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8 Two Summits & an Agenda: Scene set for a Global Tug and Pull

9 Straws in the Gujarat breeze

16 Shakespeare Wallah, the movie

21 Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India

18 Priyanka Chopra gets a stylish home in New York City

In Beijing, Trump inks \$250 Billion deals, but gains little on N Korea



US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping during a welcome ceremony in Beijing. Photo courtesy PTI

BEIJING (TIP): Despite his heavy criticism of China during last year's campaign, the president toned down his rhetoric dramatically during a visit to Beijing, continuing a pattern of extreme shifts between insults and praise. Tone aside, the summit may not result in much more cooperation on North Korea policy, as the U.S. and Chinese views of the situation are fundamentally different.

contd on Page 32

Resurgence of Democrats shocks Republicans

Women and Minorities give Groundbreaking Wins



Dr. Ralph Northam (Governor of Virginia)

Phil Murphy (Governor of New Jersey)

Bill de Blasio (Mayor of New York)

Laura Curran (Nassau County Executive)

Melinda Katz (Queensborough President)

I.S. Saluja

NEW YORK (TIP): What accounts for the wave of Democratic successes in Tuesday's elections? Health care was a key issue in Virginia, as well as in Maine, where voters chose to expand

Medicaid under Obamacare. Some voters may have been motivated by the sense that their values were threatened by President Trump's authoritarian rhetoric. And Republicans in Congress face some obstacles to their next big

goal, tax reform: The House bill undercuts some key party positions, and the Senate just unveiled a competing plan. In short, Trump policies have not gone down well with voters. His lowest

contd on page 32

Together we can eradicate blindness in children: Dr VK Raju



Andhra Pradesh Health Minister Dr. K. Srinivas (left) felicitated Dr. V.K. Raju (center). Dr. Rahul Gupta, Commissioner and State Health Officer, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services (right) arrived from USA to felicitate Dr. Raju.

Prakash M Swamy
VIJAYWADA, INDIA (TIP): There are 1.2 Million physicians of Indian-origin providing healthcare in nearly 100 countries of the world and together they can eliminate preventable blindness in children from the globe, said Dr VK Raju, Clinical Professor, Department of Ophthalmology at West

Virginia University and Founder-President of The Eye Foundation of America in Morgantown, West Virginia.

He was addressing an international seminar - "Preventing blindness in childhood and beyond" organized by the Rotary Club of Vijayawada, Rotary Club of Morgantown, Eye

contd on Page 13

Modi to attend Asean Summit in Philippines

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on November 12, will leave on a three-day visit to the Philippines where he will attend the Asean and East Asia Summits and hold a bilateral meeting with President Rodrigo Duterte, it was announced on November 9.

This will be Modi's first official visit to the Philippines. "He will be going there to attend the 15th

contd on page 32

PM Narendra Modi will hold a bilateral meeting with Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte.



Canada plans 3 lakh new settlers next year

TORONTO (TIP): In what may bring cheer to thousands of Indians, especially from Punjab, looking for greener pastures abroad, the Canadian Government is set to open its "floodgates" for immigrants, allowing up to 3,10,000 newcomers in 2018. The total annual allowance of influx of

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AAPI Launches Veterans Obesity Awareness Campaign in New York



Launching of the Veterans Obesity Awareness Campaign with the lighting of the traditional lamp at the Indian Consulate in New York on Thursday, November 2nd, 2017



Leaders representing AAPI, WHEELS Global Foundation (WGF), Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO), VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS (VFW), and MOVE! Weight Management Program, after signing the official document pledging to work together in the campaign supporting in one hundred VA facilities throughout the continental United States

NEW YORK (TIP): Over 3/4th of Veterans receiving care in VA facilities are considered to be overweight or obese and struggling with weight related issues. The epidemic of obesity across our country has adverse effects on morbidity, mortality, and healthcare expenditures. American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), the most dynamic and ethnic organization representing more than 100,000 physicians of Indian origin, officially launched Veterans Obesity Awareness Campaign (VOAC) at a solemn ceremony at the Indian Consulate in New York on Thursday, November 2nd, 2017.

Dr. Gautam Samadder, President of AAPI, in his presidential address, said, AAPI has joined a team from VA in its mission to improve the Health and Healthcare of Overweight and Obese Veterans along with other organizations including WHEELS Global Foundation (WGF), Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO) and VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS (VFW) and MOVE! Weight Management Program in developing the "Veteran Obesity Awareness Campaign". Leaders representing each of these groups signed the official document, pledging to work together in the campaign supporting in at least one hundred VA facilities throughout the continental United States.

"The goal of the campaign is to support in one hundred VA facilities throughout the continental United States," he said. Towards this end, AAPI has formed an adhoc committee to oversee its functions, consisting of Dr. Samadder, President of AAPI, Dr. Vikas Kuarna, Chir; Dr. Uma Koduri and Dr. Satheesh Kathula, Co-Chairs.

"Coming from a nation that has given much to the world, today physicians of Indian origin have become a powerful influence in medicine across the world. Nowhere is their authority more keenly felt than in the United States, where Indians make up the largest non-Caucasian segment of the American medical community," Dr. Samadder said. "The overrepresentation of Indians in the field of medicine is striking - in practical terms, one out of seven doctors in the United States is of Indian Heritage. We provide medical care to over 40 million of US population, caring for one in every seven patients in the nation. There are 150 AAPI Chapters across the nation and it has an ever growing membership of Indian American Physicians," he reported.

Providing a brief background to the launch and initiative of the Obesity awareness program for the Veterans, Dr. Samadder said, a few years back, AAPI organized a highly successful "Childhood Obesity Awareness Campaign (COAC)" with a goal to help fight the childhood obesity problem by providing education to the students & their parents. Starting with the Pilot program in 2013, AAPI



Dr. Gautam Samadder, President of AAPI, addressing the audience

adopted close to 80 schools across the United States where they are promoting "Wear Yellow" for Obesity & Childhood Obesity Awareness, 5-2-1-0 and Choose My Plate concept with the tag line of "Be Fit. Be Cool." This success story has inspired AAPI to take on this major challenge among Veterans today, he declared.

Deputy Consul General of India in New York, who had inaugurated event with the lighting of the traditional lamp, said, "We are proud to host AAPI as it launches this significant event for Veterans." While praising the contributions of Veterans, she said, the United States stands among the top nations of the world due the sacrifices made by Veterans. Describing Physicians of Indian Origin as a flourishing and highly influential community, the Indian official said, "This noble initiative is a great way of giving back to their adopted land."

Joshua Starks, a retired Commander in the US Army, shared with the audience, his own personal experiences in his own family and among his colleagues in the Army, about the many challenges faced in tackling obesity among Veterans. Describing obesity as a "symptom of the many major problems" faced by Veterans, Starks told the audience about the ways in which the Veterans are affected physically, mentally and emotionally after they return from deployment around the world, while defending freedom and liberty. According to him, the efforts at the VA in Tulsa has helped hundreds of Veterans by the older Veterans becoming mentors of the younger ones, and in the process finding meaning and purpose in life.

Dr. Vikas Khurana, in his address said, "The collaborative launch of the Veteran Obesity Awareness Campaign (VOAC) is a way of seeking to acknowledge and to create awareness about obesity among veterans as a national problem.

Dr. Uma Koduri provided the audience with a



A section of the audience at the official launch of the Veterans Obesity Awareness Campaign

brief description of her efforts in Tulsa, Oklahoma in successfully launching Childhood Obesity awareness campaign, which was later on adopted by AAPI at the national level and now the initiative to help Veterans has become a national movement with the larger AAPI taking it across the nation.

Dr. Satish Kathula told the audience of the enormous cost, \$200 Billion a year, spent in addressing the obesity problem in the country. This new initiative by AAPI and its partners is a way to educate AAPI members of the problems and create awareness among them and enable them to work towards preventing obesity among veterans and the larger population, he said.

Dr. Raj Bhayani, Coordinator of the event, in his introductory remarks, called obesity a form of "terror" from within us. "If we do not run, obesity will run behind us," he said.

Rajat Gupta, an Indian American businessman and philanthropist, in his address, said, "With a vision to use technology to enable philanthropy, WHEELS Global Foundation (WGF) is a non-profit organization, that is a pioneer in applying technology to provide solutions to issues related with water, health, education, energy, livelihood, and sustainability." Founded by the alumni of Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), the foundation partners with non-profits based in the U.S. and India to raise awareness and implement solutions for issues related to their six focus areas.

Dr. Sudhir Parikh, representing Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO), which is partnering with AAPI, in this initiative, said, GAPIO is a nonprofit organization and its vision is "Improving Health Worldwide". GAPIO stands to empower physicians of Indian origin to achieve highest

professional standards, to provide affordable good quality healthcare, to contribute to local and regional community development and thereby help to reduce health inequalities and alleviate suffering globally. While lauding AAPI's efforts, Dr. Parikh offered whole-hearted support to AAPI in achieving the goals of the campaign.

MOVE! Weight Management Program, is another program, supported by VA's National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), that is part of this larger initiative by AAPI to spread awareness about obesity among Veterans. MOVE! is a weight management health promotion program designed to improve the lives of Veterans. Their goals are to annually screen every Veteran who receives care at VA facilities for obesity, refer individuals to weight management services, and make available different treatment options that fit the needs and preferences of our Veterans.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the nation's oldest major veterans' organization, is another partner with AAPI to work towards creating awareness of this major issue. VFW has an impeccable and longstanding record of service and stewardship. Their mission is to foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts, to serve our veterans, the military and our communities & to advocate on behalf of all veterans.

AAPI is an umbrella organization representing dozens of local chapters, specialty societies and alumni organizations. Headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, AAPI represents the interests of over nearly 100,000 physicians, medical students and residents of Indian heritage in the United States. It is the largest ethnic medical organization in the nation. For more, please visit: www.aapiusa.org

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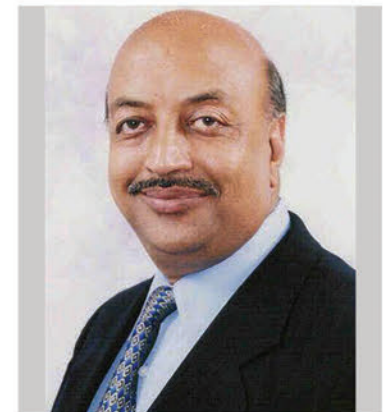
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'Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation' Raises 2 Million at a Glittering Gala



Mohan Wanchoo, Gala Chair speaks

Prakash Waghmare

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation's ('EVF') glittering 'Gala' on Saturday, Nov. 4 at the majestic 'Cipriani' on Wall Street in New York City was a grand success. The response for this highly anticipated event was simply overwhelming, not only in terms of capacity-attendance, but also donor's enthusiasm to support EVF's worthy cause. The evening raised more than \$2 Million. 'Ekal' as 'EVF' is popularly known, had been raising funds in USA through series of concerts mainly directed at grass-root level, until now. This gala was an added innovative effort to reach out to the Corporate world and high net-worth individuals and bring mainstream America into its fold. This impeccably organized spectacular evening's main architect was Mohan Wanchoo (Chairman, Founder of EC Infosystems). He was ably supported in this affair by Chirag Patel (CO-CEO & Chairman of 'Amneal Pharmaceuticals'), Soner Kanlier (CEO Jasmine Universe) and Rajesh Gooty (Founder, Pres.-CEO of M Corp). Since its inception 29 years ago, Ekal had been setting new records, year after year in fund-raising. Last year, even without any high-end gala event, this largest NGO, with chapters in ten different countries including in Middle-eastern countries, raised \$7.2 Million in USA alone.

The evening started with the salutation to American and Indian flags with national anthems on the big screen. Welcoming the guests, Mohan Wanchoo, briefed the gathering about Ekal's multi-dimensional approach to uplift rural and tribal areas of India through emphasis on literacy, healthcare, integrated village development and empowerment of village folks. He informed the gathering that Ekal



Mitzi Perdue delivers keynote speech



Some Entertainment



A view of the gathering

currently has 58,000 schools, spread all over India supporting 1.56 Million children - more than half of which were girls. He further stressed that the project cost, including administration and monitoring was only \$1-a-day or \$365 per year per school. Chirag Patel thanked all the teachers working at grass-root level in India and imparting life-sustaining education to the children facing various hurdles. Vinod Jhunjhunwala, the President of Ekal-USA paid tribute to Ekal leadership in USA as well as Ekal-India team, which had flown in specially for this occasion. Under Ekal-USA leadership Ashok Danda, Subhash Gupta, Ranjani Saigal and Ramesh Shah were acknowledged while for Ekal-India Dr Subhash Chandra, Bajrang Bagra, Laxmi Goel, and Naresh Jain were recognized. Ranjani Saigal, the Executive Director touched on the whole range of Ekal mission in remote areas through couple of brief 'reality videos' that also depicted use of digital technology, organic farming, and skill-training centers which are empowering rural life.

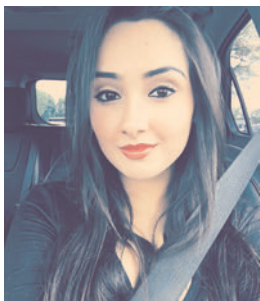
Ms. Mitzi Perdue, the heiress to 'Sheraton Hotel chain' and 'Perdue Poultry Farms', was one of the keynote speakers of the evening along with Dr. Subhash Chandra, Chairman of ZEE-TV and Chairman of Ekal-Global. Ms. Perdue, regaled

the audience with three heartwarming stories about Ekal, that also reflected the importance of education for better achievements in life. Her speech enthused so many people that live mission-based auction for raising funds had a jump start with pledging process reaching one million mark within first 15 minutes. Three generous donors - Chirag Patel, Ajay/Ranjini Poddar, Sant Singh Chatwal - each donated \$250,000 each. There was amazing synergy and excitement during the pledging process - so much so that it was hard to keep the tab on all auction 'paddle-cards'.

The frenzy to give donations was simply astonishing. Dr. Subhash Chandra, praised Mohan Wanchoo and Chirag Patel for putting up the magnificent fund-raising show and challenged economically blessed group of people to shoulder responsibility of those in need. Lauding the generosity of big donors, he further elaborated that numerous small donors were equally important as they had larger stake in building any Nation by their sheer number. The evening was interspersed with fabulous Indian dances.

With this awesome success, Ekal plans to make such 'Galas' an annual affair going forward and host them at various Metropolitan places like LA, Chicago, Houston etc.

NHL sparks more controversy after rumors of scrapping the all-star game loom



BY MARVI SAJID

The National Hockey League is looking to get rid of the All-Star Game held annually which celebrates a full weekend of star athletes, the game, and its fans. The All-star game is an event used to showcase exciting skills players are unable to use in conventional play, and brings league superstars who don't

normally play together center stage for one night. The NHL is rumored to endeavor toward international growth opportunities rather than just a "celebration" which doesn't bring growth to the game.

The idea came into play after the league decision to not attend the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and just a month after

the Vancouver Canucks and Los Angeles Kings played pre-season exhibition games in China. The news was released by Sportsnet's Chris Johnston during Hockey Night in Canada, where he made mention of the news and added that the NHL has appointed Jaka Lednik, a European businessman to assist in the NHL's European

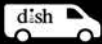
development. There is no word, as of right now if the change will be put into effect in the oncoming seasons, or if it is just another unfulfilled initiative, as the league is still in its discussion phase. The 2018 NHL All-Star festivities are set to kick off in Tampa Bay, at AMALIE Arena on Saturday, January 27th through the 28th.

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GUEST COMMENT

A failed experiment: Anniversary of an unnecessary disaster

Even after a year of painful demonetization, the government is struggling to smoke out black money. Contrary to its expectation, almost the entire black money stash found demonetization an easy way to blend in the banking system and thereby earn interest. Even the attempt to curb counterfeit notes through the move failed. The other two principal promises - choking terror funding and ushering in the era of digital economy - did not exactly take-off. FM Jaitley's assertion that demonetization has reduced stone pelting in J&K is, at best, an oversimplification of a complex issue. Admittedly, the removal of old currencies from the system did accelerate digital payment transactions. The tempo, however, quickly went down soon after re-monetization. Later, the GST encouraged small businessmen to dump digitation and resort to cash to escape the tax net.

Demonetization, however, did nudge people towards greater compliance. But, this would be more out of the coercive pressure of the tax inspector, which is not an easy sentiment. This fear has already robbed "household savings" of millions of families by forcing women to disclose their small reserves, and thereby, killed the Indian culture of micro-savings. Thus, demonetization destroyed the informal financial cushion that often came in handy at times of a family crisis. Lifetime savings of Gurkha regiment retirees in Nepal became worthless. Similarly, Indian currencies kept as valued forex by millions of citizens in neighboring Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar became worthless paper, thereby eroding trust in the Indian rupee. Imagine, if the US were to do the same with the dollar.

Undoubtedly, PM Modi's stated intent behind demonetization had initially been well-received by the people, who patiently endured it for more than 50 days. Its socio-economic costs, however, have been enormous. Most of those who lost jobs or shut their small business units due to the currency squeeze were from extremely vulnerable background. Many people also lost their lives due to this futile experiment. Whatever be the government's self-congratulatory sales pitch, for many Indians it has been a jolt from which they will take a long time to recover. (Tribune India)



By KC Singh

This week focus returns to Asia as two major summits - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and East Asia Summit (EAS) - are held in Vietnam and the Philippines, respectively. India is not a member of the first, though desirous of joining it. PM Narendra Modi shall interrupt relentless campaigning in Gujarat to attend the latter on November 12. US President Donald Trump, combining bilateral visits to Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), China, Vietnam and the Philippines with attending both summits, heightens interest, particularly as earlier he was skipping the EAS. Chinese President Xi Jinping, newly endorsed for a second five-year term by the 19th Party Congress, attending the APEC Summit completes the Asian drama.

The US State Department announced that Trump's focus would be on neutralizing nuclear threat from the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK), promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific (euphemism for contesting Chinese corraling of two-thirds of South China Sea, via artificial island building) and reciprocal trade, i.e., balancing the huge US trade imbalances with China, Japan and ROK. Trump is also expected to reassure allies and partners concerned over perceived US retreat from the region. Essentially, the summits this year are a power play between the US and China and a contest between two alternative visions of growth and governance. The Western liberal, democratic and free trade model is posited against the Chinese model, fine-tuned by President Xi, of economic success through centralized and authoritarian management underpinned by nationalism minus civil liberties and elective government.

The 19th Chinese Party Congress has allowed Xi to consolidate power and perhaps become the most powerful leader since Mao Zedong, with allies and followers controlling important institutions. Significantly, no clear successor is visible, thus breaching injunction by Deng Xiaoping, father of the Chinese economic miracle that his successors would only hold two five-year terms. Among the seven-member standing committee of the politburo, the de facto Chinese cabinet, is Wang Huning - professor, ideologue and adviser to all post-Deng presidents. He devised the "Three Represents" of President Jiang Zemin, recommending party reach out to private business and professionals and is now behind "Xi Jinping Thought" embedded in the constitution. He has, over decades, provided intellectual ballast to Chinese rulers' view that social and economic change can only be accomplished by centralized and authoritarian rule, while freezing political evolution. The Tiananmen Square uprising by students in 1989 was taken by them as confirming its validity. Xi has added an anti-graft edge, thus enhancing his own "legitimacy", which in Chinese tradition is called the "Mandate of Heaven". Ensuing public

AS I SEE IT

Two Summits & an Agenda: Scene set for a Global Tug and Pull

"China seeking "great power relationship" is nothing but a desire for the US to accept them as the only "other" in a bipolar engagement. Trump has frequently praised Xi in the past, even calling him "King of China", perhaps in line with his penchant for authoritarian rulers, assuming he can flatter them for a shortcut to strategic compromise. Trump would seek China to compel DPRK to accept nuclear restraint, if not disarmament; balance bilateral trade; and end Chinese predatory trading practices and poaching of intellectual property. Xi will tactically yield some ground but is unlikely to kowtow fully", says the author.



Big picture: PM Modi must realize the real challenge is without, not within

support has enabled him to purge potential rivals or dissenters.

At the 19th Congress, President Xi reiterated his "China Dream" to make the nation a "basically modernized nation" by 2035 and a "rich and powerful socialist nation" by 2050. The 21st century continental and maritime Silk Route, called the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), is the next step to achieve this. It is imagined as a Sino-centric network for trade and investments to rival, if not supplant, existing post-World War II architecture created by the West under US leadership.

