

Saranggi Hurls Mine Slur

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Senior BJP leader and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi on Tuesday alleged that there were massive irregularities in auction of mines by the Odisha Government.

Holding a press conference here, Shrimati Sarangi alleged that the State Government has already acknowledged occurrence of large-scale irregularities that led to the loss of thousands of crores of rupees to the exchequer.

She said that the State Government in a letter to the Ministry of Coal and Mines has admitted that leaseholders reported high-grade iron ore as low-grade after extraction.

Showing a letter she has received from Union Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi in this regard, the BJP National Spokesperson the State Government has constituted a committee under the chairmanship of the Director of Mines to investigate the irregularities.

"High-grade iron ore has been represented as low-grade. It resulted in a loss to the tune of thousands of crores to the state exchequer.

Odisha: Covid norms to be back during Khandagiri Mela

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): AMID fears of a possible resurgence of Covid-19, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has asked the Jatra committees and parties to adhere to Covid safety norms during Khandagiri Mela, to be held in the city from January 28 to February 10.



Issuing a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the mela, the civic body stated that theatre groups taking part in the 10-day festival will have to follow Covid-19 protocol for the entire period. The zonal deputy commissioner of the Southwest zone will ensure that all the officials, members, volunteers of the organising committee of the festival are fully vaccinated.

The Jatra organising committees are also required to prepare the layout plan of the stages and obtain safety certificate for the same. CCTVs will be installed at major places of

As a result of the irregularities, an adequate amount of funds could not be transferred to the District Mineral Funds (DMFs)," alleged Sarangi.

The irregularity has also led to reduction of funding to National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET), she said.

Though the State has informed the Centre that it has formed a panel to look into the issue, it has not mentioned what kind of preventive measures have been taken to improve the situation and what recommendations have been

made by the committee, said Sarangi.

The measures and recommendations made by the committee should be brought to the public domain, Shrimati Sarangi demanded.

Asking who got the benefit from the corruption practices, the BJP MP urged the State Government to ensure that such corruption will not reoccur in future. The State Government should also specify the magnitude of revenue loss due to reporting of high-grade iron ore as low-grade, she added.

the pandals and mela area, while the organising committees will also ensure sufficient number of dustbins are in place for proper disposal of garbage during the mela. BMC officials said as per the SOP, the organising committee will have to ensure cleanliness in and around their pandal

premises and handing over of waste to the garbage collection vehicles of BMC. Moreover, the vendors and eateries have been asked to ensure that their five metre radius remains clean. The organisers have also been asked to deploy adequate number of volunteers to assist security staff in managing crowd and other arrangements. BMC in its SOP also clarified that the content of the shows should not contain anything which is indecent and may disrupt the communal harmony or offend religious sentiments.

Meanwhile, the BMC has also issued a separate SOP for the traders and shop owners for the Mela, making it clear that old applicants will be given first preference in the allotment process. On the other hand, the civic body has asked the city health officer and food safety officers to do a quality check of food served to people during the fair.

Several top Ukraine officials quit amid corruption claims

KYIV(KCN): Kyiv on Tuesday announced the resignation of several officials, including regional governors and deputy ministers, against the backdrop of the largest corruption allegations made in Ukraine since Russia invaded.

Ukraine has long suffered endemic corruption, including among the political elite, but efforts to stamp out graft have been overshadowed by Moscow's full-scale war that began in February.

Kyiv's Western allies, who have allocated billions of dollars in financial and military support, have been pushing for anti-corruption reforms for years, sometimes as a precondition for aid.

Oleg Nemchinov, a senior government official, announced the departure of five regional governors, whose territories have seen fierce

fighting, and four deputy ministers. They include the heads of the central Dnipropetrovsk region, the northeastern Sumy region, the southern Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, as well as the region surrounding the capital Kyiv.

Nemchinov also announced the dismissal of a deputy defence minister, two deputy ministers of development of communities and territories, and a deputy minister of social policy. The deputy head of the presidential administration Kyrylo Tymoshenko and



US Debt ceiling: 2011 showdown leaves lessons for Biden, GOP

WASHINGTON(KCN): The debate around raising the debt ceiling sounds eerily similar: Newly elected House Republicans, eager to confront the Democratic president in the White House, refused to raise the debt limit without cuts to federal spending.

Negotiations over the debt ceiling consumed Washington in 2011, a high-stakes showdown between the Obama White House and the new generation of "tea party" House Republicans. "Now we're getting down to the real hard stuff: I'll trade you my bicycle for your golf clubs," the chief negotiator,

Ayodhya's Deepotsav to be theme of UP tableau for Republic Day parade

LUCKNOW(KCN): Second time in the last three years, Ayodhya will feature in Uttar Pradesh's

Vice President Joe Biden, said at the time.

But weeks of tense talks between Biden

and suffered a devastating credit downgrade, a first in the nation's history.

toward a very similar outcome. Neither Republicans nor Democrats are willing to budge.



and the House Republicans collapsed that summer, sending Washington careening toward a fiscal crisis. When Republicans in Congress refused to raise the debt ceiling, the government risked a

Lessons learned from the debt ceiling standoff more than a decade ago are rippling through Washington, as the White House and Congress brace for another fiscal showdown — one that appears headed

"The whole debate is a façade," said William Gale, a senior fellow at the nonpartisan Brookings Institution who wrote "Fiscal Therapy: Curing America's Debt Addiction and Invest

As per the theme, the tableau will comprise of a large idol of sage Vashishtha, the family Guru of

middle portion will replicate Ayodhya decked up in all its glory to welcome Lord Ram on his ar-

Ram along with Goddess Sita, brother Laxman and his army arriving Ayodhya by Pushpak Viman. The atmosphere of joy and revelry that prevailed in Ayodhya on return of Ram, Laxman, and Sita will be replicated. Besides, on both sides of the tableau, Deepotsav at Ram ki Paidi, Saryu Ghat etc will be depicted.

Ayodhya Deepotsav 2022 had set a new Guinness World Record for lighting over 15 lakh-earthen lamps on the banks of river Saryu as Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the celebrations on the Diwali eve.



tableau as 'Deepotsav' has been chosen as the theme to represent the state in for the Republic Day parade in New Delhi on January 26, this year.

Lord Ram, in the front which will also feature a large replica of a lamp symbolising end of ignorance and the spreading of the light of knowledge. The

rival after an exile of 14 years. Bharat will also be shown seated with other relatives on the tableau. The rear portion of the tableau would be dedicated to Lord

Extreme Israeli group takes root in US with fundraising bid

JERUSALEM(KCN): An Israeli group raising funds for Jewish extremists convicted in some of the country's most notorious hate crimes is collecting tax-exempt donations from Americans, according to findings by



The Associated Press and the Israeli investigative platform Shomrim. The records in the case suggest that Israel's far-right is gaining a new foothold in the United States.

CONTINUED ON: P-7

deputy prosecutor general Oleksiy Symonenko were also among those who resigned.

of the army's logistical support, on the heels of accusations it was signing food contracts at inflated prices.

Local media reports last week accused the ministry of having signed a deal at prices "two to three times higher" than current rates for basic foodstuffs.

Why Russia's war in Ukraine today is so different from a year ago
Stubborn problem

In a statement, the ministry insisted the accusations were "unfounded and baseless" but said Shapovalov's departure would "preserve the trust of society and international partners." Tymoshenko, who has worked with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy since his election in 2019 and oversaw regional policy, also announced his resignation Tuesday. He posted a photo of himself
CONTINUED ON: P-7

Social worker Ashirbad Mahapatra participated in the Nation Youth Festival in Karnataka

Cuttack Sadar (KCN) : Youth Social worker Ashirbad Mahapatra belongs to Gandhi Tikira



village, Block Attabira Dist Bargarh has nominated by Neheru Yuva Kendra(NYK) Bargarh

Branch and participated with received merit Certificate from honorable guests as well as Honorable Priminister of India joined with delivered his valuable speech to youth mass on the great occasion of 26th Nation Youth Festival - 2023 from 12-16 January - 2023 held at Hubballi-Dharwad Karnataka organised by Ministry of Youth affairs & Sports Department respectively. Youth Volunteers Ashirbad & his team done a good presentation of folk dance on the lifestyle of the Tribals lok nritya. For this great achievement of Nation Youth Volunteers, Scholar students Ashirbad Mohapatra all the organizations paid their thanks & good wishes from his father Ramanarayan Mohapatra, Mother Damayanti Mohapatra, Adarsha Mohapatra, Indira Dei, His Mentor, Writers society, social workers group, Mr. Roshan Tondan, Mr. Trilochan Satapathy & all. Moreover he received award as Grade "A" in artificial rock climbing & aviation and has completed in Nation level rock climbing only time period of 14 second with gained lots of experience, skill much more.

