarly, poachers have killed 10 wild elephants in Odisha during the five years. However, only one elephant died due to poisoning, the Minister



said. According to the last elephant census conducted in 2017, there are 1,976 elephants in Odisha. Informing about the measures taken by the Ministry in prevention of elephant deaths due to unnatural reasons, Mr. Choubey said the Ministry provides financial and technical assistance to States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes 'Project Elephant' for protection and conservation of elephants and their habitats in the country.

To reduce human-elephant conflict and to avoid retaliatory killing of elephants, compensation is provided to local communities for loss of their property and life caused by wild elephants, he said. The States/UTs and power transmission agencies have been requested to take necessary steps for compliance of Electricity Rules & Regulations and to maintain minimum ground clearance for electric transmission

lines for minimizing death of elephants due to electrocution, he said. A general advisory has been issued jointly by the Ministry of Railways (MoR) and Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) in 2010 to the General Managers of North East Frontier, East Coast and Southern Railways with a request to implement the suggested measures. The MoS said a guideline for management of human elephant conflict has been issued by the Ministry on 6 October 2017 and elephant range states have been requested for implementation of the same. Critical elephant habitats are notified as 'Elephant Reserve' for focus and synergy in elephant conservation and to reduce conflict.

Will liberate the country from the nuisance of illegal conversion: Alok Kumar

New Delhi: Affronted and offended by the increasing incidents of love jihad and illegal religious conversions in the country, the Hindu society now looks for a permanent solution of the nuisance! Vishva Hindu Parishad, along with the Sant fraternity and every indigenous Mata-Panth-Sampradaya, has issued a clarion call against the undermining agenda that threatens national unity and territorial integrity of Bharat. VHP's Central Working President and Senior Advocate Shri Alok Kumar announced today that the Karyakartas of Vishva Hindu Parishad, through the 'Dharma Raksha Abhiyan' ('Save Dharma Campaign') in the whole country from

December 21 to December 31, 2022, will not only awaken the nationals against religious conversions being done by force, fraud and allurements, but will also free the nation from this pest. He said that by keeping Swamiji Shradhdhanandji's martyrdom day on 23rd December as the point of reference, VHP shall take forward his Shuddhi Movement and speed up the 'Paraavartan' ('Home-Coming') campaign to bring back the brethren who had gotten estranged from their Mother Society (Hindu society) for any reason. During the campaign, in addition to Havan-Yagya, Katha-Pravachan, Shobha Yatras, Seminars,



distribution of Divine-Literature, participation and guidance of revered saints in Pada Yatras and Prabhaat Pheris, and also apart from special programmes for women, men and

children, many competition programmes and Dharmic awakening ones will be conducted. Addressing a press conference at New Delhi today, the VHP

Working President said that so far we have saved 62 lakh Hindus from religious conversion and brought 9 lakh back to their original fold with respect. About 20 lakh

cow-progeny were saved from being slaughtered and 25 thousand Hindu daughters were saved from getting trapped in the clutches of love jihadists. He said that in the very second year of the establishment of VHP, i.e., in the first World Hindu Conference in 1966, in the presence of more than one lakh delegates from 12 countries, the announcement of 'Paraavartan' ('Home-Coming') was made and only three years after that in 1969, the declaration of 'Hindavah Sodara Sarve, Na Hindu Patito Bhavet' ('All Hindus are siblings, No Hindu is fallen') by the Jagadgurus infused new energy in the society. Shri Alok Kumar said

that these days a special campaign 'Sansad Sampark Abhiyan' is undergoing to meet with our honourable Members of Parliament from all over the country by Vishva Hindu Parishad. During this 12-day campaign, which started from December 12, personal contact is being made with the MPs of both the Houses of Parliament. Under this, the Karyakartas of VHP's Vishesh Sampark Vibhag (Special Contact Cell) are drawing the attention of the Hon'ble MPs to the issues of Population imbalance, liberate Hindu temples from government control and also creation of separate ministries at the centre and states to ensure

sanctity of the Dharmic-pilgrimage sites. A total of 74 VHP Karyakartas, including 4 women Karyakartas, had joined the campaign in its first phase. In the last 8 days, a total of 286 Hon'ble MPs of all parties, including 225 Lok Sabha and 61 Rajya Sabha MPs, have been contacted. We also met some Muslim and Christian MPs. The second phase of the campaign started yesterday and by next Friday we will meet 450 to 500 MPs. VHP's Central secretary & National Dharm Prasar Pramukh Shri Sudhanshu Patnaik and Vishesh Sampark Pramukh Shri Narpal Singh were also present in this press conference.

BJP MPs meet Goyal More Funds for PLISFPI

New Delhi(KCN): A day after BJD MPs met Union Minister Piyush Goyal demanding release of pending food subsidy dues of Rs 14,292 crore, BJP MPs from Odisha met Goyal alleging gross irregularities in procurement of paddy in the State.

A delegation of the BJP Parliamentarians led by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan met the Union Food Minister and sought his intervention to deal with alleged corruption in paddy procurement and denial of MSP to farmers in Odisha.

In a memorandum to Shri Goyal, the leaders accused the State Government of scuttling paddy procurement and causing great distress to farmers.

They said the Centre's attention was earlier drawn to corrupt practices prevalent in Regulated Markets Committees (RMC), Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS) and Paddy Procurement Centres (PPCs) in Odisha. It was also corroborated in the re-

representatives and officials of the Odisha Government, it said.

The MPS also alleged that the centralised token system for the paddy sale is being exploited by Secretary PACS/PPC to summon a farmer on a particular date to bring his Paddy for sale leading to favouritism and many tokens belonging to small and marginal farmers getting lapsed.

As mandis are not being opened at all in some RMCs, irregular lifting of rice at Mandi has created an additional issue of storage of the grains for farmers in open, they said.

Claiming that farmers are not getting MSP of Rs 1940/- per quintal due to cut in weight over FAQ, it said mandis are not maintaining separate register & accounts and surplus paddy is adjusted as FAQ and value is being misappropriated by those involved in the procurement system.

A nexus of millers and officials of the Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare department



port of the Central Team deputed to probe these issues.

Unfortunately, the Government of Odisha seems to have ignored the findings of the report as the same issues are yet again plaguing the paddy procurement process in the state of Odisha, said the MPs.

While the Kharif Marketing Season commences from October to facilitate smooth paddy procurement, mandis have not opened so far except for a few districts.

"In Odisha except for a few districts, Mandis have not opened till now even in 3rd week of December. This is severely curtailing the actual procurement window to 40-43 days against the official 151 days window creating panic among small and marginal farmers," read the memorandum submitted by the MPs to Shri Goyal.

Noting that a restricted procurement period disables farmers from bringing their produce to the mandi for sale and generate income, the memorandum said a recent drone survey has pointed out that the harvesting has been completed in around 35% of the cultivated area.

However, mandis in most coastal districts have not been opened yet and the Odisha government is shifting the blame to District Level Paddy Procurement Committees (DLCP) in the name of decentralisation. Ironically, these are indirectly controlled by

BJP-BJD spar over tardy procurement of paddy

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): With farmers of some western Odisha districts staging dharna to protest inordinate delay in paddy procurement, the BJP on Monday announced to launch a 'Mandi Chalo' abhiyan from December 22 to 28 to expose the alleged nexus between millers and supply officials. Addressing mediapersons, BJP state general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said as part of the campaign, the party's workers will stage protests in front of the offices of 58 sub-collectors in the state. "We will not tolerate the continuous neglect and ill-treatment of our 'annadatas' (farmers). The party will submit memorandum to the sub-collectors for immediate purchase of paddy failing which a state wide agitation will be launched," he warned. Farmers of western and eastern regions of the state have suffered significant losses due to distress sale of paddy to agents of millers from Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. The farmers are selling their produce for Rs 1,300-Rs 1,400 per quintal against the minimum support price of Rs 2,400 per quintal, Harichandan alleged. As per the food and procurement policy for the 2022-23 kharif marketing season, a five-month window was opened beginning November 1 for procurement of kharif paddy through designated state agencies mostly PACS. "Mandis were opened 15 days after the scheduled

has made the paddy procurement automation system (P-PAS) a mockery by allowing unscrupulous traders farmers to snatch away the benefits from genuine registered farmers.