The Xi-Trump summit thus assumes importance. Trump has frequently praised Xi in the past, even calling him "King of China", perhaps in line with his penchant for authoritarian rulers, assuming he can flatter them for a shortcut to strategic compromise. Trump would seek China to compel DPRK to accept nuclear restraint, if not disarmament; balance bilateral trade; and end Chinese predatory trading practices and poaching of intellectual property. Xi will tactically yield some ground but is unlikely to kowtow fully.

Asian neighbors of China, concerned over Trump's erratic and vacillating policy making, must devise alternative strategies, assuming Trump will, at best, henceforth, be an off-shore balancer. In a Pew Research Centre poll, only 24 per cent Japanese trust Trump compared to 78 per cent giving thumbs up to former President Barack Obama. PM Shinzo Abe is hewing a path by not allowing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) to collapse, inviting 11 members, minus the US which quit, to a meeting before Trump's visit. He has also resurrected and elevated to political level the 2007 meeting of Australia, India, Japan and the US, dubbed the Quad - a gathering of major regional democracies, expandable to include others later. As a swing power, India must use these emerging China-containing mechanisms as, indeed, alternative groupings, where China and India share space, for instance BRICS, etc.

Meanwhile, authoritarianism is spreading globally like a pandemic. Polls in India indicate a vast majority preferring a "strong" ruler. The play book is almost identical, despite differences in political and historical contexts. Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman in Saudi Arabia or President Xi in China or PM Modi in India use anti-corruption crusades to purge rivals, isolate opponents and bolster public image. Trump himself operates beyond the confines of own party and the Congress, sustained by social media. Nationalism becomes the handmaiden to suppress dissent and demoralize, or even silence media. Differences of power use or abuse are obliterated between authoritarian rulers straddling different political systems.

An Atlantic Council study predicts Indo-Pacific as globally the most economically dynamic region by 2050. With a fundamental power shift underway, the study concludes a "Trans-Pacific century" has already begun. China's BRI, advances in Artificial Intelligence, Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank, renewal energy advances and rededication to futuristic industries is its path to growth and rapid power accrual. The BJP-led Modi government, meanwhile, expends energy on eliminating opposition and constant electioneering, implementing ambitious, but poorly conceived schemes like demonetization and now GST, corraling media, exulting in selective positive economic news and soaring stock market.

The bubble may be more than in share prices and reality has been known to prick it inopportunely. PM Modi has a narrowing window to close ranks domestically and realize his challenge is without, not within. Unless he self-corrects soon, like Rajiv Gandhi in 1984 when China under Deng Xiaoping had only a four-year head-start over India, his would be a wasted mandate.

(The author is a former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs)

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Straws in the Gujarat breeze



By Zoya Hasan

“For the past several years, the BJP has constantly harped on the Gujarat model of development claiming that it was a perfect formula for growth, and it could be extended to the rest of the country. But in the meantime, Rahul Gandhi and his party upped their game in Gujarat, seeking to puncture the mythology built around the Gujarat model with pointed attacks on the government's economic policies and the inadequate development in the Prime Minister's home State”, says the author.

”

More than three years after the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) stormed to power at the Centre with an unprecedented victory, it finds itself on the defensive, especially on the economic front. This defensiveness extends to the political front as well, evident in the Gujarat election campaign where after 19 years of unbroken rule, the party is facing a serious challenge.

Tell-tale signs

Three developments signal that political equations in the country may well be in a state of flux. First, the rejection of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in recent university elections indicates a strong sense of discomfort with the BJP's politics among the youth who gave the party solid support in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. Second, the Election Commission's decision to de-hyphenate the Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat Assembly election notification which allowed the Central and State governments more time to frantically announce sops, including slashing rates of the goods and services tax (GST) on select items, loan waivers for farmers, and benefits for government employees. Third, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's attempt to pass the blame for the disruptive introduction of the GST and its shambolic implementation on the Congress implies that something is really changing on the ground.

For the first time, he argued in favor of collective ownership of the GST after taking sole credit for its introduction in a midnight session of Parliament, saying that all State governments, including of the Congress, are responsible for the GST.

This has created opportune conditions for the Congress Party to come out of its self-imposed hibernation since 2014. It suddenly appears to be eager, even aggressive, in taking on the BJP on its home turf. This coincides with a rising discontent across the country over the economic slowdown and growing job losses. The double blunder of demonetization and GST seems to have infused new life into Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi's floundering political career just weeks before his likely elevation as the party president.

The Gujarat election, which was expected to be an easy win for the BJP, has unexpectedly developed into a possibly close and certainly engrossing contest.

For the past several years, the BJP has constantly harped on the Gujarat model of development claiming that it was a perfect formula for growth, and it could be extended to the rest of the country. But in the meantime, Rahul Gandhi and his party upped their game in Gujarat, seeking to puncture the



mythology built around the Gujarat model with pointed attacks on the government's economic policies and the inadequate development in the Prime Minister's home State.

Against this backdrop, the Congress put the BJP on the back foot with its Gujarat campaign highlighting joblessness, decelerating economic growth and poor social infrastructure through the hashtag "Vikas Gando Thayo Chhe" (development has gone crazy).

Where is Vikas?

It has gone all out since then to broadcast and publicize the social media campaign captured by the image of an upturned state transport bus with its wheels off. While the Gujarat model proved extremely persuasive in 2014, three years later people seem to have a more skeptical take on it and what lies beneath it. Despite three decades of high growth rates, Gujarat's performance on social indicators has not improved significantly; this has damaged its credibility.

For the first time in more than two decades, people are freely criticizing the ruling dispensation, mocking the Gujarat model through jokes, caricatures, and parody. One witty message posted on Twitter sums up the popular take on the model: "In a conversation, on seeing the railway tracks submerged in water, a person asks why Vikas is not visible. He gets the reply that as Vikas is sitting in the bullet train, he is invisible."

The growing number of humorists poking fun at official policies has struck a chord among people. It forced BJP president Amit Shah to urge the State's youth not to fall prey to the Congress's anti-BJP propaganda on social media. Thanks to this campaign, the ruling party is facing its toughest fight in State, in sharp contrast to

the 2012 Assembly elections, for instance, when Mr. Modi had made powerful use of social media in his campaign against the Congress.

Aside from the advantages of political humor, the Gujarat campaign underlines the effectiveness of a State-specific approach. Ensuring that the Gujarat election remains a State battle, the Congress has fashioned its campaign around governance, law and order and failed promises of the Gujarat model, and questioning the leadership of incumbent Chief Minister Vijay Rupani and his predecessor Anandiben Patel while targeting specific social constituencies. Finding itself on the defensive on issues like nationalism, terrorism and corruption, the Congress has shifted the discourse to development failures to preempt Hindu consolidation; it is cornering the government on the economic front and at the same time shunning cultural and emotional issues. The Congress is keen to shed its pro-minority image and deflect attention from Hindu-Muslim tension in order to prevent the BJP from diverting the simmering discontent towards the familiar territory of minority appeasement and the projection of Congress as a Muslim-centric party.

However, while drawing attention to the government's economic failures, the Congress has not offered any alternative model of growth. In his speech at the University of California, Berkeley in September, Mr. Gandhi said the Congress can steer a new development model in the future and that "creating jobs in a democratic environment" is vital for inclusive growth. But what this new model is has not been spelt out so far. A critique of economic failures is not enough; a party must shape it with a social and economic agenda of its

own. Also, the weakness in the Congress's organization remains glaring: it has no strong State leader and no organization. The party has been rendered organizationally quite weak in Gujarat over the past two decades; it needs a dedicated cadre of grassroots workers and an organization to fight the formidable RSS/BJP election machine, which it does not have, leave alone the capacity to micro-manage elections as this political machine can.

Map of disaffection

To harvest the collective discontent in the State, the Congress has reached out to disaffected groups, including the Patidars, by attempting to build a social coalition with like-minded civil society leaders in Gujarat against the BJP.

The new coalition is pivoted on socio-economic issues, and not identity politics. That's the new strategic dimension of the campaign. Hampered by the lack of a strong local face, it revolves around bolstering the anti-BJP sentiment whipped up by the troika of young leaders: Alpesh Thakor, Jignesh Mewani and Hardik Patel. In theory, the support of OBCs, Dalits and Patels, represented by these three leaders, along with that of Adivasis, can give the Congress an edge over the BJP; in any event, their support has helped to create a public mood against the BJP.

It is too early to say what electoral dividends this fascinating campaign will pay, but one thing is clear. It has unsettled and disrupted the official narrative about the much-hyped Gujarat model of development that paid rich dividends for Narendra Modi in the 2014 elections.

(The author is Professor Emerita, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Tele-ophthalmology prevents blindness in infants

BY PRAKASH M SWAMY IN RAJAHMUNDRY

Siva, a technician working at Goutami Eye Institute checks the eyes of the newborns at the neonatal intensive care unit in Government General Hospital in Kakinada, some 60 kilometers from Rajahmundry in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

He gently and carefully captures image of each eye of the prematurely-born babies with the help of portable Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) Retcam machine to check the blood vessels.

Dr. Y. Srinivasulu Reddy, an internationally acknowledged vitreo-retina surgeon at the Institute in Rajahmundry is waiting for the beep sound of his Whats App messages and on hearing the melodious tone; he enlarges the photos on the screen and checks minutely the images of the eyes, one after the other.



Dr. V.K. Raju (center) guides his assistants in conducting an eye check up on a child at Goutami Eye Institute in Rajahmundry

He enlarges the images of the doubtful eyes sent on his laptop screen and then calls Krishna and identifies the infants that require laser correction or other forms of intervention to save their precious sight. The images taken by Siva are instantaneously transmitted from the field to one of India's acknowledged retinal surgeons Dr Reddy in real time so that no time is lost. Welcome to digital India.

Goutami Eye Institute, founded by the visionary Dr VK Raju Regional Eye Associates/ Clinical Professor, Department of Ophthalmology; West Virginia University and Founder, President; The Eye Foundation of America, is a shining example how tele- Ophthalmology helps save the nearly lost eyesight of thousands of new born babies in India.

The retina surgeon and his team await the arrival of the infants with weak blood vessels at the hospital and perform the necessary laser correction to restore the eye sight - all free of cost. The 50-bed eye institute that imparts world class treatment at no cost to the hapless poor has been hailed as a lamp that lights the houses of the underprivileged and saves them from darkness.

The pre-mature babies checked are below 35 weeks and weighing less than two kilos and the new born in premature delivery are prone to weak blood vessels as they are formed towards the end of pregnancy and are hard to detect.

The ROP Ret cam brought to India first time by Dr Raju costing close to Rs one crore provides an invaluable tool to detect retinopathy in premature babies whose parents have neither resources nor adequate knowledge to understand the seriousness of the problem leading to permanent blindness if not treated early.



Dr. Richard Hertle of Akron Children's Hospital in the US and one of the celebrated surgeons in the field to perform surgeries on the infants is the visiting faculty for the last five years.



The technicians visit all the neo natal intensive care units of government general hospitals in East and West Godavari districts and carry out the screening with the help of the Ret cam. Plans are on to expand the screening in Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram and Visakhapatnam districts in the future.

The trained technicians are sent to neo natal intensive care units to take retinal images of the pre-mature babies and identify those at risk. Laser surgeries are performed free of cost to the poor and those who can afford pay a very nominal amount of Rs 2,000. Of the 1500 premature babies screened, 112 required laser surgery or other interventions to prevent childhood blindness, said V S Prakash, Chief Administrative Officer of the Institute.

The Institute is world class in the real sense as its one of the few centers in India to offer treatment to a disease where the eyeballs of the children keeps rolling or revolving. This results in the impairment of the vision permanently. Also known as Nystagmus or involuntary movement of eyeballs, the disease affects the new born. There are only 30 or so ophthalmic surgeons all over the world to correct the malfunctioning of the eyes with just a few in India, said VV Kumar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer of the Institute.



The Institute has invited Dr. Richard Hertle of Akron Children's Hospital in the US and one of the celebrated surgeons in the field to perform surgeries on the infants in Rajahmundry. Dr. Hertle is a regular visiting faculty for the last 5 years. He will not only perform the specialized corrective eye surgery free of cost between December 4 and 9 this year but will provide hands on experience to young Indian pediatric ophthalmic surgeons.

About two dozen young surgeons from across the nation will be invited to join the American specialist who will take them two per surgery he is doing on the infant by turns. The rest of them will interact with Dr Hertle in theater through video conference during all the surgeries. Using a sterilized microphone, he will clarify doubts and explains the procedure for correction while simultaneously performing the surgeries - all thanks to the vision of Dr Raju to make blindness free India.

The entire surgical corrections will be videotaped in high definition and shown to medical students. Dr. Hertle is expected to perform 150 to 200 surgeries during his stay in Rajahmundry. This will be first of its kind in India.

Dr. Leela Raju, world renowned cornea specialist, Leela Raju, chief of ophthalmology, Bellevue hospital, NY university Langone, New York and daughter of Dr Raju accompanied by Dr. Will Young and Dr Duncan Katherine also from the US, will be conducting free oculoplasty surgery on poor babies with corneal problems.

The team will be in Rajahmundry between December 4 and 7. The experts will operate on kids with unique disorders whereby the eyelids close involuntarily. These kids require a specialized surgery - a kind of plastic surgery- to correct the defects.

The Institute that focuses on preventable blindness among children will be doing massive eye screening camps in all government and municipal schools. Over 5 lakhs screened, and many thousands of children provided spectacles in the project

supported by Government of India's Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) and Gail India Limited till 2013.

The Institute has trained the primary school teachers how to check the vision of the children who have difficulty in reading from the black board (astigmatism) or those suffering from chronic head ache and refer them to the Institute for correction of refractive errors. The Institute has plans to revive the screening in East and West Godavari districts.

The Institute founded by Dr Raju in 2005 is working on 75 percent free treatment to be compensated partially by 25 percent of paying patients. On an average over 200 patients are seen every day and thousands are seen every year in outreach programs. in the outpatient department. Of which 25 to 30 patients undergo surgeries such as cataract, retinal surgery, pedantic cataract, squint correction for babies and adults. There are five full-time surgeons assisted by 75 para medical and other staff.



The Institute conducts rural eye camps in villages, identifies those require correction, brings them to the Institute for surgery. The patients are not only operated free but their three-day inpatient stay, food and medicines for three months are provided at no cost. One attender of the patients is also provided free stay and food.

For each patient fitted with Intraocular Lens (IOL) the government gives Rs 1000 as against the expenses of Rs 4,000 and the balance is absorbed by the Institute. The same cataract surgery is performed at a cost of Rs 6,000 in private hospitals.

The Institute also screens the current and retired employees of the State Government at every city and villages in Krishna, Guntur, East and West Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts under the state health insurance scheme. For each patient fitted with Intraocular lens (IOL), the government gives Rs 1000 as against the expenses of Rs 4,000 and the balance is absorbed by the Institute. The same cataract surgery is performed at a cost of Rs 6000 in private hospitals.



Termed as baby of Dr Raju, the Institute has gained from his expertise and international connection immensely. Visiting at least four to five times a year, he never carries any personal items as baggage but two suitcases full of medicines from the US for free distribution among poor patients. Such expensive medicines are never sold. The Eye Foundation of America started in 1979 is now working in 25 countries including India with the goal World without childhood blindness.



Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan's former PM indicted in three references

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's accountability court on Wednesday formally indicted ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif in three separate corruption references filed against him and his children by the National Accountability Bureau.

The court adjourned the hearing until November 15.

Rejecting his plea to club all the cases together, the judge called the former PM to the rostrum and read out the charges to him in each of the three references. Calling the investigation "malafide and politically motivated", Sharif pleaded not guilty to all charges.

Sharif also said since the Supreme Court had given six months to wrap up the cases against him, the court will have to decide each of the four references (including one against finance minister Ishaq Dar) within 45 days. The judge, however, assured that all cases would be heard simultaneously and concluded within the specified timeframe.

Outside the court, Sharif accused the judiciary of being biased and full of hatred for him. "These judges are full of hatred and anger. I knew that the decision of the review petition I had filed in the Supreme Court would not come in my favour," he told reporters a day after the SC had issued a detailed verdict on his review petition.

In its order, the Supreme Court said that Sharif had tried to fool the people inside and outside the Parliament. "He even tried to fool the court without realising that 'you can fool all the



people for some of the time, some of the people all the time but you cannot fool all the people all the time." Refuge in evasive, equivocal and non-committal replies does not always help," said the 23-page SC judgment.

"Their hatred was reflected in their words. Their hatred, anger and words will become a dark chapter of history," Sharif said, adding that the judiciary was responsible for penning down several dark chapters in Pakistan's history. "Their judgment on my review petition would also be written in dark letters," he said.

Pakistan's top court had disqualified Nawaz Sharif on July 28 in the Panama

Papers case verdict that showed that his children were owners of offshore companies registered in the British Virgin Islands and the companies were used to buy offshore properties. In its verdict, the Supreme Court had ordered the NAB to investigate and conduct a trial against Sharif family. The NAB has filed three references against the Sharif family and one against Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in the accountability court.

If convicted, the accused may face up to 14 years imprisonment and lifelong disqualification from holding public office besides freezing of bank accounts and assets. (PTI)

NATO to boost Afghan mission by 3,000 troops

BRUSSELS (TIP): NATO will boost its training mission in Afghanistan by 3,000 troops, chief Jens Stoltenberg said today as Kabul reeled from the latest deadly attack on civilians.

Around half the new troops will come from the United States, and the overall size of NATO's training and support mission in the unrest-hit country will increase from 13,000 to 16,000, he said.

Speaking a day before NATO defence ministers meet in Brussels, Stoltenberg said the alliance would boost its presence "to help the Afghans break the stalemate, to send a clear message to Taliban to the insurgents that they will not win on the battleground".

"There will be more troops. Current level is around 13,000, the new level will be around 16,000... so far indications are roughly half US, half non-US," he added.

But Stoltenberg insisted there would be no return to combat operations. "We are focusing on training the Afghan special operations forces, which have proven so key in the fight against the insurgents," he said.

The Taliban, ousted from power in a US-led invasion in 2001, have been resurgent since NATO ended combat operations in 2014, and the Islamic State group are also stepping up attacks.

Gunmen disguised as policemen stormed Shamshad TV station in Kabul today, killing one person and wounding two dozen others in an attack claimed by IS.

Stoltenberg said there will also be more help to develop the Afghan air force. Over 16 years of war in Afghanistan, air strikes have proved a potent weapon against the Taliban.

The decision to boost numbers will be formally approved by the NATO defence ministers' meeting in Brussels tomorrow and on Thursday.

US ambassador to NATO Kay Bailey Hutchison said last month that Washington would ask other alliance members to contribute around 1,000 more troops in Afghanistan

This was to add to the roughly 3,000 US troops who are already dispatched to train and advise the country's security forces under US President Donald Trump's new Afghan strategy. (AFP)



Nepal opens bridge built with India's help near China border

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal on Nov 5 inaugurated a bridge built with India's financial assistance of \$430,626 on the Kaligandaki river near China border.

The bridge at Jomsom area in Mustang district not only provides direct motorable connectivity to people of Mustang but also benefits thousands of tourists and pilgrims visiting the famous Muktinath temple and upper Mustang for trekking, the Indian Embassy here said in a statement.

The newly-constructed Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) bridge was inaugurated by ambassador of India to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri.

India had extended a total of 44.5 million Nepali rupees (\$430,626 or 2.7 crore Indian rupees) as financial assistance for its construction as part of India-Nepal Economic Cooperation (INEC) programme, the statement said.

Prior to the construction of the RCC bridge, the old suspension bridge on the river Kaligandaki could not be used by motorists, it said.

People had to alight from their vehicles and took another vehicle from across the river to reach their destination, the statement added.

The INEC has an outlay of over 76 billion Nepali rupees with more than 554 large and small development projects completed or currently being implemented across the country in cooperation with the Nepal government.

The projects focus on the education, health and infrastructure sectors. (PTI)

DIG including Four policemen killed in Pakistan suicide attack

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police and four police officials were killed and nine injured in a suicide bombing in Pakistan's southwestern city of Quetta on Nov 9.

The suicide bomber targeted DIG Hamid Shakeel's vehicle when it was passing through a residential area of the city. Law enforcement officials said Shakeel had played a key role in arresting militants and members of separatist groups in the volatile Balochistan province in the recent years. He was heading the transport and telecommunication departments of police in the province.

Hours after the blast, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a conglomerate of several militant outfits, claimed responsibility for the attack. TTP had carried out most of the deadly attacks across Pakistan in the previous decade. TV footage showed the badly damaged vehicle of DIG while rescuers and volunteers transporting the dead and injured to hospitals.