Two Ultras Nabbed

Koraput(KCN): A female cadre ultra and her associate, allegedly involved in several offences, were arrested on Tuesday in Nabarangpur district.

The two ultars were arrested by the security personnel during a combing operation by Special Operation Group (SOG) and District



Voluntary Force (DVF) personnel and CRPF from Hatigaon reserve forest area under Raigarh police limits of Odisha's Nabarangpur district, said Pandit Rajesh Uttamrao, DIG (south western range), Koraput.

The arrested Maoists are identified as Poje

Coast Guard Rescues Sailor



Bhubaneswar(KCN): Undertaking a long-range medical evacuation above sea, Indian Coast Guard on Monday rescued a Myanmar sailor from mid-sea. He has been admitted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar.

The Myanmar national, identified as Than Htike Lwin, was onboard MT GB Venture, which had reached near Sagar Island from Singapore.

The rescue operation was carried out with an indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter equipped with a medical team from Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here. According to official sources, the Indian Coast Guard officials received a message from Sagar VTMS regarding an injury to a Myanmar crew onboard MT GB Venture this morning. The officials communicated with the master to ascertain the condition of the patient and other details.

After detailed assessment and discussion with the master, the patient's condition was assessed to be critical, requiring immediate medical care, the Coast Guard said in a statement.

The Coast Guard launched the operation at 8.55 a.m. and aircraft reached near the merchant vessel at 10.10 a.m. and the patient,

Mandavi alias Anita (25) and Samudra Bagh (32) of Mainpur Nuapada Division. Anita belonged to Motodi village in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh and Bagh a native of Nangalbod in Sinapali block of Nuapada district of Odisha, he said.

The DIG informed that the duo was found to have been involved in many cases of violence in Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Kalahandi and neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

The police said that Anita had joined the Maoist group in 2010 and was working as a party member of Bodchatia local organisation squad (LOS) prior to her joining Mainpur-Nuapada Division. She was influenced by Bal Sanghatan under Ungi. She was promoted as area committee member (ACM) in 2020 and has been active since 2013. Similarly, Bagh had joined the Maoists in 2017 and has been active ever since as a militia of Mainpur-Nuapada Division. He reportedly provided information and other inputs to the extremists. Bagh was also providing medicines and other essential articles to the rebels, the police said.

Orion'23 Grand Opening

Cuttack(KCN): The Sports Fest of Orion - 2023 commenced with a grand Inaugural Ceremony on the 23rd of January 2023 at Sri Sri University premises. Named as Shaurya 2023, the annual course encompasses 11 inter-university sports competitions which include Basketball, Volleyball, Table tennis, Cricket, Futsal, Chess, Lawn Tennis, Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Athletics & Badminton.

The ceremony was graced with the Chief Guest Padma Shri Pramod Bhagat, the Guest of Honour, Satya Ranjan Sahoo, Collector and District Magistrate, Boudh. The Sports Inaugural Ceremony began with the guests lighting the lamp, signifying the goodwill and brilliance of the forthcoming fest. It was followed by the students of Sri Sri Gurukul infusing energy and optimism into the surroundings through their divine Vedic chanting.

Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi Mohanty Director - HRDC and Head Public relations, Sri Sri University, introduced Orion's sports events and welcomed the gatherings, lauded the culture of sports in the institution nurtured by student players, their coaches and the management of Sri Sri University.

The Indian national flag was hoisted by the guests

BharOS Test Successful



New Delhi(KCN): Union Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan along with Minister for Railways, Communications, Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnav successfully tested the 'BharOS'.

BharOS is a Made In India Mobile Operating System developed by IIT Madras today.

Shri Pradhan said that the poor people of the country will be the main beneficiary of a strong, indigenous, dependable & self-reliant digital infrastructure.

He further said that promoting policy enablers with the whole of the government approach is an applied experiment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision.

'BharOS' is a successful step towards data privacy he added.

Shri Pradhan further added that successful test of 'BharOS' - the Made in India mobile operating system is an important initiative towards fulfilling PM Shri Modi's vision of a strong, indigenous & self-reliant digital infrastructure in India.

State To Set SWIC

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The State Government is taking steps to constitute a State Water Informatics Centre (SWIC) dedicated to the handling of State-level water resources data. Department of Water Resources (DoWR) has

Centre (OCAC) on the framework for setting of the SWIC.

The SWIC is being created as per the directions of the Central Government which had formed the National Water Informatics Centre



(NWIC) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti as a central repository of data on water resources.

Sources said that a memorandum of agreement will be signed between the NWIC and the SWIC

given the task for establishment and operationalization of the SWIC.

The SWIC will be set up to act as a dedicated organization for coordination, collection and dissemination of water resources data of the State with the support and guidance from National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC), an official said here on Monday.

And, the SWIC will include a domain expert from each stake holder Department/organization that is dealing with water and sharing of data thereof.

In fact the management of water resources is a highly complex and tedious task that involves expertise of multidisciplinary domains and depend on historical and real time reliable data and information.

Hence, the DoWR has sought views from the Departments of Planning & Convergence, Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water along with Odisha State Pollution Control Board and Odisha Computer Application

in due course.

Earlier, the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, had asked all States and Union Territories to nominate lead agencies for establishing SWICs in their jurisdictions.

The Central Government expects SWICs to collaborate with the NWIC for providing 'a single point of contact for regional and micro-level data collection and dissemination for developing and managing the nation's water resources. This initiative will empower, inform and enrich every citizen with up to date and reliable water data and information through web based SWIC.

It will also develop value added products and services for all aspects of integrated water resources management serving the State through research, capacity building, linkages, outreach and better governance in water resources sector, officials say.

followed by the playing of the national anthem. The ceremony then witnessed the torch run by nationally and internationally acclaimed students in the field of sports.



The student coordinator of Orion Sports, Anivart Jhujhunwala, led the audience to the oath of ethics in sports. The ceremony witnessed the energizing Yoga Dance performed by the students of Faculty of Health and Wellness. Shri Gaurav Verma, Director Operations wished students to be courageous and

be inspired by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose as the Fest is inaugurated on the Parakram Divas.

Prof. B.R. Sharma, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sri University, took the podium and threw light on the importance of sports and how the honour of the country is related to the glory of sports.

He quoted Chandogya Upanishad "Yadev vidya karoti sharadhyopanishda. Tadeva veerayavatram bhavati", which means anything done with knowledge, faith and the right attitude becomes prosperous and big. He announced the formation of a Hockey Team in the University.

Satya Ranjan Sahu envisioned Orion Cultural, Sports and Bfest to reach a global audience along with percolating the same to the grassroots.

Shri Bhagat spoke about his journey in the sports of Badminton, his winning gold medal in Paralympics - 2020, receiving the Arjuna awards and Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, etc. The ceremony was enthralled by mesmerizing 'Nameless' band performance by the students of Sri Sri University.

The event ended with the offer of a vote of thanks by alumni Ashutosh Mohapatra.

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Kawasaki Bajaj in tiptop condition for sale. Contact: 2555326

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Please Contact- 8338870595

Disney's Marvel unit files lawsuits to keep rights to 'Avengers' characters from copyright termination

WASHINGTON: Stan Lee, Steve Ditko and Gene Colan. Marvel has faced terminations from Ditko as well as law, authors or their heirs can reclaim rights once granted



acquire full control of 'Avengers' characters including Spider-Man, Iron Man, Black Widow and others. According to The Hollywood Reporter, the complaints come against the heirs of some late comic book geniuses including

The legal document seeks "declaratory relief that these blockbuster characters are ineligible for copyright termination as works made for hire." Reportedly, if Marvel loses, Disney would have to share ownership of characters worth billions.

Larry Lieber's (who worked at Marvel as a writer, too) estate. In August, the administrator of Ditko's estate filed a notice of termination on Spider-Man, which first appeared in comic book form in 1962. Under the termination provisions of copyright

to publishers after waiting a statutory set period of time. According to the termination notice, Marvel would have to give up Ditko's rights to its iconic character in June 2023, reported The Hollywood Reporter.