The MPs also said that if sources are to be believed, millers are not lifting stocks from the mandis as the Civil Supplies Officers (CSOs) have not issued miller authority slips. The millers are playing to the tunes of the CSOs who tag them to mandis and decide the quantum of paddy to be allocated for custom milling.

Unscrupulous traders and landless farmers / proxy farmers, who do not cultivate, in collusion with the members of PACS, have been siphoning the MSP of the government by getting tokens for paddy sale, alleged the memorandum, copy of which was released to the media.

This Kharif season around 5,54,679 acres of land has been identified as fake in the satellite survey for which proxy/non-farmers were eligible to receive MSP support to the tune of Rs 1715 crore, it alleged. "We would like to request you for your personal intervention to resolve the issues on alleged mismanagement and corrupt practice in the State of Odisha in Paddy Procurement Operation which is continuing to persist till today despite recommendation & suggestion given by Government of India, resulting harassment to the poor farmers of the State," it added.

date in Bargarh district in view of the by-election to Padampur but the same are yet to be opened in coastal districts. Generally, paddy purchase centres (PPCs) are opened on December 1 because of late harvesting," Harichandan said. He said this is a deliberate attempt to force farmers to sell their stock to rice millers' agents for recycling. A substantial amount of the benefits earned by the millers goes to the coffers of the ruling BJD, the saffron party leader alleged. Brushing off the allegations, food supplies, consumer welfare and cooperation minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said there is not a grain of truth in BJP's allegations as the government has already procured paddy worth Rs 1,104 crore from 1.24 lakh registered farmers. "The food supplies and cooperation department has nothing to do with finalisation of dates for opening of mandis as the process has been decentralised. The district level procurement committees (DLPCs) headed by respective district collectors and represented by local MLAs decide when to start procurement which depends on harvesting of paddy," the minister said. Nayak said all mandis are operational in western Odisha districts and steps are being taken to open PPCs in coastal districts by end of this month.

New Delhi(KCN): The Ministry of Food Processing (MoFPI), is implementing a Central Sector Scheme- "Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI)" with an outlay of Rs. 10,900 crores over a six-year period from 2021-22 to 2026-27.

The scheme, inter alia, helps create of global food manufacturing champions commensurate with India's natural resource endowment and supports Indian brands of food products in the international markets.

The export of agri-food products (ITC Chapters 2-23 excluding 5,6,14) has increased from US\$ 29.67 billion in 2015-16 to US\$ 46.11 billion in 2021-22 showing a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.62% and the export of value added processed-food products (ITC Chapter 16-23) increased from US\$ 4.855 billion in 2015-16 to US\$ 10.420 billion in 2021-22 showing a CAGR of 13.57%.

In order to ensure overall development of Food Processing sectors across the country, MoFPI has been implementing Central Sector Umbrella Scheme - Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY), centrally sponsored PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME) and Central Sector Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLISFPI). Under component schemes of PMKSY, MoFPI provides mostly credit linked financial assistance (capital sub-

Naveen asks party leaders to serve people ahead of BJD foundation day

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has called upon all party leaders and workers to rededicate themselves to the service of people on the occasion of 26th foundation day of the party to be celebrated at Puri.

In a letter to all party leaders, the chief minister said that office-bearers of state, district, block and urban local bodies, MPs and MLAs will attend the celebrations. The event will be celebrated at all Assembly constituencies for a fortnight.

sidy) in the form of grants-in-aid for setting up of food processing industries/ units/ projects. Ministry provides financial, tech-



nical and business support for setting up/ upgradation of micro food processing enterprises through PMFME scheme, whereas, PLISFPI is targeted to facilitate expansion of food processing capacity by creating champion brands in Food Processing Sector. This information was given by the Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Prahlad Singh Patel in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

Stating that people's faith in the BJD has been proved by continuous victories in all elections and bypolls, he said that the party now has Zilla Parishad presidents in all 30 districts and won 80 per cent seats in urban local body (ULB) polls. "This has given us inspiration to carry forward our service to the people and get more closer to them," he said.

Plea for Highways Funds

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Government has requested the Union Government to make adequate provision in Union Budget for repair, maintenance and development of National Highways in the State. Because of inad-

equate allocation of funds quality of National Highways in Odisha has deteriorated substantially, which is a major concern for the State Government. While 'National Highway' is a Union Subject, the State Government has been entrusted with the task of improvement and maintenance of National Highways running through the state, all expenditure relating to repair, maintenance and development are provided by the Ministry of Road Transport and High-



ways. However allocation is low in this regard, which has resulted in poor conditions in major National Highways passing through the State. And development of National Highways is moving at a 'Snail's Pace'. Take for example, Four-Lanning of 265 KM Sambalpur-Cuttack National Highways expansion has been continuing for more than 10 years. Because of expansion, no routine repair and maintenance work is being taken up. For which is National Highway has turned out a 'Death-Trap' and resulting in frequent accidents. This Highway has become Non-Motorable during the rainy season, causing massive inconvenience to the commuters. This Highway connects to Mining and

Industrial Zones and due to bad road condition the economic activities of the area are also adversely affected, pointed out a memorandum sent to Government of India. Similarly Coastal Highway Project, an ambitious program under Bharatmala Corridor from Paradeep to Barbail via Chandikhol, Duburi, Keonjhar, Rimuli and Bhadrāsahi with a length of 300 KM is needed to be taken up on priority basis. Entire Corridor will cost Rs.8000 Crore and this 8 Lane Super Highway will give fillip to State's as well as National Economic Growth by giving direct connectivity to Paradeep Port and State's key industrial and mining hubs. Looking at these mega projects and much required repair and maintenance of the National Highways running across the state, adequate allocation may be made in Union Budget for 2023-24, requested the State Government in its Memorandum, said a senior official. So far Economic

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Aasmaan Bhardwaj's 'Kuttey' is a black comedy ft an ensemble cast

MUMBAI: The trailer of the upcoming film 'Kuttey' was unveiled on Tuesday at a star-studded event in Mumbai and it saw actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Arjun Kapoor, Tabu, Konkona Sen Sharma, Kumud Mishra, Radhika Madan, and Shardul Bhardwaj in attendance.

The trailer promises a riveting black comedy with generous portions of humour, thrill and action. It tells the story of cops played by Arjun and Tabu, who come face to face with a gang of bandits, and a group of forest exploiters.

The trailer also teases viewers with a glimpse of the song 'Dhan Te Nan' from the 2009 Shahid Kapoor-starrer 'Kaminey'. Vishal Bhardwaj, who composed it, has also composed the music for 'Kuttey'. 'Kuttey' has been directed by Vishal's son Aasmaan Bhardwaj and the title comes across as an extension to 'Kaminey', which was directed by his father Vishal Bhardwaj. Composer-director-screenwriter Vishal said during the press conference, "I was operating on three different planes of a father, a writer and a producer on 'Kuttey'." Juggling three tasks wasn't easy for him and

the nervousness was compounded because he had vowed to not visit the film's set in order to let his son follow his instincts as a director.

"Maine kasam khaayi thi ki main is film ke shoot pe ek din bhi nahi jaaunga. So, I was very nervous during the course of the film-



ing. But, I'm happy with the output and hope the audience loves the film upon its release", he added.