Prolonged instability and violence in Balochistan southwestern province has become a headache for Pakistani authorities due to huge Chinese investment in the strategic China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in the region. CPEC connects Chinese Xinjiang province with a deep-seaport in Gwadar in Balochistan. Pakistan has been struggling to bring normalcy to the volatile province to pave way for the massive Chinese investment.

For over a decade, Baloch nationalists have waged a separatist insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan's mineral-rich and largest province by area, demanding autonomy and a greater share in resources of their province. Taliban and other Islamist militants also operate in the province.

At least seven police officials were killed last month in an explosion in Quetta. In August this year, a massive suicide blast, targeting army personnel in Quetta, had left 15 persons dead. More than 14 people, including seven police personnel, were killed and 21 injured this year in June when an explosive-laden car went off near the office of provincial police chief of Balochistan. (PTI)

27 killed, 69 injured as bus falls into ravine in Pakistan

LAHORE (TIP): At least 27 people were killed and 69 others injured after a speeding passenger bus fell into a ravine in Pakistan's Punjab province, officials said on Nov 9.

The bus carrying more than 100 people was going from Kohat to Raiwind when the accident took place in Kallar Kahar town last night.

"The passengers were going to Raiwind to attend an annual religious congregation," Muhammad Afzal, the Station House Officer of Saddar Police Station said.

Thirteen of the injured were rushed to Rawalpindi because of their serious condition whereas many injured were shifted to nearby hospitals, the Dawn News reported.

The bus originally was to go to Raiwind via Islamabad-Lahore Motorway but it opted for another route. "The motorway is closed after 10 pm due to smog and overloaded buses are fined on the motorway because of which the driver opted to go through Grand Trunk Road," Afzal said.

"The driver was unfamiliar with this area and he was driving the bus at high speed. The bus fell into the ravine while it was passing through a slope," he said.

Punjab chief minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief over the loss of lives and sought a report of the accident.

He also ordered the authorities concerned to provide immediate medical treatment and relief to all those injured in the accident, the report said. Road accidents are common in Pakistan. Most of them are caused by careless driving, bad roads and faulty vehicles. In April 2014, some 15 people were killed in a bus crash in Kallar Kahar. (PTI)

Pak diplomat shot dead in Afghanistan

KABUL (TIP): A Pakistani diplomatic official was shot dead in Afghanistan on Nov 6, officials said, but the motive for the deadly attack was not immediately clear. Two assailants riding a motorbike opened fire on Nayyar Iqbal Rana, 52, at a shop in the eastern city of Jalalabad, Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan Zahid Nasrullah Khan said. "When he went to the hospital he was pronounced dead," Khan said. No arrests have been made so far. Pakistan condemned the assault in a statement issued by its foreign ministry that called on Afghanistan to take "urgent steps to apprehend the perpetrators". (AFP)

White House says no formal Trump-Putin meeting in Vietnam

DANANG (TIP): US President Donald Trump will not hold a meeting with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin at the sidelines of a regional summit in Vietnam, the White House said on Nov 10.

Both leaders are attending the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in the city of Danang and there had been mixed messages about whether a face-to-face was on the cards.

"Regarding a Putin meeting, there was never a meeting confirmed, and there will not be one that takes place due to scheduling conflicts on both sides," press secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters minutes before Air Force One touched down in the Vietnamese beach resort city.

On Thursday Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov told Russian news agencies that the two would hold a meeting with the time and place still to be determined.

But hours later US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said no decision had been taken.

The White House press secretary's comments shortly before arrival in Danang appear to end any speculation that a bilateral meeting will take place over the next two days.

The two men last met at the G20 summit in Germany in July. Relations between Moscow and Washington have plummeted as a US probe has accused Trump's former campaign aides of secretly meeting Kremlin-connected officials.

Russia has denied allegations of interfering in the US election last year that brought Trump to power. (AFP)

Future military aid to Pakistan will depend on its efforts to address our concerns: US diplomat

WASHINGTON: A top US diplomat has said that any future foreign military financing will take into account Pakistan's efforts to address America's central concerns with regard to their role in fight against terrorism.

"We are conducting a review of our assistance, to ensure it is aligned with the level of cooperation we achieve in disrupting the Taliban, including the Haqqani Network," acting assistant secretary for South and Central Asia Alice Wells told lawmakers during a Congressional hearing.

"For example, before we move forward with future foreign military financing for Pakistan, the US will take into account Pakistan's efforts to address these central concerns," Wells told lawmakers. She said that in the fiscal year 2018 budgetary request is \$344.6 million for Pakistan. This includes \$241.1 million for civilian assistance and \$103.5 million for security assistance. The diplomat said the \$100 million foreign military financing request is focused on enabling Pakistan to stabilize the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region and fight terrorism.

"However, part of the President's new strategy means that we are evaluating the full range of tools that could encourage changes in Pakistan's actions, including examining the nature and scope of our cooperation with Pakistan," she said.

For Afghanistan, the Trump Administration has requested \$782.8 million in civilian assistance this year. The president, she said, is clear that US must help the Afghan government spur private sector growth to absorb the 400,000 young Afghans entering the job market yearly. "To further that goal of self-reliance, our assistance to Afghanistan promotes a stable government and society able and willing to reject the influence of extremist and terrorist organizations," she added. (PTI)

Democratic election sweep is lousy anniversary gift for Donald Trump

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump suffered a triple defeat as Democrats won high-profile state and mayoral elections to underscore his unpopularity on first anniversary of his dramatic election win on Nov 9. The results amounted to a sweeping repudiation of what critics have called Trump's politics of division, and a test of his influence ahead of electoral battles looming on the state and national level. The most damaging defeat was in Virginia, a state bordering Washington seen as a bellwether for national politics with the country gearing up for 2018 congressional elections and the next presidential contest in 2020. The Virginia governor's race had all the makings of a nailbiter, but in the end, Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam trounced his Republican rival Ed Gillespie by an unexpectedly wide nine percentage points in the southern battleground state. (AFP)

US worried but rules out mediation to reduce India-Pak tension

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump's new South Asia strategy+ focuses on reducing tension between India and Pakistan, a top American diplomat has said but ruled out any mediator role for the US between the two neighbours.

Alice G Wells, the acting assistant secretary for South and Central Asia, told lawmakers that the Trump administration is increasingly concerned about the threat to strategic stability in South Asia associated with the introduction of new nuclear capable ballistic or cruise missile systems in the region.

"The South Asia strategy also focuses on reducing tensions between Pakistan and India+," she told lawmakers yesterday during a Congressional hearing on Afghanistan and Pakistan held jointly by House Foreign Affairs Subcommittees for Middle East and North Africa, and Asia and Pacific.

She said the US does not seek a role as a mediator between India and Pakistan, but encourages both countries to restart dialogue+ at the earliest opportunity.

"An improved relationship between these two countries is critical to regional security and stability," Wells said.

"In particular, the region and the world looks to both Pakistan and India to safeguard against a nuclear conflict in South Asia," she said.

She said the US remains concerned about Pakistan's growing fissile material stockpiles and its expanding and diversifying military nuclear and missile programmes.

Wells also voiced concern over the



stability and security of the South Asia region and said the US is ready to work constructively with Pakistan against the terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e Mohammed and the Haqqani Network.

"We remain concerned about the stability and security of the region, and of Pakistan itself," she said.

"We are prepared to work constructively with Pakistan to move against these terrorist groups, including the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Jaish-e-Mohammed," she added.

She also told lawmakers that the Trump administration values the role India can play in global security and stability as part of its shared vision of a

free and open Indo-Pacific region.

"We also want to work with India to counter terrorist threats. And we see significant economic and business opportunities in both countries that we intend to explore for the benefit of all of our citizens," she said.

The US welcomes the central role of India in the Indo-Pacific region and throughout the world, she said.

"Our two democracies have a shared commitment to uphold the rule of law, freedom of navigation, universal values, and free trade," she said.

Secretary of state Rex Tillerson also noted that the US views India as a partner for peace in Afghanistan and welcomes India's economic and development assistance efforts. (PTI)

Democrats win bitter Virginia governor's race

WASHINGTON (TIP): Democrat Ralph Northam won a bitter race for Virginia governor on Tuesday, dealing a political setback to President Donald Trump by beating a Republican who embraced some of the president's combative tactics and issues.

Northam, the state's lieutenant governor, overcame a barrage of attack ads by Republican Ed Gillespie hitting the soft-spoken Democrat on divisive issues such as immigration, gang crime and Confederate statues.

Trump had endorsed Gillespie but not campaigned with him. The Republican president had taken a break from his Asia trip to send tweets and record messages on Tuesday supporting the former chairman of the Republican National Committee.

But after the outcome, Trump quickly distanced himself from the Virginia Republican.

"Ed Gillespie worked hard but did not embrace me or what I stand for," he said. "With the economy doing record numbers, we will continue to win, even bigger than before!"

The Northam victory, in a state that Democrat Hillary Clinton won by 5 percentage points in the 2016 presidential election, also was a much-needed boost for national Democrats who were desperate to turn grassroots resistance to Trump into



election victories.

Democrats had already lost four special congressional elections earlier this year. But exit polls in Virginia showed that one-third of the voters went to the polls to oppose Trump, and 17 percent went to support him.

Democrat elected New Jersey governor The Virginia race highlighted a slate of state and local elections that also included a governor's race in New Jersey, where Democrat Phil Murphy, a former investment banker and ambassador to Germany, defeated Republican Kim Guadagno for the right to succeed Republican Chris Christie.

Murphy had promised to be a check on Trump in Democratic-leaning New Jersey.

Guadagno, the lieutenant governor, was hampered by her association with the unpopular Christie.

In Virginia, Democrats had worried that if Gillespie won, Republicans would see it as a green light to emphasize cultural issues in their campaigns for next year's elections, when all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and 33 of the U.S. Senate's 100 seats come up for election. Republicans now control both chambers.

Democrats were also were gaining seats in the Virginia House of Delegates. Democrat Danica Roem beat a 25-year Republican incumbent to become the first transgender person to win a state legislative race. (Reuters)

Together we can eradicate blindness in children: Dr VK Raju

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Foundation of America and Goutami Eye Institute of Rajahmundry last week at Hotel Fortune Murali Park in Vijayawada in the State of Andhra Pradesh.



Dr. Raju, an internationally-renowned ophthalmic surgeon, said there are about 700,000 physicians in India, 100,000 in the US, 60,000 in the UK and 25,000 in Australia and serving the patients even in small countries. Preventing blindness in children is crucial to nation's progress as 80 percent of the blindness can be cured if detected early.

Combating childhood blindness is the most cost effective health intervention according to the World Bank. In times like these, headlines are grabbed by crises and scientific breakthroughs and prevention of disease is being totally neglected.



Dr. Leela Raju, world renowned cornea specialist, chief of ophthalmology, Bellevue Hospital, NY University Langone, New York, giving a presentation

eliminate avoidable blindness. The campaign is focused on those in rural India who suffers from diabetes and is at risk for, or may already be suffering from, diabetic retinopathy - a condition that often leads to blindness if left untreated.

The Eye Foundation of America plans to touch the lives of 100,000 people in India as a part of its ongoing efforts to eliminate avoidable blindness. The campaign is focused on those in rural India who suffers from diabetes and is at risk for, or may already be suffering from, diabetic retinopathy - a condition that often leads to blindness if left untreated, he said.



successfully performed corneal transplant on him when he was 18 months old in West Virginia.

As an infant, Maddula was referred to Dr Raju during one of his eye camps in Vijayawada who found that was suffering from a disease where his brain cells will die leading to permanent blindness if not treated immediately. Dr Raju arranged for the American visa for the baby along with his parents and brought them to the US and performed cadaver transplant of cornea on both the eyes within a span of six months.



In 1900, the top three leading causes of death were- Influenza, tuberculosis and gastro-intestinal diseases. Thanks to public health programs such as sanitation, water supply and vaccines and preventive medicine, the rates of these diseases have plummeted over the last 100 years.

An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Though preventive medicine had been a specialty for many decades in the US, it comprises only 0.8% of the physician work force. Most of the countries try to imitate US in many ways, he said.

"By eradicating blindness among infants and children, we are building a strong and healthy India and the world, and the future generation is protected," he says.

The Eye Foundation of America plans to touch the lives of 100,000 people in India as a part of its ongoing efforts to

Eye Foundation of America with the motto world without childhood blindness is poised to take up with Rotary International as an international partner in eradication of childhood blindness.

Dr Raju was felicitated for his lifelong dedicated service in eradicating blindness among children at the one day conference by Andhra Pradesh Health Minister Dr. K. Srinivas, Past President of Rotary International K.R. Ravindran, District Governor of Rotary Clubs GV Rama Rao and former Mayor of Vijayawada Dr. Jandhayala Sankar.

Srinu Maddula, owner of Banks Apothecary Pharmacy in Philadelphia and a Roving Ambassador of Eye Research Foundation, who was felicitated for spearheading the Foundation's relentless campaign to eradicate childhood blindness, said he was given a new lease of life by Dr Raju who



Maddula, 32, married last month enjoys a perfect vision now and owns a multi-million dollar specialized pharmaceutical company in Philadelphia. He is now the biggest supporter and an ambassador of goodwill for the foundation across the globe. He refers Dr Raju as living god who gave him a new lease of life.

A galaxy of physicians, policymakers and Rotarians from the US were invited to address the seminar from the US and they include Dr. Rahul Gupta, Commissioner and State Health Officer, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, Ranjt K Majumdar, Past District Governor of District 7530, Morgantown, WV, Dr. Indira Majumdar, President of Rotary Club of Morgantown, WV and Dr. Leela Raju, world renowned cornea specialist, chief of ophthalmology, Bellevue Hospital, NY University Langone, New York.

Dr Rahul Gupta is partnering with the Eye Foundation of America to advance the preventive aspects of the childhood blindness and beyond.



I-T RAIDS AT SASIKALA'S KIN, AIDES CONTINUE

CHENNAI (TIP): For the second consecutive day on Friday, Income Tax (I-T) officials continued their massive raids at the premises of close relatives of jailed AIADMK leader VK Sasikala, their business associates and organisations connected to them, a senior I-T official said.

He also said that "sizeable volume of cash and documents" had been seized at the searched premises.

"The volume and value of cash and documents seized would be known only after they are totalled after completing the entire operation," he told IANS preferring anonymity.

"In some places the search operations have ended and in many places they are still going on," he added.

The searches were conducted in connection with unexplained routing of cash post-demonetisation through shell companies allegedly connected to Sasikala and Dinakaran.

The I-T department would look at the routing of funds within India whereas other agencies would look into the routing of money outside India, the official said.

Source: IANS

'BRIBE IN JUDGE NAME': SC NOTICE ON SIT PROBE PLEA

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court has issued notice to the Centre and the CBI on a petition seeking a probe by a special investigation team (SIT) headed by a former Chief Justice of India into alleged corruption in medical admissions in connection with which a retired judge of the Odisha High Court was arrested.

A two-judge Bench of Justices J Chelameswar and S Abdul Nazeer referred the petition to a Constitution Bench comprising five seniormost judges — which will take it up on Monday.

RAJASTHAN HIGH COURT STAYS OBC QUOTA BILL

JAIPUR (TIP): A Division Bench of the Rajasthan High Court today stayed a Bill providing 5 per cent quota to five OBCs (Other Backward Classes) and six sub-castes, including Gurjars, raising the reservation in the state to 54 per cent. Justices KS Jhaveri and VK Vyas asked the Rajasthan Government to maintain status quo on the Supreme Court order on Special Backward Classes (SBC) after the High Court struck down the SBC quota for Gurjars in 2015 on the grounds that it would take the total reservation to 55 per cent, violating the 50 per cent ceiling by the apex court.

Source: PTI

AADHAAR LINK FOR INSURANCE POLICIES MUST

CHENNAI (TIP): The country's insurance regulator has mandated all insurers — life and non-life — to link the Aadhaar number of policyholders to their policies.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), in a circular on Wednesday, told life, non-life and standalone health insurers that linking of the Aadhaar number to insurance policies was mandatory under the Prevention of Money Laundering (Maintenance of Records) Second Amendment Rules, 2017.

Source: PTI

BSF seizes 5 Pak boats from Gujarat, 3 fishermen arrested

BHUJ (TIP): The Border Security Force (BSF) on Friday seized five Pakistani fishing boats and apprehended three fishermen from Bhuj in Gujarat.

The fishermen were apprehended from vertical channel of Harami Nala in Bhuj along the India-Pakistan border.

As per reports, a search operation for the same is under way.

Last month, the BSF had apprehended a fisherman of Pakistan origin and seized his boat along the India-Pakistan border of Gujarat's Kutch district.

Source: ANI



74% polling in Himachal Pradesh, the highest ever

Results will be declared on December 18, along with Gujarat, which goes to polls on December 9 and 14

SHIMLA (TIP): Himachal Pradesh registered a heavy turnout for elections to the 68 Vidhan Sabha seats on November 9, with more than 74 per cent of the voters exercising their franchise. The polling was peaceful.

With people standing in queues past 7 pm at 435 polling stations, this figure is likely to go up. The polling percentage is marginally higher than that in the 2012 Assembly elections (73.51 per cent). The counting will take place on December 18 along with that in Gujarat.

Though a high turnout generally indicates a strong ant-incumbency sentiment, with GST and demonetisation emerging as key issues, it is hard to say which party will benefit. However, buoyed by the turnout, BJP's Chief Minister candidate Prem Kumar Dhumal and state party president Satpal Singh Satti claimed that the BJP had won it big in the state.

While Sirmaur district recorded the highest polling percentage at 82 followed by 77.9 in Kullu district, Hamirpur saw the lowest turnout at 69.5 per cent, followed by Kangra at 72.4 per cent.

The Doon Assembly constituency recorded 88.9 per cent turnout, the highest in any constituency, followed by Nalagarh at 84.2 per cent. Both are in



Women after casting their vote in Fagu, near Shimla.

Solan district.

Jubbal-Kotkhai in Shimla district recorded 81 per cent polling. The lowest turnout that the state saw was in 1952, a mere 25 per cent, whereas the highest was in 2003 — 74.61 per cent.

In the 2012 polls, the Congress had won 36 seats and the BJP 26 with five going to Independents and one to the Himachal Lokhit Party.

Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh cast his vote at his native Rampur in Shimla district with wife Pratibha Singh and son Vikramaditya Singh. The CM is contesting from the Arki seat in Solan. His son is in the fray from Shimla (Rural). Leader of Opposition Dhumal, along with his son Anurag Thakur,

Hamirpur MP, and other family members cast his vote at Samirpur in the Bhoranj segment.

Congress leader Anand Sharma cast his ballot in Lakkar Bazaar, Shimla.

There were reports of malfunctioning of EVMs and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines at a few booths. Voters across the state could be seen reaching polling stations even before the polling started at 8 am. Women, who form 19 lakh of the over 50 lakh voters, turned out in strength in rural areas. In the first two hours, the state recorded a 13.72 turnout, but by 4 pm, nearly 64 per cent of votes were cast. A total of 337 candidates, 19 of them women, are in the fray.

Smog effect: Odd-even in Delhi for 5 days, Central panel to list solutions

NEW DELHI (TIP): With air quality dipping further on November 9 to its worst level this year, the Delhi government announced that the odd-even car rationing scheme will be rolled out in the city for five days from November 13 to November 17. Announcing this, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said that the scheme, a part of the emergency measure in the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), created and enforced by the Supreme Court-appointed EPCA, will be in place from 8 am to 8 pm like last year and will allow odd-numbered cars to run on odd dates while even-numbered cars will only run on even dates.

Earlier, the odd-even scheme had been implemented, initially for a fortnight beginning from January 1, 2016 and then four months later from April 15 to 30.

The move came after an "emergency" prevailed in the capital for the third day, with the Air Quality Index, worsening to 486, on a scale of 500 — and predicted to get worse over the next 48 hours. As per norms, a satisfactory AQI level is 100 and Delhi routinely is between 300 and 400.

After the Central Pollution Control Board task force told EPCA on Wednesday that prevailing conditions called for an "emergency" response, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal met



A family in Delhi ride through the thick smog.

and announced that they were "preparing" for the implementation of the scheme.

Gahlot asked citizens and agencies to cooperate and promised that radio-cab services would not be allowed to use surge-pricing. He added that the DTC would hire 500 buses from private contractors to deal with the increased number of commuters. He said, "Delhi Metro has also promised to provide 100 small buses during the period. Schools will be free to provide their buses voluntarily. However, there will be no compulsion."

He also urged Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to call a meeting of Chief Ministers of Delhi and its surrounding states to find a solution to the crisis.

