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EVER TRUTHFUL

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8 An Itinerary in Search of a Strategy: on Trump's East Asia Tour

9 A Chinese View of the New Global Order

12-13 Feature: Thanksgiving

16 ACTRESS SHYAMA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PUNJABI CINEMA



Ambanis beat Lees of Samsung to become Asia's richest family



The Ambanis (net worth \$44.8 billion) are the only Indian family on the top 10 richest families list in Asia.

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's Mukesh Ambani family is the richest in Asia as its net worth rose \$19 billion to \$44.8 billion, toppling the Lees of the Samsung empire, to claim the numero uno position, Forbes said. Despite dropping to the second spot, Korea's Lee family still saw its wealth soar by \$11.2 billion to \$40.8 billion this year as shares of Samsung Electronics moved up 75 per cent over the past year.

According to Asia's 50 Richest Families compiled by Forbes, Hong Kong's Kwok family, Asia's richest real estate household that controls Sun Hung Kai Properties, ranked third this year with a net wealth of \$40.4 billion. Thailand's Chearavanont family of the Charoen Pokphand Group took the fourth spot on the list, with a net worth of \$36.6 billion. **contd on Page 24**

House Passes Tax Bill in Major Step Toward Reform

Bill Signals G.O.P. Prioritizes Corporate Tax Cuts

WASHINGTON (TIP): In what appears to be the first major step in the direction of implementation of Trump's agenda, the House passed a sweeping rewrite of the tax code on Thursday, November 16, by 227-205. The Bill seeksto enact \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts for businesses and individuals and deliver the first major legislative achievement of President Trump's tenure.

The House tax bill, which passed in the Ways and Means Committee last week, would cut taxes more than \$1.4 trillion over 10 years. It cuts the corporate tax rate to 20 percent from 35 percent, collapses the

contd on Page 24

House Speaker Paul Ryan won a major victory November 16 when the House passed rewrite of the tax code by 227-205 (Twitter picture)



'Padmavati' Sets India on Fire: Deepika Threatened, Provided Security Cover

Protests Force government assurance that Censor Board will weigh in Public Sentiment

NEW DELHI (TIP): The controversy over Bollywood film "Padmavati" has set India on fire. The situation took an ugly turn on November 16 when a leader of the Rajput Karni Sena cited Ramayana's

contd on page 24



Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone poses for a photograph during a promotional event for the forthcoming Hindi film Padmavati (File photo)

UK Plans to Double Visas to Non-EU Professionals Post Brexit

LONDON (TIP): The UK will double the number of visas offered to non-EU nationals who show promise in the field of technology, art and creative industries, Prime Minister Theresa May has announced, as part of her post-Brexit strategy to present Britain as open to global talent. The number of visas available through the

contd on Page 18

"As we prepare to leave the European Union (EU), I am clear that Britain will remain open for business", said UK Prime Minister Theresa May (Twitter picture)



Bush Unlikely to be Prosecuted Despite 7 Women's Accusations



DALLAS (TIP): Allegations that former President George H.W. Bush inappropriately touched seven women involve potential crimes punishable by fines or jail time, if they had been prosecuted, according to an NBC 5 report.

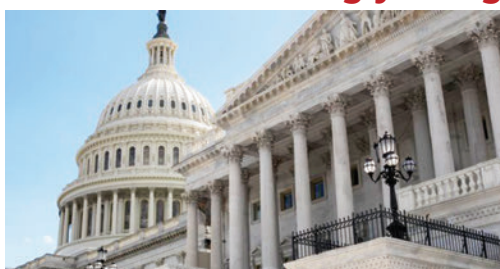
All but one of the cases is ineligible under state laws that limit when a prosecution can begin after an alleged crime, and several lawyers interviewed said that it would be difficult to win

contd on page 5

George H.W. Bush is alleged to have inappropriately touched several women

Congressional Committee Votes to Increase Minimum Salary of H1B Visa Holders

NASSCOM Strongly Disagrees with US Lawmakers



WASHINGTON (TIP): A key Congressional committee has voted to pass a legislation that proposes to increase the minimum salary of H-1B visa holders from \$60,000 to \$90,000 and imposes a number of

contd on Page 32

The bill prohibits H-1B dependent employers from replacing American workers with H-1B employees, there are no longer any exceptions

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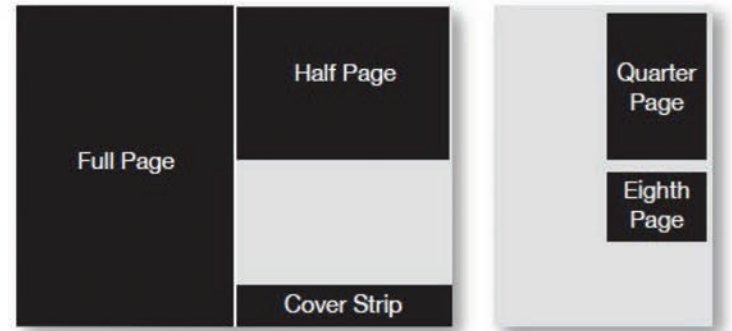


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Indian American Student Killed After Driver of the Pick-Up Truck involved in accident Runs Her Over

LONG ISLAND, NY (TIP):

An Indian American, 18-year-old student at Adelphi University, was brutally killed after being run over by a driver who crashed into her SUV on Thursday, November 9. Taranjit Parmar, 18, got out of her SUV and attempted to exchange contact information with the person who accidentally bumped her vehicle in a fender bender near Long Island, New York. Once Parmar approached the pickup truck that was responsible for the crash, the driver revived the engine, ran over her and drove away, according to Newsday.

Parmar was on her way home from school and was only five minutes away from her destination when the tragic incident took place. Nassau County Police Department Spokesman Vincent Garcia recounted the tragic event saying, "This was a minor auto accident and an 18-year-old girl lost her life."

An eye witness claimed that both parties tried "to exchange information," but the "red truck guy ran over the girl" before the issue could be resolved. Another witness claimed that Parmar held onto the red pickup truck to stop it from fleeing.



Taranjit Parmar, daughter of Ranjit Singh Parmar and Kulvinder Kaur, was killed by driver of the vehicle involved in the accident with Taranjit's SUV

However, the witness added that he saw the truck driver drag Parmar about 30 feet before running her over and killing her in the process. "I feel horrible because it could happen to anybody's kid, it shouldn't happen that way, 18-year-old, it's a horrible thing," the concerned witness expressed.

Local authorities are now seeking the aid of civilians and other eye witnesses in order to establish the identity of the red pickup truck driver. Investigators are now reviewing various surveillance footage to determine the perpetrator's license plate number.

"Nothing anyone can do. She was four days away from her 19th birthday," a family member exclaimed.

Meanwhile, the family on Thursday, November 16 started an Akhand Path in her memory at Gurdwara Nanak Darbar, Hicksville where, on Saturday, November 18, prayers, according to Sikh tradition, will be offered for the departed soul's eternal peace. For further information, please call Ranjit Parmar at 516-512-2242.

Indian American Vikas P. Sukhatme appointed Dean of Emory University School of Medicine



Indian American Vikas P. Sukhatme, MD, ScD, a distinguished physician-scientist, has been appointed Dean of Emory University School of Medicine

NEW YORK (TIP): Emory University has appointed Vikas P. Sukhatme, MD, ScD, a distinguished physician-scientist, as the new Dean of Emory University School of Medicine. He also will serve as Chief Academic Officer of Emory Healthcare and as Woodruff Professor. Sukhatme will join Emory Nov. 1, 2017. Emory President Claire E. Sterk joined Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Emory Healthcare CEO Jonathan S. Lewin and Emory Provost Dwight A. McBride in making the announcement.

Sukhatme is currently Chief Academic Officer and Harvard Faculty Dean for Academic Programs at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston and the Victor J. Aresty Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

"I am delighted to join President Sterk and Provost McBride in announcing this new appointment," says Lewin. "Dr. Sukhatme is a highly recognized and exceptional biomedical scientist, clinician, and teacher. I am confident that under his leadership, the medical school will continue its upward trajectory in reputation and impact and will further enhance the Woodruff Health Sciences Center's place as one of the world's premiere academic health centers."

Sukhatme's appointment is the culmination of a nearly year-long national search. He succeeds David S. Stephens, MD, who has served as interim dean and will continue his roles as vice president for research in Emory's Woodruff Health Sciences Center and as chair of the Department of Medicine in Emory University School of Medicine.

"Dr. Sukhatme's eclectic academic background as a basic science researcher, a clinician, and a translational scientist will be a major asset to the School of Medicine, the University at large, Emory Healthcare, and to the full array of diverse communities with which Emory interacts," said McBride. "We look forward with great excitement to the future of the School of Medicine under his stewardship."

"I am deeply honored to have been selected as the Dean of Emory University School of Medicine," Sukhatme says. "With a stellar leadership team, an extraordinary faculty, an outstanding cadre of staff, trainees and students, and distinguished alumni and supporters, Emory's future is bright. Now is the time to take on some of the most challenging problems in medicine and biology, and to tackle them through innovative, interdisciplinary approaches."

His first faculty appointment was at the University of Chicago, where he was also appointed an assistant investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. In 1992 he moved to Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) as chief of the renal division in the Department of Medicine, and he subsequently received an appointment in the hematology-oncology division. He is also the founding chief of the Division of Interdisciplinary Medicine and Biotechnology at BIDMC. For eight years, he has been the Chief Academic Officer and Harvard Faculty Dean for Academic Programs at BIDMC.

Sukhatme's research spans numerous areas of medicine in both fundamental science and clinical care. He has over 200 scientific publications that have been cited more than 31,000 times. His longstanding interest in cancer currently centers around tumor metabolism and tumor immunology and on "outside-of-the-box" approaches for treating advanced cancer. He has conducted studies on genes important in kidney cancer and polycystic kidney disease.

Sukhatme's laboratory played a key role in the discovery of the cause of preeclampsia, a blood vessel disorder and a major cause of morbidity in pregnant women. His research also has provided insights into how blood vessels leak in patients with severe infections, and on how new vessels form to feed growing tumors. He has elucidated mechanisms by which statins can cause muscle damage.

Indian American Abhijit Das to Run for Massachusetts Congressional Seat

BOSTON (TIP): Abhijit Das, the president and CEO of Troca Hotels, has announced he is running for the 3rd District Congress in Massachusetts. The Democrat candidate made the official announcement on his birthday amidst friends, family and community members at the Stonehedge Hotel and Spa in Tyngsborough. The seat is being vacated by Niki Tsongas in November 2018.

"As most of you know, I'm not a fan of [President] Donald Trump," Das said, adding that the unequivocal denunciation of hatred, bigotry and racism should be a prerequisite to running for president. "That notwithstanding, we should not demonize those who voted for him nor can we simply ignore their voices. It is by engaging other viewpoints that we ultimately achieve understanding, compromise and progress," he said.

Das attended the Brooks School in North Andover and earned a BA in political science from Middlebury College in Vermont. He later earned a law degree at the University of Michigan's law school, focusing on constitutional law and the American political sector.

"It was there (at the University of Michigan) that I learned the power of democracy," he said.

Early in his career, Das served as law clerk to U.S. District of Maryland Judge Benson Legg. There, Das said he was witness to the power of the federal government, its compassion and its injustice.

Before starting Troca Hotels in 2011, Das was senior director of development for Hilton Hotels in South Asia, resurrecting 28 hotels in India from none. With Troca Hotels, Das's mission is to revitalize communities.

"Our state of the economy is troubling," Das noted. "Something is not working, and we need to fix that. We must work diligently



Abhijit Das has announced he is running for the 3rd District Congress in Massachusetts.

to turn this place to one of opportunity and innovation."

Das says his platform includes the economy, innovation, education and the mental health crisis, among other issues. "Washington is broken. I entered the possibility of this race because I saw friends (on both sides) shouting at each other," Das said. "True dialogue is what we need. We need someone who is going to cross over that line and say, 'let's talk.'" The Democrat is among eight individuals from his party, as well as two Republicans, who hope to be victorious next November for the seat being vacated by Lowell-based Democratic incumbent Niki Tsongas, who is retiring after the current term.

"Our state of the economy is troubling. Something is not working, and we need to fix that. We must work diligently to turn this place to one of opportunity and innovation," Das said at the time in his announcement. His platform, he said, will focus on the economy, innovation, education and the mental health crisis, among other issues. The 44-year old Das was born in Woburn, and grew up in North Andover. He went to Brooks School, studied political science at Middlebury College in Vermont, and took two semesters of classes at UMass Lowell, where his mother Mitra Das is in her 45th year teaching sociology, the Eagle-Tribune reported.

INDIAN AMERICAN MAN DIES IN NIGHTCLUB SHOOTING

CHARLOTTE (TIP): Indian American Akash R. Talati, 40, was killed in a nightclub shooting that happened in Fayetteville, North Carolina on Saturday, November 11 morning at 1:51 a.m. Talati was the owner of Diamondz Gentleman's Club, where according to abc11, Markeese Dewitt, 23, began shooting after he got mad about being kicked out of the club.

"I heard the gunshots, and ran to the front and saw my boss laying on the floor, it was chaos," Cortez Wamble, who is a bouncer at the club, told WNCN. "I talked to this man every day. I look up to this man as a father figure," he added. Family and friends of Talati told CBS North Carolina that he was always putting others first. Wamble and several other employees told WNCN that Talati had such a great impact in the community and even offered free rooms at his nearby motel for those affected by Hurricane Matthew. "Nobody feels safe, you have people traumatized and everything. It's just messed up for everybody," Sheron Bunn, one of Talati's employees who said the club was like a home to many, told WNCN.

According to WNCN, Talat's family said he died early Saturday morning after being hit by a stray bullet while inside the nightclub, three others have been injured as well.

"We are in touch with the family of the deceased and will provide them all help," Sushma Swaraj told IANS.

The Fayetteville Police Department tweeted that Dewitt will be charged with attempted murder.



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Sikh Community Presence at UN Day in Dallas

BY EK ONG KAAR KAUR KHALSA-MICHAUD



DALLAS (TIP): On Tuesday, October 24th, several Sikh activists attended a luncheon hosted by the Dallas Chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America. The luncheon took place at the University of North Texas at Dallas College of Law and was held in honor of UN Day - October 24, 2017.



The Sikh businesswoman, Shabnam Modgill, V.P. of FunAsia, presided at the event. She is a highly visible and successful Sikh businesswoman in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. She is the Board President for the UNA-USA Dallas Chapter and served as the host for the UN Day - Dallas program. (<http://www.unausa.org/membership/directory/chapter/dallas>)

The theme of the Dallas Chapter United Nations Day was Global Goals Local Leaders.

Ek Ong Kaar Kaur Khalsa and her husband, Dr. Patrick Michaud, and respected Sikh scholar Dr. Harbans Lal attended the luncheon, as well.