Tabu, who has worked with Vishal in films such as 'Maqbool' and 'Haider', said, "My character was written for a male, but Aasmaan and Vishal ji changed it for me." She shared that working in the film brought in a sense of pride for her as she has seen Aasmaan growing up in front of her eyes. "Aasmaan mere saamne hi bada hua hai, mere

saamne sets pe lakdi ka camera leke ghoomta tha (he has grown up in front of me, I remember seeing him walking around on the sets with a wooden camera) and he was so consumed by the world of films. To see him write something like 'Kuttey' brought in a sense of pride for me as Vishal ji, Rekha ji and Aasmaan are a family for me".

Previously, Vishal Bhardwaj had said he flipped the gender of his lead character in their upcoming spy film "Khufiya" for Tabu.

First-time filmmaker Aasmaan Bhardwaj said he is looking forward to the release of his film.

"I'm just really grateful and thankful to have got this opportunity. I'm just very happy to have fulfilled my dream. I just want to do good work," he added.

Vishal Bhardwaj's frequent collaborator Gulzar has penned the lyrics. "It was both a tough and easy job for me. Sometimes, Aasmaan took advantage of me, and at times, I did the same to him. But, he gave me the toughest time as a dialogue writer," he said. Produced under the banner of Luv Films and Vishal Bhardwaj Films and presented by Gulshan Kumar and Bhusan Kumar's T-Series, 'Kuttey' will release in cinemas on January 13, 2023.

'Joram', 'Moha', 'All India Rank' among Indian films at International Film Festival Rotterdam 2023

NEW DELHI(KCN): The 2023 edition of the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) will witness a heavy presence of Indian films, including the Manoj Bajpayee-starrer "Joram" and writer Varun Grover's directorial debut "All India Rank".

Films in various Indian languages feature in diverse segments of the festival, being held in the port city of the Netherlands for the past 52 years.

This year, the film gala will run from January 25 to February 5.

Manoj Bajpayee's "Joram" will be screened as part of Big Screen Competition, which aims to bridge the gap between popular, classic and art house cinema.

"Joram", which reunites Bajpayee and filmmaker Devashish Makhija after the success of their 2019 movie "Bhonsle", is a survival-thriller about a displaced indigenous man.

"Bhonsle" was also screened at the festival back in 2019. "The film 'Joram' is a riveting story of a man torn between his past and present. I loved playing the intricate character, Darsu, whose past and present have a significant contrast. On the outside he looks like an ordinary man that people may not even notice, but in no way is he a common man! A brilliant story with such impactful characters," Bajpayee said in a statement.

Grover's "All India Rank", part of Bright Future segment that showcases feature-length debuts, is a semi-autobiographical tale, centers on a middle class boy named Vivek, enrolled in coaching classes for the notoriously competitive entrance exams of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). The film, produced by Matchbox Shots, will serve as the closing film of the festival.

"Vivek's father, who sees an IIT degree as a moral certificate, ships his only son off to a residential preparatory school in Kota, the Mecca for IIT coaching. Over two years, Vivek goes through the motions of Indian adolescence, but it is his parents who do the growing up," the official plotline read. Taking to Twitter, Grover said he is beyond thrilled with the world premiere of his debut feature at the IFFR.

"Beyond thrilled to know that my debut feature ALL INDIA RANK (Produced by @MatchboxShots) will have its World Premiere at @IFFR as the Closing Film. Congratulations and gratitude to our entire team (comprising of so many debutants)! (sic)" he tweeted.

"Very happy to share that '1744 White Alto' has been selected to be a part of the prestigious 'Harbour' programme at International Film Festival of Rotterdam (@IFFR). #1744WhiteAlto" tweeted Hegde.

Ladakhi-language movie "Last Days of Summer", directed by Stenzin Tankong, will be competing in the Ammodo Tiger Short Competition.

The segment also includes "Night and Fear", an Odia movie directed by Lipika Singh Darai.

The film gala will also celebrate filmmaker Manmohan Desai's 1977 multi-starrer classic "Amar Akbar Anthony" in its Cinema Regained programme.

The segment offers restored classics, documentaries on film culture, and explorations of cinema's heritage. It will also screen a 10-minute documentary "Blueprint of a Pleasure Machine", directed by Amit Dutta.

The IFFR has also dedicated a segment on India, titled "Focus: The Shape of Things to Come?".

"In 2022, India celebrated the 75th anniversary of independence. But is really all well in the

'world's largest democracy'? Both documentaries and fictional narratives reflect on the socio-political development of the past 30 years --- and ask: Is the institutional success of right-wing Hindu-nationalist groups and the persecution of dissenting voices a sign for the shape of things to come --- and not only in India?" the official description of the programme read. It features a line-up of films and documentaries, including Kabir Khan's 2015 directorial "Bajranghi Bhaijaan", starring Salman Khan, Anand Patwardhan's celebrated documentary "In the Name of God" ("Ram Ke Naam"), "Kali of Emergency", "Election Diary - Phulpur", "Encountered on Saffron Agenda?", and "Final Solution".



"All India Rank" is joined by Vignesh Kumulai's "Karparaa" in the Bright Future segment.

Two short films -- "Dear Me" by Suchana Saha and "A Flower In A Foglight" by Gaurav Puri -- will be screened as part of the Short & Mid-length programme, which is a showcase of films under 63 minutes.

Santosh Sivan's "Moha", starring Jaaved Jaffrey and Shaylee Krishen, along with two Malayalam movies -- Senna Hegde's "1744 White Alto" and "Family" by Don Palathara -- will be screened in the Harbour segment. The section features a range of contemporary cinema that the festival champions.

Should we get rid of air miles for climate change?

Flying is very far from being a green activity. A return flight from Lisbon to New York generates nearly the same level of CO2 as the average person in the EU does by heating their home all year round.

Compared with land transport, a plane requires a lot more energy, says Agnes Jocher, a professor at the Technical University of Munich, whose research explores sustainable future mobility. The result is a disproportionate climate impact compared to alternatives (trains and ferries, to name a few).

In a 2019 report on reducing emissions through behaviour change, Richard Carmichael, a social sciences researcher at Imperial College London, observed that flying was a "uniquely high-impact activity" and "the quickest and cheapest way for a consumer to increase their carbon footprint".

The very last thing we should be doing is reward frequent flyers – Herwig Schuster. Rather than simply capping travellers' ability to fly, Carmichael suggested an alternative: to limit the perks that travellers get from airlines. Among his recommendations, Carmichael proposed an outright ban on air miles and frequent flyer loyalty programmes that he says incentivise "excessive" flying.

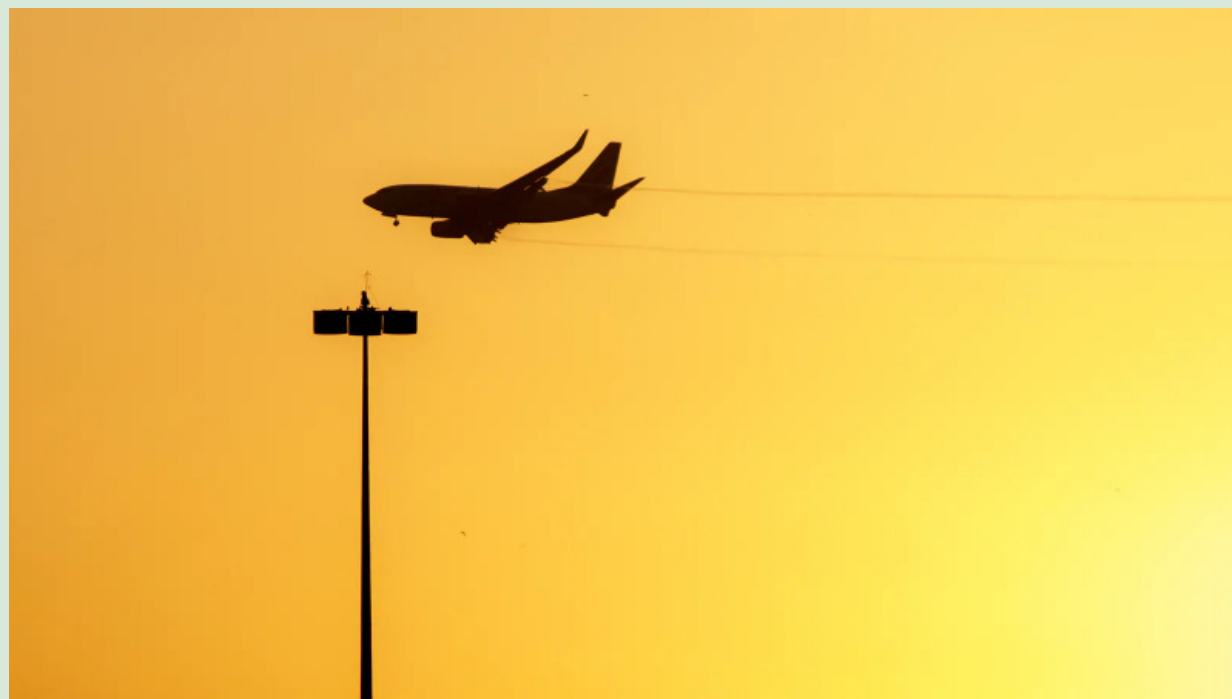
By one estimate, trips taken using air miles account for around 10% of overall bookings. But could axing these schemes curb rising aviation emissions? Or would such a policy be fruitless – and efforts to reduce aviation