The exemptions, Gahlot said, would include CNG vehicles, electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles, women-only vehicles and those carrying children up to 12 years of age, as well as children in school uniform.

He added, "IGL (Indraprastha Gas Limited) will issue stickers which will be available at 22 CNG stations in Delhi. Extra buses are also being arranged. But we will not requisition them for school buses."

Govt says note ban wiped out Rs 6 lakh crore black money, oppn questions claim

NEW DELHI (TIP): The NDA government has argued that demonetisation has effectively wiped out Rs 6 lakh crores of black money from the Indian economy, even as an angry Opposition has dubbed it as a failure crippling jobs and small industries.

A finance ministry's background note to a parliamentary panel stated that based on RBI reports, there is a reduction of around 50% of high-value notes that would have been in circulation if the demonetisation had not happened. The Opposition, however, has argued that as nearly the entire cash has returned to the system, the efforts to curb black money has not yielded the desired results.

The Parliament's standing committee on finance, however, decided to expand the scope of its review of demonetisation and black money and will now seek inputs from states and various ministries to study the "full impact of demonetisation". "A draft report that was under preparation from August has now been shelved," said a member of the finance panel.

The ministry note said that as on November 8, the specified bank notes (high-value) were of the value of 15.44 crores. And given the growth rate of these bank notes in previous years, the notes would have amounted to Rs 18 lakh crore in November 2017.

"Reserve Bank of India has reported that the specified bank notes of



The Opposition has argued that as nearly the entire cash has returned to the system, the efforts to curb black money has not yielded the desired results.

Pic Courtesy: AFP file

estimated value of Rs 15.28 lakh crores was deposited back by June 2017. The estimated high-value notes at September-end are approximately Rs 12 lakh crores—a decrease of 50% of the high value notes that would have been in circulation today without demonetisation," the note said.

It also pointed out that new high-value notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 were of the order of Rs 2.94 lakh crores and 6.57 lakh crores respectively on March 31, 2017.

Several Opposition members, however, continued to question economic affairs secretary Subhash Garg and financial services secretary

Rajiv Kumar on the merits of demonetisation on Thursday. Some members asked the officials on the cost incurred by the government to scrap the two high-value notes and then bring in the new Rs 2000 notes. A member wanted to know about the cost of demonetisation and why the banks, sitting on piles of money after the huge cash inflow during demonetisation, are not giving enough credit. According to members, the officials sought time for a written reply.

One BJP member reportedly admitted that in his constituency, many bidi workers are jobless and starving after demonetisation. Source: HT

POST DEMO, ED PROBING 3700 CASES INVOLVING ILLEGAL ASSETS WORTH RS 9900 CR

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has reported that it has registered over 3700 cases of money laundering and forex violations and issued close to 600 show-cause notices in the last one year, after demonetization in November 2016.

In a report the directorate has said that this heightened crackdown through 620 search operations across the country has led to the discovery of illegal assets worth more than Rs 9900 crore. This data for the period between November 2016 and September 2017, also shows that 54 people have been arrested for money laundering.

The report details that 3567 cases have been registered under FEMA violations involving Rs 4600 crore and 191 cases have been registered under PMLA (prevention of money laundering act). Assets worth Rs 5335 crore have been attached under PMLA.

The report shows the scurry to convert black money into white and to bring it into the regular financial system, right after demonetisation. ED lists six most popular methods of this conversion: bribing bank officials, creation of shell companies, buying gold, over-invoicing imports, hawala and investment in real estate.

"In most cases...use of shell companies was an important factor," said the report. In fact, in 24 hours on April 1, 2017, ED searched 134 locations in 16 states involving more than 1000 shell companies, the report said.

"A general review of the cases post demonetization shows that business and professionals have collaborated with each other to use shell companies for converting illegal wealth into legitimate assets," the report said.

In a risk assessment exercise, ED has found that 43% of money laundered in India is through financial institutions by cheating them using shell companies and real estate. Bribes involving government officials and bureaucrats account for generating 31% black money in the economy, while drugs and narcotics contribute 6.5% and arms and explosives account for 4.5%. In the report, ED lists financial institutions as the sector most vulnerable to money laundering, followed by real estate.

The report said that the "menace of shell companies" to launder money came to the forefront during the post-demonetization investigation. It details how shell companies are used to wash black money by first receiving it and then routing them through a web of companies for layering the transactions, before finally transferring them to the beneficiaries in the form of banking transaction. Source: HT

RAILWAYS TARGET COMPLETING BULLET TRAIN PROJECT BY AUG 2022



NEW DELHI (TIP): Unfazed by opposition criticism, Indian Railways is working overtime to push ahead with the much-talked about the "Bullet Train" project, aiming to complete it ahead of the August 2022 deadline set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Railway Board Chairman Ashwani Lohani, who has a reputation of a turnaround man, has taken up the task of monitoring and chairing the periodic review meetings of the project that is estimated to cost over Rs 1 lakh crore (\$15 billion).

Lohani held a high-level meeting in Rail Bhavan last Thursday which was attended by Japanese Ambassador Kenji Hiramatsu, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar, Central government officials, Principal Secretary-rank officials of

Gujarat and Maharashtra, officials of NHRCL (National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited), officials of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the General Manager of Western Railway.

A senior railway board member, requesting anonymity, told IANS, "The railways is in no mood to delay the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project. Lohani will now hold a review meeting once every three months... And even on weekly basis, if required."

Emphasising on the government's intention, the official said, "The attendance of the Niti Aayog Vice Chairman, the Japanese Ambassador and the CRB in the review meeting is a clear signal that the government is taking the project seriously and there is no scope for any delay." Source: IANS

Nothing wrong in raising demand for Khalistan: SGPC president

AMRITSAR (TIP): Kirpal Singh Badungar, president of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), said on November 9 that "as per a Supreme Court ruling, there is nothing wrong in raising the demand for Khalistan", a separate Sikh nation, and that "it is neither unconstitutional nor an offence".

Even as he belongs to Parkash Singh Badal-led Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) — considered moderate in the Sikh religio-political sphere — Badungar made this statement while replying to a query on "terrorist" tag used by some racist opponents against the newly elected Sikh mayor of Hoboken city in the US, Ravinder Singh Bhalla.

He was apparently referring to the SC verdict in a case about two men having shouted some slogans in Chandigarh after assassination of Indira Gandhi in Delhi in 1984. The court had held that mere shouting of slogans did not amount to sedition unless there was incitement to violence.

When specifically asked to comment on some Sikh leaders living abroad being termed "Khalistanis", he referred to movements going on in



SGPC president Kirpal Singh Badungar (Centre) and other members at a press conference in Amritsar.

other parts of the world: "Irish people have been fighting against England. Similarly, we can consider the conflict between South Korea and North Korea. The conflict between Shia and Sunni Muslims in as many as 37 countries is another instance... This is not only an issue about Sikhs, but also of others."

He added the SGPC will welcome and honour Bhalla when he visits the Golden Temple. To a query on an identity confusion faced by Sikhs

abroad, he said, "Canada has a Sikh defence minister and many parliamentarians. In a country like Canada, the identity problem should not rise."

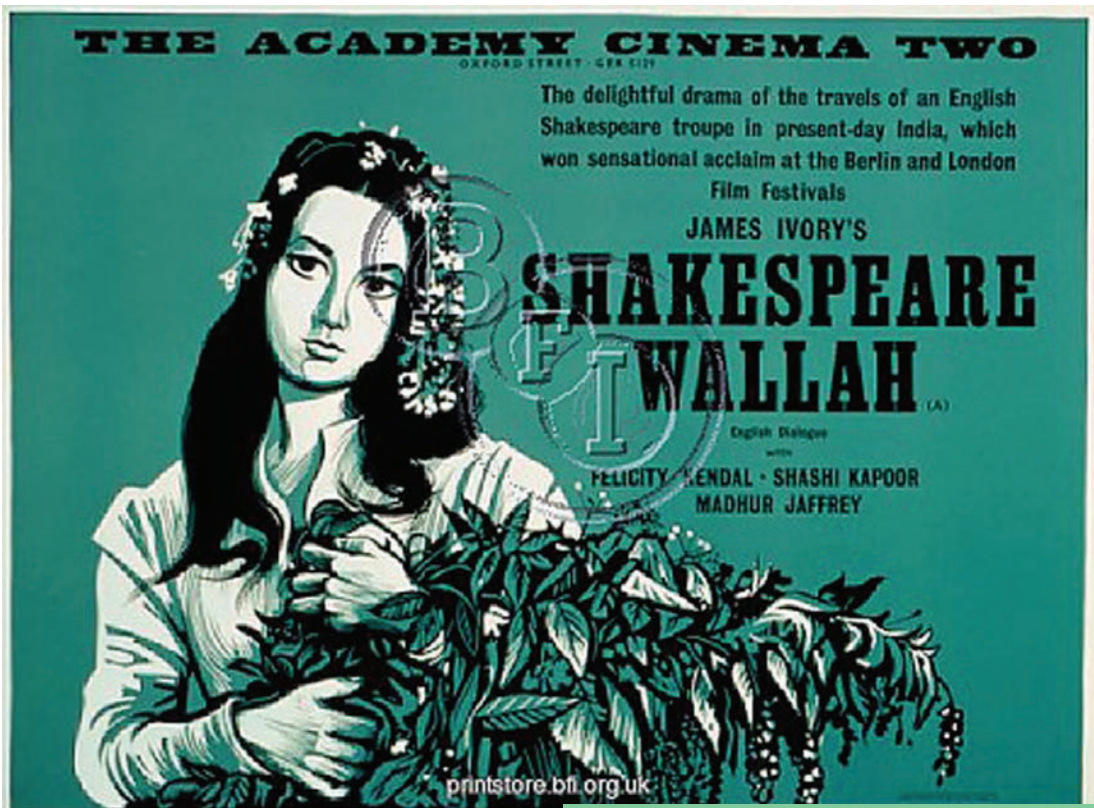
He also reacted to an alleged hate speech by Amritsar-based Hindu right-wing leader Sudhir Suri, he said, "Such people want to vitiate the peaceful atmosphere of Punjab... It is the responsibility of the state government to rein in these elements." Source: HT

Shakespeare Wallah, the movie

BY MABEL PAIS

Watching the restored-version recent screening of 1965's "Shakespeare Wallah," brought back fond memories of the real life story of the Kendal family: Geoffrey Kendal, wife Laura Liddell, daughters Jennifer and Felicity staging scenes from Shakespeare works in the school auditoriums of India. In the late 1960s mine was one such school in Bangalore, India at the performances of which we were prompted to learn and sing in unison, Shakespeare's songs, as "The Wind And The Rain" from "Twelfth Night."

Accompanied by his wife Laura and, in later years, by his daughters Jennifer and Felicity, Kendal's troupe toured India performing not only Shakespearean plays but also those of Sheridan, Shaw and Wilde from shabby village halls to opulent maharajas' palaces, often joined by a variety of young local actors who later earned international cinematic acclaim, according to the British newspaper Independent.



Shashi Kapoor with Madhur Jaffrey in a scene from Shakespeare Wallah

Shakespeare Wallah, the 1965 Merchant-Ivory Productions film story and screenplay are by Ruth Praver Jhabwala about a traveling family theatre troupe of English actors in India, who perform Shakespeare plays in towns across India, amidst a dwindling demand for their work and the rise of Bollywood. Madhur Jaffrey won the Silver Bear for Best Actress at the 15th Berlin International Film Festival for her performance. The music was composed by Satyajit Ray. The film was shot in black and white, and the Kendal family play their own fictionalized counterparts, "the Buckingham's".

Shakespeare Wallah, James Ivory's second feature film following 1963's *The Householder*, is directly inspired by the diaries kept by actor Geoffrey Kendal of the experiences of the Shakespeareana Theater Company, a traveling troupe of actors in India founded and led by both British born Kendal and his wife, Laura Liddell, during 1947, the year India achieved independence.

Ivory had met the Kendal family when he was making *The Householder* and he was very interested in making a film with them. After he read Geoffrey's diaries, Ivory knew he had found the right project, casting Geoffrey Kendal as troupe leader and director Tony Buckingham and Laura Liddell as his wife, actress and partner Carla Buckingham. The pair are, of course, portraying fictionalized versions of themselves: British stage performers who have made a life for themselves and their family in India, which they thought of as home. In this case the Buckingham's daughter, Lizzie (Geoffrey and Laura's real-life daughter Felicity Kendal, in her film debut), who was born in India and grew up in the company. Over the years, Lizzie graduated from stage assistant to supporting actress and occasional leading role in the troupe's repertoire of Shakespeare plays that they would stage anywhere from village parks and school auditoriums to private manors and palaces.

Loosely based on the real-life actor-manager Geoffrey Kendal family and his "Shakespeareana Company" of travelling theatre, which earned him the Indian sobriquet, "Shakespearewallah," the film follows the story of nomadic British actors as they perform Shakespeare plays in towns in post-colonial India. In this story, Tony Buckingham (Geoffrey Kendal) and his wife Carla (Laura Liddell) oversee

the troupe. Their daughter, Lizzie Buckingham (Felicity Kendal), falls in love with Sanju (Shashi Kapoor), who is also romancing Manjula (Madhur Jaffrey), a Bollywood film star.

In real life, Shashi Kapoor fell in love with Felicity's elder sister Jennifer Kendal. Their marriage would provide an important contribution to the Indian film industry until Kendal's death in 1984.

In the 1960s post-colonial India, Tony Buckingham (Geoffrey Kendal) and his wife, Carla (Laura Liddell), are the British actor-managers of a troupe of English, Irish and Indian actors who travel about the country mounting stage performances of Shakespeare's works.

One night, after visiting a maharajah for a "command performance," the troupe heads off in two crowded vehicles for their next engagement. Along the way, one of the cars breaks down, and the company is stranded for some time before being rescued by a wealthy passerby, Sanju (Shashi Kapoor). He takes the troupe to his estate, where they all camp out in their tents on his lawn. While there, Sanju finds himself immediately attracted to Lizzie Buckingham (Felicity Kendal), Tony and Carla's daughter, and he promises to attend Lizzie's next stage performance. But instead, Sanju goes to watch a Bollywood film shoot in the countryside, where he observes the glamorous but self-centered actress Manjula (Madhur Jaffrey), with whom he has a relationship.

As Tony deals with the ongoing financial struggles of keeping his company afloat, Sanju woos Lizzie, though he remains involved with Manjula. He soon becomes enthusiastic about the seriousness of Lizzie's theater work, particularly when he contrasts it with what he sees as the shallow nature of Manjula's Bollywood films.



(Left) Laura Liddell with Felicity Kendal in a scene from Shakespeare Wallah

Photos / Courtesy Cohen Media Group

Manjula's mute servant reports to her in sign language that she has seen Sanju and Lizzie embracing, prompting Manjula to angrily inform Lizzie that Sanju belongs to her and that although he

Director: James IVORY;
Producer: Ismail MERCHANT
Screenwriters: James IVORY, Ruth PRAYER JHABWALA
Actors: Felicity KENDAL, Geoffrey KENDAL, Laura LIDELL, Madhur JAFFREY, Shashi KAPOOR, Partap SHARMA, Utpal DUTT, Praveen PAUL, Prayag RAAJ, Pincho KAPOOR, Jim TYTLER
Music Composer: Satyajit RAY
Editor: Amit BOSE
Cinematographer: Subrata MITRA
Costume Designer: Jennifer KAPOOR
Makeup Designer: Nate GROVER
Production Managers: N. KABIR, Mohamed SHAFI
Release: November 10, 2017, NY City
Runtime: 122 minutes

flirts with other girls, he always comes back to her.

Later, Sanju takes Manjula to see the Buckingham's company perform Shakespeare's *Othello*. While there, the vain Manjula intentionally disrupts the performance by making a scene with the usual Bollywood-obsessed autograph hounds. Sanju angrily tells Manjula to leave without him, and though Sanju's relationship with Lizzie appears to be ruptured, he sincerely apologizes to her for what happened at the performance and she forgives him.

Noting the intensifying relationship between Lizzie and the Indian playboy, Tony and Clara grow concerned about their daughter's future-along with the diminishing demand for their craft as the English theatre in India is being supplanted by Bollywood entertainments. The couple makes a life-changing decision and urges Lizzie to go back to England with them.

Meanwhile, Sanju notes how Lizzie is growing in popularity, attracting autograph hounds and leering comments from the audience and even inciting a fistfight at a performance. In the aftermath of the fight, Sanju tells Lizzie he doesn't like her public lifestyle and that his izzat (an Indian sense of male pride) has been offended. He declares that if she is to be his love, she must be "his property" and be kept in line with his izzat. Lizzie tells Sanju that she would give up anything for him, including her way of life, if he asks her to. When Sanju does not respond, Lizzie senses that his love is not unconditional...and that another life in England is still beckoning.

Shakespeare Wallah's popularity grew in the USA and across the world after that, and the film later became regarded as the feature that put Merchant Ivory Productions on the international movie map.

(Mabel Pais is a freelance writer. She writes on *The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Health and Wellness, and Spirituality*)

VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day is a U.S. legal holiday dedicated to American veterans of all wars. In 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I, then known as "the Great War." Commemorated in many countries as Armistice Day the following year, November 11th became a federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became legally known as Veterans Day.

History

World War I – known at the time as "The Great War" – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of "the war to end all wars."

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor



American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am

designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee

In the USA, Veterans Day annually falls on November 11. This day is the anniversary of the signing of the armistice, which ended the World War I hostilities between the Allied nations and Germany in 1918. Veterans are thanked for their services to the United States on Veterans Day

in every way possible."

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Great Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World War I and II on or near November 11th: Canada has Remembrance Day, while Britain has Remembrance Sunday (the second Sunday of November). In Europe, Great Britain and the Commonwealth countries it is common to observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. every November 11.

In the United States, an official wreath-laying ceremony is held each Veterans Day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, while parades and other celebrations are held in states around the country.

Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American servicemembers who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.



PRACHI DESAI LEARNS GUITAR FOR 'KOSHA'

Actress Prachi Desai has learnt guitar for her upcoming film 'Kosha', and says she always wanted to master playing the instrument.

'Kosha' is being described as a 'dark urban fairy tale', with the story revolving around a girl who is a band member and struggles with substance abuse. It is produced by late Raj Kanwar's son Abhay, and directed by Amman Advaita.

"You always take back something from a film and for me learning guitar was just one of it. I always wanted to learn guitar, but never got an opportunity to do so," Prachi said in a statement.

"When I had to shoot this particular scene where I had to jam with a guitar I thought why not learn it so that it looks real. So yes, I learnt the instrument and I am happy to say that I am playing it for real in the scene," she added.

The actress put in extra hours for over two weeks to learn it.

The director said: "The particular scene was a pivotal one in the film, and Prachi wanted to perfect the same so, she put in the extra hours."

Source: IANS

PRIYANKA CHOPRA GETS A STYLISH HOME IN NEW YORK CITY

Actress Priyanka Chopra is currently busy with her shoot for *Quantico 3* in New York City. The thespian had been searching for a rented accommodation in the New York City to stay for the time she is filming for television series *Quantico 3*.

Finally, Chopra has found her perfect home in where she can stay before coming back to Mumbai. She has moved into a four-bedroom apartment in Manhattan. Before, moving into her new place, Chopra has spent her two months in studio rentals and hotels.

The new apartment on the top floor in New York City has a spectacular view of Manhattan. Chopra has shared pictures of her new apartment in which she is excited about the view from her apartment.

Chopra is currently busy with her shoot for *Quantico 3* in the New York City. A few days back she was seen in the streets of the city in which she was snapped on the streets shooting for an exceptional kidnapping sequence. In season 3, Chopra is doing the character of Alex Parish.

Chopra's upcoming Hollywood films are *A Kid Like Jake* & *Isn't It Romantic?* in which she will be seen in supporting roles. Earlier Chopra has revealed that she will be coming back to Mumbai in December for her upcoming Bollywood projects. But now, with her new home in the US, it is clear that she will come back to the US after her short trip to Mumbai.



MOVIE REVIEW



ITTEFAQ

CAST: Sidharth Malhotra, Akshaye Khanna, Sonakshi Sinha

DIRECTION: Abhay Chopra

GENRE: Mystery

DURATION: 1 hours 40 minutes

The story in director Abhay Chopra's reimagining of Yash Chopra's and BR Chopra's classic is quite different. The basic premise is similar, a man on the run suspected for the murder of his wife, takes shelter in the house of a woman who has her own bag of secrets. In addition to the double murder charges, the new *Ittefaq* throws in a third angle of a suicide case that's also linked to the protagonist Vikram Sethi (Sidharth Malhotra). So over an hour and forty five minutes, the viewers and the investigating officer Dev (Akshaye Khanna) are left guessing who's the killer. Vikram has his side of the story while Maya (Sonakshi Sinha) has her own.