Hugh T. Dugan was the keynote speaker for the event. Mr. Dugan currently teaches as a guest scholar at Seton Hall University's School of Diplomacy and International Relations. (<https://www.shu.edu/news/hugh-dugan-appointed-new-sharkey-scholar.cfm>) He has served in the U.S. Department of State for 32 years, working at the United Nations under 11 different USA Ambassadors to the UN. Mr. Dugan's speech focused on President Donald Trump's interaction with the United Nations this last year; and how the media is not giving the full picture. From Mr. Dugan's observations, President Trump did signal in many different ways his commitment to the UN and the USA's continued involvement at the UN. In Mr. Dugan's view, President Trump may look to redefine that relationship, but he is not abandoning it.

W3 Mr. Dugan's speech offered a fascinating perspective about President Trump's visit to the United Nations from someone who has been deeply involved in the United Nations for the last 30 years.

Also, Mr. Dugan informed those in attendance that the President of the General Assembly for the UN, Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Miroslav Lajčák, would be touring the United States next year. The tour would begin with an address at Seton Hall University. The President of the General Assembly is interested in speaking at other universities in the country. Mr. Dugan offered that if any University was interested in hosting the UN President of the General Assembly, to contact him and let him know.

The UNA Dallas Chapter also honored the work of 3 local leaders, who have progressed 3 of the UN's Global Goals in the Dallas area. Taylor Toynes, founder and Executive Director of the non-profit For Oak Cliff, which focuses on student support and development; Vana Hammond, Chief of Community Relations and GrowSouth for the Office of Dallas Mayor Michael S. Rawlings - helping to promote economic growth in southern Dallas, and Ericsson North America's Cotishea Anderson for embedding Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility into their business models. Almas Muscatwalla, the Founding Member of Faith Forward Dallas - Nonprofit Organization with 500+ connections is seen in front row left of the photo.

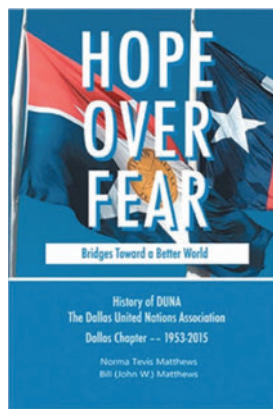


The United Nations Day in Dallas also saw the launch of a new book published by UNA Dallas Board members, Norma Tevis Matthews and Bill (John W.) Matthews. The book details The History of the Dallas United Nations Association 1953-2015. The title of the book is Hope Over Fear. Norma and Bill, both of whom are past presidents of DUNA probed into many events that contributed to the long life and panorama of projects that were initiated in Texas as well as at the UNO Headquarters in New York. Dr. Harbans Lal added a chapter in the book detailing the history of the Sikh participation in the UNO and UNA activities.

UNA-USA Dallas members David and Nelda Reid were the 2017 UN Day Event Co-Chairs. The program also included opening remarks from Derrick Morgan of the UNT College of Law; the reading of the UN Day Proclamation by Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins; and Tatiana Androsov, who introduced the keynote speaker, Hugh T. Dugan.

<https://www.xlibris.com/Bookstore/BookDetail.aspx?Book=742918>

Modified for the Blog from the Sikhnet.com with acknowledgment.



contd from Page 1

Bush Unlikely to be...

a conviction against Bush, who has vascular parkinsonism, a rare syndrome that mimics Parkinson's disease.

"You're still going to be facing prosecuting a 93-year-old man in a wheelchair that's a former president," said Toby Shook, a lawyer who previously served as a prosecutor in Dallas. "I doubt if you could ever find a jury that would ever want to convict him." There's no indication prosecutors are planning to pursue a case against Bush. Jordana Grolnick, an actress who alleged that Bush groped her behind last year as his wife, Barbara, stood nearby, told The Associated Press that she has no plans to report the 41st president to authorities. That appears to be the only incident that hasn't reached the local statute of limitations on how long a crime can be prosecuted after it occurs. The incidents occurred in three states over a decade. In all of the cases, the women say Bush touched their buttocks as they stood next to him to take photos. All three states have laws against touching someone without their consent.

Wendy Davis Says She Was Inappropriately Touched by Lawmaker

The women's stories broadly follow the same outline: Bush patted them below the waist as they stood next to him to take photos, sometimes with a joke about his favorite magician or writer being named "David Cop-a-Feel." Bush has issued repeated apologies through a spokesman "to anyone he has offended." The spokesman, Jim McGrath, said in a statement last month that Bush has used a wheelchair for roughly five years, and that "his arm falls on the lower waist of people with whom he takes pictures."

In a statement Monday, McGrath said, "George Bush simply does not have it in his heart to knowingly cause anyone distress, and he again apologizes to anyone he offended during a photo op." Actress Heather Lind was the first to accuse

Bush of groping her, saying in an Oct. 24 Instagram post that Bush "touched me from behind" and told "a dirty joke" while they posed for a photo at a Houston screening of the AMC television series "Turn." Six more women have come forward since then, including Roslyn Corrigan, who told Time magazine Monday that Bush groped her as they took a photo in 2003, when Corrigan was 16, during an event in The Woodlands, a Houston suburb. Broadway actress Megan Elizabeth Lewis also told NJ.com that Bush groped her at the performance of a musical in Houston in 2009.

The AP generally does not identify victims of sexual assault without their consent, but is using the names of women who have spoken publicly on social media or in news reports.

Four of the incidents are reported to have occurred in Texas. Shook said that under Texas law, touching someone's buttocks over the person's clothing would most likely be grounds for a misdemeanor assault charge, with only a \$500 fine and no jail time.

In Maine, where Bush is accused of grabbing two women, those allegations could give rise to a charge of assault or unlawful sexual touching, punishable by up to a year in jail, said Walt McKee, a defense attorney in Augusta, Maine. And in Pennsylvania, where a retired newspaper journalist has accused Bush of touching her during an event in Erie, the state's law against indecent assault could apply, said Richard Settgest, an adjunct law professor at Penn State University.

A key question in any prosecution, the lawyers said, would be whether the suspect touched the victim for sexual gratification or by accident. While age and physical disability would factor into any determination, Settgest said, "I don't necessarily think that just because someone's infirm, they wouldn't be able to be held accountable."

Bush, who served as president from 1989 to 1993, is a beloved figure in both Texas and Maine, the two states where he lives.

Biju Thomas Launches New Line of South Indian Spices

DALLAS (TIP): If you've eaten at one of Biju's Little Curry Shop's two locations, you know just how fresh and flavorful founder Biju Thomas' cooking can be. Now, you can recreate that culinary magic in your own home kitchen using Thomas' new line of South Indian spices.

This month, Thomas released six varieties-Chili Lime Finishing Salt, Toasty Garam Masala, Vindaloo XX Blend, Madras Curry, Soup & Sambar X Hot, and Kerala Golden Turmeric- online, and at his two restaurants. (They'll also be available at Whole Foods Market in the near future). But the spice line is simply Thomas' first push into the retail realm: A collection of simmer sauces, as well as various snacks such as chips and roasted chickpeas, are on the way. All are rooted in the same bold flavors the chef is known for, and they'll boast the same "clean-eating" ethos. The products are Paleo-diet friendly, vegan, and in the process of being Kosher certified. "I really put a lot of thought into this to make sure it's good for people," Thomas says.

What really sets them apart, however, is the quality of the spices themselves. Thomas is sourcing from small farmers in his native Kerala and the surrounding region, often referred to as India's spice coast. The spices are steam-sterilized rather than irradiated (which preserves the flavors), and then ground and blended in Boulder. As Thomas says, the spices are geared towards serious home cooks, while the simmer sauces and snacks will offer something quicker and more convenient for those with less time to spend in the kitchen.

That's not all: While Thomas pulled his two Whole Foods outposts of Biju's Little Curry Shop, he will host frequent pop-ups at various Whole Foods locations in support of the retail line. He also has plans to franchise Biju's in New Orleans, Dallas, San Francisco, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.

Look for the spices, which retail at \$7.99, at Biju's Curry shop locations, online, and in Whole Foods Market very soon. The simmer sauces and snacks will roll out early next year.

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Muslim American filmmaker Noor Naghmi highlights the "Angels Within"

WASHINGTON DC (TIP): The trigger for Director/Producer Noor Naghmi's newest film was not just the post-9/11 anti-Muslim environment in the United States or even inflammatory 2016 election campaign rhetoric, but the stark distortion and lack of representation of America's reality of tolerance and coexistence.

The focus of Naghmi's newest film, *Angels Within*, is the large community of Pakistani-American doctors who spend their lives providing healthcare to Americans in remote towns across the country - places which do not offer lucrative returns and hence are not a major attraction for many other Americans in the medical field.

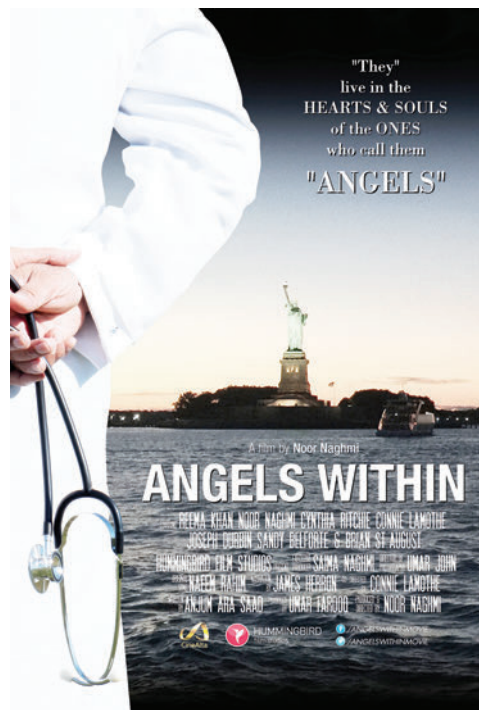
Angels Within is an attempt to tell Americans the collective story of physicians who come from half a world away and, instead of making big bucks in U.S. megacities, mix with Americans in places where the majority of the population likely has never heard of the doctors' country of origin.

"They are the angels within American society. Each one of the Pakistani-American doctors has a story to tell. This is a story of hard work, dedication, and service," he says.

Of course, like everyone else, doctors who immigrate and adopt the United States as their homeland do receive financial returns for their service.

"But it is much more than that. It is opting to go to far-off places where others rarely reach. I remember an Iowa lawmaker saying that if Pakistani-American doctors were taken out, the healthcare system in the state would collapse," Naghmi said in an interview to Next TV.

He also cites the example of a doctor in a rural town in Minnesota, whose story of



Poster of the film "Angels Within".

reaching out to fellow Americans, as told in *The Washington Post* this month (July 2017), gained a lot of attention, underscoring the role of immigrants and the ideal of peaceful coexistence.

"While there are challenges, I also met a lot of Americans who acknowledge and praise the contributions of immigrants.

"At the same time, I felt a strong need to tell my fellow Americans the amazing work the Pakistani-American doctors are quietly doing," says Naghmi, whose country of origin, Pakistan, is one of the biggest suppliers of



Cast and crew of the film

trained medical practitioners to the United States.

The theme of the film, which will soon be exhibited at festivals, addresses the broader question of stereotypes and generalizations of Muslims by some media outlets and organizations that paint the entire Muslim communities with one broad brush whenever an act of violent extremism takes place. "This discriminatory representation is absolutely against American ideals of liberty and equality" he says, citing movies such as *Enemy Within* and *Siege*.

Angels Within has a true story, with a larger unfolding tale that includes stories of individual doctors, which the producers hope will interest all Americans, not just those

from diverse communities.

The story, written by a young writer, Anjum Saad, is another effort at using arts as a platform for dialogue between American Muslims and mainstream America.

In a welcome sign, several American Muslims have recently taken to comedy, entertainment, and films to engage with Americans of all political persuasions - with a lot of encouraging responses.

Together with interfaith dialogue, such conversations can help address harmful generalizations regarding diverse communities such as American Muslims, who are contributing to America's progress in so many areas of national life.

(Source: Next TV/ Ali Imran)

Construction of \$4 million "Northpole" Hindu Temple in Canada to begin in May



NEVADA (TIP): Sanatan Mandir Cultural Society (SMCS) reportedly plans to launch construction of Canada's northernmost Hindu temple in Fort McMurray (Alberta) on a two-acre plot in May 2018 and finish in October 2019, costing about four million dollars.

SMCS, a registered charitable organization, is said to be raising funds for this about 30,000 square feet Hindu temple and cultural center, which will include statues of various Hindu deities and will be marked by various spires.

Interim Mandir run by SMCS opens daily and holds arti. SMCS also organizes various cultural, religious, social and educational events in the area; and to "promote multiculturalism" is one of its objectives. It plans to conduct yoga, spirituality, dance, music, art and language classes; besides undertaking charitable and humanitarian activities. It has launched "One paycheck to Mandir" donation project, reports suggest. Meanwhile, Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, in a statement commended efforts of temple leaders and area community towards realizing this temple and cultural center complex.

Rajan Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, further said that it was important to pass on Hindu spirituality, concepts and traditions to coming generations amidst so many distractions in the consumerist society and hoped that this temple complex would help in this direction. Zed stressed that instead of running after materialism; we should focus on inner search and realization of Self and work towards achieving moksh (liberation), which was the goal of Hinduism.

Kalpesh N Patel, Chitra Udayshankar, Vipul Patel and Dipak Bhatt are President, Vice President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively of the Temple Committee; while Jigar Desai is the Board of Governors Chairperson.

Indian firms have invested \$17.9 bn in US, employ more than 110,000 Americans: Report

WASHINGTON (TIP): The survey, titled 'Indian roots, American Soil', showed though IT and enabled services accounted for the largest chunk of Indian businesses in the US at 28%

The survey, titled 'Indian roots, American Soil', showed though IT and enabled services accounted for the largest chunk of Indian businesses in the US at 28%.

Indian companies, who have struggled with the image of being the outsourcer of American jobs - especially those in information technology, have invested at least \$17.9 billion in the United States and employ 113,424 people, according to a new survey of 100 such firms released on Tuesday.

Though they are present across the country, in all 50 states and Puerto Rico and Washington DC, top recipient states of the investments were New York (\$1.5 billion), New Jersey (\$1.5 billion), Massachusetts (\$930 million), California (\$542 million) and Wyoming (\$435 million), in that order.

The report, which is put together by the Confederation of Indian Industry every two years as an effort to highlight the "relatively unknown history" of Indian FDI in the US, was released by Navtej Sarna, the Indian ambassador to the US, and several American lawmakers at an event in Capitol Hill.

"The presence and reach of Indian companies continues to grow each year as they invest billion of dollars and create jobs across the United States," Sarna said in prepared remarks, adding that the report "highlights Indian industry's ascension as a significant stakeholder in the US economy".



The report, which is put together by the Confederation of Indian Industry every two years, was released by Indian ambassador to the US Navtej Sarna.

The ambassador also referred to Indian IT companies, such as Infosys, Wipro and TCS that have a substantial presence in the US, making commitments of major investments and hiring Americans --- measures aimed at addressing a growing concern about them taking away local jobs.

President Donald Trump has not named these Indian IT companies, who have lived in dread since he picked on companies he was unhappy about for moving operations abroad. But his aides have pointed to them over concerns of taking away American jobs and shipping them abroad.