times annually. Each can pick from over 22,000 routes flown by over 25,000 commercial jets that collectively account for over 42 million flights. That puts total miles travelled in the air globally in the trillions, a potential gold mine for frequent fliers often courted by carriers.

Today, banking air miles also no longer requires getting in the air. In fact, it is estimated

Ashley Nunes

for America (A4A), declined to comment on the prevalence of breakage in the industry. However, global consulting firm McKinsey has calculated that up to 30% of all air miles go unused: it estimates that over 30 trillion frequent-flier miles are currently sitting unspent in accounts (enough to give a free one-way flight to almost all of the roughly four billion passengers that fly in a year).



that over half of all such miles are earned through non-flying related activities. This is because airlines have formed lucrative partnerships with third parties: credit card com-

panies, car rental agencies and hotel chains, to name a few. Some campaigners and researchers have called for a policy that amounts to the very opposite of frequent flier rewards – a 'frequent flier levy' (Credit: Getty Images)

Some campaigners and researchers have called for a policy that amounts to the very opposite of frequent flier rewards – a 'frequent flier levy' (Credit: Getty Images)

But does earning these miles make people fly more? It turns out that snapping up miles is one thing, using them, another. This disconnect may seem surprising, but "breakage" – industry parlance for miles that go unused – does occur.

North American airline trade body, Airlines for America (A4A), declined to comment on the prevalence of breakage in the industry. However, global consulting firm McKinsey has calculated that up to 30% of all air miles go unused: it estimates that over 30 trillion frequent-flier miles are currently sitting unspent in accounts (enough to give a free one-way flight to almost all of the roughly four billion passengers that fly in a year).

Flying first or business class may have a far larger carbon impact than flying economy as it occupies more space on the plane, meaning more emissions per person

Likewise, when miles are used, flyers now have more choice of what types of rewards to splurge on. Rather than only locking in free travel, the sole "go-to" for travellers of yesteryear, other choices now abound. Passengers can opt for hotel nights, electronics, gift cards or even football shirts.

And then of course there's what many travellers consider the biggest attraction: upgrades to premium cabins on an airplane. With enough miles on hand, you can move from the back of a jet to the front: from a place where cuts, squeezes and exasperation are the norm to a space where courtesy abounds, champagne flows freely and Michelin-starred meals await.

Flying first or business class, however, may have a far larger carbon impact than flying economy as it occupies more space on the

ing on the type of aircraft.

In sum, though, not all miles are used, not all miles are used to fly, and when they are, they are sometimes used to make flying more comfortable (versus securing a spot onboard).

Passengers crisscross the globe four billion times annually, putting total miles travelled in the air globally in the trillions (Credit: K V Weel/Getty Images)

Passengers crisscross the globe four billion times annually, putting total miles travelled in the air globally in the trillions (Credit: K V Weel/Getty Images)

Airline execs seem content with doling out miles. But how do they feel about people redeeming them?

If each passenger cashed in on their unspent miles, carbon emissions would jump. But those trips can only be taken if miles can be redeemed without restrictions (e.g. for any flight, at any time, without any additional fees). And airline execs make sure that's almost never the case.

The reason? Fare-paying passengers are more valuable to carriers than freeloading flyers. If an airline thinks a seat can be sold for more than the miles equivalent, it will make trading miles for that seat hard, if not impossible. Data backs up this sentiment. Over time, the share of flights paid in miles has fallen and a recent experiment from CBS News in the US found no seat availability for miles in key markets for 45 days straight.

CARBON COUNT

The emissions from travel it took to report this story were 0kg CO2. The digital emissions from this story are an estimated 1.2g to 3.6g CO2 per page view. Find out more about how we calculated this figure here.

Carmichael says he supports flights that do fly being full rather than having lots of empty seats, since it's more efficient. But "how that is achieved fairly without stimulating demand for flying" requires more scrutiny, he says. Work is also needed to see which miles and rewards schemes incentivise extra flying, he adds.

Carmichael and others also stress the need to reduce energy-intensive activities like flying altogether. The International Energy Agency, for example, has pointed to the need to reduce demand for flying through measures such as taxes on flights, as part of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. Some campaigners and researchers have called for a policy that amounts to the very opposite of frequent flier rewards – a "frequent flier levy" whereby the more someone flies, the higher a tax they have to pay on each flight.

But could air passengers ever go along with measures to reduce flying? Lucia Reisch, a professor of behavioural economics and policy at the University of Cambridge, thinks so. "The past years have seen a general tendency of consumers to be more interested in and engage more in sustainable consumption," she says. Alongside taxes or regulations, so-called "soft policy tools" – like simply providing people with information or nudges towards flying less – are one way to do this, she says, and "can be very successful, effective, [and] are often highly accepted".

Frequent flier programmes might seem like an obvious target, but in reality, their contribution to aviation emissions is small compared with the emissions reductions we need.



be better spent elsewhere? The answer is more complicated than it might initially seem. You might also like:

The fastest way aviation could cut its carbon emissions

What would a flying-free world look like?

Is seaweed the future of flying?

Aviation loyalty programmes are around 40 years old. Texas International Airlines, a now-defunct carrier, created the first one in 1979. At the time, governments were easing restrictions over which carriers could fly, where they could fly to, and when, so competition between carriers intensified. Airline execs needed new ways to boost their brand. One solution? Offer flyers something extra to secure their loyalty – an IOU that could be cashed in later.

Paying passengers would earn "miles" based on how often and how far they flew, which could then be exchanged for a complementary trip. Although these programmes have since evolved (today's flyers are also rewarded based on how much they spend), the underlying premise remains the same.

Some climate activists suggest that it's time to scrap these schemes. "The very last thing we should be doing is reward frequent flyers," says Herwig Schuster, a transport campaigner for Greenpeace. "Frequent flyer programmes are not fair to the climate and the majority of people worldwide who almost never fly. We cannot allow airlines to incentivise a lifestyle that's destroying the planet while they receive major tax cuts and subsidies, and fill their pockets by selling more flight tickets."

Fare-paying passengers are more valuable to carriers than freeloading flyers

And sell more flight tickets carriers do. Passengers crisscross the globe four billion



is one thing, using them, another. This disconnect may seem surprising, but "breakage" – industry parlance for miles that go unused – does occur.