The writing makes good with the tweak in premise, the third angle of suicide makes things complex and that's good enough to give the viewer something to think about. In an industry that prides itself on leave your brains behind kind of entertainment, a smart and thinking man's thriller comes as a pleasant surprise. The only problem is, at times *Ittefaq* isn't as detailed and

methodical as it should be. Inspector Dev is the voice of reasoning and logic in this story. But his actions aren't always as smart as his character is supposed to be. In particular, he records the statements of Vikram and Maya over several conversations spanning 3 days. That's a major flaw, but thankfully not as major as yesteryear police character specialist Iftekhar asking the face palm question "Mrs Jagmohan koun hain?" The *Ittefaq* screenplay stumbles on a few occasions but it does so without actually affecting the proceedings. Despite its minor stutters the film keeps a tight grip on the suspense and the climactic twist really does throw up a surprise. The most seasoned thriller experts though, will see the final twist coming.

Apart from solid cinematography and editing, *Ittefaq* also benefits from three solid performances. Akshaye Khanna, Sidharth Malhotra and Sonakshi Sinha are all super effective in their performances. Akshaye has the most detailed role, he's the one who asks the questions, listens to the story's multiple accounts and arrives at all the logical conclusions.

He's no Sherlock Holmes, but he is a smart and interesting cop. Sidharth and Sonakshi both have many distinct shades to their characters, depending on who's narrating the story and that gives both actors lots of room to impress and improvise. *Ittefaq* is a solid modern whodunit. It looks as slick as any Hollywood production. Even with its mistakes, the crime mystery manages to impress with its logical and clinical writing. There's no way you'll be able to easily guess the outcome here, not even when you've watched the original.



ASHLEY JUDD TO STAR IN 'A DOG'S WAY HOME'

Ashley Judd has been roped in to feature in the canine drama 'A Dog's Way Home'. Reportedly, the 49-year-old actor will be joined by Edward James Olso, Wes Studi, Alexandra Shipp and Jonah Hauer-King.

Directed by Charles Martin Smith, the movie is an adaptation of the best-selling book 'A Dog's Purpose', by W Bruce Cameron. Besides Cameron, his wife and co-writer of the novel, Cathryn Michon has penned the screenplay for the film.

Reportedly, 'A Dog's Way Home' chronicles the heartwarming adventure of Bella, a dog who embarks on an epic 400-mile journey home after she is separated from her beloved human, Lucas, an aspiring med student and VA hospital volunteer.

"Bella touches the lives of many during her unwavering quest; from an orphaned mountain lion cub to a homeless veteran down on his luck, Bella brings joy and comfort to everyone she meets with her unique spirit and faith."

It has been announced the studio has rescued two dogs to play the role of Bella. The movie is now in production. *Source: PTI*

JESSICA CHASTAIN WANTS TO BE A PART OF 'IT' SEQUEL



Actor Jessica Chastain has shown interest in starring in the sequel to the horror blockbuster movie 'It'. Andy Muschietti, who directed 'It', is expected to return for the second installment.

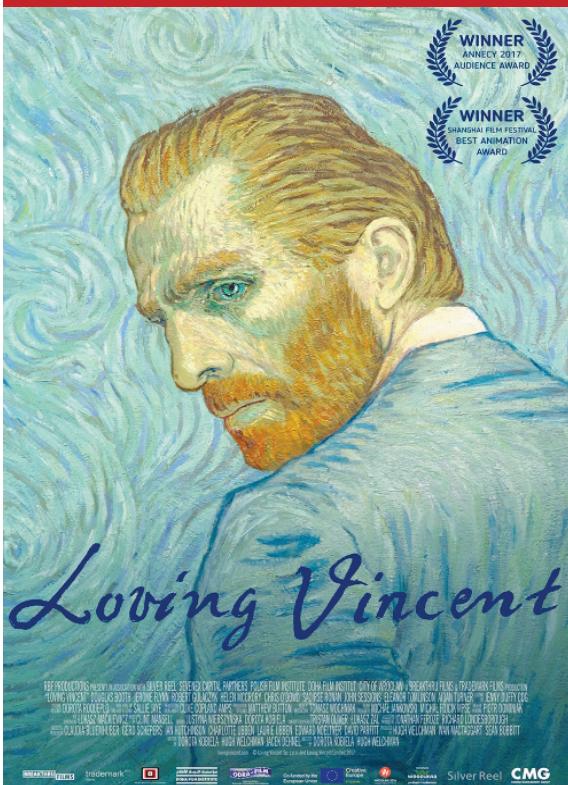
Producers Barbara Muschietti, Roy Lee, Dan Lin, Seth Grahame-Smith and David Katzenberg are also believed to be on board. Chastain said, "Well, I love Andy and Barbara. I worked with them on Andy's directorial debut, you know, his film, 'Mama'. And you know, Barbara is one of my best friends so... We'll see..."

"Listen, of course, I want to work... They're my friends. They're like my family. Anything that they're doing I want to be a part of, so I hope we can make it happen."

'It' is based on Stephen King's 1986 novel, which focuses on a group of schoolchildren in a fictional Maine community that battles the small town's demon as kids, and then again as adults. The hit film, which opened on September 8, centred on the children, while the sequel will follow them into adulthood.

Source: PTI

MOVIE REVIEW



LOVING VINCENT

Cast: Aidan Turner, Chris O'Dowd, Douglas Booth, Eleanor Tomlinson, Helen McCrory, Holly Earl, Jerome Flynn

Director: Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman

Genre: Biography, Drama, Crime, Animation

Duration: 94 min

Every frame of the animated film "Loving Vincent" about the great artist Vincent van Gogh was an oil painting in his distinctive style that comes to vivid life. Seeing the beautiful trailer of this film alone gives enough reason to go watch this film on the big screen.

Van Gogh, touted as the "Father of Modern Art," died violently at the young age of 37. This film deals with that mentally disturbed, turbulent part of his life. It was at his death that his artistic genius was launched into legendary status.

It has been a year after the death of van Gogh. The Postmaster Roulin requests his son Armand to personally hand-carry a letter sent by van Gogh before his death to his brother Theo because the mail system could not deliver it. During this trip, Armand interacts with the people whom Vincent himself interacted in his last six months before his death.

In Auvers-sur-Oise, Armand gets to interview the paint supplier Pere Tanguy (John Sessions), the friendly innkeeper's

daughter Adeline Ravoux (Eleanor Tomlinson), the boatman (Aidan Turner) along the river, and his kindred spirit Dr. Paul Gachet (Jerome Flynn), his lovely daughter Marguerite (Saoirse Ronan) and their spiteful housekeeper Louise Chevalier. From their stories told from divergent perspectives, Armand puts the pieces of the puzzle together when he finally reports back to his father.

Even if this film was largely all talk (which may turn off some viewers), the story never became boring for me. I had always thought that his suicide was an uncontested fact, so I am not really sure how much of this tale was fact and fiction. I doubt if the characters in the film (real people who became subjects of various van Gogh paintings) encountered each other in real life that way. But for me, the tale of mystery of van Gogh's fatal wound, along with significant details of his tormented life, were masterfully woven by co-writers-directors Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman into a cohesive and engaging tapestry.

From the hand-lettered opening credits to the creatively informative closing credits, I sat mesmerized for an hour and a half by this beautifully and delicately crafted film whose painstakingly detailed oil paintings in van Gogh style is unprecedented. The images we see on the screen (people, rainfall, fire, smoke, depth, etc) were never static, the brushstrokes in each frame were constantly moving, giving a unique dynamism I've never seen before. This sense of shimmering motion may cause some difficulty for some people to watch, but for me it was absolutely magical -- a true wonder of cinematic art.

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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

His birth anniversary falls on November 14, which is also celebrated as Bal Divas or Children's Day

Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was a member of the Congress Party that led the freedom movement against the British rule. He was the chief framer of domestic and international policies during his term as PM between 1947 and 1964. It was under Nehru's supervision that India launched its first Five-Year Plan in 1951. Nehru was one of the architects to steer the nascent nation towards the brilliance envisioned by countless revolutionaries of the Indian Freedom struggle.

Early Life

Jawaharlal Nehru was born on 14 November 1889, in a wealthy Kashmiri Brahmin family in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. His father, Motilal Nehru was a renowned advocate and also an influential political activist. Nehru family was elitist in most of their practices and English was spoken and encouraged. His father, Motilal Nehru appointed English and Scottish teachers to supervise his children's education at home.

For higher education, young Nehru was sent to Harrow school, then later to Cambridge University in England to obtain a degree in natural sciences. After spending two years at the Inner Temple, London, he qualified as a barrister. During his stay in London, Nehru studied subjects like literature, politics, economics, and history. He got attracted to the ideas of liberalism, socialism and nationalism. In 1912, he returned to India and joined the Allahabad High Court Bar.

Nehru got married to Kamala Kaul on 8 February, 1916. Brought up in a traditional Hindu Brahmin family, Kamala felt an outsider amongst the progressive Nehru family but tried her best to adapt to the family ethos and values. During the Non-Cooperation movement of 1921, Kamala played a vital role by organizing groups of women and picketing shops selling foreign cloth and liquor in Allahabad. On 19 November, 1917 she gave birth to a daughter, who came to be known as Indira Priyadarshini. Kamala died from tuberculosis in Switzerland on February 28, 1936, while Jawaharlal Nehru was in prison.

His Role in Freedom Struggle

Although he dabbled in political affairs since his return to India, by participating in Indian National Congress' sessions and in Besant's Home Rule Movement, Nehru wholeheartedly embraced a political career only in 1919 in the wake of the Jallianwallah bagh Massacre. He followed Gandhi's directives and was imprisoned for participating in the first civil disobedience campaign as general secretary of the United Provinces Congress Committee in 1921. His time in jail helped him achieve a deeper understanding of the Gandhian philosophy and the nuances of the non-cooperation movement. He was moved by Gandhi's approach of dealing with caste and "untouchability".

With time, Nehru emerged as a popular and influential nationalist leader, particularly in Northern India. He was elected as the president of the Allahabad municipal corporation in 1920.

His loyalty to Congress remained unwavering in the face of the rift created in the party due to Gandhi's decision to adjourn



Nehru with Mahatma Gandhi

the Non-cooperation movement post Chauri Chaura incident. He refused to move to the Swaraj Party established by his father and Chittaranjan Das in 1922.

During the Guwahati Session of the Congress in 1928, Mahatma Gandhi announced that the Congress would launch a massive movement if the British did not grant dominion status to India within the next two years. It was believed that under the pressure

of Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose, the deadline was reduced to one year. Jawaharlal Nehru criticized the famous "Nehru Report" prepared by his father Motilal Nehru in 1928 that favored the concept of a "dominion status for India within the British rule".

In 1930 Mahatma Gandhi supported the name of Nehru as the next president of the Congress. The decision was also an attempt to abate the intensity of "communism" in the

FACTS

Born: 14 November 1889

Place of Birth: Allahabad

Parents: Motilal Nehru (father) and Swaruprani Thussu (mother)

Spouse: Kamala Nehru

Children: Indira Gandhi

Education: Harrow School, London; Trinity College, Cambridge; Inns of Court School of Law, London

Associations: Indian National Congress

Political Ideology: Nationalism; Socialism; Democracy; Communist influences

Publications: The Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History, Toward Freedom, Letters from a Father to His Daughter

Death: 27 May 1964

Congress. The same year, Nehru was arrested for the violation of the Salt Law.

In 1936, Nehru was re-elected as the president of the Indian National Congress. Sources suggest that a heated argument between the old and young leaders took place in the Lucknow Session of the party. The young and "new-gen" leaders of the party had advocated for an ideology, based on the concepts of Socialism.

In the 1942 Quit India Movement, Nehru vehemently rallied for 'Purna Swaraj' or complete political independence for India. He was arrested on August 8 of the same year and was imprisoned till June 15, 1945. Post his release, he threw himself into a series of rigorous discussions and negotiations with the British Government that ultimately led to attainment of freedom in 1947. Nehru fought hard against the proposed partitioning of the country by the last Viceroy Lord Mountbatten. He failed to obtain enough support from Mohammed Jinnah, the leader of Muslim League and reluctantly gave in to it.

Nehru as PM of India

On August 15, 1947, a free India was born. Nehru was elected as the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was the first PM to hoist the national flag and make his iconic speech "Tryst with Destiny" from the ramparts of the Lal Quila (Red Fort). The time had come to implement his ideas and build a healthy nation. Nehru's stint as PM of India is characterised by his secular and liberalist approach. He carried out his vision to carry the young India towards the road of technological and scientific excellence with great zeal. He implemented a number of socio-economic reforms and paved the way for rapid industrialization. In the year 1949, Jawaharlal Nehru made his first visit to the United States, seeking a solution to India's urgent food shortage. In 1951, Jawaharlal Nehru launched the country's "First Five-Year Plan" emphasizing on the increase in the agricultural output.

Death

In 1964, Jawaharlal Nehru suffered a stroke and a heart attack. On 27 May 1964, Nehru passed away. Nehru was cremated at the Shantivana on the banks of the Yamuna River, Delhi.

US inventing doping allegations to influence Russian presidential elections: Vladimir Putin

MOSCOW (TIP): President Vladimir Putin on Thursday accused the United States of inventing doping allegations against Russian athletes to influence next year's presidential election, which he is widely expected to contest and win.

"In response to our alleged interference in their election, they want to create problems for the election of the president of Russia," Putin said in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk.

Putin has not said whether he will contest the March election but few analysts say they believe he will pass up the chance to extend his Kremlin term to 2024.

"Here is what worries me: the Olympics start in February, and when are our presidential elections? In March," Putin told workers during a visit to a factory.

"There is a strong suspicion that this is all happening in order to create a situation useful to some, one of disappointment for sports followers and sportsmen in which the state allegedly participated in violations," he said.

Putin spoke ahead of a trip to Vietnam, where he will take part in an APEC summit and is expected to meet US President Donald Trump.

Relations between Russia and the United States have plummeted as a Washington probe has accused Trump's former campaign aides of secretly meeting Kremlin-connected officials.

Russia has denied allegations of interfering in the US election last year that brought Trump to power.

Putin spoke after the Russian Cross-Country Ski Federation announced on Thursday that four Russian cross-country skiers were found guilty of doping by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The federation said that Alexei Petukhov, Evgenia Shapovalova, Maxim Vylegzhanin and Yulia Ivanova were stripped of their medals won in Sochi in 2014 and banned for life from the Olympics.

Petukhov told the Russian sports news agency R-Sport that the decision was a "declaration of war".

"I will fight until the end. This is a violation of all human rights," Petukhov said.

Last week, Russian cross-country skier Alexander Legkov was stripped of his Olympic 50-kilometre title after the IOC found him guilty of doping.

Putin said last month the United States had put indirect pressure on the IOC to block Russia from the 2018 Winter Games in South Korea. (AFP)

Nato commander tells Russia to 'stop meddling'

BRUSSELS: The commander of Nato forces in Europe, US General Curtis Scaparrotti, on Thursday demanded Russia "stop meddling" in European elections, amid concerns about Kremlin interference in the Catalan crisis.

Spanish media have accused Moscow-backed outlets such as Russia Today and Sputnik — which have Spanish language services — of playing a destabilising role in the crisis triggered by Catalonia's banned October 1 referendum.

Moscow is also suspected of interfering in last year's US presidential election and Britain's Brexit vote, and Scaparrotti said he was concerned by "Russian malign influence" in other countries. "It is something that we've seen in the United States, we've seen it in a number of countries here in the elections of late," Scaparrotti said when asked about claims of Russian interference in Catalonia.

"It should stop meddling in other nations, (in) what is their sovereign right to determine their government and how it works," he told reporters at a meeting of NATO defence ministers in Brussels.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said Nato ministers had "discussed at length Russia's now constant efforts to intercede in our sovereign democratic processes".

Bogus news reports and images shared widely online have helped fuel the crisis triggered by Catalonia's banned October 1 independence referendum. Last year Moscow mounted a hacking and disinformation campaign making heavy use of social media to boost the now President Donald Trump's chances. When asked if he had particular concerns about the Catalan crisis undermining key Nato member Spain, Scaparrotti said "we've seen these kinds of activities in other nations as well. It's a part of ... what I call a destabilisation campaign." "We would encourage Russia to stay within the accepted international order and to honour each sovereign nation's right to determine their means of government, their way of government and how they run their government," Scaparrotti said. (AFP)

Priti Patel resigns as UK minister over Israel trip row

LONDON (TIP): Britain's senior-most Indian-origin minister Priti Patel resigned from her Cabinet post over her unauthorised secret meetings with Israeli politicians, after a meeting at Downing Street with Prime Minister Theresa May.

Patel's position as international development minister had become increasingly untenable after it emerged that she had two further meetings with Israeli officials that were not disclosed through the proper procedure.

In her resignation, Patel again apologised and said her actions "fell below the standards of transparency and openness that I have promoted and advocated".

It follows a week of controversies around a dozen undisclosed meetings she had with other Israelis, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for which she had been forced to apologise.

Her departure from the Cabinet marks an abrupt halt to the meteoric rise of the Gujarati-origin MP, often touted as a potential future leader of the Conservative party and a prime ministerial candidate.

The 45-year-old was elected as a Conservative MP for Witham in Essex in 2010 and gained prominence in the then David Cameron-led Tory government as his 'Indian Diaspora Champion'.

She went on to be appointed to junior ministerial posts, treasury minister in 2014 and then employment minister after the 2015 general election, before May promoted her to secretary of state in the department for international development (DfID) last year.

A longstanding Eurosceptic, Patel is among the most vocal supporters of Brexit and had steered the 'Vote Leave' campaign in the lead up to the June 2016 referendum in favour of Britain's exit from the European Union (EU).

She must have hoped that the storm around her undisclosed meetings in



Israel would die down after a formal apology before she flew out to Africa for an official tour of Uganda and Ethiopia yesterday.

But she was unable to attend any of the scheduled meetings as she was ordered to abandon the visit and fly back to London today "at the request of the prime minister".

Earlier this week, Downing Street had said that May had accepted Patel's apology over a series of meetings while she was on holiday in Israel in August without reporting them to the Foreign Office.

But new revelations of further meetings with Israeli officials following that visit had made Patel's position within the Cabinet very precarious.

It is understood that she met Israel's public security minister Gilad Erdan in the UK Parliament complex in early September and an Israeli foreign ministry official Yuval Rotem in New York later that month.

The British premier was reportedly told about the unreported New York meeting during Patel's apology conversation at Downing Street on

Monday but only learned about her unreported meeting with Erdan after the talks.

Ministers are required to tell the UK Foreign Office when they are conducting official business overseas, but it emerged that British diplomats in Israel were not informed about any of Patel's meetings - which included a meeting with Netanyahu and other political figures as well as charity organisations.

Opposition parties had been calling for Patel's resignation as minister in charge of DfID and the country's aid budget if it emerged that she had breached the ministerial code of conduct and failed to follow established protocol.

In a letter to May, Labour's shadow Cabinet Office minister Jon Trickett had called on the premier to either call in her independent adviser on ministerial standards to investigate, or "state publicly and explain your full reasons for why Priti Patel retains your confidence".

In her apology statement on Monday, Patel had attributed the unreported meetings to "enthusiasm". (PTI)

'\$100 billion embezzled': Saudi Arabia detains 201 in anti-corruption drive

RIYADH (TIP): Saudi Arabia announced on Thursday it has detained 201 people as part of a sweeping probe, estimating that \$100 billion has been misused through embezzlement and corruption in the past decades.

Saudi Attorney General Saud al-Mojeb said in a statement that 208 people had been called in for questioning since Saturday evening, and that seven people were released without charge, leaving 201 people still in detention.

"The potential scale of corrupt practices which have been uncovered is very large," he said, adding that based on investigations over the past three years, at least \$100 billion has been misused through corruption and embezzlement over several decades.

Critics and observers say the purge that has targeted dozens of top princes, officials, military officers and businessmen is a power grab by the crown prince to sideline potential rivals and critics.

Among those detained earlier are billionaire Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal and two of the late King Abdullah's sons, including Prince Miteb who until Saturday had headed the powerful National Guard before he was ousted and detained.

The government, however, has declined to name the individuals being questioned, saying it is respecting their privacy during this phase of the process.