The CII survey, called "Indian roots, American Soil", seeks highlight investments and job creation by these and other non-IT companies such as Mahindra Americas, Lupin Pharmaceuticals.

The survey showed though IT and enabled services accounted for the largest chunk of Indian businesses in the US at 28%, there were plenty of them engaged in other sectors. Life sciences and pharmaceuticals were a close second, for instance, with 25%, followed by manufacturing at 14%, energy 11%, food and agriculture 5% and automotive 4%.

Companies told the survey that their investments were slated to grow over the next five years. And that was probably the reason why lawmakers playfully competed with each other at the report's release seeking more investments for their home districts and states. Ami Bera, the senior-most Indian American member of the House of Representatives, had no problem pitching for his district, Sacramento. And Raja Krishnamoorthy, another Indian-American, spoke for his district in Illinois.

Gujarat Cultural Association, Chicago, Celebrated Diwali with musical master pieces of S. D. Burman

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): Gujarat Cultural Association (GCA) hosted Diwali celebrations, accompanied by an electrifying Music Concert, the essence of Maestro S. D. Burman. The Sold-out event was held at Meadows Club, on Saturday, October 28, 2017. The program was exceedingly successful with the active support of the Sponsors, Executive Board, GCA members and volunteers. Occasion was graced by dignitaries present from all different professions such as political, entertainment, education, business, medical, IT (Information Technology). Among them were, Cook county board of commissioner Toni Preckwinkle and Board of review commissioner Dan Patlak, Lt Governor Evelyn Sanghinetti, Mr. O. P. Meena from Consulate General of India's Office, Mr. Iftekhar Shareef, Bhavesh Patel, Anuja Gupta, Dr. Ann Lata Kaliyal, Ifthekar Sherif, and Kalpesh Joshi, prominent Community leaders like Dr Bharat Barai and Hetal Patel, Dina Modi etc.

The program started with welcome speech and lamp lighting. The Chief Guest was Sunil Shah, the founding president of the Schaumburg FIA and he entertained the audience with his witty speech.

To preserve cultural, religious, and various



Organizers and dignitaries

other traditions, Gujarat Cultural Association was established by brain child and founding member Mr. Kanti Patel in 1973. GCA launched a platform for the old and young family members to get-together to promote share and express the common feelings of love, compassion, and sacrifice involved in every Gujarati's heart. GCA Chair Mr. Kanti Patel stated in his speech famous quote of the poet Khabarder "Where ever in the world there is a residing Gujarati member, you will always find that person represents entire state of Gujarat". We should not only celebrate Diwali as a

festival but also understand its true message, implement it in our daily lives, and commit to the path of virtue, rather than that of evil, in order to emerge victorious. Wishing everyone very happy, healthy and prosperous upcoming New Year; Kanti S. Patel, Chairman of GCA concluded his speech by requesting everyone for their continued support co-operation and participation in future events.

Every year GCA organized picnics, sports competition, and musical events. It also collaborates with other national organizations like Federation of India Association (FIA), the Indo-American Democratic organization (IDOA) etc. to promote the goal of our Indian-Americans to achieve the success political arena in this foreign land.

MC was 'Evergreen' Mrs. Hetal Patel. She invited Chief Guest on stage Tony Prickwinkle. Tony thanked Gujarat Culture Association for tireless work by its member, especially Kanti Patel. She congratulated leadership and entrepreneurship of the community of diaspora from Gujarat and especially paid special tribute to Mahatma Gandhi who also hailed from Gujarat in India.

Four Extraordinary individuals were honored with lifetime achievement awards; Mr. Pratap Gohil of Sumit Construction, Mr. Chandresh Bhrambhatt for his outstanding achievements as a Hotelier and Mr. Bharat Patel for being an outstanding entrepreneur.

"Unity of mind and heart bring us to gather

to calibrate Diwali festivity. I offer warm greetings to the members and friends of the Gujarat Cultural Association for organizing and celebrating the annual Diwali Dinner and Musical Program. Again, my sincere congratulations to the Gujarat Cultural Association on its annual Diwali dinner, and wish the Gujarat Cultural Association, and all who comprise it, every continued success" Said by Mr. Dipak Vyas Chairman and CEO of Redberri Corporation.

Mr. O. P. Meena, representing Consul General of India in Chicago, congratulated GCA for organizing this GALA and wished everyone happy Diwali, which symbolizes joy, hope, and positive energy, focuses on the triumph of light over darkness and compassion over hatred. He added that the message of Diwali is universal in nature.

Eagerly awaited event 'A Fitting Musical Extravaganza in Memory of Mr. S. D. Berman, Golden Era of Indian film music's the most successful Bollywood musician of the Indian Film industry', followed in to late hours of night.

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(Photographs and Press release by Asian Media USA)



Audience

US Congresswoman shows concern over human rights violations in Karachi, Pakistan

WASHINGTON (TIP): World Muhajir Congress (WMC) and its leadership hosted an open forum for economic development of Muhajirs in USA and Pakistan with Honorable Congresswoman Barbara Comstock as the guest of honor. Large number of Muhajir Americans attended the event. The main objective of the event was to highlight and identify positives ways for the large growing Muhajir population in USA and translating the advancement in USA to the people of Karachi, Pakistan. The conversation was on the following topics.

Congresswoman Barbara Comstock serves on Joint Economic Committee in US Congress and participates in wide variety of Caucuses. Her office is great resource in guiding communities.

Congresswoman Comstock told Muhajir Americans to inform the US leadership in policy arena by sharing their personal and affected family members stories. She mentioned that you are "always invited to our table" with your expertise to enrich our community. Importantly, she mentioned that "education and economic development go hand



in hand in changing things". Expressing concern over the violation of human rights of Muhajirs in Karachi, an influential Republican Congresswoman has assured the Muhajir community to raise their voice in the Congress.

Puneet Ahluwalia, member of the Republican Party of Virginia shared that this is an important issue for the Muhajir Americans. They have to rally together and work closely

with US leadership. They should demand that the US aid to Pakistan should be directed toward economic development and education of people of Karachi.

Renowned expert on South Asia affairs Arif Jamal delivered an important speech on this occasion. He highlighted the role of Pakistan's military establishment in exporting extremism and terrorism in the region. He said

that port city of Karachi could fall in the hands of Taliban as it's being surrounded by extremist terror groups. He shed light on gross human rights violations in Karachi and said that Muhajirs are being persecuted and victimized in Pakistan.

WMC Directors Jamshed Warsi and Arif Siddiqui addressed the gathering. They said that 70 million Muhajirs are being deprived of their fundamental rights in Pakistan. 22,000 Muhajirs have been brutally killed by Army led operations in Karachi and Urban Sindh. The WMC office bearers rejected the bogus census results and demand for a fair census under the supervision of United Nations. They urged US administration and Congress to play their role in stopping state atrocities on Muhajirs in Pakistan.

WMC Director Tauseef Khan thanked Muhajir community for attending event in large numbers on economic development of Muhajirs.

Muhajir Americans are bringing attention to the gross human rights abuse on their educated secular community in Karachi and Urban centers of Sindh province in Pakistan.



GUEST COMMENT

Stifling Padmavati IFFI row also undermines artistic liberty

An unseemly row has erupted over Padmavati. No film can, and no film maker is obliged to appease the sentiments of a billion plus population. Instead, of providing safe passage to the release of Padmavati, several BJP-ruled states have joined hands with obscure outfits and self-appointed custodians of culture and history. The UP CM's demand to postpone Padmavati's release because it will disturb the law and order situation is self-defeating. He is giving undue credit to a Bollywood film. The UP CM has a responsibility to maintain law and order rather than give in to hooligans from fringe elements. 'Film will hurt religious sentiments' is an alibi the politicians have misused for too long. This is a smokescreen to hide bigoted attitudes.

As if the Padmavati row was not bad enough, the government has placed itself on the wrong side of the film fraternity. Even before the Goa film festival could kick-start, the government has pressed the delete button by dropping two films, duly selected by the eminent members of the jury who were handpicked by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry. Besides, Nude, which was to be the opening film of the Indian Panorama section, S Durga has also been axed. The unwarranted and undemocratic decision has forced three members of the jury, including well-known filmmaker and the jury head Sujoy Ghosh to resign.

Even if it is conceded that these films contain some provocative content, how could I&B ministry overlook the fact that festival films are for evolved audiences who are intelligent enough to put things in proper perspective and context. Even otherwise, the right to reject a film, once cleared by the CBFC, must rest with the viewers. Much to the chagrin of those who champion artistic liberty, scuttling filmmakers' right of expression has almost become a habit with the Centre. Creative freedom has been virtually under siege. Be it the IFFI row or the never-ending fracas over Padmavati, the government stance remains cussed; inexplicable and inexcusable. Cine enthusiasts who will be flocking to Goa seek a widening of horizons not myopic interpretation of cinematic values.

(Tribune India)

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AS I SEE IT

An Itinerary in Search of a Strategy: on Trump's East Asia Tour



By Varghese
K. George

Donald Trump's transactional diplomacy during his East Asia tour has only created confusion

“Mr. Trump's "Indo-Pacific dream" may not appear to be much of a dream for most countries in the region. In 2006, Mr. Trump had said he was waiting for a housing market crash, and boasted about his ability to profit from a falling market. Conflicts in Asia, in the west and the east, could appear to be good opportunities for profit from the realtor's perspective", says the author.

Parsing Donald Trump's statements and Twitter posts through his 12-day, five-nation tour of Asia - the longest for a U.S. President in 25 years - to decipher a new American strategy towards the region can be taxing unless the idea is to cherry-pick and substantiate pre-existing notions.

'Terrific' China

One can read resistance to China's expansive ambitions in euphemisms such as 'freedom of navigation' and condemnation of 'predatory' economic practices, used along with America's commitment to democracy, human rights, and free trade. When you read them alongside the U.S.-Philippines commitment to "share best practices" to prevent illegal drug use, which is a "problem afflicting both countries", and Mr. Trump's desire to be friends with the "short and fat" ruler of North Korea, the emerging picture could appear confusing, if not outlandish.

In his interactions with reporters as he travelled back, Mr. Trump gave an overview of the "terrific" tour and the new friendships that he has developed, how he enjoyed the unprecedented reception in Beijing, conversations with the "terrific" President Xi Jinping and the special honor he received at the Forbidden City. What topped the list of achievements for him were the business deals - he put the figure at \$300 billion and hoped that it would exceed \$1 trillion in the coming months, though the actual numbers remain unclear. He said security partnerships with these Asian partners have also been enhanced.

Ahead of his travel, the White House had said his speech at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO summit in Vietnam would elucidate his vision for the Indo-Pacific region, a term that the Trump administration has started using in a clear acknowledgment of India's prominence. Administration officials had been emphatic that his speech would demonstrate the U.S.'s continuing commitment to the region. His speech did not live up to the build-up, and may have actually added to the nervousness among traditional U.S. partners. Recalling the U.S.'s historical ties to the region, Mr. Trump said it is time the terms of engagement between these countries and the U.S. changed. In his reckoning, the U.S. has been taken advantage of by all countries and global institutions, particularly the World Trade Organization (WTO). But he would not blame other countries or their leaders for this situation; it was all the fault of the U.S. administrations that preceded him.

"Those days are over," he declared. He was there "to offer a renewed partnership with America," the basis of which would be "bilateral trade agreements with any Indo-Pacific nation that wants to be our partner and that will abide by the principles of fair and reciprocal trade... I call it the Indo-Pacific dream."

What does he mean?

The U.S. has trade deficits with all the five countries that Mr. Trump visited, and he told four of them that the U.S. would not tolerate this - putting China, Japan, South Korea and Vietnam in the same basket on this count. In the case of the Philippines, which has a small surplus with the U.S., the relationship is less about trade, he said, but more for "military purposes... it's called the most prime piece of real estate from a military standpoint."

What are the implications of Mr. Trump's statement that "those days are over?" First, America offers these countries technology, capital and access to its market. Second, America offers a security guarantee and a predictable world order based on multilateral trade and security pacts. China has also been a



beneficiary of this system, and the rise of China has added additional buoyancy for neighboring countries. The friction between China and its neighbors heightened as Beijing's ambitions grew after the 2008 financial crisis. Vietnam, Philippines, Japan, and South Korea started to gravitate more towards the U.S., which was itself alarmed by the assertiveness of China. The Obama administration announced the Pivot to Asia strategy in response. Kurt Campbell, an Obama official who is credited with drafting the policy, described it as "a multifaceted approach that will involve a strong security component, working with allies, working constructively with China, a commercial dynamic that is about not shipping U.S. [jobs], but U.S. exports and services to Asia; a commitment to building institutions to multilateralism; bringing other partners into Asia, like Europe, working closely with Europe."

Like Mr. Trump, Barack Obama also wanted to open the Asian markets for American companies, but there was a broader blue print at play. Mr. Trump has knocked it down to a one-point agenda: buy our goods and services. His statement that countries in the "region [should] be strong, independent, and prosperous, in control of their own destinies, and satellites to no one," is a call for ending multilateralism. More than a newfound respect for the autonomy of these countries, it reflects American disinterest. Mr. Trump also told his Asian hosts that they were free to pursue their interests solo, as he would pursue his. He hinted that America is washing its hands of any leadership role, making it clear that it could cut a deal with China on its own, regardless of its potential impact on other countries. China is the biggest trading partner of South Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Speaking after Mr. Trump at APEC, Mr. Xi presented a case for multilateralism and open trade. China is also willing to offer technology, capital and market access, on its terms under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Security concerns

Now, what is America offering for the security of these Asian partners? Mr. Trump asked them all to join hands with the U.S. in stopping North Korea's nuclear adventurism. But that apart, he told Japan, Vietnam and South Korea to buy "our weapons".

"We make the best," he told them and cited how Saudi Arabia was using them effectively. In one Twitter post during the tour, he also gave a carte blanche to the Saudi Arabian regime to chart regional politics.

Mr. Trump's "Indo-Pacific dream" may not appear to be much of a dream for most countries in the region. In 2006, Mr. Trump had said he was waiting for a housing market crash, and boasted about his ability to profit from a falling market. Conflicts in Asia, in the west and the east, could appear to be good opportunities for profit from the realtor's perspective.

We may be looking for a strategy that does not exist, perhaps. American economist Lawrence Summers, now a Harvard professor, and a key player in the American-led globalization over the last three decades, described the challenge before America: "... (we) confuse a strategy with a wish list. Our strategy is that it is very important that they open their markets, that it is very important that they cooperate with us on this security issue... Well, that is a good wish list... And I do not think we yet have a strategy for thinking about the management of the global economic system that is appropriately respectful of the scale and achievements of the Chinese economy."

(Author is a senior journalist with The Hindu. He can be reached at varghese.g@thehindu.co.in)

A Chinese View of the New Global Order



By Luo Zhaohui

“The Xi Jinping Thought on major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is highly innovative and consistent. One of the important concepts is to forge a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation. The other one is to build a community with a shared future for mankind, to build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity. In line with the world trend, President Xi's thought on diplomacy follows the tide of the times and will further strengthen China's interaction with the rest of the world”, the author says.