North American airline trade body, Airlines

plane, meaning more emissions per person. The International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) estimates that flying premium leads to emissions per passenger two to three times greater than flying in economy, depend-

MVA demands resignations of Maharashtra CM Shinde over NIT land scam

MUMBAI: The Maha Vikas Aghadi demanded the resignation of Eknath Shinde when he was serving as the



Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday over the alleged allocation of five acres of Nagpur Improvement Trust (NIT) land to 16 developers at throwaway prices. Uddhav Thackeray said that CM Eknath Shinde should first resign and face the inquiry fairly. He said if the incumbent CM remains in his post, then there are chances that he may manipulate the out-

come of the report. MVA alleged that Eknath Shinde when he was serving as the urban development minister under the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government allocated five acres of NIT land meant for the redevelopment of slum dwellers to 16 developers. The MVA further stated that land worth Rs 100 crores was given at a throwaway price of Rs two crores. The Bombay High Nagpur bench even passed a scathing or-

der against the government for interfering in the administration decisions when the matter was pending before the court. Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde refuted all allegations while deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis clarified that the government has already put the stay over the allocations of the land to the developers. He said that the government has also cancelled the allocations of these plots. However, Uddhav Thackeray said, "If all

is well, then why did the government cancel the allocations of this plot to developers? There must be something fishy and the incumbent government is trying to cover it up. But we will continue to fight and demand the resignation of Shinde. Both the houses of the Maharashtra assembly were stalled by Opposition legislators over Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The MVA protested and walked out of the upper house. Leader of Oppositions Ajit Pawar was reluctant to take up the NIT issue in the morning. Pawar said that the allocations of funds to MLAs were the main issue that he raised in the house. But after pressure from Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray) group, Pawar later raised this issue in the lower house.

UP Congress leader Ajai Rai booked over his 'latke-jhatke' jibe against Smriti Irani

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh police have booked senior Congress leader and party's provincial president Ajay Rai over his 'misogynistic' remark against Union Minister



and Amethi MP Smriti Irani. Rai was booked on the basis of a complaint filed by BJP women's wing leader Pushpa Singh at the Robertsganj police station in Sonbhadra district on Tuesday. The raging controversy comes after the Uttar Pradesh Congress leader, on Monday, took a jibe at Smriti Irani, saying she only comes to her constituency to show "latke-jhatke" (for pomp and show) and the real work was done when Amethi had an MP from Gandhi family. The FIR against Rai was lodged under Sections 354(a) (making sexually coloured remarks), 501 (printing or engraving matter known to be defamatory) and 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) of IPC. However, Rai stood firm in his statement and refused to extend an apology saying that he did not use unparliamentary language against Irani.

"Why should I apologise? I did not use any unparliamentary language. 'Latke-jhatke' is our 'bolchal ki bhasha' (colloquial slang) which means that somebody suddenly appears and says something and then disappears," said Rai while talking to media persons in Chandauli district, adding that he had no intention to insult anyone.

Operation of ATR-72 aircraft from Rourkela by month-end

ROURKELA: The process for operation of ATR-72 aircraft from Rourkela airport is likely to be completed by December this year. This was informed by Civil

"Some people are unnecessarily trying to exert pressure on me. I did not intend to insult anyone with the word Latke-Jhatke. I have always respected women and will continue to do so," said Rai while reiterating his claim that the party's Waynad MP Rahul Gandhi would contest the 2024 Lok Sabha polls from Amethi. "The people of Amethi got overawed by the latke-jhatke, so they elected someone other than Rahul in 2019, but now they have realised and want Rahul Gandhi back," he claimed.

The Congress leader went a step further saying he himself was ready to challenge PM Narendra Modi in Varanasi in 2024. "PM Modi has not done any such work in Varanasi that the public will re-elect him in 2024. My vote percentage has increased significantly in the last election, so imagine what will happen in 2024," he said. Meanwhile, the National Commission for Women took cognisance of Rai's remarks and summoned him to appear at a hearing scheduled for December 28.

"The Commission has taken cognisance of the misogynistic remark made by Ajay Rai. The remarks are outrageous and extremely derogatory and the Commission strongly condemns such statements," the NCW said in a statement.

Rai's controversial statement also evoked a sharp response from Smriti Irani who accused the Congress of misogyny and took potshots at Rahul and Sonia Gandhi on Twitter. Irani tweeted, "Heard that Rahul Gandhi has got the announcement on his Amethi contest made via a party leader. I hope you will not run to contest another seat, and won't get scared. PS: You & Mummy ji need to get your misogynistic goons a new speechwriter."

of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for operation of ATR-72 aircraft under Aerodrome Code 2C operations. The process is likely to be completed by December-

won't be any flight between Rourkela and Kolkata before or during the Hockey World Cup. Despite the desperation of the state government to provide

operation of ATR-72 aircraft. Reviewing the World Cup preparations at Rourkela on the day, chief secretary SC Mahapatra said he hoped the airport will



Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia in a letter to Sundargarh MP and chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence Jial Oram on Monday. In a letter on December 12, Oram had sought to know the status of Rourkela airport under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN). Scindia said upgradation of the airport is almost complete. It is being inspected by the Directorate General

end. The Minister further said the selected airline operator (SAO) Alliance Air will commence flight operations on Bhubaneswar-Rourkela-Bhubaneswar route. Another SAO Big Charters has recently been awarded the Kolkata-Rourkela-Kolkata route under UDAN 4.0 special round of bidding. Operation of 19-seater aircraft on this route is likely to start from February next year. Scindia's letter has made it clear that there

UK government refuses to give way on pay as nurses, medics strike

LONDON: The British government said Tuesday it will not offer more money to nurses and ambulance crews to end strikes that are piling pressure on an already overstretched health system. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative administration is under pressure to increase its pay offer to health care staff who are seeking big raises in the face of decades-high inflation that was running at 10.7% in November.

Thousands of nurses walked off the job Tuesday in their second 24-hour strike this month. Ambulance drivers, paramedics and dispatchers are set to strike on Wednesday and again on Dec. 28.

They are joining railway staff, passport officers and postal workers in the U.K.'s biggest strike wave for decades, a response to a cost-of-living crisis driven by soaring food and energy



prices in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Pat Cullen, head of nurses union the Royal College of Nursing, urged Sunak to "step in now and do the decent thing on behalf of every patient and member of the public of this country" by negotiating over pay. The union has asked for a raise of 5% above inflation but says it is willing to accept less.

The union says it will stage more strikes in January if there is no deal. Nurses have agreed to staff key areas including critical care and cancer services during the strikes, but thousands of operations and procedures have been canceled in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Nurses in Scotland are not on strike.

The government says it will dispatch 1,200 troops to fill in for striking ambulance drivers and border staff, who are due to walk out later this week.

The government insists it can't get directly involved in pay talks between unions and employers — but Sunak also told the Daily Mail that double-digit public sector raises would drive inflation even higher, which would "make people poorer in the long run."

The government is calculating that public opinion will turn on the unions as people across the U.K. face postponed hospital appointments, canceled trains and travel delays during the winter holiday season. But opinion polls show a high level of support for the workers — especially nurses. Britain's health system is under strain from surging demand as pandemic restrictions ease, alongside staff shortages from burnout and Brexit, which has made it harder for Europeans to work in the U.K. Official statistics show that ambulances in many ar-

reas are stuck waiting outside hospital emergency departments, sometimes for hours, because there are no beds for the patients. Rachel Harrison, national secretary of the GMB union that represents ambulance staff, said the delays and backlogs were "having a devastating effect on our members — frustration, stress, burnout, exhaustion, low morale, mental health."

On a picket line outside St. Thomas' Hospital in London, nurse Rosie Wood said many of her colleagues were exhausted because of staff shortages. "Nobody feels safe, because you're always worried that you've missed something," she said. "It's not meant to be painful and stressful and horrible to come to work. So many people are unhappy in their jobs right now because they don't get the joy out of caring for people because they just don't feel they can do it properly."