Larry also filed termination notices to Marvel in May. The heirs of the comic book creators (including Black Widow creator Don Rico) are being represented by Marc Toberoff, who had also represented Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster in an unsuccessful termination attempt against DC which saved off termination by counterclaiming against Toberoff. As per The Hollywood Reporter, Dan Petrocelli represented the publisher at that time and will be representing Disney for the new case. Petrocelli has already filed several lawsuits against Lieber, Don Heck, Patrick Ditko, Don

Rico and Keith Dettwiler. The cases will focus on the creation of famous comic book characters and who should be deemed the statutory author. One of the complaints filed on Friday asserted, "Marvel had the right to exercise creative control over Lieber's contributions and paid Lieber a per-page rate for his work." If the plaintiffs win, Disney would have to share profits with the others and hold on to at least a share of character rights as co-owners. As per The Hollywood Reporter, the termination provisions of copyright law only apply in the United States, allowing Disney to continue to control and profit from foreign exploitation.

'Kanyadaan' an outdated ritual or important custom? Alia Bhatt's ad sparks debate

The bride, pretty, radiant and in red, sits in front of the sacred fire, her family, the groom and his parents around her, the love flowing like a balmy breeze. And in that arguably most precious moment, she looks into the camera and asks, "why must a woman be commodified through the custom of 'kanyadaan' literally 'donating a daughter'."

The ad for a lehenga brand featuring Bollywood star Alia Bhatt as the much-indulged daughter and granddaughter has fired debate on social media platforms and elsewhere on the age-old tradition of giving away the daughter.

Many term it Hindu phobic for casting aspersions on a ritual that is part of the warp and weft of society, others appreciate it for calling out the patriarchy that underderscores the custom and there are those that feel it should have gone even further in its rejection.

"There is a growing number of young women who are beginning to think about the issue, especially as increasing number joins the workforce, has access to ideas (via social media etc) that are critical of 'women as property' concept. This ad reflects that," sociologist Sanjay Srivastava told PTI.

In the 1.41 minute ad, Bhatt, the self-assured woman of today who also does a selfie pout with her father while at the 'mandap', recalls her lifetime of 'othering' in a monologue - her fond grandmother saying she would one day go to her own home, her father not reacting when people called her "paraya dhan" (alien property) and her mother calling her a 'chidiya' which would fly away one day.

The Manyawar ad ends with the grooms' parent also joining in in the ritual (though it is unclear whether they too are giving away their son) and Bhatt's bride saying it should be 'kanyamaan' (respect for the girl child) and not 'kanyadaan', and asking, "Am I a thing to be given away?" Her angst finds a wide echo. Actor Dia Mirza, who decided to do away with the rituals of both "bidai" and "kanyadaan" when she got married to businessman Vaibhav Rekhi, said they wanted the wedding to reflect their "beliefs and not outmoded ideas." "Neither of us believes that women are com-

modities to be given away or 'donated.' Women have agency, selfhood and can make decisions about their lives on their own so my wedding reflected exactly that by not including a ritual like 'kanyadaan'," the actor told PTI.

She even engaged a female priest for her wedding to emphasise gender equality.

"It is time for young couples to define how they want to get married and if their ceremony is truly representative of their personalities and love for each other," said the actor, who is also the United Nation's National Goodwill Ambassador from India.

The ritual of giving away the bride is, of

married. 'Kanyadaan' is like you're giving me away and you have nothing to do with me anymore. You're severing ties like I'm some object basically that you're giving away. My parents did understand it but the issue was 'this is how it is, has been and will be'."

Actor Kangana Ranaut was among those who disagreed. Criticising the ad in an Instagram post, she said, "Humble request to all brands. Don't use religion, minority, majority politics to sell things. Stop manipulating naive consumers with shrewd divisive concepts and advertising. Please stop mocking Hindus and their rituals."

One of the Twitter users echoed similar sentiments.

"Our traditions are not regressive, your mindsets surely are! Kanyadaan is a sacred tradition, where a father/parent parts with their most precious and cherished daughter, a bitter-sweet emotional moment filled with hopes, promises and dreams," the user wrote.

Women's rights activist Shabnam Hashmi said the attacks on the ad "reflects the highly patriarchal mindsets of our society".

"It is a very progressive advertisement and raises important questions of women's dignity and equality," Hashmi told PTI.

Sociologist Shrivastava added that people reacted negatively because there is an increasing intolerance against anything that is seen to question 'Indian traditions'.

The reaction, he said, also reflects a "male anxiety" about the changes that are happening in addition to the current climate where it has become difficult to question anything Indian/Hindu.

There were also those who felt the ad didn't go far enough.

"The idea should not be to perpetuate the custom but to break away from it," said a young woman, who welcomed the ad and the questioning of traditions but would have preferred that it didn't end with the parents of both sides taking part in it.

A radical break would have been more effective in sending out the message, she said. However, a debate reflects a churn. And in that sense, any discussion is welcome, even if it has unlikely beginnings in an ad for a bridal lehenga.



Role and contributions of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose in India's freedom struggle

“Give me your blood, and I shall give you freedom”—the quote by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose



inspired thousands of Indian youths to join the struggle for independence from the British colonial rule. A pivotal figure in India's freedom movement, Netaji is considered by many as one of the greatest leaders ever born. To venerate his contribution to India's struggle for independence, every year on 23rd January, we celebrate his birthday across various parts of the country. This year we celebrate his **126th birth anniversary**.

Subhash Chandra Bose was one of the most celebrated freedom fighters of India. He was a charismatic influencer of the youth and earned the epithet 'Netaji' by establishing and leading the Indian

National Army (INA) during India's struggle for independence. He

was born on 23 January, 1897 in Cuttack (Orissa) to Janakinath Bose and Prabhavati Devi. Subhash was the ninth child among eight brothers and six sisters.

He himself started the newspaper 'Swaraj', edited Das' newspaper 'Forward' and worked as the CEO of Calcutta Municipal Corporation under Das' stint as Mayor. Subhash Chandra Bose played an important role in enlightening the students, youths and labourers of Calcutta. In his fervent wait to see India as an independent, federal and republic nation, he emerged as a charismatic and firebrand youth icon. He was admired within the congress for his great ability in organization development. He served several stints in prison for his nationalist activities during this time.

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

he also expressed his admiration for their structured way of life. He met with the leaders of the British Labor Party and political thinkers including Clement Attlee, Harold Laski, J.B.S. Haldane, Arthur Greenwood, G.D.H. Cole, and Sir Stafford Cripps and discussed the possibilities that an independent India might hold.

He was known as “Netaji” one of the famous fighters who participated in the freedom of India. He possessed an odd bravery, self-confidence and persistent trust in his capabilities. He taught all the Indians to love homeland from the inmost heart's core. He was able to set up his own army. He managed to escape from his residence in 1940, where he was kept on house arrest by the then British rulers.

Bose, the epitome of intelligence and a fearless fighter managed to trail across the globe, meeting influential leaders from Germany, Italy, and Japan and ultimately formed the INA (Indian National Army) in 1941. He was a brilliant academician and wrote exceptional literature to promote patriotism through his books. Few of the books that “Subhas Chandra Bose” wrote are – An Indian Pilgrimage, Words of Freedom-Ideas of a Nation, The Indian Struggle, Azad Hind and many more. He also wrote books in Bengali like Jaruri Kichu Lekha. Netaji.

“Subhas Chandra Bose” is an icon of the Indian freedom struggle. He ignited the true spirit of patriotism in the hearts and minds of all the Indians. Even the daring Netaji couldn't change his destiny as on 18th August 1945; he faced his tragic end when his aircraft crashed while he was heading towards Japan.

B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur
Tekra, Satellite, Ahmedabad

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor,

Perils of Lithium mining

Lithium is crucial to the effort to achieve net-zero emissions because it can power electric cars and store wind and solar energy. One of the primary drivers of the current economic and infrastructural transformation is lithium. Our reliance on lithium is similar to how we once relied on coal and oil to revolutionise our society. The long-term effects of burning fossil fuels were unknown at the time, whereas lithium extraction has also a very negative impact on the environment as on today says scientists and metallurgists. This knowledge ought to be accompanied by responsibility for the environment and future generations. We must be careful not to fall into the same traps that we are trying to avoid. Along with lithium's potent curative and palliative effects on the effects of climate change, it is important to take into account any potential side effects and communicate them openly. The hydrological cycle may be altered, there may be an increase in carbon dioxide emissions, there may be a large increase in the production of mineral waste, and there may be an increase in respiratory issues. The magnitude of the economic interests at stake is obvious. Majority of the world's lithium is produced in China, Chile, and Australia. The market for lithium on a global scale is rapidly approaching ten billion. It follows that there can be a contradiction between the clean revolution and the dirty lithium mines. It is true that electrifying cars and other aspects of our society helps to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The transition might not be as effective as we think it is once we take into account the price of emissions related to lithium extraction, particularly if miners are not using clean energy. According to research by the automotive consultancy producing a battery weighing two thousand pounds emits over eighty percent more carbon dioxide than producing a conventional car. Furthermore, lithium mining requires a lot of water. To extract one ton of lithium requires about ten lakh litre of water, and can result in the poisoning of reservoirs and related health problems. To avoid this, One should first make investments in lithium battery alternatives. The need to mine vast quantities of the priceless material would also be diminished by recycling and extending the lifespan of these batteries. Along with this effort, strict environmental laws and regulations should be implemented for lithium mining operations, and money should be invested in cutting-edge mining techniques that can extract lithium from seawater. To be able to refer to the actions we are taking toward a new world as progress, the effects of lithium mining must be remedied and reduced. If not, we will definitely going to witness lot of environmental pollutions that we are trying to get rid of.