“China attaches great importance to "China-India relations. There will be a series of institutional dialogues between the two countries. We need to set long-term goals for our relations such as Free Trade Agreement, the Treaty of Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between China and India, "early harvest" on the boundary issue and alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative with India's development strategies. I firmly believe that China and India can move at the same pace towards the same direction. We need to enhance mutual trust and focus on cooperation, while properly managing differences, in a bid to promote China-India relations to a new level.”

As a saying goes, if you want to create an opponent, you will have an opponent. The cold war mentality must give way to closer Indo-Pacific ties.

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has successfully concluded in Beijing, but the heated discussion and interpretation of it continue both in China and abroad. People show strong interests in its far-reaching influence on China and the world, as well as China-India relations.

I believe that the influence is positive, and I would like to highlight my optimism in the following three aspects.

First, I am optimistic about China's development and its future. One important political judgment in the 19th CPC National Congress is that Socialism with Chinese Characteristics has crossed the threshold into a new era. China is the second largest economy in the world. Over the past five years, China has made historical progress and deepened its reform and opening-up. With an average annual economic growth of 7.2 per cent, China's average contribution to the global economic growth exceeds 30 percent annually. More than 60 million people have been lifted out of poverty. People are talking about high-speed train, Alipay, bicycle-sharing and online shopping with great interest. In the early stage of China's reform and opening-up, we formulated a "three-step" roadmap of development. The first step is to address the subsistence problem, followed by preliminarily building a moderately prosperous society as the second step. These two goals have been successfully accomplished in advance. At present, we are in the decisive stage of the third step for building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020 when the CPC celebrates its centenary anniversary.

In the meantime, the principal contradiction in Chinese society has changed. This is another important political judgment made in the 19th CPC National Congress. It has evolved from the contradiction between the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people and the backwardness of social production, to the one between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life. It indicates that we need to focus on addressing development's imbalances and inadequacies, and shift the economy from high speed growth to improvement in quality and effect of development. With this, we will be better placed to focus on green development and environmental protection, and to promote well-rounded human development and all-round social progress.

The great practice of China's reform and opening-up and the great era we are in call for the great theories and ideas emerged in the Congress. The 19th CPC National Congress has endorsed the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the guiding ideology that the CPC adheres to on a long-term basis.

The Thought will guide China to realize its blueprint. The Party Congress has drawn up a two-step approach to develop China into a great modern socialist country by 2050 when China celebrates its centenary anniversary, building on the foundation created by the moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020. At the first stage from 2020 to 2035, socialist modernization will be basically realized. At the second stage from 2035 to 2050, we will build China a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful.

Second, I am optimistic about China's interaction with the rest of the world. China has been deeply integrated into the world and



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers his speech opening the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, a twice-a-decade, week-long, mostly closed-door conclave that will culminate with the selection of a new Politburo Standing Committee that will rule China's 1.4 billion people for the next five years. Photo courtesy HT

long adhered to the fundamental national policy of opening up. President Xi Jinping attaches great importance to and directly participates in China's external exchanges. Over the past five years, President Xi has made 28 foreign trips to 56 countries. China has hosted APEC, G20, BRICS Summit and the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. Earlier this year, President Xi's speech on globalization and free trade at the World Economic Forum in Davos was very inspiring. He is the super diplomat of China and the great contributor to world peace and development.

The Xi Jinping Thought on major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is highly innovative and consistent. One of the important concepts is to forge a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation. The other one is to build a community with a shared future for mankind, to build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity. In line with the world trend, President Xi's thought on diplomacy follows the tide of the times and will further strengthen China's interaction with the rest of the world.

A prosperous and stable China in itself is a contribution to world peace and development and will provide more opportunities for world prosperity, progress, and mutually beneficial cooperation. In the coming 15 years, China's market will further expand. It is projected that China will import \$24 trillion worth of goods and attract \$2 trillion of foreign direct investment. China's total outbound investment will reach \$2 trillion. Next November, Shanghai will host the first China International Import Expo.

To realize the blueprint and achieve greater progress, China needs a stable international and regional environment and order. In this context, China must stay committed to its independent foreign policy of peace, upholding the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, and promoting good neighborliness and friendship. China is opposed to zero-sum game and never seeks hegemony.

After the 19th CPC National Congress, China's diplomacy has already taken on a new look. Russian and the US leaders visited China successively. President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang will attend several multilateral meetings respectively and visit some

neighboring countries. China-ROK and China-Japan relations have also made progress.

Third, I am optimistic about the prospect of China-India relations. The new thought and blueprint have emerged in the 19th National Congress. President Xi and Prime Minister Modi reached important consensus during their meeting in September in Xiamen. Against the aforesaid backdrop, I am optimistic about China-India relations. Both China and India are developing countries and face common tasks of developing economy and improving people's well-being. At a critical stage of deepening reform and advancing modernization, both countries need to foster a favorable external environment. China and India are neighbors that cannot be moved away. We live under the same sky. As important members of BRICS and the SCO, China and India are committed to advancing globalization and multi-polarity, and upholding democracy in international relations. We believe that the New India initiative proposed by Prime Minister Modi and the Chinese Dream are closely connected and can be synergized as well.

In recent days, some media have been covering the concept of "Indo-Pacific Strategy" and speculating that the emerging multilateral cooperation is against China. I have a different opinion. As a saying goes, if you want to create an opponent, you will have an opponent. We should get rid of the cold war mentality. In fact, it is in the interests of all parties and in the trend of globalization to enhance closer Indo-Pacific ties from a geographical and economic perspective. Above all, China cannot be contained. We are fully confident about it.

China attaches great importance to China-India relations. There will be a series of institutional dialogues between the two countries. We need to set long-term goals for our relations such as Free Trade Agreement, the Treaty of Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between China and India, "early harvest" on the boundary issue and alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative with India's development strategies. I firmly believe that China and India can move at the same pace towards the same direction. We need to enhance mutual trust and focus on cooperation, while properly managing differences, in a bid to promote China-India relations to a new level.

(Author is Chinese Ambassador to India)

CENTRE INCREASES CARPET AREA OF HOUSES UNDER PM AWAS YOJANA

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre today approved the enhancement of the carpet area of houses for the middle income group (MIG) category under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U), a move hailed by realtors' bodies CREDAI and NAREDCO.

Under the MIG-I category, the carpet area of the houses has been enhanced from 90 sq.mtr to 120 sq.mtr, while under the MIG-II segment, it has been increased to 150 sq.mtr from the current 110 sq.mtr, Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters while briefing them about the Union cabinet decisions.

Under the MIG-I category, a four-per cent interest subsidy is provided to the beneficiaries with an annual income of Rs 6-12 lakh on a loan of up to Rs 9 lakh and under the MIG-II category, the beneficiaries with an annual income of Rs 12-18 lakh get a three-per cent interest subsidy on a loan of up to Rs 12 lakh.

Hailing the cabinet decision, Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri said it would attract more people in the MIG category to buy houses under the scheme.

An official said many people were not opting to buy houses under the scheme as the previous carpet area did not seem very attractive to them.

Now that the carpet area had been increased, more people would come forward to avail of the benefits, he said, adding that the Centre was expecting an enhanced expenditure of about Rs 1,000-1,200 crore because of the decision.

Source: PTI

BJP BEHIND HARDIK PATEL'S SEX CDS, SAYS PAAS

AHMEDABAD (TIP): The Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS), the organisation spearheaded by Hardik Patel, claimed that BJP leaders were behind the release of sleaze videos of the Patel quota stir leader (Hardik).



"As per the information we have been able to gather from our sources, there are 52 more 'sex CDs' of PAAS leaders, with 22 of Hardik alone, that have been prepared by the BJP under instructions from Chief Minister Vijay Rupani and state BJP chief Jitu Vaghani. They have spent over Rs 40 crore to get these CDs prepared abroad and morphed images to show Hardik and other PAAS leaders," Dinesh Bhambaniya, a close aide of Hardik and a PAAS leader told mediapersons.

Dinesh also claimed that BJP leaders were trying to frame Hardik by getting a woman to lodge a complain against him (Hardik) on charges of rape.

"They want to then lodge an FIR and put Hardik behind bars and defame him as has been done with Narayan Sai (son of Asaram who is facing charges of rape)," he said.

Hardik has been on the backfoot since early this week after videos showing a person looking like Hardik involved in sexual escapades surfaced. Though neither Hardik nor the PAAS is directly contesting the upcoming Assembly elections, his support is considered key for electoral fortunes of political parties in the state.

While he has openly said that his aim is to defeat the BJP, this episode is being seen as the ruling party's attack on him.

EC to BJP: No 'Pappu' in advt

AHMEDABAD (TIP): The Election Commission has barred the ruling BJP in Gujarat from using the word "Pappu" in an electronic advertisement, which apparently targeted Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi, calling it "derogatory". "Pappu" is perceived as a social media slur coined to target Gandhi.

According to BJP sources, the media committee under the Gujarat Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) objected to the word in the script of the advertisement which was submitted by the party for approval last month.

A senior BJP leader said the party will replace the word and submit a new script for the EC's approval.

Gujarat CEO BB Swain said he was not aware of any such development.

Source: PTI

Cabinet clears setting up of GST anti-profiteering body

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Union Cabinet on November 16 approved setting up of a National Anti-profiteering Authority under the GST, as it seeks to ensure that consumers get the benefit of reduced prices under the new indirect tax regime.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said currently there are only 50 items which attract the highest tax of 28 per cent under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime and rates on many items have been cut to 5 per cent as well.

"The National Anti-Profiteering Authority is an assurance to consumers of India. If any consumer feels that the benefit of tax rate cut is not being passed on, then he can complaint to the authority," Prasad told reporters after the Cabinet meeting.

This reflects governments full commitment to take all possible steps to ensure benefits of implementation of GST to the common man, the minister said. The approval by the Cabinet paves the way for immediate establishment of the apex body, which is mandated to ensure that the benefits of GST rate reduction is passed on to consumers.

The GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts, had last week decided to slash tax rates of over 200 items in the GST regime as well as lowered tax rates on AC and non-AC restaurants to 5 per



Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

cent.

The Council had earlier approved setting up of a five-member National Anti-Profiteering Authority to enable consumers to file complaint in case price reduction is not passed on.

A five-member committee, headed by Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, comprising Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia, CBEC Chairman Vanaja Sarna and chief secretaries from two states, has been entrusted to finalise the chairman and members of the authority.

The authority will have a sunset date of two years from the date on which the chairman assumes charge. The chairman and the four members of the authority have to be less than 62 years.

As per the structure of the anti-

profiteering mechanism in the GST regime, complaints of local nature will be first sent to the state-level screening committee, while those of national level will be marked for the Standing Committee.

If the complaints have merit, the respective committees would refer the cases for further investigation to the Directorate General of Safeguards (DGS). The DG Safeguards would generally take about three months to complete the investigation and send the report to the anti-profiteering authority.

If the authority finds that a company has not passed on GST benefits, it will either direct the entity to pass on the benefits to consumers or if the beneficiary cannot be identified will ask the company to transfer the amount to the consumer welfare fund within a specified timeline.

The authority will have the power to cancel registration of any entity or business if it fails to pass on to consumers the benefit of lower taxes under the GST regime, but it would probably be the last step against any violator. According to the anti-profiteering rules, the authority will suggest return of the undue profit earned from not passing on the reduction in incidence of tax to consumers along with an 18 per cent interest, as also impose penalty.

Source: PTI

Indian, Pak cities could turn into unhealthy snow globes: NOAA

WASHINGTON (TIP): Smog-filled cities in north India and Pakistan will continue to experience dangerous level of air quality over the next several months, a top American atmospheric organisation has said, warning that the cities could turn into dangerously unhealthy "snow globes".

"This is just the start to the smog season in northern India and Pakistan, as the monsoon will last for much of the upcoming winter. That means there are plenty of more opportunities for cold, stagnant air to fill with pollution, turning cities into dangerously unhealthy snow globes," National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said in a statement.

NOAA released satellite pictures and explained the reasons behind such a polluting atmosphere in major parts of north India and Pakistan.

Widespread smog caused by the combustion of fuels, and the burning of crops and fires made it dangerous to be outside in cities in northern India and Pakistan, it said.

For air to get this polluted, in addition to needing a good amount of human help from the combustion of fuels and burning of crops and garbage, there needs to be specific atmospheric conditions that let the air remain still enough for pollution accumulate, it said.

"This stagnation occurs when there is an inversion layer in the atmosphere," NOAA said.

An inversion layer refers to instances where the air does not cool as one moves up in the atmosphere, it explained.

"Instead, warmer air sits on top of denser, colder air near the ground. Since that cold air has no place to go thanks to the warm lid placed atop it, it just sits there gathering pollution like a hazy snow-globe," NOAA said.

So, in late fall across the Indian sub-continent, the Northeast Monsoon is beginning to take hold, it said, adding that, the Northeast monsoon is driven by temperature differences between the land and surrounding waters.

At this time of year, the large landmass to the north begins to cool down considerably forming a dense, cold air mass



known as the Siberia high pressure system.

Referring to satellite images, NOAA said the widespread burning of crop fields in northern India contributed to dangerous levels of air pollution in cities across northern India and Pakistan.

At the US Embassy in New Delhi, hourly AQI values for PM2.5 taken on November 7 through 10 exceeded 500 with an astounding recording of 1010 at 4 pm local time on November 8.

Hourly readings still peaked in the hazardous category (301-500 AQI) through November 14.

New Delhi and several other north Indian states has been experiencing dense smog for over a week, forcing authorities to enforce emergency measures such as banning construction activities and brick kilns. In Pakistan, bad weather conditions caused by smog have disrupted over 600 PIA flights this month.

The smoggy conditions in the country's Punjab province forced the airline to either delay or cancel the flights.

Source: PTI

'Modi remains most popular figure in Indian politics'

WASHINGTON/ NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains "by far" the most popular figure in Indian politics, ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, a Pew survey, conducted among 2,464 respondents, said.

Modi at 88% is 30 points ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi (58%), 31 points ahead of Congress chief Sonia Gandhi (57%) and 49 points ahead of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal (39%), said the survey conducted between February 21 and March 10.

Pew said the public's "positive assessment" of Modi is buoyed by "growing contentment" with the Indian economy. More than 10 out of 10 said economic conditions are "good", up 19 percentage points since immediately before the 2014 election.

The share of adults who say the economy is "very good" (30%) has tripled in the past three years, it added. Overall, seven-in-ten Indians are now "satisfied" with the way things are going in the country. This positive assessment of India's direction has nearly doubled since 2014, Pew said.

According to Pew, at least nine-in-ten Indians in the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana and in the



PM Narendra Modi at 88% is 30 points ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi 58%, 31 points ahead of Congress president Sonia Gandhi 57% and 49 points ahead of Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal 39%

western states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh hold a favorable view of the Prime Minister.

The same is true for more than eight-

in-ten in the eastern states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal and the northern states of Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

"Since 2015, Modi's popularity is relatively unchanged in the north, has risen in the west and the south, and is down slightly in the east," it said.

Notably, the survey reflects a 21 percentage points drop in favorable view of America among Indians from 70 per cent in 2015 to just 49 per cent in 2017.