Dhenkanal: 265-metre high chimney of power plant demolished

Restoration of Chandaneswar temple delayed, resentment among devotees

DHENKANAL: A 265-metre high chimney on the premises of Lanco Babandh Power Limited in Dhenkanal district was razed to

November 17. Sources said the company used 750 kg explosives to demolish the chimney. Local administration and police had evacu-

assessment has not been done yet, said Motanga IIC Niranjana Sethy. The company had taken away all equipment and machinery from

However, while 80 per cent of the construction was complete, the company was faced with a financial crunch. It later went bankrupt

BALASORE: Delay in restoration and beautification of one of Odisha's prominent Shaivite shrines, the Chandaneswar

Another local, Ananta Kumar Pradhan said renovation of Nila Pokhari, construction of eight bathroom-cum-toi-

officials concerned along with the temple trust board seem oblivious to it. Locals said basing on the temple trust

gious spots of North Odisha where 'Chadak Mela', an important festival of the region is organised during the



the ground by a Rajasthan-based company on Monday. The chimney was brought down in the third attempt.

While the first attempt to demolish the chimney was made by the company on October 13, the second was on

ated people from localities nearby before the demolition. Steps were taken by the company to ensure the chimney did not cause damage in the village nearby. The demolition work was completed within seconds at around 10.30 am. Damage

the plant and only the chimney was left. Construction of Lanco Babandha Power Plant was started in 2009 with installation of boiler, turbine and other equipment. The company aimed at producing power from the plant by 2014.

and was referred to the National Company Law Tribunal in 2015. Sources said the Tribunal ordered the plant's machinery and other equipment to be sold in scrap. The Rajasthan-based company was assigned the task of demolition.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressing the conclave organised by the India Today

NEW DELHI: External affairs minister S. Jaishankar on Monday took a potshot at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and said the unprecedented deployment of Indian troops at the Line of Actual Control to deter Chinese troops from unilaterally changing the Line of Actual Control had been ordered at the instance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was speaking at a conclave organised by a media group. Later in the day, in Parliament, while reacting to Mr Gandhi's reported comment that Indian soldiers in Arunachal Pradesh were being "beaten up" by Chinese troops, the minister said the word "pitai" (thrashing) should not be used for our troops.

Speaking at the conclave organised by the India Today Group, the minister said: "The deployment of the Indian Army (is there) on the China border that we've never had. It was done to counter Chi-

Why are we saying publicly that our relations are not normal." Mr Jaishankar was responding to Mr Gandhi's criticism that the government was "hiding facts" on the Chinese incursions and the allegation that it had taken Indian territory along the LAC at India Today's India-Japan Conclave.

Indian and Chinese troops were engaged in a fresh clash in the Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector on December 9. The incident came amidst the over 30-month border standoff in eastern Ladakh.

The external affairs minister said it was the commitment of the Indian Army to not allow China to change the LAC unilaterally. "I am saying that it is the obligation of the Indian State and that is the duty and commitment of the Indian military that we will not let any country, and in this case China,

change the LAC unilaterally," Jaishankar said. "I think it is fairly obvious and most people in the country see that. You can make your polemical points. I think people will treat it as politics," he added.

Asked about Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's criticism of the government for increasing trade volumes with China despite the border row, he said that India continues to import from that country because there was no adequate focus on the manufacturing sector. Mr Jaishankar said not much attention was given to the MSME sector and building supply chains as well after India opened up its economy in 1991.

"When somebody says why imports are coming out of China, there are imports coming out of China because for 30 years, you did not give your industry the kind of support and protection you should have," Mr Jaishankar said. "It is only now in recent years that you have started to do it. Now you cannot reverse in five or 10 years what you have done in 30 years," he said.

The Lok Sabha, meanwhile, passed the Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill to make special provisions for the repression of piracy on the high seas, with the government adding life imprisonment along with the provision of death penalty for those convicted of the crime. Some amendments moved by Opposition MPs were negated and the bill was passed by a voice vote.

Mr Jaishankar said keeping in mind the observations of the Supreme Court that the death penalty should be in rarest of rare cases and the fact that many nations do not extradite the accused in view of the provision of capital punishment, the government was including the option of life in prison.



temple, located in Bhograi block of Balasore district, has fuelled resentment among devotees. The shrine lacks basic facilities like drinking water and parking space for devotees. Purna Chandra Das, a local said, no development work has been done at the temple in the last almost three years.

lets, a parking space and drinking water projects are yet to be completed at the shrine. The works that included replacement of the four doors of the shrine's sanctum sanctorum, were taken up in 2019. He said the temple's roof and sanctum sanctorum have developed cracks and

board's suggestions, the Tourism department had sanctioned `3.5 crore for the project which is far from over. The trust board was formed in 1981 to manage the shrine's affairs and Bhograi tehsildar Kamalakanta Panda is its present executive officer. Chandaneswar is one of the holiest reli-

month of Chaitra every year. This apart, lakhs of Bol Bom devotees through the shrine and offer holy water to the Shiva Lingam during the holy month of Shraavan. Contacted, Panda said steps will be taken to expedite the project to beautify and restore the temple.



nese deployments which were scaled up massively since 2020. Now, if we were in denial, how is the Army out there? The Army didn't go there because Rahul Gandhi asked them to go. The Army went there because the Prime Minister of India ordered them to go."

He added: "I understand today politics is politics. People will say things. They may not be credible. They may sometimes contradict their own positions, their own behaviour. All that could happen... The proof of the pudding is that the Indian Army today is deployed to counter any attempt to unilaterally change the LAC."

Later, in the Lok Sabha, the minister said: "The word 'pitai' should not be used for our jawans," adding that while the government had no problem with political criticism, one should not disrespect Indian troops. The minister said: "We should not criticise our jawans directly or indirectly. Our soldiers are standing at a height of 13,000 feet in Yangtse and guarding our border. They should be respected and appreciated, this (criticism) is not appropriate."

He added: "If we were indifferent to China, then who sent the Indian Army to the border? If we were indifferent to China, then why are we pressuring China for de-escalation and disengagement today?"



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Vedanta Aluminium Sponsors Administrative Building of Jharsuguda District Athletics Association

Bhubaneswar: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, is sponsoring the construction of the new administration building of the Jharsuguda District Athletics Association. Shri Naba Kisore Das, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, and Shri Suresh Pujari, Member of Parliament from Bargarh, laid the foundation stone of the building at Kantapali village, recently, in the presence of Mr. Sunil Gupta, CEO – Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda. The administrative building will be a hub for various sports activities in the district and work towards

development of sports at grassroots. The company has committed Rs. 50 lakh for the development of the complex.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sunil Gupta, CEO – Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda said, "Odisha has a rich legacy of producing sportspeople of national and international repute. The District Athletic Association has been doing commendable work by promoting sports among the youth in Jharsuguda and we are proud to augment their endeavours through the development of an administrative building. We are working towards holistic development of the region's youth, creating an inclusive,



healthy, and creative environment that empowers them with the right tools to be architects of socio-economic transformation in the region." Shri Naba Kisore Das, Minister of Health and Family Welfare,

Government of Odisha, said, "The new administrative building for District Athletics Association is a much-awaited development in the district and I thank Vedanta Aluminium for this endeavour. Development of sports is

essential for building a healthy society and this complex will become a catalyst for the growth of sports culture in the region."

Shri Suresh Pujari, Member of Parliament from Bargarh, said, "I welcome Vedanta's

support for the development of the administrative building. Jharsuguda should benefit in line with the Prime Minister's vision of 'Kheho India'. The association with Vedanta Aluminium would pave the growth of sports in the region."