Vijaykumar H K
Raichur, Karnataka
Environmentalist

We will vote but...

Dr. Lokendra Singh Kot

The royal court was full. The reason was that the king would punish a criminal. There was curiosity mixed in everyone's mind. The king came, the criminal was brought. The king said to the criminal in the voice of a lion, we take pity on you because today is the birth anniversary of our daughter.... We give you a chance to choose your own punishment. These three boards which are kept in front of you, three punishments are written for you..... You can choose whatever you want. The criminal was happy.... The king also laughed a long time. The criminal picked up a plank with death written on it. In anger, he picked up the second one too, death was written on it... and when he picked up the third one, death was written on that too....

Had to choose death...he chose.....and got death. What to do sir, according to the poet, "The condition inside the bottom is the same as the condition above the bottom / Where will the fish go when the whole net is water. If we talk about the net, then everyone gets entangled in the web of the net....not here So there In the illusion, it is not known when we are voters and when we are common people whom the President and the Prime Minister address. In the speeches, we keep hoping that when this buffalo of our expectations will be born and when we will be normal and drink milk. At present, we are enjoying adulterated democracy on the lines of adulterated goods. What is democracy, it would be better if it is called Para-democracy. Here our democracy is full of supernatural incidents. Can anyone pave the way for assembly from the kitchen, can a dacoit give up his dacoity and enter the parliament, can the public choose someone to be their leader even after being in jail, is there any "brother" Type man can become our representative..... When yes is found in the answer, then the mind stops thinking and understanding. Foreigners and all of us together often speculate on Mars and the existence of no one there, but our attention is rarely paid to our own unique democracy. We are aware of the various developments that take place during ticket distribution at the time of elections. The number of head-to-head incidents, brawls, wild methods of protest and incidents of change of parties would have baffled even Narad Muni. If he himself had been present at this time, he would have said Trahimam-Trahimam before the public!! The poet has also written, 'I was the only one who was punished for my cowardice / Leaving myself in the middle of the stream, I was on the other side.' How soon we call the person who talks two opposite things as a backslider when everything happens to us like this. They don't accept such a person in their family and society, then what a big deal the country is. Now you tell me, all this is possible only in a sleeping democracy. A party always runs on certain principles and a man changes his party ten times and compromises with all the principles. Worms of doubt are squirming in whether such a man will be loyal to the public. Parties also keep their principles in check and term it as a political development. How easily these parties fool us com-

mon people. Somebody is making fool of you and us openly and we are becoming. It simply means that under the guise of glamour, when did you and I turn into creatures called owls and are telling the sleeping democracy alive.

Studying and writing is done by those who do not have experience. It is not an essential element of our democracy. All distance studies are considered to be important and nowadays even the smallest position is not available due to less education, then the criteria of education is not in democracy. Now believe me that democracy is in a dormant state. If less educated or illiterate can run the country, then why are we making a fuss about studies...? Why the emphasis on literacy? Such a person decides our destiny who does not know what is called destiny. You tell me whether our beloved democracy is sleeping at this time or not?

Now while hurling gold questions at democracy, our question starts getting stronger here that why a man is dying to become a leader in our country. A common man (owl) is not armed with missiles like Sama, Daam, Dand and Bheda, who can contest elections, but how does a small chilgoze type person get so much power. If democracy is sleeping then what difference does it make to anyone who does anything. Amidst the white fuzz clothes of politics, it feels so good that if you get your clothes clean, the rest will go to hell. We always want the person in front of us to be good. Even an adulterous husband wants his wife to be decent.....a drug addict father also looks for a simple son-in-law for his daughter.....no matter how much corruption we are doing but we don't need any corrupt person for our work. Didn't get it... overall there are expectations..... but everything from the person in front, not from himself. As voters under this sleeping democracy, we are able to pray that our representative should be less adulterous, less corrupt, less power-hungry, less dishonest....

We tremble when we talk about the gold of democracy, because when a party accepts donations from anyone, then after coming to power, it will first of all take care of those donations, why voters like us (owls)? Why should we go crazy over two rupees per kg rice and two rupees per kg wheat? Today we say Ram or Allah according to our religion, then we have to think four times that how many and who are the people around. Don't know when the stamp of which party will be imposed on us. Poor God is also feeling cheated these days. Let's vote but no party is taking a guarantee that we won the ticket by fighting worse than the children, even after that no one will throw a chair in the Legislative Councils.....no one will kick and punch....No one will break the dignity of the Vidhansabha by talking about street signs.... We voted for Ganpat and this great representative of ours went and changed the party, so whose fault is he? He cheated us, now you tell me, so it is our democracy, isn't it? Our leaders wave notes in an institution like Parliament, open a market of buying and selling and you say vote wisely? Now it is for us to think and understand, what should we think, what should we understand and then why should we vote....?

Before voting, we are very surprised to think that we know very well the fate of countless promises made in the name of the party's 'manifesto'. Doesn't it come under the category of a crime to openly kill the sentiments of crores of people? Poor Adne, after catching the thief, Pamri Colony starts cleaning its hands and then on top of that, our police.... We take all crimes seriously, then why written crimes with such manifestos are not taken more seriously? Why doesn't anyone try their hand here? Where do the channels and newspapers that pounce on our inflammatory news go in such a situation? Why don't we, like a series of question papers, ask our captains, who would never have solved the question papers properly, to account for the promises they had given before the elections. Before awakening democracy, who will take the news of those leaders who were saying what they were saying six months ago and what they are saying after six months. Who justifies his contradictory statements and why such a double faced person should be voted for, will anyone bother to tell? If there are all such candidates in one area who are more 'naked' than one, which arrow will we shoot there by waking up? When we can elevate former bandit lords to higher level of democracy. A bandit leader has no right to rule those who are at least more decent than him. Those actors, players are imposed on us who, except for a few, know nothing more than gimmicks and most importantly do not know anything about our area, how can they understand us and our problems? Sleeping democracy wake up now.

What an irony that when it comes to the MP's own salary, the bill is passed unanimously and politics, debates continue on the questions related to the man, sometimes the best of the bills are not passed at all. Recently, an interesting figure had come that lakhs of rupees are spent in the Parliament on a Member of Parliament every minute and many a times even by being absent in the Parliament on important issues, they kill the aspirations of the common man. Accusations on each other in the parties have become too much these days. We live in such a country where sometimes such statements come that we feel ashamed of ourselves. Democracy, which has a healthy tradition of pointing out shortcomings, is awash with indecent language these days. It is increasing continuously and the day is not far when abuses and shoe-bashing will be very common among politicians in public places. By the way, most of the crowd gathers in our place for two things only, one for the free goods and the other to become the people's representative.

Overall, we will vote but first the accountability should be fixed. Every vote has value and is deep, every vote has participation in this country. It has become more necessary in today's era to decide some things. We will also have to fix accountability on our part that some things should be completely banned and strictly banned. The side of the common man should also be talked about in this democracy, on the basis of which the whole system has been created. That's why we will vote, but.....