An estimated 1,700 bank accounts have been frozen belonging to individuals. Al-Mojeb confirmed that action was



taken to suspend personal bank accounts, but did not disclose any figures. The government has stressed that only personal banks have been frozen, leaving companies and businesses so far untouched.

For years, Saudis have complained of rampant corruption and misuse of public funds by top officials in a system where nepotism is also widespread. (AP)

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USE COCONUT, ARGAN OIL FOR SMOOTH LIPS

Winter can be a brutal time of the year for your lips. During the cold winter season, there are various skin problems which emerge like dry cracked lips and skin. Besides drinking water it is important to use coconut and argan oil based products like lip balms, scrubs, lipsticks with the natural oils as its base to save your lips from chapping, suggest experts.

Anirudh Ringe, education manager at Kiehl's India and Bijon Burepapa, Director of Artistry at MyGlam, have listed ways to save your lips.

Don't lick your lips

This common practice is quite harmful for your lips as when you put saliva on the lips, it dries out and make our lips even more dry.

Use coconut oil

Coconut oil is very good for lips as it acts as a good nourishing moisturiser and will give you cracked free lips. For a deep hydrating result we recommend butterstick lip treatment which has coconut oil and lemon butter and comes with SPF.

Use argan oil

The thin skin of your lips loses moisture rapidly, especially in the winter. So make sure lips are covered with lip balm as often as possible. Argan oil is your lips best friend. Make sure you use lipsticks with argan oil or shea butter so that your lips don't crack in the cold.

Try lip scrub

Our lips are not protected by hair or sebaceous glands (oil glands), so they start to chap, therefore weekly exfoliation is a must. Lip scrub works great to gently exfoliate dry lips. For a homemade lip scrub, mix brown sugar and honey and gently scrub lips until the sugar crystals melt. Wash and pat dry.



Keep a gloss handy

If you're a matte enthusiast, and your lips begin to feel dry, always keep a gloss handy. Start your make-up routine by moisturising your lips for which you can use the good old Vaseline. Keep it on for a minute, blot the excess and go ahead with the lipstick application.

Use a lip balm

This will lock in the moisture and help to heal cracks and splits in the skin. Look for a healing ointment that contains petrolatum, essential oils or glycerin. Another important ingredient is sunscreen — there still is sun in the winter.

Avoid lip balms containing camphor, eucalyptus and menthol. These substances actually dry out your lips and make the problem worse. In response, you apply more of this kind of lip balm, and the cycle continues.

Avoid brushing or rubbing your lips when they are flaky or peeling. "It's better not to scrub your lips or pick the peeling skin off with your teeth or your fingers. That just creates cracks and sores on your lips and can make things worse," Dr. Piliang says. "Instead, apply a very heavy ointment-based balm that will be soothing and help to heal your lips."

Treat cracks right away

If you let them go, they can become worse and possibly get infected or lead to a cold sore.

At night, apply lip balm before you go to bed. Many people sleep with their mouths open. Eight hours of breathing in and out through your mouth can dry your lips, Dr. Piliang says. Also consider using a humidifier at night if the air in your house is dry because of being heated.



COFFEE FOR SKIN CARE

Coffee is usually associated with waking people up in the morning, but it can also perk up your skin. The caffeine in coffee has a number of benefits for your skin, from treating redness and inflammation, to reducing the appearance of under-eye circles, to getting rid of cellulite. By incorporating caffeine into your skin care routine, you can reveal evenly toned, smooth skin all over your body.

Reduces Inflammation

Caffeine has potent anti-inflammatory properties that make it ideal for reducing inflammation and redness in your skin. In a 1981 study performed at the Seoul National University, researchers found that caffeine is able to reduce inflammation almost as well as aspirin in rats; in a 1978 performed at the University of Tennessee, researchers found that adding caffeine to anti-inflammatory creams significantly increased their effectiveness. Overall, use of skin care products containing caffeine will reduce and prevent inflammation and redness, leaving you with a beautiful, even skin tone.

Helps get rid of under-eye circles

Dark under-eye circles can be caused by a number of factors, including dehydration, allergies, lack of sleep or genetics. Although caffeine cannot completely erase hereditary dark circles, applying caffeine under your eyes will reduce the puffiness and inflammation associated with dark circles. Additionally, caffeine reduces the build-up of blood under your eyes which contributes to dark shadows. Several eye creams contain caffeine, or you can apply moist tea bags to your eyes for five minutes to reduce puffiness and give you a more alert appearance.

Gets rid of cellulite

Caffeine can also reduce the appearance of cellulite. In a 2008 study performed at the University of São Paulo, researchers found that an application of skin cream containing caffeine to cellulite reduced the size of cellulite fat cells by 17 percent. In addition, a 2007 study performed at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro found that caffeine cream applied to cellulite decreased the hip's diameter in almost 70 percent of participants.

Source: *Livestrong*

FOOD CORNER

LEMON CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

6 chicken thighs without skin, 3-4 Tbsp refined oil, 2 tsp cumin seeds, 2 onions julienned, 6 cloves garlic chopped, 1/2 inch ginger chopped, 3-4 hot green chillies, 3/4 tsp turmeric powder, 1 tsp coriander powder, Salt to taste, 1 cup fresh lemon juice, 1/2 cup orange juice, 1/4 cup fresh sugarcane juice, Fresh coriander to garnish.

Method

- Heat a heavy cooking vessel on a high heat and once its hot, add the refined oil and swirl the pan to coat the base evenly. Once the oil is nice and hot, add the cumin seeds and saute them until crackling and fragrant.
- Now add the onions, garlic and ginger and sauté them gently until they take on a light golden brown color. Turn up the heat and then add the spice powders. Toast the spices on a high heat until they are intensely aromatic and well toasted. Then add a little water and bhuno the base ingredients repeatedly until the oil rises to the top and the masala is well cooked out.
- Add some salt and mix well, then add the chicken thighs to the pan. Turn up the heat and fry the chicken in the



masala until it is evenly coated with the flavor of the base and is a very light yellowy golden brown in color.

- Now add the lemon and orange juice to the chicken and deglaze the pan well, scraping up the flavor packed pan deposits on the base of the pan. Stir everything together well to combine, then add a little sugarcane juice to balance the acidity of the lemon juice.
- Bring the chicken to a boil, then turn the heat to low, cover the pan and let the chicken simmer away until it is cooked to perfection and almost falling off the bone.
- Once the chicken is cooked, uncover the pan and simmer the light gravy until slightly reduced and concentrated in flavor. Turn off the heat, then garnish with fresh coriander and serve with hot rotis or rice.

COCONUT CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

1 kg chicken, 200 ml cream, 100 ml coconut milk, 200 gm onion, cut into small pieces, 2 tsp garlic paste, 1 tsp ginger paste, 1 tsp turmeric powder, Salt to taste, 1 tsp garam masala, 100 gm butter/refined oil, 1 tsp red chilli powder.



Method

- Add chicken, garlic and ginger paste, turmeric powder, salt, garam masala, salt and chilli powder and mix well. Keep the marinated chicken for two hours.
- Then place the pan on fire and put the oil/butter and fry the onion till golden brown.
- Add the marinated chicken to the pan and fry on a low flame adding coconut milk slowly till the chicken is cooked properly.
- Then mix the cream slowly
- Add 1/2 tsp of sugar (optional)
- Now the chicken is ready to eat
- Serve with roti/rice.

CHEMICAL USED IN PLASTIC PACKAGING CAN RISK YOUR BABY'S HEALTH



If you are expecting, you may want to avoid using plastic-packaged products, as according a recent study, a chemical used in them may cause health problems for your offspring. According to the Penn State research, chemical bisphenol A (BPA), used in plastic packaging and in the linings of food and beverage cans, may be passed from a mother to her offspring during pregnancy and cause changes in the gut bacteria of the offspring.

Previous research suggested that exposure to flame retardant chemicals found in furniture and household products during pregnancy could damage the child's IQ. And a similar study done a few months ago said that exposure to chemicals used to increase

flexibility of plastic could increase the risk of allergic asthma in babies.

In a study on rabbits, the researchers observed that exposure to BPA during pregnancy caused chronic inflammation in the offspring's intestines and liver. The researchers also noted signs of increased gut permeability or leaky gut and a decrease in the diversity of gut bacteria and anti-inflammatory bacterial metabolites, such as short-chain fatty acids, said researcher Jairam KP Vanamala.

Leaky gut and decreased gut-bacteria diversity and metabolites are considered biomarkers or indicators of inflammation-related chronic diseases, he added. The offspring were not directly exposed to BPA, but received

exposure to the chemical from their mother through the placenta and in the milk. This exposure may lead to long-lasting health problems, according to the researchers.

In the future, Vanamala said researchers may investigate how the influence of diet and environment during pregnancy could affect long-term health. The researchers used rabbits because of their longer gestation period, which is similar to humans. Rodents have shorter gestation periods, according to Vanamala.

He also suggested that future research may investigate whether there is a relationship between a decrease in gut bacteria diversity and food allergies.

Source: ANI

High-protein diet might help you shed extra kilos

If you've been struggling to knock off some excess weight, consider a diet that's high on protein. A new study shows how phenylalanine reduces food intake by affecting the gut and the brain, and suggests that it may be used to prevent or treat obesity. Although high protein diets have been shown to be satisfying and to promote weight loss, they can be hard to maintain and may lead to other health problems in the long-term. Phenylalanine is an amino acid produced in the gut when protein is digested and has previously been shown to affect the release of gut hormones that reduce appetite in rodents.

However, it was unclear exactly how the amino acid was causing this release and whether other systems were involved in phenylalanine's appetite suppressing effects. To investigate the effects of phenylalanine on appetite and gut hormone release, Professor Kevin Murphy and colleagues at Imperial College London, examined the effect of the amino acid on food intake and brain activity in areas known to be involved in appetite regulation.

Mice were given phenylalanine, either orally or rectally, to assess the effects on different parts of the gut. Food intake was monitored at regular intervals over 24 hours and the amount of activity in brain areas associated with appetite regulation was also assessed. Both oral and rectal phenylalanine reduced food intake of the mice and increased activation in a brain area known to be involved in regulating appetite.

Heartburn pills can put your kidneys at risk

Millions of people popping common heartburn and indigestion pills could be at an increased risk of kidney failure, suggests a recent analysis. The study found that individuals who used proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), which reduce gastric acid production, had a 33% increased relative risk of developing chronic kidney disease or kidney failure when compared with non-users. Previous studies showed a link between use of heartburn pills and kidney damage and even fractures.

To investigate, Charat Thongprayoon and his colleagues conducted an analysis of published studies that reported the risk of chronic kidney disease or kidney failure among PPI users compared with non-users. Five studies with 536,902 participants met the eligibility criteria and were included in the meta-analysis. Individuals who used PPIs had a 33% increased relative risk of CKD or kidney failure when compared with non-users.

Thongprayoon noted that this study demonstrated a significant association between the use of PPIs and increased risks of chronic kidney disease and kidney failure.

"Although no causal relationship has been proven, providers should consider whether PPI therapy is indicated for patients. Chronic use of PPIs should be avoided if not really indicated," he added.



HUMAN STEM CELLS MAY HOLD THE KEY TO TACKLING DIABETES

Globally, 415 million people have been diagnosed with diabetes. In India, because of changing lifestyles, deaths due to diabetes have increased by 50% in India between 2005 and 2015.

These people lack the ability to produce sufficient amounts of insulin, which regulates the blood sugar in the body. This can lead to a number of complications and in many cases be potentially fatal. Previous studies showed that stem cells

Human stem cells can be used to produce insulin-producing cells that in the future can be transplanted into diabetes patients, a new study has shown

could play a role in treating lung damage, osteoporosis and cerebral palsy.

The findings showed that regulation of cell polarity is the key to the development of many other human cell types, for example, nerve cells as well for transmitting signals in neurons. Cell polarity is the asymmetric organisation of several cellular components, including its plasma membrane, cytoskeleton or organelles.

In the study, published in the journal Nature Cell Biology, the researchers examined how the body creates the complex piping systems that transport fluids and gases in our organs to understand the machinery for instructing progenitor cells into their different destinies.

"By identifying the signals that instruct mouse progenitor cells to become cells that make tubes and later insulin-producing beta cells, we can transfer this knowledge to human stem cells to more robustly make beta cells," said Henrik Semb, Professor at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

The researchers discovered that the same signal — the so-called epidermal growth factor (EGF) pathway — controls both the formation of pipes and beta cells through polarity changes. "Therefore, the development of pancreatic progenitor into beta cells depends on their orientation in the pipes," the researchers explained.

While the study was mainly based on tests performed on mice, the researchers found that the same cell maturation mechanism applies to the development of human cells. "Now we can use this knowledge to more efficiently turn human stem cells into beta cells in the laboratory with the hope to use them to replace lost beta cells in patients suffering from diabetes," Semb stated.

Source: IANS

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HEAT SOURCE UNDER ANTARCTICA MELTING ITS ICE SHEET

WASHINGTON (TIP): A geothermal heat source called a mantle plume lies deep below West Antarctica, explaining some of the melting that creates lakes and rivers under the ice sheet, confirms a new NASA study.

The heat source may help explain why the West Antarctic ice sheet collapsed rapidly in an earlier era of rapid climate change, and why it is so unstable today, said the study published in the *Journal of Geophysical Research: Solid Earth*. The stability of an ice sheet is closely related to how much water lubricates it from below, allowing glaciers to slide more easily.

Understanding the sources and future of the meltwater under West Antarctica is important for estimating the rate at which ice may be lost to the ocean in the future.

The mantle plume deep below Antarctica's Marie Byrd Land formed 50 to 110 million years ago, long before the West Antarctic ice sheet came into existence, the researchers determined.

At the end of the last ice age around 11,000 years ago, the ice sheet went through a period of rapid, sustained ice loss when changes in global weather patterns and rising sea levels pushed warm water closer to the ice sheet—just as is happening today.

The researchers suggest that the mantle plume could facilitate this kind of rapid loss.

Some 30 years ago, a scientist at the University of Colorado Denver suggested that heat from a mantle plume under Marie Byrd Land might explain regional volcanic activity and a topographic dome feature.

Very recent seismic imaging has supported this concept.

When Helene Seroussi of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, first heard the idea, however, "I thought it was crazy," she said.

"I didn't see how we could have that amount of heat and still have ice on top of it," Seroussi said.

With few direct measurements existing from under the ice, Seroussi and Erik Ivins of JPL concluded the best way to study the mantle plume idea was by numerical modelling.

They used the Ice Sheet System Model (ISSM), a numerical depiction of the physics of ice sheets developed by scientists at JPL and the University of California, Irvine.

To assure the model was realistic, the scientists drew on observations of changes in the altitude of the ice sheet surface made by NASA's IceSat satellite and airborne Operation IceBridge campaign.

Since the location and size of the possible mantle plume were unknown, they tested a full range of what was physically possible for multiple parameters, producing dozens of different simulations.

They found that the flux of energy from the mantle plume must be no more than 150 milliwatts per square metre.

For comparison, in US regions with no volcanic activity, the heat flux from Earth's mantle is 40 to 60 milliwatts.

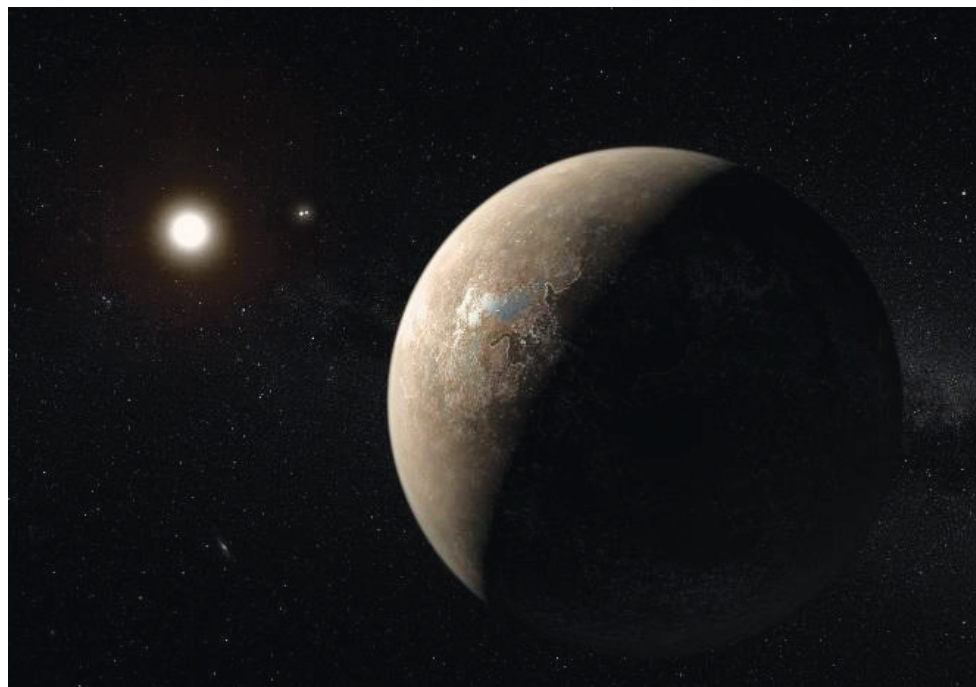
Source: IANS

TWITTER GETS LIMIT OF 280 CHARACTERS

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): The 140-character limit that has been around since 2006 and became part of Twitter's personality on Wednesday paved the way for a new 280-character limit that is now available virtually for all users — including for those who tweet in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi and Tamil.

In September, Twitter launched a test with a select group of users that expanded the 140-character limit so that they could express themselves easily in a tweet.

COLD DUST DETECTED AROUND EARTH'S NEAREST STAR



WASHINGTON (TIP): Astronomers at Chile's Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) observatory have discovered cold dust around the closest star to Earth, indicating an elaborate planetary system, says a report.

Proxima Centauri is a faint red dwarf lying just four light-years away in the southern constellation of Centaurus (The Centaur), orbited by the Earth-sized temperate world Proxima b that was discovered in 2016, and the closest planet to the Solar System.

The new observations reveal emission from clouds of cold cosmic dust surrounding the star, which presents a glow that could be coming from a region between one to four times as far from Proxima Centauri as the Earth is from the Sun, the astronomers led by Guillem Anglada, from the Instituto de Astrofísica de Andalucía (CSIC), at Granada in Spain, said in a statement.

The dust lies in a belt that extends a few hundred million kilometres from Proxima Centauri. It has a total mass of about one hundredth of the Earth's mass and is estimated to have a temperature of about

minus 230 degrees Celsius, as cold as that of the Kuiper Belt in the outer Solar System.

In addition, the ALMA data also hinted at the presence of an even cooler dust belt about ten times further out, indicating the presence of an elaborate planetary system.

"The dust around Proxima is important because, following the discovery of the terrestrial planet Proxima b, it's the first indication of the presence of an elaborate planetary system, and not just a single planet, around the star closest to our Sun," Anglada said.

If confirmed, the nature of an outer belt is intriguing, given its very cold environment far from a star that is cooler and fainter than the Sun.

Both belts are much further from Proxima Centauri than the planet Proxima b, which orbits at just four million kilometres from its parent star, the report noted.

"This result suggests that Proxima Centauri may have a multiple planet system with a rich history of interactions that resulted in the formation of a dust belt," Anglada explained. Source: IANS

FACEBOOK KNOWS IT HAS 270 MN FAKE ACCOUNTS

LONDON (TIP): Already under lens for its role in Russia's meddling into the 2016 US election, Facebook has admitted that up to 270 million accounts on the platform are either fake or duplicate.

The social media giant this week released its third quarter earnings and buried in those results, it disclosed that there are tens of millions more fake and duplicate accounts than it had previously thought, The Telegraph reported on Saturday.

Around two-to-three per cent of its 2.1 billion monthly users in the third quarter of 2017 were "user-misclassified and undesirable accounts", Facebook said, adding the number were up from the one per cent it had estimated in July.

Another 10% of its accounts are duplicates of real users, doubling its estimate of six per cent from last quarter's results, suggesting that in total, up to 13 per cent of its 2.1 billion monthly users almost 270 million accounts are "illegitimate".

The company said that improvements to the data used to identify fake accounts was behind the increase, rather than a sudden surge in fake users, the report pointed out.

The disclosure could lead to increased scrutiny of the social network that is already under scrutiny. According to a report in The Washington Post in October, Facebook was planning to tell lawmakers that 126 million of its users might have seen content produced and circulated by Russian operatives — many times more than the company had previously disclosed about their reach.

Beware of falling prey to fake WhatsApp

LONDON (TIP): In the day and age of increasing cybercrime, download of verified apps has been stressed upon time and again. However, as fake downloads continue to take place, cyber criminals are encashing on this exact loophole; the latest method being through the circulation of a fake WhatsApp.