Only 40 per cent express confidence in President Donald Trump to do the right thing regarding world affairs, down 34 points from their faith in his predecessor Barack Obama in 2015.

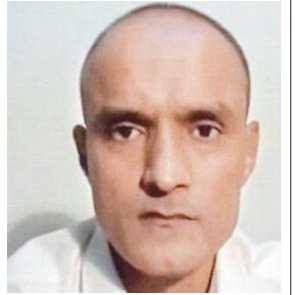
Same is the case with China, whose favourability rating among Indians have dropped from 41 per cent in 2015 to 26 per cent in 2017. The survey was conducted before the Doklam crisis.

According to Pew Survey, despite periodic outbreaks of religious violence, relatively few Indians see communal relations as a very big problem.

"Similarly, despite Prime Minister Modi's decision last November to abolish high-value bank notes, less than half of the Indian population sees the lack of availability of cash to be a major problem," it said.

WAITING FOR INDIA'S RESPONSE TO ARRANGE MEETING BETWEEN JADHAV AND WIFE: PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD/NEW DELHI (TIP): Pakistan on Nov 16 said it was awaiting India's response on its offer to arrange a meeting between Indian prisoner on death row Kulbhushan Jadhav and his wife on humanitarian grounds.



Kulbhushan Jadhav

Pakistan last week said it will allow 46-year-old Jadhav to meet his wife, months after India had requested Islamabad to grant a visa to his mother on humanitarian grounds.

During his weekly media briefing, Foreign Office spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said Pakistan was awaiting India's response on the offer.

Jadhav, a former Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court in April on charges of espionage and terrorism. The International Court of Justice in May halted his execution on India's appeal.

Pakistan has repeatedly denied India consular access to Jadhav on the ground that it was not applicable in cases related to spies.

Some media reports have linked Pakistan's offer to the quiet efforts by the US.

Pakistan, however, insisted that the offer was made purely on the humanitarian grounds. *Source: PTI*

Telangana assembly passes bill making Urdu the state's second official language

HYDERABAD (TIP): The Telangana assembly on Nov 16 passed a bill making Urdu the second official language of the state.

The state has a substantial Urdu-speaking population spread across all the 31 districts.

The Telangana Official Languages (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was passed with all parties supporting it.

Urdu was declared the second official language as per section 2 of the Telangana Official Languages Act, 1966 in nine districts (of total 10), except Khammam, of the Telangana region before bifurcation of undivided Andhra Pradesh, as per the statement of objects and reasons of the bill.

After the formation of Telangana state in 2014, the 10 districts were reorganised into 31 districts last year.

The percentage of Urdu-speaking population has increased to 12.69 of the total population in the state, the statement said.

"In view of the above, the Government have decided to declare Urdu language as the Second Official Language in the entire state of Telangana by suitably amending section 2 of the Telangana Official Languages Act, 1966. This bill seeks to give effect to this decision," it said..

Ban on export of all pulses lifted

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government removed prohibition on export of all types of pulses to ensure that "farmers have greater choice in marketing their produce and getting better remuneration for their produce".



The approval followed a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The CCEA also empowered the committee chaired by Food Secretary and comprising secretaries of departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Revenue, Consumer Affairs and Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to review the export/import policy on pulses. Officials say opening of export of all types of pulses will help the farmer dispose of their produce at remunerative prices, encourage them to expand the area of sowing and provide an alternative market for surplus produce.

Cong, BJP spar over Rafale deal

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress and the BJP continued to exchange barbs over the Rafale aircraft deal today with Rahul Gandhi accusing the Prime Minister of allegedly changing the "entire deal" to benefit a businessman, a charge debunked by the ruling party.

The Congress vice-president also asked why no questions were put to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on BJP president Amit Shah's son Jay, whose company his party alleged has witnessed a quantum jump in turnover since the Modi government came to power. "You ask me so many questions and I answer all of them. I want to ask you, why don't you question PM Modi on the Rafale deal. Why don't you ask about Amit Shah's son? "Why don't you question the PM who changed the entire Rafale deal to help a businessman?" he said.

Gandhi said the PM should explain the "Reliance" on someone with nil experience in aerospace for the Rafale deal. "Self 'Reliance' is obviously a critical aspect of 'Make in India'," Gandhi added in a series of tweets on the Reliance Rafale deal.

Responding to Gandhi, senior BJP leader and Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Congress must remember its rule when it takes up such an issue.



"Why don't you question the PM who changed the entire Rafale deal to help a businessman?"

Rahul Gandhi, Cong VP



"They are finding it difficult to accept that there has been no case of corruption in the three-year rule of the Narendra Modi government."

Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union minister

India, Singapore discuss ways to strengthen trade ties

SINGAPORE (TIP): Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Nov 16 called on Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and discussed ways to strengthen economic ties between the two countries, an official release said.

Both the leaders recalled the shared history of the countries, rooted in strong commercial, culture and people-to-people links.

"They also discussed the meeting between the two prime ministers and elevation of India-Singapore partnership to a strategic level and actions taken to translate their vision," the release said.

They discussed at length the roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax in India, bilateral trade and investment, and the road map for enhancing economic and commercial ties.

Jaitley, on the last day of his two-day visit, also delivered a keynote address at Morgan Stanley 16th Annual Asia Pacific Summit on "India: Structural Reforms and Growth Path Ahead".

He talked about the current state of India's economy, outlining the key reforms being implemented by the government with a view to positioning India as an attractive global investment destination.

Jaitley re-iterated India's commitment to increasing public expenditure on infrastructure and creating an environment for private participation to boost employment and provide impetus to overall economic growth.

He also addressed senior fund managers and key financial institutional investors, and replied to their queries on various tax issues including impact of the re-capitalisation package for banks that are battling non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans.

Jaitley also met the Chairman and Board of Directors of Temasek, one of the largest investment companies in Asia, and discussed investment opportunities available across various sectors in India, including the National Investment and Infrastructure (NIIF). *Source: PTI*

THANKSGIVING DAY IN THE UNITED STATES

THANKSGIVING DAY IS A HOLIDAY AND WILL BE OBSERVED ON NOVEMBER 23



This year Thanksgiving falls on Thursday, Nov 23, (the fourth Thursday in November) – the day before Black Friday.

Thanksgiving Day traditionally kicks off the 'holiday season' in the United States. The day was set in stone by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939 and approved by Congress in 1941. FDR changed it from Abraham Lincoln's designation as the last Thursday in November (because there are sometimes five Thursdays in the month).

While Britons think of it as a warm-up for the Yuletide period, many Americans think of it as just as important as Christmas.

In fact, more people in the US celebrate Thanksgiving than they do Christmas. Thanksgiving Day is a secular holiday in a country that officially separates church and state so this probably makes sense.

THANKSGIVING AT PLYMOUTH

In September 1620, a small ship called the Mayflower left Plymouth, England, carrying 102 passengers—an assortment of religious separatists seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith and other individuals lured by the promise of prosperity

and land ownership in the New World. After a treacherous and uncomfortable crossing that lasted 66 days, they dropped anchor near the tip of Cape Cod, far north of their intended destination at the mouth of the Hudson River. One month later, the Mayflower crossed Massachusetts Bay, where the Pilgrims, as they are now commonly known, began the work of establishing a village at Plymouth.

Throughout that first brutal winter, most of the colonists remained on board the ship, where they suffered from exposure, scurvy and outbreaks of contagious disease. Only half of the Mayflower's original passengers and crew lived to see their first New England spring. In March, the remaining settlers moved ashore, where they received an astonishing visit from an Abenaki Indian who greeted them in English. Several days later, he returned with another Native American, Squanto, a member of the Pawtuxet tribe who had been kidnapped by an English sea captain and sold into slavery before escaping to London and returning to his homeland on an exploratory expedition. Squanto taught the Pilgrims, weakened by malnutrition and illness, how to cultivate corn, extract sap from maple trees, catch fish in the rivers and avoid

poisonous plants. He also helped the settlers forge an alliance with the Wampanoag, a local tribe, which would endure for more than 50 years and tragically remains one of the sole examples of harmony between European colonists and Native Americans.

In November 1621, after the Pilgrims' first corn harvest proved successful, Governor William Bradford organized a celebratory feast and invited a group of the fledgling colony's Native American allies, including the Wampanoag chief Massasoit. Now remembered as America's "first Thanksgiving"—although the Pilgrims themselves may not have used the term at the time—the festival lasted for three days. While no record exists of the historic banquet's exact menu, the Pilgrim chronicler Edward Winslow wrote in his journal that Governor Bradford sent four men on a "fowling" mission in preparation for the event, and that the Wampanoag guests arrived bearing five deer. Historians have suggested that many of the dishes were likely prepared using traditional Native American spices and cooking methods. Because the Pilgrims had no oven and the Mayflower's sugar supply had dwindled by the fall of 1621, the meal did not

feature pies, cakes or other desserts, which have become a hallmark of contemporary celebrations.

THANKSGIVING BECOMES AN OFFICIAL HOLIDAY

Pilgrims held their second Thanksgiving celebration in 1623 to mark the end of a long drought that had threatened the year's harvest and prompted Governor Bradford to call for a religious fast. Days of fasting and thanksgiving on an annual or occasional basis became common practice in other New England settlements as well. During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress designated one or more days of thanksgiving a year, and in 1789 George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States; in it, he called upon Americans to express their gratitude for the happy conclusion to the country's war of independence and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution. His successors John Adams and James Madison also designated days of thanks during their presidencies.

In 1817, New York became the first of

Continued on page 17

Continued from page 16

several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday; each celebrated it on a different day, however, and the American South remained largely unfamiliar with the tradition. In 1827, the noted magazine editor and prolific writer Sarah Josepha Hale—author, among countless other things, of the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb”—launched a campaign to establish Thanksgiving as a national holiday. For 36 years, she published numerous editorials and sent scores of letters to governors, senators, presidents and other politicians. Abraham Lincoln finally heeded her request in 1863, at the height of the Civil War, in a proclamation entreating all Americans to ask God to “commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife” and to “heal the wounds of the nation.” He scheduled Thanksgiving for the final Thursday in November, and it was celebrated on that day every year until 1939, when Franklin D. Roosevelt moved the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression. Roosevelt’s plan, known derisively as Franksgiving, was met with passionate opposition, and in 1941 the president reluctantly signed a bill making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.

In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so ubiquitous it has become all but synonymous with the holiday, may or may not have been on offer when the Pilgrims hosted the inaugural feast in 1621. Today, however, nearly 90 percent of Americans eat the bird—whether roasted, baked or deep-fried—on Thanksgiving, according to the National Turkey Federation. Other traditional foods include stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free dinners for the less fortunate.

Parades have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. Presented by Macy’s department store since 1924, New York City’s Thanksgiving Day parade is the largest and most famous, attracting some 2 to 3 million spectators along its 2.5-mile route and drawing an enormous television audience. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and giant balloons shaped like cartoon characters.

Beginning in the mid-20th century and perhaps even earlier, the president of the United States has “pardoned” one or two Thanksgiving turkeys each year, sparing the birds from slaughter and sending them to a farm for retirement. A number of U.S. governors also perform the annual turkey pardoning ritual.

THANKSGIVING CONTROVERSIES

For some scholars, the jury is still out on whether the feast at Plymouth really constituted the first Thanksgiving in the United States. Indeed, historians have recorded other ceremonies of thanks among European settlers in North America that predate the Pilgrims’ celebration. In 1565, for instance, the Spanish explorer Pedro Menéndez de Avilé invited members of the local Timucua tribe to a dinner in St. Augustine, Florida, after holding a mass to thank God for his crew’s safe arrival. On December 4, 1619, when 38 British settlers reached a site known as Berkeley Hundred on the banks of Virginia’s James River, they read a proclamation designating the date as “a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God.”

THANKSGIVING TRADITIONS



Some Native Americans and others take issue with how the Thanksgiving story is presented to the American public, and especially to schoolchildren. In their view, the traditional narrative paints a deceptively sunny portrait of relations between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, masking the long and bloody history of conflict between Native Americans and European settlers that resulted in the deaths of millions. Since 1970, protesters have gathered on the day designated as Thanksgiving at the top of Cole’s Hill, which overlooks Plymouth Rock, to commemorate a “National Day of Mourning.” Similar events are held in other parts of the country.

ANCIENT ORIGINS

Although the American concept of Thanksgiving developed in the colonies of New England, its roots can be traced back to the other side of the Atlantic. Both the Separatists who came over on the Mayflower and the Puritans who arrived soon after brought with them a tradition of providential holidays—days of fasting during difficult or pivotal moments and days of feasting and celebration to thank God in times of plenty.

As an annual celebration of the harvest and its bounty, moreover, Thanksgiving falls under a category of festivals that spans cultures, continents and millennia. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans feasted and paid tribute to their gods after the fall harvest. Thanksgiving also bears a resemblance to the ancient Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot. Finally, historians have noted that Native Americans had a rich tradition of commemorating the fall harvest with feasting and merrymaking long before Europeans set foot on their shores.





PRIYANKA CHOPRA: 'DOSTANA' FOREVER MADE ME 'DESI GIRL'

Actress Priyanka Chopra has fondly recounted that it was her film 'Dostana' which gave her the 'desi' epithet. 'Dostana' on Tuesday clocked nine years of its release in Hindi cinema and Priyanka took to Twitter to express her happiness.

"It's nine years of 'Dostana', the movie that's forever made me the 'Desi girl'. Adore you Tarun Mansukhani, Abhishek Bachchan, John Abraham," she tweeted.

Directed by Mansukhani, 'Dostana' was a story about two men pretending to be a gay couple in order to secure an apartment. Both fall in love with the same girl and strive to win her heart, only to realize that she loves someone else. The film also featured Abhishek Bachchan and John Abraham.

Currently, Priyanka, who rose to fame playing an FBI agent in the American thriller drama series 'Quantico', is busy with two Hollywood films. The 'Mary Kom' actress has already completed her next film 'Isn't It Romantic', featuring Adam Devine, Liam Hemsworth and Rebel Wilson. It is slated to release on February 14, 2019.

She will also star as a single mom in 'A Kid Like Jake' alongside Jim Parsons, Claire Danes and Octavia Spencer.

Source: IANS

FATE OF MAHIRA UPCOMING FILM VERNA REMAINS UNCLEAR

Confusion continues over the release of much-awaited Mahira Khan starrer 'Verna' which deals with the issue of rape after the Pakistan government today denied that the Censor Board had banned the film.

The film, which is due to release this Friday, has run into trouble after it was first reported that the Central Board of Film Censors (CBFC) had banned its release following its viewing.

"The film has not been banned. But there is a process that every film has to go through before it is cleared by the CBFC," Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb said in Islamabad.

The members of the censor board are private members and it was their decision, she said, adding that if they found something objectionable in the film they could ask the producer and director to delete those parts.

A top official of the CBFC said the board members had watched the film.

A member of the Punjab Censor Board said that they had found several objectionable scenes in the film.

"Firstly, it shows a governor's son involved in a rape case which was the biggest objection. Secondly, it includes many bold dialogues and scenes. The general plot of the movie revolves around rape, which we consider to be unacceptable," the member said.