The author is a Freelance Writer and Faculty in Community Medicine Department Govt. Medical College, Ratlam-457001 MP

Indian Coast Guard evacuates injured Myanmar national from sea

BHUBANESWAR: THE Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) advanced light helicopter on Monday evacuated an injured Myanmar national from a vessel of Singapore, about 80 nautical mile (148 km) east-northeast of



Paradip. Motor tanker GB Venture had developed a mechanical snag and was anchored about 40.5 nautical mile south of Sagar. One crew member Than Htike Lwin sustained blunt abdominal trauma while carrying out maintenance of a hydraulic pipeline. Lwin complained of severe pain in the abdomen and also faced difficulty in breathing. The master of GB Venture vessel, which was reportedly carrying oil to Haldia, requested Sagar vessel traffic management system for his immediate evacuation. As Lwin was in persistent pain, ICG's medi-

cal officer in Haldia asked the master of the vessel to provide him first aid to stabilise his health condition. The Indian Coast Guard Air Enclave in Bhubaneswar then deployed an advanced light helicopter (ALH) to evacuate him. Two coast guard ships operating in the sea were also diverted towards the motor tanker to render necessary assistance. The ICG's helicopter arrived on the spot at 10.10 am and evacuated Lwin from the vessel about 20 minutes later. He was brought to Bhubaneswar at 11.40

am and shifted to a private hospital here. Lwin's health condition is stated to be stable. A senior officer of the coast guard said, "The swift medical evacuation at sea has once again reaffirmed ICG's steadfast resolve towards providing support to mariners in distress and reiterated its commitment towards ensuring safety of lives, true to its motto Vayam Rakshamah." The incident comes weeks after the death of Russian engineer Milyakov Sergey. He was found dead on a ship off the Paradip coast in Jagatsinghpur district on January 3. His postmortem report indicated that he died of cardiac arrest.

Odisha police arrest wife after man's body was found stuffed in trolley bag

BHUBANESWAR: A day after body of a man stuffed in a trolley bag was recovered from Haripur forest within Nachuni police limits of Khurda district and his wife was detained in the connection, police on Monday said, it was a pre-planned murder. The 25-year-old woman Nili Das was arrested for allegedly killing her husband Manoranjan Mahapatra (32). Her cousin brother Mitu Das (26) and a friend Bikram Kumar Sahoo (29) were also arrested in the connection. The deceased was from Ranapur and married to Nili, a native of Chandpur in Nayagarh district. Manoranjan had criminal antecedents

and shifted to Chandeswar in Khurda district with Nili as he ran into problems with the locals in Ranapur. He allegedly used to consume alcohol and torture her very often. He assaulted her on January 20 following which she plotted a plan to kill him, said the police. On January 21 evening, Bikram purchased the trolley bag from Chandpur and reached the couple's house in Khurda district. Nili's cousin Mitu was also present. As per the plan, the accused consumed alcohol with Manoranjan and strangled him to death after he dozed off. "They disposed of the body on the same night," said a police officer.

Actor-politician Urmila Matondkar joins Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu

Jammu: Actor-turned-politician Urmila Matondkar joined Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra as it resumed from the garrison town of Nagrota on a cold Tuesday morning. Matondkar, a popular Bollywood stars of the 1990s, joined Gandhi shortly after the march started from near the army garrison around 8 am amid tight security, with Congress workers and supporters lined up on the road along the route to welcome them. Matondkar (48) had resigned from the Con-

gress in September 2019 after a short association of six months, and joined the Shiv Sena in 2020. Dressed in a cream-coloured traditional Kashmir Pheran (loose gown) and beanie cap, Matondkar was interacting with Gandhi as they marched along. Noted author Perumal Murugan and J&K Pradesh Congress committee president Vikar Rasool Wani, his predecessor G A Mir and former minister Abdul Hamid Karra also joined them alongside hundreds of other carrying the tricolour in their hands. The yatra, which started from Kanyakumari



on September 7, entered Jammu and Kashmir from Punjab on Thursday and reached Jammu city on Monday. The march is scheduled to make two night halts at Ramban and Banihal along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway before its culmination in Srinagar with a grand rally at the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium on January 30. A 65-member strong Ladakh delegation led by Ladakh Territorial Congress President Nawang Rigzin Jora joined Gandhi at the start of the yatra and briefed him about the issues and concerns of their people, one of the delegation members said. A group of Kashmiri Pandit migrant women, wearing their traditional attire and carrying flower petals, were waiting outside the famous Kol-Kandoli temple to welcome Gandhi. "We are wandering in Jammu for the last three decades after our migration from Kashmir. We have come here to welcome Gandhi as he could help in our rehabilitation back in the Valley as it was Congress which worked for the community in the past by providing employment package to our youth," Geeta Koul told to us. She said the biggest issue for them is the rehabilitation of the community and the BJP has miserably "failed" in this mission and "ignored us". After walking for over one-and-a-half hours, the yatra is scheduled to make a stop-over and will resume near the Army gate Rehambal in Udhampur district at 2 pm.

Odisha: Peace symposium by Ahmadiyya community in capital city

BHUBANESWAR: from various walks of society en-

versal brotherhood and is engaged in

Humanity First.

"We must pursue the rights of others with the same zeal and determination like an individual does for himself/herself. We should broaden our horizons and look at what is right for the world instead of thinking what is fair for us," said Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad. The community conducts peace symposiums around the world with an aim to ensure peace in the society by bringing people from various walks of life together and providing them a platform to express and exchange their thoughts.



Muslim community of the state capital organised a 'peace symposium' on Sunday. The theme of the event was 'Fundamentals of Establishing Lasting Peace'. Several delegates, religious leaders and intellectuals

dorsed universal brotherhood and peace at the event. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (Aba) is the fifth and the current head of the community. The Ahmadiyya Muslim community is working to establish peace and uni-

PM Modi: Netaji was not given due respect

NEW DELHI(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday virtually unveiled the model of a proposed memorial dedicated to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to be set up in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and said it will infuse feelings of patriotism among people. The Prime Minister also named 21 islands of the Union territory after Param Vir Chakra awardees on the occasion of Netaji's 126th birth anniversary. The ministry of home affairs (MHA), meanwhile, announced the Subhas Chandra Bose Rashtriya Aapda Prabandhan award for 2023. This annual award was instituted to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management. Mr Modi said, "Today, it is a proud moment for me as I address the people of Andamans

is paying tribute to the great hero today, preserving the history and heritage associated with him.

"Attempt was made to suppress Netaji's contribution towards the freedom struggle, but the entire nation is remembering him today. Netaji will be remembered for his fierce resistance to the colonial rule. I am deeply influenced by his thoughts," Mr Modi said.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the demands to make Netaji's files public were made by many for a long time, and it was his government which eventually declassified the files.

"There were demands to make Netaji's secret files public and we did so while respecting his sacrifice for the country," he said.

The proposed memorial whose model Mr Modi inaugurated during the day will be set



up on Ross Island, which had been renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep in 2018. Neil Island and Havelock Island were also rechristened as Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep.

Referring to the rechristening of the islands, he also stated that these islands were earlier associated with

because this is the land where Subhas Chandra Bose unfurled the national flag for the first time in 1943."

The freedom fighter had hoisted the tricolour in the archipelago on December 30, 1943.

Mr Modi noted that the islands, named after famous soldiers, including Maj. Somnath Sharma, Lt. Col. (then major) Dhan Singh Thapa, Subedar Joginder Singh, Maj. Shaitan Singh, Company Quartermaster Havildar Abdul Hamid, 2nd Lt. Arun Khetrpal and Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon, will be a source of inspiration for generations to come.

"It gives me immense pleasure to announce the naming of 21 islands after Param Vir Chakra awardees and to inaugurate the model of a proposed memorial at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island (previously known as Ross Island). One should see the naming of 21 islands as 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and the memorial will infuse feelings of patriotism in the hearts of people," the Prime Minister said.

He said that attempts were made to "downplay" Netaji's contribution to the freedom movement, but the entire country

signs of slavery. "Therefore, we decided to rename these islands," he noted.

Highlighting the tourism potential of the archipelago, Mr Modi said that the Centre has identified various opportunities in Andamans in the last eight years, and worked hard to make this place a must-visit for people across the globe.

"Several steps were taken, including laying of optical fibre for better Internet connectivity and many more initiatives will be taken in future... Not only for beautiful beaches, but people are also now visiting Andamans to learn our history (of freedom struggle)," he said.

The memorial will have a museum, a cable car ropeway, a laser-and-sound show, a guided heritage trail through historical buildings and a theme-based children's amusement park, besides a resto lounge. Earlier, Union home minister Amit Shah lauded the initiative to christen the 21 islands, and said this effort will be a source of encouragement for the country's armed forces.

Mr Shah also said that the cellular jail in the Union territory, where many freedom fighters were incarcerated, is no less than a pilgrimage site.

Netaji 126th birth anniversary: Odisha Governor, CM pay tributes in Cuttack



CUTTACK: The 126th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was celebrated at his birthplace "Janakinath Bhawan" here in Odia Bazar on Monday. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik paid tribute to Netaji by garlanding his statue and unfurling the national flag at the house, which is now a museum. Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal also paid floral tributes to Netaji. "The Utkal Janani has given birth to many brave freedom fighters. Veer Surendra Sai was also one of them whose birthday is also celebrated today. But adequate respect is yet to be paid to Surendra Sai. I

came to know from a newspaper that his birthplace is lying neglected. I will soon be writing to the chief minister to take care of his birthplace," the Governor said. An art exhibition on the life of Netaji was organised under the aegis of Culture department in association with Odisha Lalit Kala Academy and students of Ravenshaw Collegiate School. Different cultural programmes too were organised to mark Netaji's birth anniversary. Many political leaders, bureaucrats, senior citizens, intellectuals, students and also the general public visited the museum.