Vedanta Jharsuguda has been working towards strengthening grassroots sporting culture with the participation of young talent from local communities in and around its areas of operations. In pursuit of this aim, the company has been actively supporting several sports formats, events and training programs in Jharsuguda. Vedanta's social interventions in the domains of sustainable livelihood, quality education, women empowerment, health, water and sanitation, bio-investment and community infrastructure reach out to over 79 villages in Jharsuguda and nearby areas, benefiting nearly 1.7 lakh people in a year. It empowers more than 4000 women from

over 339 SHGs, provides doorstep healthcare services to about 32,000 people annually, gives educational support to more than 6400 students, has planted more than 1.48 lakh trees in partnership with locals at the community level. Vedanta Aluminium, a business of Vedanta Limited, is India's largest producer of aluminium, manufacturing more than half of India's aluminium i.e., 2.26 million tonnes in FY22. It is a leader in value-added aluminium products that find critical applications in core industries. Vedanta Aluminium ranks 4th in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) 2021 world rankings for aluminium industry, a reflection of its sustainable development practices.

SpiceJet and Axis Bank launch co-branded credit card

GURUGRAM: SpiceJet, the country's favourite airline and Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank, have partnered to launch the most rewarding co-branded credit card, powered by Visa that will offer a host of privileges and benefits to customers. The card comes in two variants – SpiceJet Axis Bank Voyage and Voyage Black, and is aimed at facilitating a superlative travel experience for flyers through SpiceClub, the first frequent flyer program by a low cost carrier in India.

Through this

collaboration, the two brands hope to capitalize on the resurgent demand for travel following two years of stagnation caused by the pandemic. Further, with the shared goal of expanding their reach to Tier 2 & 3 cities and other synergies, the brands are committed to serving a much larger populace.

SpiceJet Axis Bank Voyage & Voyage Black credit cards were officially launched at Indira Gandhi International airport in the presence of Ajay Singh, Chairman and MD, SpiceJet and Amitabh Chaudhry, MD & CEO, Axis Bank,

where they unveiled a special SpiceJet-Axis Bank credit card livery on a SpiceJet Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

The products are designed to enable customers use the rewards earned on their daily spends for booking flights and add-ons, thus encouraging both travel and digital payments embedded with benefits of SpiceJet's frequent flyer program, SpiceClub.

Customers can earn benefits up to 7% on the Voyage Black credit card which is a Top-tier offering in the travel credit card segment. In addition, the redemption

of earned points does not have any limitations on blackout dates, festival demand, and are on first-come basis. Cardholders would get exclusive SpiceClub membership with direct entry in either Silver or Gold tiers, and special benefits like complimentary or discounted travel add-ons, priority check-in, SpiceMax upgrade, preferred seat selection, complimentary meal etc.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, said, "I am delighted to announce the launch of the SpiceJet-Axis Bank co-branded Credit Card. This card will make

every customer journey an even more rewarding one. We are the pioneers of the frequent flyer program for budget airlines in the country and this partnership with Axis Bank significantly strengthens the value offering of SpiceClub. Our association with Axis Bank – founded on the shared vision to offer unparalleled customer experience – is yet another innovative step towards creating a world class travel experience. I hope to see our customers enjoying the benefits of this rewarding collaboration as much as they love to fly with us."

JSW Infrastructure begins commercial operations at Paradip East Quay Terminal in Odisha

Paradip/ Bhubaneswar : JSW Infrastructure, India's leading ports company and part of US\$ 13 billion JSW Group, has begun commercial operations at Paradip East Quay Coal Terminal in Odisha. This is a fully-mechanized terminal at Paradip Port Trust with an annual coal handling capacity of 30 million tons. The coal terminal has been built as a cape compliant terminal and will handle capsize vessels once the dredging at Paradip Port is completed. The terminal has capacity to unload 25 rakes per day and can load two vessels simultaneously. The infrastructure of the terminal is built to ensure higher productivity while reducing overall logistics

cost to power producers. The company has invested approximately Rs 1,300 crore to establish this terminal at Paradip Port. Paradip Port Trust awarded JSW Infrastructure to develop a fully-mechanized coal terminal on Build, Operate & Transfer basis for 30 years. Following the commissioning of this coal terminal, JSW Infrastructure's current cargo capacity crosses 150 MTPA. It aims to have a total cargo handling capacity of 200 MTPA by FY24.

Commenting on its coal terminal at Paradip, Mr Arun Maheshwari, Joint MD & CEO of JSW Infrastructure said, "Paradip Port continues to be an attractive sea route for coal movement. With the

commissioning of this terminal, India can now offer cape size shipments with efficient operations. During the last few months, steam coal prices globally have witnessed sharp increase forcing thermal power plants and other coal based industry to switch to domestic coal. Start of this coal terminal has come at the right time to fill up the demand gap of domestic coal. Through high productivity and larger shipment size, we hope to reduce overall logistics costs for our coal cargo customers. As the country pursues PM's vision of Atma Nirbhar Bharat, the total thermal coal demand in India is expected to remain strong and our endeavor would be to maximize fulfilment by domestic producers.

Sony announces the Next-Gen Smart BRAVIA 32W830K Google TV

Bhubaneswar : Sony India today announced the launch of BRAVIA 32W830K television with attractive picture quality and life like sound. The all-new 80 cm (32) HD ready Google TV lets you enjoy movies, games and shows from apps or broadcast in an instant with advanced voice controls and built-in Chromecast.

Now seamlessly integrate Google TV and bring together more than 700,000 movies, shows, live TV and more from apps and subscriptions and organize seamlessly. With BRAVIA 32W830K, browse content from across your apps, intelligently organized just for you. Customers can easily find something to watch with personalized recommendations and bookmark shows and movies by adding a watchlist from phone and watch it on TV to keep track of what to watch. Users can even add to their Watchlist from their phone or laptop with Google Search and find everything in one place. BRAVIA 32W830K supports Apple Home Kit and AirPlay that seamlessly integrates Apple devices like iPads and iPhones with the TV for effortless content streaming. Easily control your TV with Hands-free voice capabilities. The hands-free voice control is built into the TV, no need to reach for the remote every time to search for entertainment, get answers, or control the TV and smart home devices. Simply say, "OK Google" to issue a voice command.

life goals and form the bedrock of our business model.

The company paid death claims, maturity and survival benefit payouts of over Rs. 1,877 Cr in FY22 and achieved an impressive claims settlement ratio of 98.7% for FY22, up from 98.5% in FY21. The company expeditiously settled 3,517 Covid related claims worth Rs. 117 Cr. within an average period

of 9 working days. Mr. Vohra further commented, "A death claim is the ultimate test of a Life Insurance product, and it is the 'dharma' of a Life Insurer to honour all such claims with speed and accuracy. We continue to be fully committed and financially stable at 235% solvency (against the regulatory requirement of 150%), to meet all customer claims that may arise in the times ahead."

Retired engineer from Odisha undergoes DBS surgery for Parkinson's at Amrita Hospital, Faridabad



Bhubaneswar : A 65-year-old civil engineer, a retiree from the PWD Department of Odisha Government, successfully underwent Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) surgery at Amrita Hospital in Faridabad for symptoms of Parkinson's Disease.

The six-hour-long surgery involved implanting electrodes within the patient's brain to produce electrical impulses which can stimulate certain cells and chemicals. The amount of stimulation would be controlled by a pacemaker-like device placed under the skin in the upper chest. The surgery would help reduce the symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease and drastically improve quality of life of the patient, according to doctors. The successful surgery was led by Dr. Anandh Balasubramaniam (Neurosurgery), Dr.

Sanjay Pandey (Neurology) and Dr. Gaurav Kakkar (Neuroanaesthesia).

Said Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Head, Department of Neurology, Amrita Hospital, Faridabad: "The patient has been suffering from rigidity dominant Parkinson's disease for the last 15 years, unable to perform day-to-day activities properly due to constant tremors in his hands. He had been to various hospitals before arriving at Amrita Hospital. Considering his condition, we recommended Deep Brain Stimulation surgery. There were two steps involved in the procedure. In the first, performed in an awake state, electrodes were placed in the bilateral subthalamic nucleus of the patient's brain. In the second step, performed under general anaesthesia, the electrodes were connected with a battery placed in his left upper

chest. The condition of the patient is now better and he can lead a more normal life now."