Aurangzeb said the government had allowed films dealing with politicians and showing them in a negative light to be screened in Pakistan.

Provincial Censor Boards operate independently in Pakistan's Sindh, Punjab and other provinces and have not issued any certificate for the screening of the film so far.

There has been outrage on the social media over the move to ban the film.

Source: PTI



MOVIE REVIEW

SHAADI MEIN ZAROOR AANA

CAST: Rajkummar Rao, Kriti Kharbanda

DIRECTION: Ratnaa Sinha

GENRE: Romance

This love story, too, is entangled in the age old traditions of dowry and not allowing the daughters of the house to earn a living, like the sons do.

Rajkummar Rao aka Satyendra Mishra aka Sattu is a young bachelor from Kanpur, all set to begin his job as a government clerk. Kriti Kharbanda, who plays Aarti Shukla, is an MA degree holder and wants a career, but is forced to get married by her father (Govind Namdeo).

Sattu and Aarti meet in an arranged marriage set up, start liking each other and agree to get married.

Since Sattu belongs to a well-to-do family and has a government job, he is a prime catch in the marriage market.

His family asks for Rs 25 lakhs as dowry, which the girl's father agrees to solely because 'Acche ghar ke ladke itna toh maangte hi hai (A boy from a good family will ask for this much at least) despite the fact that his daughter is more educated and more capable than

the boy.

While the marriage preparations are on in full swing, Aarti clears the PCS exam in her first attempt, making her eligible to become an IAS officer.

Aarti, who fears not being allowed to work after marriage, chooses her career and runs away, leaving Sattu heartbroken.

Cut to five years later, Aarti -- an IAS officer accused of taking bribes -- is grilled by the officer in charge of the case, the now well-groomed Satyendra Mishra.

Will Sattu avenge Aarti's betrayal? Will the two get together? That's what the rest of Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana is about.

Director Ratnaa Sinha, who marks her debut with this film, starts off on a dull and predictable note, giving us a déjà vu of Badrinath Ki Dulhania. The not-so-capable boy falling in love with an ambitious girl, with the plot based in north India, is a story that has been done to death lately in Bollywood.

Sinha, unfortunately, has nothing new to offer.

In terms of music, the songs are on the tackier side and will appeal only to a niche audience. For the rest, it will just be melodramatically loud music. While Rajkummar Rao does a good job as Satyendra Mishra, his act become repetitive after a point. It's annoying to watch such a talented actor restricted to wooing a woman. However, his charm is such that you cannot help but like him. He does a fairly decent job in this sluggish tale.

Kriti Kharbanda as Aarti Shukla fits the bill. But the story is so weak and unbelievable in certain parts that you fail to connect with her character. She needs a better script to prove her mettle.





KRISTEN STEWART: LUCKY TO HAVE 'TWILIGHT' EXPERIENCE

Actor Kristen Stewart feels 'lucky' for the experience she had while filming for 'Twilight' series. The 'Snow White and the Huntsman' actor said that playing the character of Bella really helped her shape as a person that she is today.

"Every part that I've ever played has shaped me in such a significant way...I know from an outsider's perspective you might have something to say about that like in general."

"But I kind of view it as every other thing that I've invested in and really loved. And I'm lucky to have had that experience," Stewart told.

The 27-year-old said that she never looks back at her life and introspects and just counts on the experience.

Source: PTI

MANDY MOORE WISHES TO GET MARRIED SOON TO TAYLOR GOLDSMITH



Actor Mandy Moore wants to get married soon to her partner Taylor Goldsmith. Taylor, 32, popped the question two months ago, but 'A Walk to Remember' star is already planning to tie the knot as she does not want to wait for too long.

The 33-year-old actor told, "It'll happen sooner rather than later. I'm not in any rush, but also I'm like, I wanna do it. I don't need to wait, I don't need to have a long engagement. I'm not planning some giant, lavish affair. So, I might as well just do it."

Moore also said that she would love to start a family as soon as she ties the knot, "I have always known that I wanted to be a mother, hopefully. Hopefully that's on the cards for me." The duo has been dating for two years now, after they got in touch via Instagram. Moore advised people looking for love on the internet to not be "afraid".

Source: PTI

MOVIE REVIEW



THOR: RAGNAROK

CAST: CHRIS HEMSWORTH, CATE BLANCHETT,
TOM HIDDLESTON, MARK RUFFALO
DIRECTOR: TAIKA WAITITI

Marvel Studios and DC Comics approach comic book movies very differently, and the finest analogy I found was in an essay that argues how DC positions superheroes like gods: larger than life, philosophically flawed, creatures of hubris too gigantic for ordinary people to comprehend (or to laugh at). Marvel, meanwhile, treats its heroes like rock stars: arrogant and brash and sartorially outstanding, a quip eternally at the ready. They're all about cool.

What, then, does Marvel do with a superhero who happens also to be a god? Thor, modelled on the Norse god of thunder, has always been a comic book oddity, an otherworldly warrior who speaks in archaic dialogue written in a curlier and more elaborate typeface than those around him. This allows storytellers to weave epics both grander and sillier, leading to visually stunning realms and splash-pages, as well as gloriously nutty stories like that time Thor was turned into a tiny frog named Throg.

Thor: Ragnarok director Taika Waititi has the answer:

rockstar gods. Once upon a time, the only rock band in the world every single human looks up to, found themselves performing in Iceland. They wrote a great wailing song about Vikings, about a land of ice and snow and about a certain legendary hammer. After all these years, not just does that Immigrant Song by gods Led Zeppelin find its way into a Thor movie, but - thanks to the brilliance of repeated usage - it becomes an anthem for the hammer wielding hero. Hail Lord Waititi.

Waititi, of course, ought to be hailed regardless of super heroics. The New Zealander is a highly distinctive filmmaker with a fantastically oddball oeuvre, highlighted by What We Do In The Shadows, a vampire mockumentary that, quite simply, turns it up to eleven. What he does with Thor: Ragnarok is gobsmacking. He looks past the obvious faux-Shakespearean aspects of the character and his world to focus on the colour of Thor's lustrous hair and the plain fact that gods can be stupid.

Ragnarok embraces the comedy at the core of the preposterously posture-heavy superhero genre, and reminds us that men who fly around in cloaks and tights are there to be snickered at, regardless of mythology and budget. This is a film that worships at the altar of the weird, celebrating the far-out art of comic book visionary Jack Kirby alongside the eccentric stylings of Jeff Goldblum. On Sakaar, a planet Kirby may well have storyboarded, Goldblum plays a character called the Grandmaster who wears a golden dressing-gown, has a fluoride-blue goatee and - as befits all flashy Grandmasters - knows his way around a turntable.

ACTRESS SHYAMA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PUNJABI CINEMA



By Harjap Singh Aujla

- Born as Khurshid Akhtar, the Lahore-born actor first appeared on screen as a pre-teen in Noor Jehan's *Zeenat*
- *Aar Paar*, released in 1953 and was the turning point in her career
- Shyama acted in at least 140 movies essaying an assortment of lead parts and character roles

According to Wikipedia, actress Shyama was born in Punjab's capital city of Lahore in June 1935. But music director Sardul Kwatra claimed that Shyama was sixteen years old in 1949, that means she was born in 1933. When she was only twelve years old, her parents moved to Bombay, the film city and the capital of Bombay Presidency in 1945. From her childhood she had an inclination for acting and dancing. Her mother tongue was Punjabi and she never abandoned this language. Her first few roles were in Punjabi films. In 1948, she acted in Punjabi film "Chaman". Then she acted in film "Bhaiya ji" (1950) and *Mutiari* (1950). Both had music by Vinod and both became musically hit films.



Yesteryears film heroine Shyama, whose vim and spontaneity lit up song sequences in Guru Dutt's breezy crime yarn, Aar Paar (1953), and AVM productions' weepy social, Bhai Bhai (1956), passed away in Mumbai on Tuesday, November 14 morning. She was 82, says film data website IMDB. According to a 1952 book, though, she would have been 84.

commercially successful. Shyama became a snake charmer's daughter and she fitted herself perfectly in that role. Some of the songs of film "Kaude Shah" have attained the status of classics. Shamshad Begum was its main playback singer. Some songs were sung by Talat Mahmood and Rajkumari too. In the same year film "Lara Lappa" was made and once again Shyama was the heroine and she excelled in her role.

In the meanwhile, Shyama was doing very well in Hindi films too. In 1957 a Punjabi story based Hindi film "Mirza Sahiban" was made by the Kwatra brothers. Shyama acted as the heroine opposite Shammi Kapoor. The film was commercially and musically hit and Shyama's career got a boost from this film. Subsequently Shyama started churning out hit after hit. Her last Punjabi film was "Vilayat Pass" in 1961. Her role was critically acclaimed, though the film did not do too well.

All lovers of the vintage Punjabi films are deeply saddened by the death of their beloved veteran actress Shyama on November 14, 2017. May God rest her soul in peace!

(Author is a regular contributor to The Indian Panorama. He can be reached at harjapaujla@gmail.com)

In 1949, she came in contact with film producer Harcharan Singh Kwatra, a displaced entrepreneur from Lahore and his younger brother music director Sardul Kwatra. Harcharan Singh Kwatra liked her command over Punjabi language and effortless flow in words and Sardul Singh Kwatra liked her extempore dancing skills and devotion to duty. The two brothers had just obtained requisite financing for their upcoming Punjabi movie "Posti". Entire cast of this film had come from Lahore. The hero of this movie was Amar Nath and the villain was Majnu, a Christian immigrant from Lahore.

Most songs of film "Posti" were picturized on heroine Shyama. Two of the hit songs of the film were "Ve mein kajle di paaniyan dhar" and "Nahin lagda dil", both were sung by veteran singer Rajkumari. Popular playback singer Asha Bhosale made her film singing debut in film "Posti", the song was "Maye meriye ni mainoo barha chaa, ki do guttan kar meriyan". Asha Bhosale sang a duet also with iconic playback singer Mohammad Rafi, "Too peengh te main parchhawan, tere naal hulare khawan, laa lai dosti". It became a superhit. Film "Posti" was a big commercial success" and Shyama became very popular as an actress. Her wit and elocution in Punjabi were par excellence.

The Kwatra brothers made another Punjabi film "Kaude Shah" in 1953. Once again Shyama was taken as the heroine. Its music composed by Sardul Kwatra became a hit and the film became



Theresa May accuses Vladimir Putin of election meddling

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Theresa May has accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of meddling in elections and planting fake stories against the West to sow discord in the West to undermine their institutions.

Addressing the annual Lord Mayor's banquet in London last night, May was blunt and outspoken in her condemnation of Russian tactics of meddling in elections and cyber espionage.

"Russia has...repeatedly violated the national airspace of several European countries, and mounted a sustained campaign of cyber espionage and disruption.

"This has included meddling in elections, and hacking the Danish Ministry of Defence and the Bundestag (Germany), among many others," said May.

"It is seeking to weaponise information. Deploying its state-run media organisations to plant fake stories and photo-shopped images in an attempt to sow discord in the West and undermine our institutions," she said.

The prime minister said she wanted to relay a "very simple message" for Russia, that the UK was aware of what it was doing and it will not succeed because European democracies will fight back.



"Because you underestimate the resilience of our democracies, the enduring attraction of free and open societies, and the commitment of Western nations to the alliances that bind us.

"The UK will do what is necessary to protect ourselves, and work with our allies to do likewise," she warned.

May said that while her government was determined to take all necessary action to counter Russian activity, a return to the era of the Cold War was not desirable for either side.

"We do not want to return to the Cold

War, or to be in a state of perpetual confrontation...Russia can, and I hope one day will, choose this different path," she said.

Her warning came in the lead up to UK foreign secretary Boris Johnson's scheduled visit to Moscow before the end of the year. Russia has been accused of running so-called "troll factories" that disseminate fake news and provocative posts on social media.

It has also been linked with a damaging drive to influence the outcome of international elections, including in the US. (PTI)

Prince Harry hands out HIV kits in London to promote testing

LONDON (TIP): Britain's Prince Harry handed out HIV self-testing kits at a pop-up shop in London on Wednesday as part of his ongoing campaign to promote testing for the AIDS-causing virus. Harry, 33, has become a prominent HIV and AIDS campaigner through his charity Sentebale that was set up in 2006 to help children in Africa where AIDS is the leading cause of death among adolescents aged 10 to 19.

Harry, who is fifth in line to the British throne, launched the #FeelNoShame campaign in 2014 with singers Nicole Scherzinger and Paloma Faith and was filmed with Barbadian pop star Rihanna being tested for HIV in 2016.

An estimated 14 percent of more than 100,000 people living with HIV in Britain have not been diagnosed and are unaware they have the virus, according to government figures. (Reuters)

France eyes setting age for sexual consent; 13 suggested

PARIS (TIP): Is a 13-year-old old enough to agree to sex with an adult? That's a question France is asking as the government prepares to set a legal age for sexual consent for the first time. Twice in recent weeks, French courts have refused to prosecute men for rape after they had sex with 11-year-old girls because authorities couldn't prove coercion. Amid the public disbelief over the situation, the French government is drafting a bill to say that sex with children under a certain age is by definition coercive.

Justice Minister Nicole Belloubet provoked consternation among feminist groups on Monday by saying a legal minimum age of 13 for sexual consent "is worth considering." Activists staged a small protest on Tuesday in central Paris to argue that the age of consent should be set at 15. Protesters waved placards that read "for him impunity, for her a life sentence" in reference to the recent cases. (AP)

Saragarhi film receives applause in British Parliament

LONDON (TIP): On Tuesday 14th November 2017, the British Parliament resounded to a thunderous round of applause in honor of 21 native Indian soldiers who fought to defend British India on the unruly North-West frontier in 1897.

Parliamentarians, leading members of the British Indian community and representatives of Her Majesty's Armed Forces gathered for a special Parliamentary launch and screening of the new docu-drama "Saragarhi: The True Story", hosted by former Justice and Work and Pensions Minister Shailesh Vara MP.

The film, made in honor of the Sikhs who fought at Saragarhi to mark the battle's 120th anniversary, comes after more than seven years of research and production by Captain J. Singh-Sohal, a British Army reservist and filmmaker.

"Saragarhi: The True Story" narrates, for the first time on film, the fate of the 21 Sikh soldiers of the 36th Sikh Regiment of Bengal Infantry who on 12th September 1897 found themselves surrounded by 10,000 enemy tribesmen during an uprising on the North-West Frontier between colonial India and Afghanistan.

The brave 21 fought to the last man despite the odds, in an engagement lasting nearly seven hours and with only limited ammunition. The battle is a significant one which was commemorated by the British with memorials in India, a battle honor for the 36th Sikh regiment that fought (now the 4th Sikh Regiment in the Indian Army) and the issue of the Indian Order of Merit class III, the highest award of gallantry at that time given to native Indians on par with the Victoria Cross, which was awarded posthumously to the 21 men.

The documentary, filmed in India, Pakistan and the UK; tells the story with unique access to private archives, never-before-seen images, stunning visual graphics, effects and re-enactment scenes.