Department of Justice holds awareness programme for woman in Choudwar

CUTTACK: An awareness programme was organised recently at Choudwar by

A awareness Programme, Dept.



campaign on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace & Consumer Protection Act-2019 was

Department of Justice, Government of India. Programme manager of Legal Literacy & Legal

of Justice Ashutosh Srivastava said, issues like rights of children to free and compulsory educa-

tion, protection of women from domestic violence, women rights, and POCSO Act were also discussed. Among others state coordinator, Jana Seva Kendra, Shresan Pattnaik, senior advocate, Orissa High Court Radheshyam Behera, law students from Madhusudan Law University and women representatives from various SHGs participated in the campaign.

Union Education Minister Pradhan's poll plans ups political heat in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Political climate of the state has begun to heat up after Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan an-

resented by BJP. Pradhan's poll plans raises political heat At the Express Dialogues event of TNIE,



nounced that he will be contesting in the next general elections. While the ruling BJD excluded confidence of forming the next government in the state for the sixth time despite Pradhan's entry, the Congress welcomed his decision.

Even as Pradhan holds his cards close on the matter of contesting for Assembly or Lok Sabha and the constituency of his choice, there has been speculations that he has been preparing ground to try his luck from Dhenkanal parliamentary seat. Pradhan has been frequenting Dhenkanal district ever since the party launched the Lok Sabha Pravas programme under which Union ministers are visiting different parliamentary constituencies and spending nights there.

Sambalpur is the other Lok Sabha seat that is stated to be the choice of Pradhan. Political analysts feel Sambalpur will be safer than Dhenkanal which has been favouring the BJD in the last few elections. Nitish Ganga Deb, the scion of the Deogarh royal family, is the sitting MP from Sambalpur while three Assembly constituencies under the seat are rep-

resented by BJP. Pradhan's poll plans raises political heat At the Express Dialogues event of TNIE, Odisha Chapter, on Friday, Pradhan said he has sought the permission of the Central leadership to contest in the 2024 election. He, however, did not divulge his preference for Assembly or Lok Sabha. Welcoming Pradhan's decision, state BJP president Samir Mohanty said as

Union minister, he has done a lot for the state. The party will benefit the most if he joins the electoral battle. Reacting to this development, senior BJD leader Amar Prasad Satpathy told a news channel that his party will welcome all who would like to contest from anywhere they like.

"The BJD is ready to face anyone as the party is sure of winning the next Assembly election and forming the government again," Satpathy said. On the other hand, senior Congress leader and Jatni MLA Suresh Kumar Routray expressed his happiness over Pradhan's decision.

"He (Pradhan) has done a lot of work for the state during his two stints as union minister. He has executed projects worth Rs 7,000 crore for Jatani alone. He has brought an investment of Rs 3,500 crore by setting up an oil depot in the state. The revival of the defunct fertiliser plant at Talcher is his other achievement," the Congress MLA said. "I welcome his decision to contest the next election. The state will benefit most if Pradhan is elected," he added.

Odisha's Chuktia Bhunjia couple in Republic Day celebrations at Delhi

NUAPADA: A wave of enthusiasm swept the Chuktia Bhunjia community of Nuapada, after a

day celebrations, Chuktia Bhunjia community was selected for this year. The tribal community


male from the selected PVTG. The Chuktia Bhunjia couple was accordingly selected on a




couple from the tribe was invited to attend the Republic Day celebrations at New Delhi. The invitees are 60-year-old Bhujabal Majhi and his wife Kunjibai (55). They left for the celebrations on Sunday.

is confined exclusively to the Sunabeda hills located in ecologically-secluded areas because of which the tribe is often separated from other communities. District collector Hemakant Say said, "As per the communication received from the Central Government, we were supposed to send a male and a fe-

general consensus. They will be visiting several other places over a period of three days apart from attending the Republic Day celebrations." Prior to the couple's departure, the community members performed some traditional rituals in order to congratulate and wish them a safe journey. Special officer of Chuktia Bhunjia Develop-



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Vistara to have 70 planes in fleet by mid-2024: CEO Vinod Kannan

NEW DELHI: Full-service carrier Vistara will continue to expand and expects to have a total of 70 planes by mid-2024, its chief Vinod Kannan said on Tuesday.

The airline, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, reported an operating profit for the first time since inception in the three months ended December 2022.

"The percentage of capacity deployed internationally has increased. We have 25-30 per cent deployed internationally. That is quite positive and a game changer for us," Kannan said at a briefing.

Vistara is set to be merged with Air India.

By the middle of next year, Kannan said it will have a total of 70 aircraft, including 7 Boeing 787s.

Out of the total 70 planes, there will also be 10 A321s and 53 A320 neos, the Vistara CEO said at a briefing.

Among the 53 A320 neos, 10 planes will have all economy class and the rest will have three classes. Currently, the airline has a fleet of 53 aircraft.

"We will continue to expand. More international routes (will be added)," Kannan said.

Vistara turns profitable ahead of merger with AI

According to him, there are constraints in terms of traffic rights and slots.

"We would love to operate more flights to Dubai, Singapore but those are all constrained by traffic rights. We had to look at other options. We will be looking at more points in the Middle East," he added.

About the performance in the December quarter, Kannan said the operating environment for the last year itself and the last quarter has been quite strong when it comes to demand and average fare perspective.

Also, deployment of wide-body aircraft helped the airline. "It was one of the strongest quarters (December quarter) we had from the revenue perspective, if you look at the overall revenue or whether you will look at from unit revenue. Strong demand which resulted in high load factor and that demand was not turned away due to high fares, (so), we were able to get a very strong revenue performance. The second aspect is that the US dollar and fuel price have been on an increasing trend. We have some sort of scale, we have 53 aircraft. So, obviously, unit cost and deployment does reduce to a certain extent," Kannan said.

Not familiar with it, familiar with shared values with India: US on BBC documentary

Washington: "I'm not familiar with the documentary you're referring to, however, I am very familiar with the shared values that enact the United States and India as two thriving and vibrant democracies," US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said on Monday, responding to a media query on a BBC documentary on Prime Minister Narendra Modi which has sparked controversy since its release.

Addressing a press briefing on Monday (local time), Price said that there are numerous elements that bolster the US' global strategic partnership with India which include political, economic and exceptionally deep people-to-people ties.

changed, of course, we don't tolerate persecution where it appears anywhere but I am not sure I agree at all with the characterisation that the honourable gentleman has put forward to," Sunak said while responding to Hussain's question on the BBC report.

UK's national broadcaster BBC aired a two-part series attacking PM Narendra Modi's tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister during the Gujarat riots of 2002. The documentary sparked outrage and was removed from select platforms.

The Ministry of External Affairs responded to the BBC story by claiming that it was entirely biased.



While addressing a weekly presser in New Delhi, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "We think this is a propaganda piece. This has no objectivity. This is biased. Do note that this hasn't been screened in India. We don't want to answer more on this so that this doesn't get much

"I'm not familiar with the documentary you're referring to. I am very familiar with the shared values that enact the United States and India as two thriving, vibrant democracies. When we have concerns about actions that are taken in India, we've voiced those we've had an occasion to do that," he said.

Calling India's democracy a vibrant one, he said "we look to everything that ties us together, and we look to reinforce all of those elements that tie us together," as he underlined the diplomatic ties that US and India share with each other.

He also stressed the fact that the partnership that the US shares with India is exceptionally deep and that both nations share the values that are common to American democracy and to Indian democracy.

"I'm not aware of this documentary that you point to, but I will say broadly, is that there are a number of elements that undergird the global strategic partnership that we have with our Indian partners. There are close political ties, there are economic ties, there are exceptionally deep people-to-people ties between the United States and India. But one of those additional elements are the values that we share the values that are common to American democracy and to Indian democracy," he added.

Last week, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak defended Prime Minister Narendra Modi and distanced himself from the BBC documentary series, saying he "doesn't agree with the characterisation" of his Indian counterpart.

Sunak made these remarks on the controversial documentary that was raised in the British Parliament by Pakistan-origin MP Imran Hussain.

"The UK government's position on this has been clear and longstanding and hasn't

dignity."

He even raised questions on "the purpose of the exercise and the agenda behind it."