The app, which is reportedly a fake version of the yet-to-be-released 'WhatsApp Business', was recently spotted on Play Store, with astonishingly high rating despite being labeled a "fraud app" encouraging "data theft" in the reviews section, reports The Independent.

While the matter has been reported to Google, it is being said that downloads are still taking place, as the users are assuming this to be the popular messaging platform's upcoming version of the app for businesses. And while the concept of fake versions is not so uncommon, this version of WhatsApp Business is considered to be dangerous, owing to the anticipation ahead of the launch of the original WhatsApp Business version. On a related note, the upcoming WhatsApp Business is being directed to cater to the business section of the society and others in general, in order to facilitate easy communication among users. Source: ANI



INDIA TO PRESENT 2018 BUDGET ON FEBRUARY 1

NEW DELHI (TIP): Finance minister Arun Jaitley will present on February 1, his fifth consecutive budget, a senior official said, putting to rest speculation that the date of presentation of the finance bill would be advanced. This budget will be the National Democratic Alliance's last full-fledged budget before the 2019 general elections.

In 2016, the government advanced the budget presentation to the first day of February, departing from the practice of presenting it on the last working day of the month, to give more time to departments to spend the money allocated to them.

The winter session of Parliament will be truncated and is expected to start around the second and final phase of the Gujarat assembly election, which is due to take place on 9 December, "but there is no question of bringing forward the budget and (it) will be presented on February 1," the government official cited above said on condition of anonymity.

The government last year also changed the expenditure classification to revenue and capital expenditure from the earlier classification of plan and non-plan expenditure. It merged the railway budget with the general budget. It is yet to decide on shifting the financial year to January-December from April-March.

The finance ministry has started the budget-making exercise for the fiscal year starting April 1 with the release of the budget circular in September containing the timelines for submission of information by various departments.

Ministries and departments were asked to submit tentative budget estimates for fiscal 2019 by 30 September.

The government on Monday named revenue secretary Hasmukh Adhia as the finance secretary, completing the team of bureaucrats that will prepare the next budget. Ajay Narayan has been named as the new expenditure secretary after finance and expenditure secretary Ashok Lavasa retired from his post on 31 October. Subhash Chandra Garg and



Rajiv Kumar were appointed as the economic affairs secretary and financial services secretary in July and August, respectively while Neeraj Kumar Gupta continues to be the disinvestment secretary.

This will also be the first budget after the goods and services tax (GST) was implemented from 1 July. The centre now cannot on its own change the indirect tax structure except for customs duties as this would need approval of the GST Council.

This may substantially shift focus of the next budget to quality of expenditure of the government.

The government has not decided on framing a new Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, as recommended by the N.K. Singh committee. The committee has recommended the formation of a fiscal council and a glide path to lower the fiscal deficit and debt-to-GDP ratio to 2.5% and 38.7%, respectively, by the fiscal year 2022-23 from 3.5% and 49.4% in 2016-17. *Source: HT*

Flipkart to launch new smartphone Billion Capture+

BENGALURU (TIP): India's largest online retailer Flipkart will launch a new smartphone under its Billion brand, which is the first major initiative by co-founder and executive chairman Sachin Bansal since he stepped aside as chief executive in January 2016.

The new, so-called Made for India smartphone called Billion Capture+ will go on sale on Flipkart on November 15. The smartphone, based on the Android operating system, will be priced at Rs10,999 for the 32GB model and at Rs12,999 for the 64GB model, Billion category head Hrishikesh Thite said. The phone has been designed, engineered, manufactured and tested in India, he added.

The phone's appeal with customers will be closely tracked. Flipkart, which is the leader in the crucial smartphone category, boasts of key partnerships with top phone brands such as Xiaomi, Samsung, Vivo and Oppo, all of whom have competing products with Billion. Overall smartphone sales account for more than 50% of all e-commerce in India.

In an interview, Bansal said that Flipkart will launch more products across categories such as large appliances under the Billion brand over the coming months.

"This is a significant event for us, given that a hi-tech product like a smartphone takes our brand to another level. What we have done better from our side is that we've tried to understand consumer needs better," said Bansal.

GST ON OVER 200 ITEMS LIKELY TO BE CUT: PANEL HEAD

PATNA (TIP): Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, who heads the panel on the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN), today said the rates on over 200 daily-use items are expected to come down from 28 per cent to 18 per cent at the GST Council meet. "With a view to giving further relief to small taxpayers (businessmen) and consumers at large, it is expected that tax rates will be brought down from current 28 per cent to 18 per cent on over 200 items of daily use," he said before flying to Guwahati to participate in the GST Council meet. *Source: PTI*



JIO ANNOUNCES TRIPLE CASHBACK SCHEME

NEW DELHI (TIP): Reliance Jio today introduced a variety of 'Prime Benefits for all Jio Prime customers, including triple cashback of up to Rs 2,599 on every recharge of Rs 399 or above.

The triple cashback offer includes 100% cashback vouchers of Jio worth Rs 400 on every Jio tariff plan recharge of Rs 399 or above and instant cashback of up to Rs 300 on every recharge by Jio's partner wallets, including leading digital payment wallets like AmazonPay, AxisPay, FreeCharge, Mobikwik, PayTM and PhonePe. *Source: IANS*

TATA MOTORS' PROFIT SOARS TO RS 2,502 CRORE

MUMBAI (TIP): Tata Motors today reported a three-fold jump in consolidated profit at Rs 2,502 crore in the quarter to September from Rs 848 crore in same quarter last fiscal.

Consolidated revenue grew 10.34% to Rs 70,156 crore as against Rs 63,577 crore a year ago, Tata Motors said.

The sales of commercial and passenger vehicles stood at 1,52,979 units, a growth of 13.8%. Medium and heavy commercial vehicle segment grew by 28%, while passenger vehicles grew 14.4%. *Source: PTI*

GMR INFRA: ALL BIZ ACTIVITIES IN COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

NEW DELHI (TIP): GMR Infrastructure said on Thursday all its business activities and investments in overseas entities are in compliance with applicable tax laws in respective countries.

Referring to reports related to 'Paradise Papers' that the group has a "number of overseas subsidiaries in attempt of tax avoidance through offshore entities", the company said all foreign investments of GMR group were well within the permissible limits of FEMA, Income Tax Act, Companies Act, 2013, SEBI and RBI regulations. *Source: PTI*

INDIA TO SEE 10% SALARY INCREASE IN 2018: REPORT

MUMBAI (TIP): Salaries are projected to increase by 10 per cent in India in 2018, the highest in the Asia Pacific region, according to a report.

The highest projected salary rise is seen in the energy, FMCG and retail sectors.

"Salaries in India are projected to rise 10 per cent in 2018, same as the actual increase in 2017," according to the 'Q3 2017 Salary Budget Planning Report' released by global advisory, broking and solutions company Willis Towers Watson.

The report covered a range of industries, including BPO, chemicals, construction & engineering, consumer products & retail, financial services, high tech, manufacturing, media, pharmaceutical & health sciences, business and technical consulting and transportation and logistics. *Source: PTI*

Japan's struggling Toshiba logs \$436 mn loss in first half

TOKYO (TIP): Troubled Japanese conglomerate Toshiba said on Thursday it logged a net loss of \$436 million for the fiscal first half, as it moves to complete a multi-billion-dollar sale of its chip business to restore its balance sheet.

The Tokyo-based firm said the loss was mainly due to the tax impact associated with the deal to sell the chip unit to a consortium led by Bain Capital.

The announcement came after the company said last month it was able to account for tax expenses associated with the chip unit sale, but not the massive proceeds from it.

The result of this is that Toshiba is projecting an annual net loss of 110 billion yen.

But the company has previously said the sale of the prized business should



eventually boost the firm's before-tax consolidated income by about 1.08 trillion yen.

Toshiba is also projecting annual sales worth 4.97 trillion yen.

Source: AFP



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Horoscope Forecast for NOVEMBER 2017

Today there is computerized voice type analysis. My observation is you, Scorpio, Taurus and Libra are blessed with the baritone which persuades people to do your bidding. This is certainly yoga time or yoke time or partnerships of all possible sorts. I suggest yoga and partnership with God will be exceptionally fruitful. Enjoy it. Life is sweet but short.

Ganesha says cross over time, Olympian hop-step-jump time as Jupiter the protector of the cosmos steps into Scorpio from October 11 this year. It means big push to designer babies, all chemicals and genes, buying and selling, magic, mystery and mastery of the flesh and the spirit. This awesome period will last till November 8, 2018. Genes, chemicals, climate changes, bio-pharmaceuticals show the way to a brighter future. Not to worry. It is absolutely certain that there will be the mighty marriage of technology and humanity beyond all that you can even imagine. Take heart, and march onwards spiritual warrior!

ARIES: Ganesha says this is the time for action and you are never one to run away from the good fight! In fact, you love hard work and the desire for recognition in the world is also deeply embedded in them. You are full of zest and make marked progress with determined effort. Power, prestige, perks, pelf and property are all yours for the asking. You are ruthless and merciless at the start and nothing has the gumption to even get in your way: you bulldoze your way past all roadblocks.

TAURUS: You continue with gusto; in fact, you pick up more speed. You are moving like a rejuvenated Brett Lee. You mean business and get things done with frantic speed efficiency. Property matters, inheritance, new acquisitions and high-end real-estate deals come into sharp focus. You are fiery and brook no opposition. There is travel and collaborations, and many new vistas are reached for in your professional life.

GEMINI: You finally make room in your life for emotions and feelings. Your first needs are money, recognition and a position of control and once they are in place, you look for love. All your feelings are neatly compartmentalised. The family comes into play here. There is love and bonding. You try to include them in your plans so they understand you better; it is also so much easier to trust family and include them in all your new schemes rather than put your trust in strangers.

CANCER: The intense phase resumes and you are charging like a bull at the matador's cape. You have created a balance in your personal and professional life, and now you move ahead to seize the opportunities that come your way. Your achievements are all well deserved and you bask in the glory of a job well done. There is also some fun and partying and even, possibly, a new romance. Don't lose your head and overdo it. There is passion and, possibly, great intimacy, but watch where you are going.

LEO: There is a lull after the storm. You need a) to communicate with people and b) to slow down a bit. There are many new ideas to grapple with and you need to discuss all this. There is a chance of new and meaningful relationships developing. There is closer and more intimate bonding as you want to communicate your feelings, your grand plans and work ethic. There is travel thrown in and you meet people from many different walks of life.

VIRGO: Somehow, all at once, this is the phase when everything gets more hectic. There will be skyrocketing expenses and new sources of income too. You are on a spending spree and buying the best brands. Money is coming from all your ventures, and so you are not unduly bothered. Money wields its own power and you love the feeling. There will be family outings, meetings up with old friends, visits to sanctuaries and parks and many fun times.

LIBRA: There is a lot of waste and extravagance that you have to guard against. As you know, a penny saved is a penny earned. So you need to rein in your expenses. There will be other preoccupations too as you will also have to look into domestic affairs and little details like children's education, parents / in-laws health, schooling and the other mundane details and demands of everyday life.

SCORPIO: You are reaching out in a big way, in all directions, to all you meet. There is expansion not only in your work but also in your consciousness. You bow down before a higher power and are drawn deeply towards spiritualism, philosophy, moral and social issues, and even religious rites. There will be meetings with old acquaintances and you enjoy happy times with them. Friends mean a lot to you and you realise, in your quieter moments, that life is not all about achievement and money and fame.

SAGITTARIUS: The new developments in your life make you very emotional and sentimental. Spiritualism, prayer, tantra and mantra, a lot of meditation and contemplation, the higher values and social questions of law, order, balance and justice will become a part of your psyche. Your realities get subjective and you look at all-round growth. There are strong shifts away from the worldly plane and the new values you are toying with get deeply ingrained in your personality and life, leading to very intense bonding.

CAPRICORN: You are communicating with both fervour and fire. You meet up with new collaborators and discuss grand plans. There are many expenses and you are a bit confused: should you move ahead full steam or slow down a bit and smell the roses. Expenses will grow almost unmanageably and there is no respite from them. You feel that you are at your wit's end but Ganesha sends down hope.

AQUARIUS: You are not one to be knocked down easily by life's blows. You are tough and get back on track fairly quickly and well. Not for nothing is Aquarius called one of the most powerful signs of the zodiac. The office and home need your attention along with many domestic issues. The health of family members and even pets will need looking into and you get down to handling it all. But you will definitely be pulled in many directions. Due to all this, your own health may suffer too; you need to take the necessary precautions.

PISCES: New opportunities keep knocking at your door. There is more work and more money to be made, along with journeys, legal matters and lawsuits to keep you busy and involved. There will be heavy expenses to meet once again, but you find the strength and finances to cope and that, too, with great dignity. You realise that worries and troubles are bound to be there and that life has its thorns. There is enormous tension, but you somehow find the sources to manage it all.

Bejan Daruwalla is world's most famous astrologer today. He appears regularly on world wide TV shows. Bejan who has been a professor in English, has authored a number of books on astrology. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on March 29, 2012, lunched one of Bejan's books, '2012-End of the World? Bejan contributes to a number of

journals and newspapers in many parts of the world which include Berkley Communications (London) Times of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai) and The Indian Panorama (New York and Texas). Bejan's predictions have mostly been correct and people the world over rely on his predictions.

Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone 011-91-8141234275 www.bejandaruwalla.com

TALE OF SHALIGRAM: WHY WAS VISHNU CURSED?

You must have noticed that Lord Vishnu is often worshipped in many places in the form of a black stone. During the time of Satya Narayan puja in any Hindu household, the priest carries this stone along with him and places it near the idol and then starts reciting the mantras. This black stone is known as Shaligram stone. It was due to a curse that Lord Vishnu turned into a stone. A curse so powerful that even the most powerful God, one among the trinity could not do anything but accept it. Lord Vishnu received this curse from one of His most loyal devotee, Vrinda.

The curse turned Lord Vishnu into a stone which is popularly known as Shalimar. It is found near the banks of the Gandaki river only. It is usually black, red or mixed in colour and is kept in a box. Anyone who keeps a Shalimar stone at home has to follow strict rules of cleanliness and worship. The tale of the Shaligram stone is interesting and sad at the same time. It is a story of arrogance, devotion, love and betrayal. The God tricked His most loyal devotee and earned a curse for Himself in return. Read on to find out the whole story of the Shalimar stone and why Lord Vishnu was cursed.

Jalandhar: A Part Of Shiva

There was once a demon king named Jalandhar. He was born out of the flames which emanated from Lord Shiva's third eye. That is why he was an extremely powerful warrior. He was married to the demon princess named Vrinda. Vrinda loved Jalandhar very dearly and was a devoted wife. Her devotion, loyalty and chastity made Jalandhar invincible.

Jalandhar Faces Shiva

Jalandhar was against the demi Gods and chased them out of the heaven. He established his own kingdom. The demi Gods went praying to Lord Vishnu and Shiva for help. Shiva knew that He could never defeat Jalandhar because he was a part of Shiva Himself. Yet, Lord Shiva went on to fight with Jalandhar. The battle continued for years but Lord Shiva could not defeat Jalandhar because of the protection which was provided by Vrinda's chastity and devotion for her husband.

Vrinda: The Greatest Devotee Of Vishnu

In spite of being the demon princess and wife of the demon king, Vrinda worshipped Lord Vishnu. She was a dedicated and staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu and prayed to Him with all her faith.

Vishnu's Betrayal

When the demi Gods saw that even Lord Shiva could not defeat Jalandhar, they turned to Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu could not do anything other than playing a trick to malign Vrinda's chastity. He disguised Himself as Jalandhar and stood in front of Vrinda. Vrinda could not recognise Lord Vishnu and thought Jalandhar had returned. She ran into his arms and soon realised that it was not Jalandhar. Her chastity was maligned and the protection of Jalandhar was destroyed. As a result Lord Shiva killed Jalandhar in no time.

Vrinda's Curse

Realizing her mistake, Vrinda asked Lord Vishnu to show His real form. She was shattered to see that she was tricked by her



own Lord. Seeing Lord Vishnu disguising as Jalandhar and tricking her to break her chastity, Vrinda cursed Lord Vishnu. She gave the curse that Lord Vishnu would turn into a stone. Lord Vishnu accepted the curse and He turned into the Shaligram stone. Vrinda was also heart broken and decided to end her life.

Tulsi's Boon

Lord Vishnu accepted the curse as He felt guilty of betraying His greatest devotee. So, He gave Vrinda a boon that from her ashes the plant of Tulsi would be born and the plant would get married to the Shaligram stone. This way her chastity would not be maligned and she would stay with Lord Vishnu forever. Vishnu also said that he would never accept food without Tulsi and therefore Vishnu's prasadam is always offered with a leaf of Tulsi in it.

Shaligram's Marriage With Tulsi

It is considered extremely auspicious for couples if they marry the Tulsi plant with the Shalimar stone on the day of Dev Parbodhini Ekadashi. It brings happiness and prosperity in their marriage.

Facts about Lord Vishnu

- The four arms indicate his all-powerful and all-pervasive nature. His physical existence is represented by the two arms in the front, while the two arms at the back represent his presence in the spiritual world. The Upanishad Gopal Uttartapani describes the four arms. Title has been given since some of these facts may be shocking for someone, soothing for devotees and interesting for others. Some of these facts may be

known to someone but unknown to other.

- The Shreevatsa mark is on his chest, symbolizing his consort Lakshmi.
- He wears the auspicious "Kaustubha" jewel around his neck and a garland of flowers (Vanamala). Lakshmi dwells in this jewel, on Vishnu's chest.
- A crown adorns his head: The crown symbolizes his supreme authority. This crown sometimes includes a peacock feather, borrowing from his Krishna-avataar.
- He wears two earrings: The earrings represent inherent opposites in creation — knowledge and ignorance; happiness and unhappiness; pleasure and pain.
- He rests on Ananta, the immortal and infinite snake.
- A conch shell or Shankha, named

Panchajanya, is held by the upper left hand. It represents Vishnu's power to create and maintain the universe. Panchajanya represents the five elements or Panchabhoota – water, fire, air, earth and sky or space. It also represents the five airs or Pranas that are within the body and mind. The conch symbolizes that Vishnu is the primeval Divine sound of creation and continuity. It also represented as Om.

- The Chakra, a sharp, spinning, discus-like weapon, named "Sudarshana", is held by the upper right hand. It symbolizes the purified spiritualized mind. The name Sudarshana is derived from two words – Su, which means good, superior, and Darshana, which means vision or sight; together. The Chakra represents destruction of ego in the awakening and realization of the soul's original nature and god.
- A mace or Gada, named "Kaumodaki", is held by the lower right hand. It symbolizes that Vishnu's divine power is the source of all spiritual, mental and physical strength. It also signifies Vishnu's power to destroy materialistic or demonic tendencies (Anarthas) that prevent people from reaching god. Vishnu's mace is the power of the Divine within us to spiritually purify and uplift us from our materialistic bonds.
- A lotus flower or Padma is held by the lower left hand. It represents spiritual liberation, Divine perfection, purity and the unfolding of Spiritual consciousness within the individual. The lotus opening its petals in the light of the Sun is indicative of the expansion and awakening of our long dormant, original spiritual consciousness in the light of god. The lotus symbolizes that god is the power and source from which the universe and the individual soul emerges.
- According to the Siddhartha-samhita there are twenty-four forms of Lord Vishnu. The twenty-four forms are - Vasudeva-Sankarshana- Pradyumna-Anirudha- Keshava- Narayana- Madhava - Govinda - Vishnu - Madhusudana-Trivikrama-Vamana-Sridhara - Hrishikesh - Padmanabha - Damodara-Purushottama-Achyuta-Narasimha - Janardana - Hari - Krishna - Adhokshaja. Upulvan, Uthpala Varna - In Sri Lanka, Vishnu is also referred to as Upulvan (Blue Lotus Coloured)

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cont from page 1

Resurgence of Democrats...

approval rating at 38% is an evidence of voter disenchantment with Trump.

Elsewhere, like in Nassau County, involvement of County officials in corruption was a big issue which resulted in a serious knock out of Republican contenders.

By and large, it has been a tremendous gain for Democrats.

Victory of Phil Murphy as Governor of the Republican held New Jersey and victory of a host of democrats in that State must cause Republican establishment some anxiety. Similarly, victory of Democrat Dr. Ralph Northam as Governor of Virginia has rattled the Republicans no less.

Curran ran a fierce campaign to regain for Democrats the position of Executive of Nassau County held by a Republican Ed Mangano for two terms.