Some of the military personnel attending the event in the House of Commons including, Brigadier David Southall (fifth from left), Shailesh Vara MP (sixth from left), Captain Jay Singh-Sohal (seventh from left), Colonel John Kendall (eighth from left) and Major Sartaa Singh Gogna (ninth from left)

Event host Shailesh Vara MP said: "This film rightly records the outstanding courage and bravery of Sikh soldiers fighting against the odds and paying the ultimate price.

It is right that we remember these brave men in the Mother of Parliaments, and I congratulate Captain Jay Singh-Sohal for his commitment and dedication over many years in making this remarkable film.

The film not only informs the public, but it will also be a valuable resource for historians in the years to come."

Speaking about his new film, Captain Singh-

Sohal said: "It is a unique and fitting way to honor the memory of the men who fought at Saragarhi by remembering their bravery and valor in the very Parliament of Queen and country they were fighting for. This episode of British Indian history inspired many more Indians to serve during the first and second World Wars shoulder to shoulder with the British and troops from all over the Commonwealth. And it inspires a new generation now to commit to defending our parliamentary democracy and the values it represents. Sharing their story in our

Parliament is a tremendous honor for which I'd like to express my thanks to Mr. Vara."

The film will now begin its international tour, with a screening at the "Sikh Arts and Film Festival" in New York City and events across India.

Colonel John Kendall, from the British Army, who was part of a delegation to India that visited the Saragarhi Memorial sites added:

"The courage and loyalty of the Sikhs as a warrior race is legendary. For over a century and a half the British Army has been proud to serve alongside Sikhs. We have fought together in many campaigns including the North-West Frontier and the First and Second World Wars. We have fought alongside each other to protect democracy and to rescue those in need from natural disasters. Today we are privileged to have Sikhs serving among our ranks across Her Majesty's Armed Forces and support the work of the British Armed Forces Sikh Association (BAFSA) who help us to promote the message of inclusivity and Sikh service in the Army." Images and preview clips from the film for broadcast or publication are available via this link and to be credited to: "Saragarhi: The True Story/Dot Hyphen Productions"

About the Filmmaker

Jay Singh-Sohal FRSA is a former ITV News journalist and Sky News producer, and currently a communications consultant. He serves as a Captain in the British Army Reserves. An award-winning filmmaker, in March 2017 he was presented the prestigious British Sikh Association Jewel Award by the then Defense Secretary Sir Michael Fallon MP.

You can follow Jay via @JSinghSohal on Twitter.

For more information, questions or media bids for interview please contact Dot Hyphen PR via dothyphen1@gmail.com or telephone 07985 424983.

China to send special envoy to North Korea

BEIJING (TIP): China will send a special envoy to North Korea on Friday, the state-run media said today, days after US President Donald Trump visited Beijing and urged his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping to act fast to rein in Pyongyang. President Xi's special envoy, Song Tao, will visit North Korea to inform its leadership about the outcome of the recent national congress of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), state-run Xinhua news agency said, without mentioning Trump's visit or the North Korea's nuclear programmes. The announcement about the Chinese envoy's visit came after Trump during talks with Xi last week urged him to do more to use China's influence to pressure North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un to give up nuclear weapons programme. Song, the head of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC), is expected to convey the outcome of Xi-Trump talks and Washington's emphasis on Pyongyang giving up the nuclear and missile programme for resumption of dialogue and lifting of sanctions. (PTI)

contd from Page 1

UK Plans to Double Visas to Non-EU Professionals Post Brexit

Tier-1 (Exceptional Talent) route will increase from the current 1,000 to 2,000 a year to attract the "brightest and best" talent from around the world, including in digital technology.

May, who hosted digital entrepreneurs and innovators from across the country at Downing Street last evening here, said that the visa hike was part of a slew of measures directed at the digital tech sector.

"As we prepare to leave the European Union (EU), I am clear that Britain will remain open for business. That means government doing all it can to secure a strong future for our thriving tech sector and ensure people in all corners of our nation share in the benefits of its success," she said.

"Our digital tech sector is one of the UK's fastest-growing industries, and is supporting talent, boosting productivity, and creating hundreds of thousands of good, high-skilled jobs up and down the country. It is absolutely right that this dynamic sector...has the full backing of government," she added.

The government said that the UK Home Office will look at how it can work with organizations across Britain to ensure wider take up of the additional visas outside London.

Alongside this, UK Home Secretary Amber Rudd is set to meet with technology experts to seek their input on making visa processes more efficient.

"Increasing the number of visas for these sectors will make sure that we continue to be at the heart of world culture and forefront of digital and scientific advances," Rudd said

The 2,000 visas will be made available to individuals who are recognized as existing global leaders or promising future leaders in the digital technology, science, arts and creative sectors by one of five UK endorsing organizations Tech City UK; Arts Council England; The British Academy; The Royal Society; and The Royal Academy of Engineering.

The current allocation of the 1,000 visas which are already split between the five endorsing organizations will remain in place and the additional visas will be made available across all of the endorsing bodies based on their requirements.

"Britain is a world leader in digital innovation with some of the 'brightest and best' tech firms operating in this country. Working with us, they can provide technological fixes to public sector problems, boost productivity, and get the nation working smarter as we create an economy fit for the future," UK Chancellor Philip Hammond said.

Among the other measures unveiled for the digital industry include a 21-million-pound investment towards the expansion of Tech City UK into a nationwide network called Tech Nation and another 20-million-pound fund to help public services take advantage of UK expertise in innovative technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Tech Nation will see the organization expand its successful hub model to more cities around the UK, including Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Birmingham.

"Under the Tech Nation banner, this country that has brought so much innovation to the world and leads in sub-sectors such as fintech, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, robotics and life sciences, will build a national network of digital excellence so that the UK will continue to be recognized as one of the best places in the world to start or grow a digital tech business," said Eileen Burbidge, chair of Tech City UK.

The government also announced the launch of a 20-million-pound training program which will challenge thousands of young people, aged between 14 and 18, to test their skills against simulated online cyber threats. (Source: PTI)

French former culture minister becomes new UNESCO head

PARIS (TIP): UNESCO member states today overwhelmingly approved the nomination of France's former culture minister Audrey Azoulay to head the embattled cultural agency.

They confirmed the nomination by the agency's board last month of Azoulay, 45, who becomes UNESCO's second woman director general.

"The unity you have shown in this vote is a good omen for the coming period, in which we need to stand shoulder to shoulder," Azoulay told the members after garnering 131 votes with only 19 opposed. She said she had "great faith" in UNESCO, which "bears the genuine power to transform the world."

Azoulay said members were "clear-sighted as to the organisation's difficulties (but) know how irreplaceable and essential it is in the face of our world's challenges."

Azoulay, who was culture minister under former president Francois Hollande, succeeds Irina Bokova, who was UNESCO's first woman director and whose second term expires this month. Azoulay narrowly defeated Hamad bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari of



Qatar, also a former culture minister, in last month's politically charged election.

Al-Kawari failed to pick up support from other Gulf states which are part of a Saudi-led coalition blockading Qatar.

The campaign was also overshadowed by Washington's announcement that it planned to withdraw from the Paris-based body after years of tensions over decisions

seen as critical of Israel

In the face of the Arab divisions, France presented Azoulay, who is Jewish of Moroccan origin, as a consensus figure who could mend fences and soothe tensions with Israel.

She also faces the daunting job of reforming the agency struggling under the weight of a bureaucracy that has become unwieldy over the seven decades since it was founded. (AFP)

On Xi's orders, Chinese military set to become 'world class'

BEIJING: Less than a month after President Xi Jinping began his second five-year term in office setting a new deadline for the PLA to complete its modernisation, the Chinese military has taken measures to become a "world-class" force in line with his vision, official media reported here.

China will basically complete modernisation of its national defence and armed forces by 2035 and fully build the army into a "world-class force" by the mid-21st century, Xi said in his report to the once-in-a-five-years Congress of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) held here last month.

The CPC Congress endorsed a second five-year term for Xi as head of the party, presidency and the military.

Following this, the Central Military Commission (CMC) issued a guideline on November 5 to affirm the absolute leadership of the party over the army, requiring that troops be absolutely loyal, honest and reliable to Xi, who is also chairman of the CMC, a report by state-run Xinhua news agency said.

The CMC headed by Xi is the overall high command of the 2.3 million People's Liberation Army, the world's largest. The CMC said the armed forces should deeply and comprehensively implement a system in which the chairman of the CMC has overall responsibility for the military. The system was added to the CPC Constitution at the Congress.

The top priority of maintaining the authority of the leadership core is to safeguard the CMC chairperson responsibility system, Xu Qiliang, vice chairman of the CMC, wrote in the People's Daily on Tuesday.

"In the face of profound and complex changes at home and abroad, along with fierce ideological struggles, it's a



fundamental issue for our military to maintain its original nature, tenet and colour," Xu said in the article.

Noting that the political environment in the military has improved, Xi ordered troops to strengthen their consciousness in maintaining political integrity, thinking in big-picture terms, following the leadership core and keeping in alignment. Xi has also been instructing troops to increase their readiness to win wars. During his inspection tour to the CMC joint battle command centre on November 3, Xi reiterated the need for the armed forces to improve their combat capability and readiness for war.

"The capability to win is strategically important in safeguarding national security, and strengthening that capability and combat readiness in the new era would provide strategic support to the realisation of the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation," Xi said, urging progress in joint operation command systems and training conducted under combat conditions.

To sharpen the military's fighting capacity, reforms have been made in the past few years, including the establishment of the PLA Army General Command, PLA Rocket Force and PLA

Strategic Support Force.

The four general departments were reorganised into 15 agencies of the CMC, and five theatre commands have replaced the seven military area commands. The CMC released a regulation on Monday to standardise benefits for military officials, including offices, housing, cars and medical services, in its latest move to govern the military with strict discipline, Xinhua reported.

To curb decadence in the military and make the troops more combat-ready, the CMC issued an alcohol ban in late September, listing 11 occasions on which soldiers and officers are not allowed to drink. In the past five years, fighting corruption in the military has been a focus of Xi's sweeping anti-graft crackdown, it said.

Official media reports earlier said 13,000 military officials have been punished in the anti-corruption drive.

These include Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong, both former top generals and vice chairmen of the CMC. Guo was convicted of accepting bribes and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2016, while Xu died of cancer in 2015 before he could face trial. (PTI)

Pakistan indifferent as smog kills more people than militancy

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The toxic smog that has covered parts of Pakistan for weeks has exposed official torpor over rampant pollution that has killed thousands more people than have died in years of militancy.

The polluted air that has lingered in Islamabad in recent days was finally dispelled by rain this week, bringing the surrounding Margalla Hills into view once again.

In Lahore, where the situation was most critical, the level of PM2.5 — microscopic particles that lodge deep in the lungs — had dropped to 159 on Wednesday from more than 1,000 during the pollution spike, according to PakistanAirQuality, a citizen-driven monitoring initiative.

But what looks good for Pakistan is still very bad: 159 is six times higher than the World Health Organization's (WHO) safe limit.

"Question is, can a change from #Hazardous to Very #Unhealthy be called an improvement?" tweeted PakistanAirQuality.

Pakistan is already ranked third in the world — behind China and India — for the number of deaths caused by pollution, with 125,000 people killed annually, according to one measure by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, a research institute founded by the Gates Foundation.

The figure is well beyond the estimated 60,000 people who have died in the militancy-wracked country's years-long battle against extremism.

"I don't want to downplay the risk of militant extremism, but we must understand that our citizens are more vulnerable to diseases in the air than to armed terrorists on the ground," wrote opposition senator Sherry Rehman in the Express Tribune newspaper this week.

"We must act. And we must act now."

Yet the Pakistani government provides almost no reliable data on pollution, making it difficult to say with any certainty why the smog has become



so pervasive, particularly in the last two years, much less tackle its causes.

Obvious suspects include unchecked industrial emissions, millions of poorly maintained vehicles, and a complete lack of waste management, with tonnes of rubbish often burned in the streets.

These factors are aggravated by the annual post-harvest burning of crop stubble, blamed for fuelling the recent pollution crisis across South Asia.

As the smog peaked in recent weeks, roughly 1,000 new patients were treated each day for respiratory issues in Punjab's nine public hospitals, health ministry officials have said.

But even as under-resourced medical centres struggle to cope, Pakistan's official reaction is lethargy.

"It is a matter of emergency but the officials concerned did nothing except taking tea in their offices," said Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, chief justice of the Lahore High Court.

He spoke on Monday during an emergency hearing in which an opposition party accused the provincial government in Punjab, of which Lahore

is the capital, of failing to control the smog.

Provincial officials had delayed school start times and shut down some of the worst polluting companies, and said they had also ordered a temporary halt to crop burning. But Shah said in court it was not enough, adding: "Why didn't you issue a red alert on smog since you know it's injurious to the health of pregnant women, elderly people and heart patients especially?"

Accusing environment officials of lying to the court, he ordered them to make pollution data available to the public. Unlike Beijing, which is cracking down on pollution, and New Delhi, which at least monitors its air and issues warnings to its citizens, Pakistani authorities "haven't woken up yet", said Abid Omar, the entrepreneur behind PakistanAirQuality.

"Environment happens to be at the bottom of the list," he said.

Yet "Pakistan is extremely environmentally vulnerable," warned environment lawyer and activist Ahmad Rafay Alam. (AFP)

Pakistan unveils 1,700-year-old sleeping Buddha, evoking diverse heritage

HARIPUR (TIP): Pakistan unveiled the remains of a 1,700-year-old sleeping Buddha image on Wednesday, part of an initiative to encourage tourism and project religious harmony in a region roiled by Islamist militancy.

A reflection of the diverse history and culture of the South Asian country, the ancient Buddhist site in Bhamala province was first discovered in 1929. Eighty-eight years on, excavations resumed and the 14-metre-(48-foot)-high Kanjur stone Buddha image was unearthed, and opposition leader Imran Khan presided over Wednesday's presentation.

"This is from the 3rd century AD, making it the world's oldest sleeping Buddha remains," Abdul Samad, director of Bhamala's archaeology and museums department, told Reuters.

"We have discovered over 500 Buddha objects and this 48-foot-long sleeping Buddha remains," he added.

Khan said: "It's a question of preserving these heritage sites which are an asset for our country."

The region was once the center of Buddhist civilization that took root under the Mauryan king Ashoka 2,300 years ago.

The presentation of the Buddha image coincided with a lockdown of major highways around the nation's capital to contain a rightist protest against a perceived slight to Islam by members of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)

Minority communities in Pakistan are often targeted by right-wing groups and successive governments have in the past been reluctant to embrace the country's non-Muslim heritage.

But recent attempts to improve Pakistan's image have included overtures to minority communities by the PML-N.

In January, then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif inaugurated the restoration of Hindu temples at Katas Raj in Punjab province.

Considered a conservative figure, Khan has stressed dialogue with Islamist hardliners including the Taliban but on Wednesday said the preservation of sites like Bhamala could promote religious tourism. (Reuters)

Suicide bomber kills 14 at political meeting in Afghanistan

KABUL (TIP): A suicide bomber killed 14 people at a political gathering in the Afghan capital on Thursday in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

Kabul police spokesman Basir Mujahid said another 18 people were wounded, and that the casualties included security forces and civilians. Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the attacker struck at the entrance to the wedding hall where the event was being held.