"The documentary is a reflection of the agency and individuals that are peddling this narrative again. It makes us wonder about the purpose of the exercise and the agenda behind it; frankly, we do not wish to dignify these efforts," he added.

Referring to apparent remarks made by former UK Secretary Jack Straw in the documentary series, Bagchi said "He (Jack Straw) seems to be referring to some internal UK report. How do I have access to that? It's a 20-year-old report. Why would we jump on it now? Just because Jack Straw says it how do they lend it that much legitimacy."

"I heard words like inquiry and investigations. There is a reason why we use the colonial mindset. We don't use words loosely. What inquiry they were diplomats there...investigation, are they ruling the country?" Bagchi asked.

Prominent Indian-origin UK citizens condemned the series. Prominent UK citizen Lord Rami Ranger said the "BBC caused a great deal of hurt to over a billion Indians." Furthermore, the US Department spokesperson also said that the US has always called for regional stability in South Asia and that its relationships with India and Pakistan stand on their own.

He further stated that the pace and scope of dialogue between India and Pakistan is clearly a matter for the two countries.

"We've long called for regional stability in South Asia. Our relationships with India & Pakistan stand on their own and we don't see them as zero-sum. But pace, scope & character of any dialogue between India & Pakistan is a matter for the two countries," Price said during the briefing.

Extreme Israeli group takes root in US with fundraising bid

Continued from page-1

The amount of money raised through a U.S. non-profit is not known. But the AP and Shomrim have documented the money trail from New Jersey to imprisoned Israeli radicals who include Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassin and people convicted in deadly attacks on Palestinians.

This overseas fundraising arrangement has made it easier for the Israeli group, Shlom Asiraich, to collect money from Americans, who can make their contributions through the U.S. nonprofit with a credit card and claim a tax deduction.

Many Israeli causes, from hospitals to universities to charities, raise money through U.S.-based arms. But having the strategy adopted by a group assisting Jewish radicals raises legal and moral questions. It also comes against the backdrop of a new, far-right government in Israel led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, where ultranationalists and extremist lawmakers have gained unprecedented power.

According to Shlom Asiraich's promotional pamphlets, its beneficiaries include Yigal Amir, who assassinated Rabin in 1995; Amiram Ben-Uliel, convicted in the 2015 murder of a Palestinian baby and his parents in an arson attack; and Yosef Chaim Ben David, convicted of abducting and killing a 16-year-old Palestinian boy in Jerusalem in 2014. The group also assists an extremist ultra-Orthodox man who fatally stabbed a 16-year-old Israeli girl at Jerusalem's gay pride parade in 2015.

Shlom Asiraich, or "The Well-Being of Your Prisoners," has been raising money in Israel since at least 2018, and officially registered as a nonprofit in 2020 by a group mostly consisting of Israelis from hard-line settlements in the West Bank. At least five of the group's seven founders have themselves been questioned by Israeli authorities for crimes related to their activities against Palestinians. Some have been arrested and charged.

Recipients of its largesse have hailed the group for coming through in difficult times. "You have no idea how much you help us," the family of Ben-Uliel, who is serving three life sentences, wrote in a handwritten letter posted to the group's Facebook page. Being a relatively new organization, Shlom Asiraich's official filing to Israel's nonprofit registry provides little data and does not indicate how much money it has raised. But in its promotional flyers, recently broadcast by Israeli Channel 13 news, the organization indicated it has raised 150,000 shekels (about \$43,000).

Israeli nonprofits have long sought funding abroad, with the U.S. a major source. According to figures published by Noga Zivan, a consultant for nonprofits in Israel, between 2018 to 2020 Jewish-American organizations alone donated \$2 billion to Israel each year.

Several top Ukraine officials quit amid corruption claims

Continued from page-1

holding a handwritten resignation letter, thanking the president for the "opportunity to do good deeds every day and every minute." Tymoshenko was implicated in several scandals during his tenure, including in October last year when he was accused of using a car donated to Ukraine for humanitarian purposes.

The departure of Symonenko, a deputy prosecutor general, comes after media reports that he spent a holiday in Spain this winter, reportedly using a car belonging to a Ukrainian businessman.

In his evening address on Monday, Zelensky announced coming "personnel decisions" at various levels and said he was banning officials from travelling abroad for purposes not related to work. "If they want to rest now, they will rest outside the civil service," Zelenskyy said.

Transparency International ranked Ukraine 122 out of 180 in its corruption ranking for 2021.

The shakeups come after a Ukrainian deputy minister of development of communities, territories and infrastructure was sacked over the weekend following his arrest on suspicion of embezzlement.

Vasyl Lozynskiy was accused of receiving a bribe to "facilitate" the purchase of generators at inflated prices as Ukraine faces electricity shortages following Russian strikes on the energy grid.

The European Union has highlighted anti-corruption measures as one of the key reforms Ukraine needs to gain candidate status for the bloc.

According to the Centre for Economic Strategy, a Ukrainian think tank, the total amount of Western military and financial support for Kyiv could total \$100 billion this year, including more than \$40 billion for its armed forces.

US Debt ceiling: 2011 showdown leaves lessons for Biden, GOP

Continued from page-1

ing in the Future," a book on the U.S. debt. "That was the height of the 'tea party' stuff and they wanted to flex their muscles, but it's just such a stupid way to try to do it — because you don't really want to risk the good credit rating of the United States government," Gale said. "I suspect most of these guys already knew it."

The Treasury Department has notified Congress that it's time to again raise the nation's debt ceiling, now at \$31 trillion, to allow more borrowing to pay off the country's accumulated bills. Treasury said it has started taking "extraordinary measures" to keep paying the bills, but the money will run out by June.

Raising the nation's debt ceiling had been a routine matter historically, a final task after Congress had authorized federal spending and appropriated the money needed to pay for the country's various programs and services.

But that all changed when the Republican tea party came to town after the 2010 election. Saying Americans were "taxed enough already," the tea party House Republicans arrived promising to slash federal spending, using the debt ceiling vote as their political leverage. Debt had doubled during the George W. Bush presidency and the post-9/11 wars overseas, and it skyrocketed under President Barack Obama in the aftermath of the Great Recession, teetering around \$15 trillion.

At one point, Republicans were seeking \$1-for-\$1 tradeoffs — a dollar of spending cuts for every dollar of new borrowing. They also wanted a "cut, cap and balance" approach that would eventually curb deficits.

"We met for months," Republican Eric Cantor, the former House majority leader tasked by Speaker John Boehner to negotiate with Biden, recalled in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "We all sat down. But this year, this time, President Biden is now refusing to negotiate."

In the end, House Republicans could not agree on a deal with the Obama White House.

When the August 2011 deadline came to raise the debt ceiling, only an eleventh-hour agreement with Senate Republicans led by Mitch McConnell and some Democrats tasking a "Super Committee" to recommend further federal reductions ensured there would be no debt default.

Spooked by the political crisis in Washington, the credit markets downgraded the nation's credit ranking for the first time, upping the costs of future borrowing.

The Biden White House appears to have drawn the conclusion that it's not worth negotiating with new House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, who won a slim GOP majority in last November's midterm elections and who may — or may not — be able to deliver the votes on any debt ceiling deal.

US Treasury buys time for Biden and GOP on debt limit deal

"Look, lowering the deficit has always been a top priority," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Monday at the White House. She said Biden, a Democrat, has "always said he is happy to talk to anyone who wants to deal with that in a responsible way."

"But preventing the default," she said, "is a separate matter."

Biden is scheduled to meet Tuesday with Democratic congressional leaders at the White House and is planning to invite McCarthy in the future. McCarthy has been trying to push Biden to the table. "I think it's arrogance to say, 'Oh, we're not going to negotiate anything,'" the speaker told the AP recently at the Capitol. McCarthy has already shown how hard it will be to lead his majority — it took 15 ballots just to make him the House speaker in the face of resistance from right-flank Republicans.

To win over the holdouts, McCarthy promised his detractors he would fight to bring federal spending back to fiscal 2022 levels — an 8 per cent reduction, or 17 per cent if defence military spending is spared.

In pushing McCarthy to drive a hard bargain in debt talks, House Republicans may be taking a lesson from the tea party era that one way to force their leadership's hand is to threaten his ouster if he caves. During his campaign to become speaker, McCarthy also agreed to the hard-right demand to reinstate a House rule that allows a single lawmaker to file a "motion to vacate the chair," essentially a House vote to oust the speaker.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., all but dared McCarthy on Monday to put the GOP's proposed spending reductions on the table. "If Republicans are talking about draconian cuts, they have an obligation to show Americans what those cuts are, and let the public react," he said.