Certain other victories were almost taken for granted. Mayor de Blasio was never in danger of losing. Queens Borough President Melinda Katz was quite comfortable. And so were many more.

A number of Indian Americans have won the elections. They include Ravinder Bhalla, the first Sikh Mayor in New Jersey State. He was elected Mayor of Hoboken. Others include Raj Mukherji (NJ State Assembly); Vin Gopal (NJ State Senate); Santi Narra (Freeholder, Middlesex County, NJ); Viru Patel (Councilman, Woodridge, NJ); Samip Joshi (Councilman, Edison, NJ); Hemant Marathe (Mayor, West Windsor, NJ); Balvir Singh (Freeholder, Burlington County, NJ). Besides, a large number of Indian Americans have been elected to board of education seats as well.

The Indian Panorama will publish in the next issue detailed results and analysis by experts. However, we are giving here some comments.

New York Times editorial comment said, "President Trump's critics and admirers have both often wondered whether most of the normal rules of politics apply to him. Trump, in his own graphic way, may have summarized the view best: "I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and I wouldn't lose any voters, O.K.?"

But it turns out that the normal rules of politics do indeed apply to Trump.

With his approval rating at a paltry 38 percent, Trump's Republican Party took a whopping. It's not just that the Democrats easily won the highest-profile race - the Virginia governorship. Democrats enjoyed a stunningly good night across the country. Consider:

- o Defying virtually all expectations, Democrats flipped more than a dozen of the 100 seats in Virginia's house of delegates and, pending final vote counts, may have won control of it.
- o They won full control - legislature and governorship - in both New Jersey and Washington State.
- o Maine's Republican governor has repeatedly vetoed Medicaid expansion. Maine's voters effectively overrode his veto, by referendum, in a landslide.
- o Democrats won two traditionally Republican legislature seats in special elections in Georgia.
- o Last night's results continue a trend. Democrats have done startlingly well in special elections this year, often in conservative districts.

As significant as all these wins are, they will also help shape the political future. Already, multiple House Republicans have announced their retirement, including two more yesterday. Idaho and Utah may now follow Maine and hold referendums on expanding Medicaid. Progressives will be energized to find candidates to run in traditionally Republican areas.

Donald Trump remains the most powerful person in the

country, if not the world. But the election results show that he also remains the weakest first-year president in modern history."

Elsewhere. "Enthusiasm matters," writes The Atlantic's Ronald Brownstein, noting that Ralph Northam, Virginia's governor-elect, earned about 330,000 more votes than his predecessor had in 2013.

It wasn't just that Democrats won up and down the ticket, but which Democrats won, notes Time's Charlotte Alter. "A trans woman beat the guy who introduced the bathroom bill. A gun victim's boyfriend beat a delegate with an 'A' grade from the NRA. A civil rights lawyer who sued the police department just became the top prosecutor in Philadelphia," she tweeted.

White, rural areas of Virginia largely backed Ed Gillespie, the Republican, but were swamped by suburban and urban turnout for Northam. "The data out of SW VA suggest maybe you can turn your campaign into a McTrump franchise," noted the pollster Kristen Anderson, "but that's of limited value in a state Trump lost."

"With all the evidence in front of us, Democrats are slight favorites to retake the U.S. House in 2018," argues FiveThirtyEight's Dave Wasserman.

In Beijing, Trump inks \$250...

President Donald Trump, on November 9, wrapped up two days of intense talks with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping as both sides inked deals worth over \$250 billion but doubts lingered about any headway over his efforts to push Beijing to take strong action to rein in nuclear-armed North Korea.

On the second day of his visit, which was marked by lavish red-carpet welcome with an impressive guard of honor by the Chinese military troops, Trump continued his overnight talks with Xi at the Great Hall of People here.

"Just now, the President and I witnessed the signing of some major cooperation agreements by our businesses. During this visit, the two sides signed over \$250 billion of commercial deals and two-way investment agreements," Xi said summing up his talks with Trump, who has been accusing China of not doing enough to address the massive \$370 billion bilateral trade deficit. China's Commerce Minister Zhong Shan said the two sides signed deals worth some \$253.4 billion over the past two days.

On pressuring North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un to halt his nuclear and missile programs, which was Trump's main agenda of the maiden visit, Xi reiterated China's stand that Beijing is faithfully implementing the UNSC resolutions.

China is North Korea's close ally and top trading partner. "On the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, we reiterated the firm commitment to achieving denuclearization of the Peninsula and upholding international non-proliferation regime," Xi said. The two sides will continue to fully and strictly implement the UN Security Council resolutions. At the same time, the two sides commit to working toward a solution through dialogue and negotiation, he said.

Summing up on the outcome of talks on North Korea, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said: "The key topic of discussion was our continued joint effort to increase pressure on North Korea, to convince them to abandon their nuclear and missile program". "Both leaders affirmed their commitment to achieve a complete, verifiable, and permanent denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Tillerson added, according to a PTI report.

Trump, Xi one on curbing terror in South Asia

China said President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart Donald Trump have reached a consensus on fighting terrorism and upholding peace and stability in South Asia, amid America ramping up pressure on Pakistan to dismantle terror safe havens

During their talks, Xi and the US President discussed Afghanistan and committed to working toward a peaceful future for the terrorist haven

Importantly for the South Asian region, Xi said Afghanistan, where US is increasing its presence and pressuring China's close ally Pakistan to rein in the Taliban, also figured in their talks

On Afghanistan, Trump said: "In order to create a more secure future for all and to protect our citizens from extremism and terrorism, President Xi and I also committed to working toward a peaceful future for Afghanistan"

Modi to attend Asean Summit...

Asean-India Summit and the 12th East Asia Summit," Priti Saran, Secretary (East) in the External Affairs Ministry, told the media.

With this, India would have undertaken high-level visits - President, Vice-President and Prime Minister - to all 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) members - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the

Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - in the past three years.

"This shows the importance India attaches to its relations with the Asean," Saran said. "It symbolizes India's commitment to deepening relations with Asean member states, and with the Indo-Pacific region in general within the framework of our Act East Policy."

While Modi will meet Duterte, also this year's Asean Chairman, on November 13, the two leaders will participate in the two Summits the next day.

Modi will also attend the special celebrations to mark 50th anniversary of the Asean's formation, a meeting of the leaders of the countries of the proposed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and an Asean Business and Investment Summit.

The RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement between the Asean member states and the six states with which the grouping has free trade pacts - Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

Asean accounts for over 10 per cent of India's external trade. Asean and India together comprise a population of 1.85 billion, one-fourth of the global population, and a combined GDP of \$3.8 trillion.

Saran said investments in India from Asean countries in the last 17 years had been over \$70 billion, accounting for 17 per cent of FDI. Indian investments in Asean stand at over \$40 billion.

Modi's visit assumes significance as this year marks the 25th anniversary of the India-Asean dialogue partnership.

"Asean is central to India's Act East Policy. Therefore, our Prime Minister's participation in the Asean-India Summit and the East Asia Summit provides a very important opportunity to reiterate our commitment to the partnership," Saran said.

India also has 30 sectoral dialogue mechanisms and seven ministerial-level interactions with Asean.

Saran said India supported Asean's centrality in the regional security architecture, and enhancing physical, digital, economic, cultural and people-to-people ties was a key focus in the relationship.

New Delhi attached the greatest importance to the East Asia Summit, of which India is a founding member, she said.

The East Asia Summit is held annually by leaders of Asean countries and those of Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea and the US.

On the margins of the summits, Modi will hold bilateral meetings with some other leaders as well.

Modi and Duterte were expected "to set up the stage for a quantitative change in our bilateral relations with the Philippines", Saran said.

She said there was immense potential to enhance bilateral economic ties.

In the Philippines, Modi will meet members of the Indian community, visit the International Rice Research Institute and the Mahavir Philippines Foundation, an associate center of the Bhagwan Mahavir Bikalangi Sahayta Samiti of the Jaipur Foot fame.

(Source: IANS)

Canada plans 3 lakh new...

new immigrants is planned to rise to 3,40,000 by the end of 2020, sources in the government have said.

The ambitious plan suiting the political agenda of Justin Trudeau-led Liberal government - supported by a large section of minorities like Punjabis, both Hindus and Sikhs - will be implemented with better preparation and integration than ever before.

The move is aimed at bringing in more workers, particularly in the skilled category, and professionals who can propel Canada's economy amid burgeoning skilled manpower shortage and to meet the shortfall of workers in the labor market.

Canadian Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussein has already cleared the air on the country's manpower requirements and its plans to bring in more people from around the world by opening up doors to lakhs of applicants.

The maximum number of new settlers in the country comes from South Asia, particularly from Punjab (India) and China.

With 36.29 million people living in Canada in 2016, the proposed influx will almost be 1 per cent of the country's overall population - the largest number of settlers allowed into the country since 1913, when nearly four lakh people had immigrated.

This year, the government plans to bring in around 3 lakh new immigrants or permanent residents. Of these, 58 per cent are will be professionals, skilled laborer's and caregivers or nannies, while 28 per cent will be parents, children and grandparents. Refugees and other humanitarian cases will constitute 14 per cent of the total immigrants in 2017.

The proposed annual 3,00,000 arrivals will "normalize" the situation in respect to dwindling birth rate and ageing workforce of the country, Hussein has been quoted as saying.



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A short hour-long drive from the Doon Valley, Mussoorie is a charming little hill station cocooned at an altitude of 1880 m in the Garhwal hills.

An ideal getaway during the blistering heat of the summer months, it is perfect for a short weekend break. In the winter months, snowfall starts towards the end of December and blankets the lush green landscape in white. Regardless of when you visit, you're guaranteed stunning panoramic views of the surrounding Himalayas, and a bird's eye view of the valley below. And for those who want a little more—you can shop for antiques, stroll along the mall, go sightseeing, eat at some of the precious little cafes and head to the outskirts with a picnic basket when you've had your fill of the city.

PLACES TO VISIT

Amongst the places to visit in Mussoorie, Kempty Falls easily tops the list. Perched at an altitude of 1880 in the Garhwal Himalayas, 'Queen of the Hills', Mussoorie is an ideal holiday destination. Established by the British in 1823, the vibe of that era continues to linger in its churches, libraries, hotels, and summer palaces. Take in panoramic views of the city atop Lal Tibba, relive the days of the British Raj at Gun Hill or walk around the pleasant four-kilometre long promenade of Camel's Back Road. Birdwatchers and photographers can head to the Benog Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Mall Road of course, is great for an evening stroll.

CAMEL'S BACK ROAD

Camel's Back Road is a four-kilometre-long stretch, named after a natural cluster of rocks that are shaped like a camel's hump. This road connects two prominent locations, starting at Library Point and leading up to Kulri Bazaar. The slope adjacent to the road contains a colonial cemetery that dates back to the mid-19th century. With its beautiful views of the surrounding hills at sunset and sunrise, it is ideal for early morning and late evening walks. Horse rides and rickshaw rides are also available. Surrounded by rocky mountains and green woods, it's perfect for a tranquil break from the hustle-bustle of Mussoorie's Mall Road.

BENOG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Benog Wildlife Sanctuary is surrounded by pine trees and snow-capped mountain peaks. It serves as the natural habitat for rare species of birds including mountain quails and red-billed blue magpie, as well as wildlife like the Himalayan goat, the Himalayan bear, panthers, deer, and leopards. Thickly forested with pine and fir trees, the area is also rich in medicinal plants. Take in stunning views of the surrounding peaks, and sit beside the Aglar River which flows down from Mussoorie into the sanctuary. This is an ideal jaunt for nature lovers and bird watchers.

SHEDUP CHOPELLING TEMPLE

Also known as the Tibetan Buddhist temple, this was set up by the Tibetan population in Mussoorie and is located on the Happy Valley road close to the IAS Academy. The Dalai Lama took refuge in Mussoorie after he escaped from Tibet, before the Tibetan community was granted refuge in Dharamshala. The temple has a serene vibe and is especially suitable for those seeking a bit of tranquillity amidst the madness. Housing many Tibetan literature and books, the temple is adorned with clay lamps and colourful prayer flags.

THE MALL

Take a leisurely stroll along the Mall

MUSSOORIE



Road, which is the heart of Mussoorie. Although it's jam packed with throngs of tourists on foot and in vehicles, this is an exhilarating experience which will give you a chance to get in a spot of shopping too. The two-kilometre-long stretch begins from Library Point and goes all the way up to Picture Palace, although you won't find it as long owing to the variety of stalls selling bric-a-brac, snacks and other knick-knacks along the way. We suggest munching on a hot fire-roasted 'bhutta' (corn on the cob), which is absolutely essential to make the experience complete. Look out for stores selling woollens and shawls.

GUN HILL

This is the second highest point in Mussoorie, and is located about 400 feet above the Mall. You can access it by ropeway or take the half-hour-long trek from the court complex on the Mall road. Once you're up, use one of the telescopes on the edge to get sweeping views of the mountain peaks from a close range. Back in 1857, the British had placed a large firing gun here during the Sepoy Mutiny, and it is said that subsequently, a canon was fired from Gun Hill every afternoon so that people would know that it was noon and adjust their watches. Although the gun was removed in the 70s, the name has stuck. Today Gun Hill accommodates the water reservoir for Mussoorie.

LAL TIBBA

Lal Tibba literally translates to mean the Red Hill, and refers to the highest point in Mussoorie. All the broadcasting stations of All India Radio and Doordarshan are situated here, and access is restricted since the Indian Military is stationed here as well. You can take in the panoramic views through the lens of an old telescope mounted atop a 20-metre-tall tower at the edge of the cliff. We also suggest you take a horseback ride around the area to really take in the experience in its entirety.

MUSSOORIE LAKE

The Mussoorie Lake is a relatively recent tourist attraction that has been developed by the Dehradun Development Authority. Located about 6 kilometres before Mussoorie on the drive up from Dehradun, it's a good place to make a pit stop on your way to the hill station. Enjoy boating in one of the paddle boats, grab a quick bite at one of the small restaurants around it, and take in beautiful views of the valley below.

KEMPTY FALLS

These vertical waterfalls are one of the most popular spots for tourists visiting Mussoorie. The water cascades down from a height of 40 feet and crashes against the boulders below before splitting into five streams. Plunging from a mountain placed at about 1,364 metres above sea level, the Kempty Falls are usually crowded with tourists, so the best way to take them by is by picking a picnic spot at a vantage point and observing them from a distance. The more adventurous can also take a dip in its cool water.

MUNICIPAL GARDEN

Initially known as Company Bagh, the Municipal Gardens are an ideal family outing. With sprawling colonial gardens, green lawns, a fountain in the centre, a lake, a nursery with 800 different species of flowers and a wide range of saplings for sale, it is a beautiful attraction for tourists visiting the hill station. Don't miss the mammoth China tree in the garden, and take a short boat ride on the lake. Located just a couple of kilometres from the Library Point, it's easy to access and makes for a superb early evening pit-stop.

Source: Happytrips

INDIA BEAT NEW ZEALAND IN RAIN-HIT 3RD T20, WIN SERIES 2-1

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP): Indian bowlers defended a modest-looking 67 with admirable discipline as the hosts pipped New Zealand by six runs in the rain-hit third Twenty20 to claim the series 2-1, here tonight.

Playing spoilsport, the rains reduced the decisive match of the series and first ever International match at Greenfield Stadium to an eight-overs per side affair.

Stroke-making was not easy under the conditions and all the hosts could manage to put on board was 67 for five, featuring only seven boundaries, including three sixes.

However, the Indian pacers and spinners bowled their hearts out in a short but exciting contest. They were well supported by agile fielders.

A wily Bhuvneshwar Kumar mixed it up nicely after being hit for a gigantic six by Colin Munro (7) while Jasprit Bumrah was splendid with his line and length.

Bhuvneshwar cleaned up Martin Guptill (1) with a slower one while Bumrah saw the back of dangerous Munro.

The early wickets pegged New Zealand back and they could never settle and eventually buckled under pressure.

Young leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal too contributed in choking the Kiwis, giving away only eight runs in his quota of two overs.

Hardik Pandya bowled the last over with the Kiwis requiring 19 runs. A massive six by Colin de Grandhomme threw tension in the air for the home fans but Pandya managed to pull it off.

Earlier, Both Shikhar Dhawan (6) and Rohit Sharma (8) struggled to time the ball, with Trent Boult having a perfect bowler-friendly platform to execute his skills.

Kane Williamson handed the ball to Mitchell Santner to bowl the second over and



Team India will now take on Sri Lanka in a three Test series, starting November 16.

the left-arm spinner surprised the Indians with some vicious turn.

The Indian openers had no choice but to go after the bowlers and lost their wickets in successive balls from Tim Southee at the start of third over. Both of them were caught by Santner.

Virat Kohli tried to lift the gloom by smashing Ish Sodhi for a four and six but the Indian skipper could not clear the ropes in

his second attempt and was caught by Boult at deep mid-wicket.

India managed 31 runs in the first four overs and now Shreyas Iyer (6) and Manish Pandey (17) needed to provide impetus to the innings.

Pandey lofted Sodhi over long-on for a six but Sodhi, like the Rajkot match, used his variations nicely to trouble the Indians and had Iyer caught by Guptill.

Hardik Pandya (14 not out) made his presence felt with a massive hit off Santner but could not get any more big shot.

Pandey became victim of exceptional athleticism from Santner at the deep.

Pandey hoicked Boult, attempting six, but a full-stretched air-borne Santner not only stopped the ball from soaring over the ropes but threw it towards de Grandhomme for an easy catch.

Source: PTI

UNFAIR TO TARGET DHONI, SAYS KOHLI

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP): Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who has been cornered by criticism from a few former players, has received strong support from Indian captain Virat Kohli. Two days ago, VVS Laxman said that Dhoni should "give a chance" to younger players in T20I cricket — in other words, Laxman was advising Dhoni to retire from T20I cricket and sticking to only ODI cricket.

"I still feel it's time for MS Dhoni to give youngsters a chance in T20 format. It will be an opportunity for a youngster to blossom and get confidence playing international cricket," Laxman had said. "He is definitely an integral part of ODI cricket."

Dhoni's ability to hit fours and sixers at will has declined over the last two-three years, and he's no longer finishing matches. In the Rajkot T20I against New Zealand, when India had a target of 197 to win, Dhoni got 25 off 24 balls during his partnership with Kohli, while the captain made 29 off 20. Experts say that Dhoni's inability to give Kohli more strike during this partnership was a factor India lost the game.

Kohli rubbished all such arguments. "First, I don't understand why are people only pointing him out, I'm not able to understand this," Kohli said. "If I fail three times, no one is going to point fingers at me because I'm not over 35. The guy is fit, he is passing all the fitness tests, he is contributing to the team in every way possible, tactically on the field, with the bat. If you look at the series against Sri Lanka and Australia, he did really well and in this series he hasn't got much time to bat."

"As team management and players, we understand the situations in which he goes out to bat," Kohli added. "We don't get emotional and excited by the opinions of people who are looking at things from a different point of view. If you are playing, you know how the wicket is and what the situation is like. So, I think he is doing absolutely fine."

"He understands his game, he understands his role, but it doesn't come off every time. He hit a six in Delhi and it was shown five times in the post-match show," continued Kohli. "Everyone got really happy. And suddenly he doesn't score in one game and we are after his life. I think people need to be a bit more patient. He's a guy who understands various cricketers. He's a very smart guy. He understands where he stands with his body, with his game. So I don't think anyone else has the right to decide that for him."

Source: PTI



MARY KOM STRIKES GOLD AT ASIAN WOMEN'S BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

HO CHI MINH (TIP): Indian sporting legend M.C. Mary Kom (48kg) clinched an unprecedented fifth gold medal but Sonia Lather (57kg) settled for silver at the ASBC Asian Confederation women's boxing championships.

Up against North Korea's Kim Hyang Mi, the five-time World champion and Olympic bronze-medallist prevailed in a unanimous 5-0 verdict to add another medal to her already crowded cabinet.

However, World Championship silver-medallist Sonia, had to be content with a runner-up finish for the second time at this event after she went down in a split verdict to China's Yin Junhua. India signed off with a gold, a silver and five bronze medals at the continental showpiece.

This was Mary Kom's first international gold medal since the 2014 Asian Games and her first medal in over a year. With Tuesday's triumph, she kept her excellent record at this event intact, having made the final in all of her six appearances. Mary Kom's previous gold medals had come in 2003, 2005, 2010 and 2012. "I am really happy the way this championship has panned out. I would like to dedicate this victory to all those who have supported me even though the world had written me off," said Mary Kom after the triumph.

Source: PTI



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