The patient, hailing from a middle-class family, is a pensioner of the Odisha Government. He said after the surgery: "I was aware that there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, and it tends to get worse with time. Things are very different for me now after the surgery, and I am very happy. I stay more active and performing my daily tasks has become much more manageable for me. I am grateful to the doctors of Amrita Hospital for attempting this procedure and drastically changing my life."

Said Anandh Balasubramaniam, Head, Department of Neurosurgery, Amrita Hospital, Faridabad: "Parkinson's disease, dystonia, and tremor are common movement disorders observed in a neurology clinic.

Experian launches new cloud-based decisioning solution –PowerCurve® Strategy Management

MUMBAI: Experian, the world's leading global information services company, has launched a new PowerCurve® Strategy Management solution, a powerful decisioning solution delivered as software-as-a-service via cloud. The solution is designed to help organisations leverage data and make faster, secure, and informed business decisions.

PowerCurve® is a unified platform that helps businesses understand and leverage their data across the entire customer life cycle – be it acquisition, retention or growth – to make fast, efficient decisions that support their strategic goals. With the new solution, businesses will be able to swiftly adapt their decision-based strategies at lower operational cost

while harnessing the power of cloud.

Neeraj Dhawan, Managing Director, Experian India, says: "Financial institutions in India are looking for more agile and scalable decisioning solutions. To fulfil their needs, we have come up with a comprehensive suite of solutions to help businesses make better decisions and stay one step ahead.

Mumbai : Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company Limited, a JV between Reliance Capital and Nippon Life of Japan, announced its financial results for the year ended March 31, 2022. The key performance highlights as on March 31, 2022 include:

Commenting on the company's strong performance in FY22, Mr. Ashish Vohra, ED &

CEO, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance said, "FY22 continued to pose its own set of challenges with the outbreak of the second, and then the third wave of the pandemic. We are grateful for the support we have received from our customers, employees, distributors, service providers and their families, that powered our journey of providing maximum

value to each one of our stakeholders."

Mr. Vohra further highlighted that in a volatile economic environment of today, there is a heightened appreciation of Life Insurance for ensuring certainty of life coverage as well as financial investments. These guarantees are designed to drive durable long-term returns and to help customers fulfill their

Injured Rohit Sharma to miss Dhaka Test

New Delhi: Rohit Sharma has been ruled out of the second Test against Bangladesh starting in Mirpur on December 22. The India skipper, who has missed the first Test in Chattogram, will no longer be travelling to Dhaka. Vice-captain KL Rahul will continue to lead the team in his absence in the second and final Test of the series which India lead 1-0.

The news of Rohit's unavailability emerged on Monday (December 19) after it was found that the skipper's thumb, which was injured during the second ODI of the

ongoing tour, has not fully healed. He seems to be suffering from a little bit of stiffness. Considering the important assignments ahead for the Indian team, the BCCI, the selection committee and the team management have decided not to risk him at this stage.

It is learnt that Rohit, currently in Mumbai, would have managed to bat through the Test but concerns remained over the risk involved while fielding. The medical team and the team management felt that injury could get serious on the field if he gets hurt

again on that thumb. When asked about the likelihood of Rohit's availability for the second Test, Rahul had said he was still waiting for the details. "We may be able to know in the next day or two, even I am not aware of it," the vice-captain had said at the press conference after the first Test on Sunday.

The immediate impression is that he will be available for the white ball series (three T20Is and three ODIs) against Sri Lanka starting on January 3.

Rohit suffered a blow to his thumb while trying to



take a catch in the slips in the second ODI, following which the BCCI medical team

assessed him and rushed him to Mumbai for treatment on December 7. He has been

undergoing treatment in the city since. Rohit's absence may have solved a major

selection headache for the team management ahead of the second Test as a decision on the player to leave out would not have been easy. India won the first Test by 188 runs with Shubman Gill scoring his maiden Test hundred while stand-in captain KL Rahul had a quiet game with the bat. Meanwhile, the Indian team travelled to Dhaka from Chattogram on Monday morning. They will practice over the next two days before the start of the Test on Thursday (December 22).

In other developments,

Cricbuzz has learnt from sources in the BCCI that no advisory has been issued to the members of the Chetan Sharma selection committee over the second round of the Ranji games which start on Tuesday. The selectors, who will be replaced by a new committee soon, had watched the first round matches from December 13-16. There is also no information as of Monday morning over the interviews for the new selection committee. They are, however, expected to take place sooner than later.

Lionel Messi SMASHES huge Instagram record, sails past Cristiano Ronaldo

New Delhi: Argentina captain Lionel Messi fulfilled a long-cherished dream to win the FIFA World Cup and became the first footballer to win two FIFA 'Golden Ball' awards on Sunday (December 18) night. Apart from the spate of records on the field, Messi soared to a new high on social media as well with his Instagram post to celebrate FIFA World Cup 2022 win. Messi's post was liked by over 50 million people – a new record for any sports person's post.



Messi captioned the post, "CAMPEONES DEL MUNDO!!!!!!(champions of the world)" has got over 52 million likes. In the post, Messi wrote: "So many times I dreamed it, so much I wanted it that I still don't fall, I can't believe it..... Thank you so much to my family, to all who support me and

also to all who believed in us. We prove once again that Argentinians when we fight together and united we are able to achieve what we aim. The merit is of this group, which is above individuals, is the strength of all fighting for the same dream that was also the one of all Argentinians... We did it!!! LET'S GO ARGENTINA DAMN!!!!!! We're seeing each other very soon." Within hours of being shared, Messi's post

became the most-liked post on Instagram by any sports person. The previous record for the most-liked Instagram post was held by another football great and Messi's contemporary and Portugal striker Cristiano Ronaldo that shows Ronaldo playing chess with Messi with the caption, "Victory is a State of Mind. A long tradition of crafting trunks photographed by @annieleibovitz for @louisvuitton." That post has received 41.9 million likes as of Tuesday

morning. Meanwhile, the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani placing a black and gold bisht – a traditional item of clothing worn in the region for special events and celebrations – on the Argentina captain before the 35-year-old was handed the FIFA World Cup 2022 trophy has created quite a storm of anger. The World Cup trophy presentation moment has been the most trending topic with social media users expressing the pride and joy they felt seeing the moment. Messi allowed the Emir to place the robe around his shoulders before taking the trophy from FIFA president Gianni Infantino. In his new attire, which covered his national pale blue and white jersey, Messi danced towards his teammates before lifting the trophy above his head, after beating France 4-3 via penalties on Sunday.

France striker Karim Benzema announces retirement from international football



New Delhi: After missing France's World Cup run, Karim Benzema has announced his retirement from international football. After becoming injured on the day before the competition, Benzema was sent home, but there was some talk that he would have been

able to participate in the final after taking part in a Real Madrid friendly. He apparently turned down the chance to return to Qatar as a result of a dispute with manager Didier Deschamps, and he has now confirmed his decision to end his

international career on social media. 'I made the effort and the mistakes it took to be where I am today and I'm proud of it! I have written my story and ours is ending,' Benzema wrote on Instagram on Monday afternoon. Less than 24 hours have

passed since France's shocking loss to Argentina, which prevented Deschamps' team from clinching back-to-back World Cup victories. Benzema declined Emmanuel Macron's invitation to fly on his private plane to Qatar for Sunday's championship match. To wish his teammates well, he did post the message: "It's time... all united." Vamonos. Let's go, Les Bleus. Deschamps intends to address his future with the French Football Federation in the new year, but Benzema has chosen to leave the national team rather than wait to see how those negotiations turn out. Benzema ends his time with France with 37 goals in 97 appearances, but his time with the squad hasn't exactly been easy since his debut 15 years ago.

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