But it's not clear if the proposed fiscal 2022 spending cuts, or any, would win over McCarthy's hard-right flank to raise the debt ceiling. One major difference compared to 2011 is that "Republicans have not coalesced" around a unified position, said Rohit Kumar, who was an aide to McConnell during that showdown.

"At this point, I think it's unclear what could get 218 Republican votes in conjunction with a debt limit increase, even just as an opening bid," said Kumar, now an executive with the tax services firm PwC, referring to the tally of votes typically needed to pass House legislation.

McConnell again is expected to play a pivotal role in easing the debt ceiling standoff, and some have pointed to bipartisan Senate legislation that would review spending, much the way the failed Super Committee was tasked with finding cuts after the 2011 debt ceiling showdown.

"Forget the Super Committee," Rep. Tom Emmer, R-Minn., the GOP whip, said in a recent AP interview. "What a ridiculous outcome."

Many House Republicans were not in Congress during the 2011 debt ceiling showdown. Said Rep. Bob Good, R-Va., one of the McCarthy holdouts: "I'm certainly not focused on what happened 10 years ago."

Two-time Australian champ Azarenka tops Pegula, talks anxiety

MELBOURNE: On the court at Rod Laver Arena on Tuesday night, Victoria Azarenka — the athlete — displayed the same confident brand of take-the-ball-early, hard-hitting tennis that carried her to two Australian Open titles and the No. 1 ranking a decade ago.

That was responsible, in part, for the way she beat No. 3 seed Jessica Pegula 6-4, 6-1 to return to the semifinals at Melbourne Park for the first time since those triumphs in 2012 and 2013.

After the match, Victoria Azarenka — the person — opened up about how, away from the court in recent months, she managed to learn a new mindset by, in her words, "Trying to be neutral, not to go negative; accepting the anxiety that I have; accepting the fear that I have."

And that, too, she explained, allowed her to deal with a fear of failure and play once again to the very best of her considerable abilities, which she certainly did against Pegula, who hadn't dropped a set in the tournament and ceded only 18 games through four matches until Tuesday.

The two — her professional and personal lives — "are definitely connected," Azarenka said.

"I don't think that one goes without the other. I feel like a tennis court — probably for everybody, but for me, especially — triggers a lot of those fears, a lot of anxiety," she continued. "It's kind of like an open canvas. When everything comes there at a high-pressure moment, high-stress moment, weird emotions come on the court. Sometimes, like, 'What ... are you thinking about on the court?'"

Indian played "average" hockey in World Cup: legends

BHUBANESWAR: Indian hockey legends on Tuesday slammed the national team for its "average" performance in the World Cup where they lost to New Zealand to crash out of the quarterfinal race, saying the debacle has halted the momentum the nation had gained after winning a historic bronze at the Tokyo Olympics.

coaching staff, Kumar, who scored the winning goal in the 1975 World Cup final against arch-rivals Pakistan, said, "We have had many foreign coaches in the past but what is our achievement in the World Cup after 1975? So, please tell me what difference would have been there if we had Indian coaches. Indian coaches would not have done worse at least."



India had gone into the showpiece with hopes of finishing on the podium for the first time after the gold medal-winning feat in 1975 but lost to New Zealand in sudden death in the crossover match.

The hosts will play 9th to 16th classification matches on Thursday and Saturday in Rourkela.

Member of the 1975 gold-winning team Ashok Kumar said the Indians lacked quality and were far inferior to top nations in all departments of the game.

"The team was given all kinds of support, 6-7 months camp, foreign exposure, top class infrastructure, the best of diets, what else could have been done? And what performance did they give? You cannot even reach the quarterfinals of a home World Cup in front of your fans," Kumar said.

"It has to do a lot with the quality of players, ultimately the debacle was due to average players playing average games. That can't win you a World Cup medal," he added.

Making further analysis of the performance, Kumar said, "Whenever we attacked, most of the time we ended up at the opposition circle. I don't know how the players were trained, there was no distribution of the ball, no creative passes, and they simply didn't know what to do. If you can't score more than four goals against a team like Wales, then what are you doing?"

"Since they cannot score from open play, they had to depend on penalty corners and Harmanpreet Singh was under tremendous pressure and he failed. We were not up to the mark in all departments of the game. Except for Akashdeep Singh, I would say no (out-field) player played well in the four matches." "The team failed miserably in defence also. They conceded two goals against Wales and then allowed New Zealand to come back twice after two-goal down. They cannot do that in a World Cup. I don't know why Rupinder Pal Singh retired after the Olympics, he would have been a great asset in defence and PC conversion," the 72-year-old said.

Hockey WC 2023: Finding order in disorder

Asked if there should be changes in the

"Thanks to the support of the government, especially the Odisha government, we are hosting World Cups here and our team should have capitalised on this. But it's like we are hosting tournaments and our team is not getting better. I feel that the good momentum we gained from the Tokyo Olympics has been halted by this World Cup performance."

Former captain Sardar Singh said the debacle was due to the collective failure of the team. "Hockey is a team game. If you want to win a tournament, 14 to 15 players of the squad need to perform at 70 to 80 per cent, which was missing in this World Cup," said the legendary midfielder, who is part of the Hockey India selection committee.

"Hardik's injury was a big blow as he was the main player in the midfield. He was instrumental in linking up with the forwards and creating opportunities, besides scoring a goal (against Spain)."

Sardar also agreed that Harmanpreet felt the pressure of captaincy as he missed one penalty corner after another. "He (Harmanpreet) felt the pressure of captaincy, that too in a home World Cup. He is one of the best drag-flickers in the world and did well in the Test series against Australia also. But he did not look his best, perhaps feeling the pressure. But he is a world-class player and cannot be counted out."

Hockey WC 2023: Overdependence on Harmanpreet, Hardik's injury cost India On head coach Graham Reid asking for a mental conditioning coach going ahead, Sardar said, "If he (Reid) felt so, he should have raised the demand after the Olympics. Hockey India and SAI have been providing all necessary help to the team and they would have addressed it too."

Hockey India president and former captain Dilip Tirkey said not reaching the quarterfinals of the World Cup after the high of the Tokyo Olympics less than two years ago was very disappointing.

"Some players from whom we had a lot of expectations, they somehow could not perform. We all have accepted it," he said.

"We got several penalty corners but we scored a few from them. There was something missing in our defensive structure also."

IND vs NZ: Rohit, Gill hit tons for hosts, Kiwis need 386 to win third ODI

INDORE: Blazing centuries from skipper Rohit Sharma and fellow opener Shubman Gill took India to a formidable 385-9, despite a middle-order wobble in Tuesday's third and final one-day international against New Zealand.

Rohit (101) and Gill (112) put on 212 for the opening wicket in Indore to lay a solid foundation for the innings, with the hosts already holding an unassailable 2-0 series lead.

New Zealand's bowlers hit back after the pair's departure on a batting-friendly pitch, where at one stage the hosts looked set to go well past 400.

India slipped to 293-5 before Hardik Pandya took charge, boosting the total with a 38-ball 54, including three fours and three sixes.

Rohit and Gill, who hit a match-winning 208 in the series opener, started cautiously with India reaching 17-0 in the first four overs before the pair exploded with boundaries.

Gill smashed Lockie Ferguson for four fours and a six in a 22-run eighth over and Rohit joined the party with a few big hits over the fence.

It was the highest opening partnership by any team against the Kiwis in the 50-over format, surpassing the 201-run stand of Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir in 2009.

Gill recorded his third 100-plus score in his last four ODI innings, taking off his helmet and basking in applause from the stands when he crossed the milestone. Rohit made his first

ODI century since January 2019.

Michael Bracewell bowled Rohit and Blair Tickner sent back Gill in the next over and India soon lost regular wickets, despite a brisk 36 from Virat Kohli.

The left-handed Ishan Kishan was run out after a mix-up with Kohli, who soon fell to Jacob Duffy, before Pandya hit back.



Pandya put on 54 runs for the seventh wicket with Shardul Thakur, who hit 25, the hosts hitting 60 runs in the final five overs.

Teams

India: Rohit Sharma (capt), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Umran Malik

New Zealand: Finn Allen, Devon Conway, Henry Nicholls, Daryl Mitchell, Tom Latham (capt), Glenn Phillips, Michael Bracewell, Mitchell Santner, Jacob Duffy, Lockie Ferguson, Blair Tickner

Umpires: Jayaraman Madanagopal (IND), Nitin Menon (IND)

TV Umpire: Anil Chaudhary (IND)

Match Referee: Javagal Srinath (IND)

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