The Islamic State group claimed the attack in a statement carried by its Aamaq news agency. The Taliban denied involvement.

Parliament member Hafiz Mansoor, who attended the meeting but was not harmed, said around 700 supporters of the governor of the northern Balkh province were attending a conference to highlight his work.

Both the Taliban and the Islamic State affiliate, which is largely made up of disgruntled former Taliban fighters, are at war with the government. Both groups want to impose a harsh version of Islamic law on Afghanistan, but they are fiercely divided over leadership, tactics and ideology, and have clashed on a number of occasions. (AP)

Nepal scraps \$2.5 billion hydropower plant deal with Chinese company

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal has scrapped a \$2.5 billion deal with China Gezhouba Group Corporation to build the country's biggest hydropower plant, citing lapses in the award process, the energy minister said.

"The cabinet has cancelled the irregular ... agreement with Gezhouba Group to build the Budhi Gandaki hydroelectric project," energy minister Kamal Thapa, who is also the country's deputy prime minister, said on Monday in a twitter post in Nepali after a cabinet meeting. He did not give further details.

Nepal's rivers, cascading from the snow-capped Himalayas, have vast, untapped potential for hydropower generation, but lack of funds and technology have made Nepal lean on neighbour India to meet annual demand of 1,400 megawatts (MW). (PTI)

Safe in a camp, Rohingya children face death by malnutrition

BALUKHALI (TIP): Tiny Mohammad Sohail cries uncontrollably as he waits to see a doctor — one of the thousands of Rohingya children at risk of an agonising death from malnutrition even after reaching the safety of refugee camps in Bangladesh.

His father was killed in the crackdown on Muslims in Buddhist-dominated Myanmar's Rakhine state, forcing his mother Hasana Begum to flee with Mohammad and his brother — joining some 610,000 other Rohingya who have fled since August.

The family barely ate on their seven-day trek across hills and through jungles to the Bangladesh border where they arrived two weeks ago, and it has taken its toll. Aged just 21 months, Mohammad's ribs nearly poke through his skin. His hands are just skin and bone.

"We walked for days through continuous rain, cold and heat. Both my

sons suffered from fever and diarrhoea and have since lost appetite," Begum told AFP.

There are at least 50 other malnourished children like him at the Balukhali camp medical unit.

"The condition of many of these children is very critical. Most of their parents don't even understand the extent of the problem," said paramedic Shumi Akhter.

Medical teams are distributing special high-nutrition baby food packs so Rohingya infants can build some muscle. But it is a desperate battle for all.

The UN Children's Fund, UNICEF, estimates that 25,000 children in the overcrowded Rohingya camps are suffering from severe malnutrition that could easily become a major killer.

"The Rohingya children in the camp — who have survived horrors in Rakhine state and a dangerous journey here — are

already caught up in a catastrophe," said Edouard Beigbeder, the country head of UNICEF.

"Those with severe malnutrition are now at risk of dying from an entirely preventable and treatable cause. These children need help right now," Beigbeder said. More than half of the huge influx into the refugee camps are children. Some have died there, but the UN said it had no information on whether malnutrition was a cause.

For widows like Begum who have no extended family, getting food is a new battle as ration queues last between six and eight hours.

"I can't take them to collect the relief as I cannot carry my sons and the heavy sack," the 23-year-old said.

She cannot leave them in the tarpaulin shanty that has become their home either as there is no one to look after Mohammad and three-year-old Nur Alam. (AFP)

QUALITIES WOMEN LOOK FOR IN A MAN OTHER THAN LOOKS

If your guy has some special sides, there is a strong chance that the relationship or marriage will last forever.

These qualities will make you think how important the traits are in a relationship with your man. No one is perfect, neither are you but it is okay to check for some aspects that will add life to your relationship.

Optimistic

Your man should be hopeful and confident about the future. You will definitely feel the good vibes around you if your man is cherry and positive. After all, he has a great influence on you too. Optimism is one of the most important things to look for in a man other than his appearance.

Honest

A man who is free of deceit will make you feel happier and safe at every point in your life. He should be sincere and truthful. If your man has this characteristic, he is definitely the one!

Humorous

These days, couples want spark in their relationship. A guy who can make you laugh is a guy who can ensure that you will never be out of amusement in your life. He should be comical and funny.

Strong

It doesn't always matter if the man is muscular, but he should be brave by heart. He should be a vigorous, hale and hearty man.

Needy

A man who can share his heart with you is a man who needs you. When things get rough, and if you are his savior, then it is



meant to be. Every guy needs emotional support no matter how strong he may look on the outside. Guys do feel insecure, too. Respect that!

Unselfconscious

A guy should not exhibit self-consciousness. His behavior needs to be natural and bold. He should not lack self-esteem. An embarrassed man would always feel hideous and wouldn't be proud to hold your hand in public. I am sure you don't want that, girls!

Passionate

Love is also about passion and zeal. A man should feel full of energy, enthusiasm, and determination when he is around you. A lazy person would only make things worse.

Hard-working

If he tends to work with energy and commitment, you wouldn't have to worry about the financial aspect. A diligent man knows how things are done.

Compassionate

Being able to keep your happiness first is extremely important. He should show sympathy and concern for you in the first place and never let you feel alienated. A tender-hearted man is all you need to fix your rough days.

Respectful

A woman needs to be respected more than loved. Your man should always be deferential with you and should never cross his limits. He should never use words that would hurt you and always handle things with politeness. A man who cannot respect a woman is a man who doesn't deserve one.



PEOPLE MOST LIKELY TO CHEAT

Narcissists

For the narcissist it's all about proving how lovable they are. It's not enough one person loving them; they want to make sure that everyone loves them.

They'll only feel validated when someone else flirts with them, sleeps with them, or kisses them.

A study found that narcissism is linked to people feeling less committed overall in ongoing romantic relationships, in part because they like the idea of finding someone better.

Insecure people

Insecure people are something to be careful of. This does not mean a basic level of insecurity that we all have, because we all have our own self-doubts and worries about ourselves. But when someone is so deeply insecure that if you don't give them love today, they're going to find it somewhere else — that's dangerous.

In any relationship we have to be real. If someone goes without love for a long time, the propensity to cheat is going to increase. Over a long enough period of time if someone treats you coldly or is distant, anything can happen. But on a short timeline, if somebody is constantly making how much you love them today the condition on whether they'll cheat or not, (this is) also dangerous and it stems from ego.

People who are just plain selfish

Selfish people who don't have a moral standard when it comes to their relationships" are the third type most likely to cheat. They know if they cheat their partner would hate it or be traumatized by it, but their own selfish needs just take over.

Either they have a different code of ethics in private for themselves — which is just unfair — or they're simply a hypocrite.

FOOD CORNER

GREEN CORIANDER RICE

INGREDIENTS

1 cup brown rice, 1 green capsicum, large, 1 onion, medium, 1 tsp ginger garlic paste, 30ml curd, 2 Tbsp coriander mint and green chilli paste, 1 tsp garam masala, 1/2 tsp cumin seeds, 2 bay leaves, 1/2 tsp coriander powder, 1 tsp olive oil, Salt.

Method

- In a non-stick vessel, heat oil and add cumin seeds.
- Once the seeds crackle, add the bay leaves, stir gently and add chopped onions.
- Cook the onions till they turn brown. Now add ginger garlic paste, coriander mint paste and curd to the vessel and cook well.
- Once the masala is cooked well, you will start getting a lovely aroma and this is the correct time to stir in the dry masalas.
- Cook for 5-6 minutes, time to add the crunchy capsicum. Once done, add the rice and 1 1/2 cups of water. Cover the vessel with a lid and let it cook for 15 minutes or till the rice is done.
- Garnish with some coriander and serve fresh.



VERMICELLI UPMA

INGREDIENTS

2 cups of thin vermicelli, 2 Tbsp of refined oil, 1 tsp of mustard seeds, 1 tsp of cumin seeds, 1 Tbsp of urad dal, 2 green chillies, split lengthwise, 9-10 curry leaves, 1 onion, finely sliced, 1/2 cup of beans, chopped, 1/2 cup of carrots, chopped, 1/2 cup of fresh peas, 1/2 cup of tomato puree, 1/2 tsp of turmeric powder, Salt to taste, 2 Tbsp of roasted peanuts.

Method

- Heat a wok or a kadai and roast the vermicelli for 3-4 minutes until slightly golden. Transfer to a plate and keep aside.
- Heat oil in the same kadai and add urad dal, mustard and cumin seeds. Let them crackle for a minute and add the chillies and curry leaves. Saute for 1-2 minutes and add the onions.
- Mix well. Add turmeric powder and salt and saute for 1-2 minutes. Then add the vegetables and stir well. Allow them to cook for 3-4 minutes. Add the tomato puree and 2 1/2 cups of water, and bring to a rolling boil. Add the vermicelli and mix well. Cover the kadai with a lid and let it cook for 5-6 minutes or until the vermicelli is cooked and the water is dried up. Transfer to a serving bowl and finish with roasted peanuts on top and a fresh green chilli.

WORKPLACE BULLYING, VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

LONDON (TIP): Workplace bullying and violence may increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, by potentially triggering metabolic changes and comfort eating behaviours, a study warns.

Previous analyses have noted that issues, such as job insecurity and long working hours, with the consequent psychological impacts, are associated with a moderately higher risk of diabetes.

It has also been shown that bullying and violence can affect personal resources, such as self-esteem and the ability to cope.

"Being bullied is regarded as a severe social stressor that may activate the stress response and lead to a range of downstream biological processes that may contribute towards the risk of diabetes," according to researchers from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

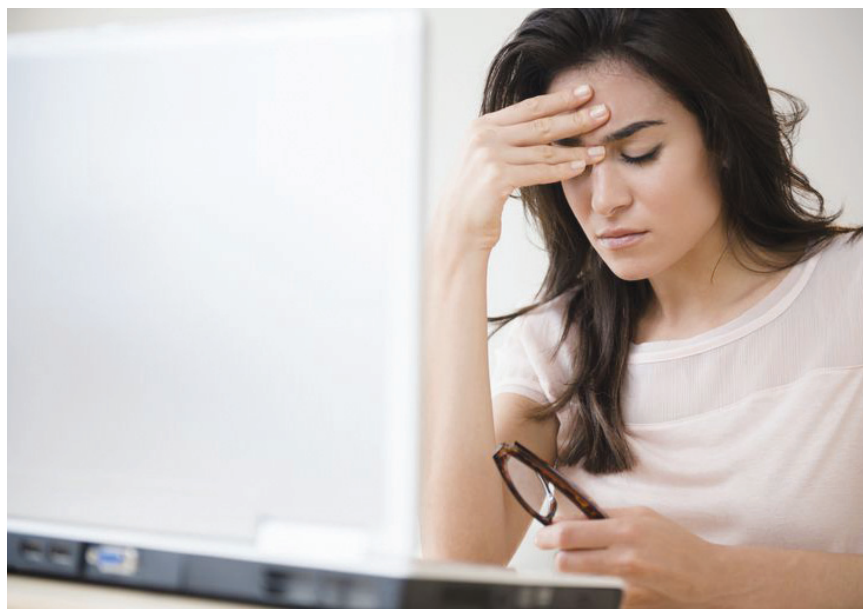
They suggest that changes caused by stress hormones may be one possible causal pathway.

Metabolic changes and obesity may be a mechanism for the increased risk, as the stress response may be linked to the endocrine regulation of appetite, and because workplace bullying or violence, and the resulting negative emotional experience, might induce comfort eating behaviours.

Researchers looked at the prospective relationships between workplace bullying or violence and diabetes risk.

The study, published in the journal *Diabetologia*, included 19,280 men and 26,625 women who were employed, aged 40 to 65 years, and did not have diabetes at the beginning of the study.

Younger participants were excluded to minimise the possible inclusion of persons with other conditions, such as



type 1 diabetes.

Nine per cent of the participants reported exposure to workplace bullying. During a mean follow up of 11.7 years, 1,223 incident cases of type 2 diabetes were identified.

After adjustment, being bullied at work was associated with a 46 per cent higher risk of type 2 diabetes (61 per cent for men and 36 per cent for women).

Adjustment for alcohol consumption and mental health difficulties did not affect this association. Adjustment for BMI removed one-third of the risk increase.

Some 12 per cent of participants had experienced violence or threats of violence in the preceding 12 months. During a mean follow-up of 11.4 years, 930 participants were found to have type 2 diabetes.

After adjusting for confounders,

workplace violence was associated with a 26 per cent higher risk of diabetes, for both men and women. Again, adjustment for alcohol consumption and mental health problems did not affect this result.

While both bullying and violence represent negative interpersonal relationships, they appear to constitute different concepts and are distinct social stressors.

Bullying is psychological aggression, including behaviours such as unfair criticisms, isolation and humiliating work tasks. It is most often perpetrated by people from inside, such as colleagues.

Violence, on the other hand, is more likely to involve physical acts such as pushing or kicking, or the threat of these, and is generally perpetrated by people from outside, such as clients, patients, etc.

Source: PTI



Why obesity, underweight up depression in women

NEW YORK (TIP): Women who are extremely underweight and obese are likely to be at an increased risk of developing common mood disorders like depression and anxiety, as a result of low feel good neuroactive steroid, finds a study.

Neurosteroid "Allopregnanolone" also known as "allo" is a metabolite of the hormone progesterone — a female hormone.

Allo works by producing a positive mood and feelings of well-being.

The findings showed that in women with anorexia nervosa, blood levels of allo were 50 per cent lower than they were in women with normal body mass index (BMIs).

Women who were clinically obese had allo levels approximately 60 per cent lower than women with normal weights.

Further, participants with lower levels of allo had greater severity of depression symptoms, the researchers noted.

"Depression is an incredibly prevalent problem, especially in women, and also particularly at the extremes of the weight spectrum," said Karen Miller, professor at Harvard Medical School.

"We are beginning to see more and more evidence that low allo levels are tightly linked to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and other mood disorders," added Graziano Pinna, associate professor in the University of Illinois at Chicago.

In addition, progesterone levels were similarly low across both groups, suggesting that the decrease in allo in these participants may have been caused by improper functioning of enzymes.

The enzymes that convert progesterone into allo may not be working properly, causing decreases in allo that lead to mood disorders.

For the study, published in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*, the team recruited women with anorexia nervosa and amenorrhea (whose menstrual periods have stopped) whose body mass indices were less than 18.5, normal-weight women with BMIs between 19 and 24, and obese women with BMIs at 25 or higher.

"Drugs that increase the efficacy of these enzymes may be useful in helping to boost allo levels," Pinna said.

"The hope is that a greater understanding of mechanisms contributing to these disorders -- including abnormalities in the regulation of hormones and their neuroactive metabolites — may lead to new targeted therapies in the future," Miller noted.

Source: IANS

IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY WITH A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

WASHINGTON (TIP): A team of researchers has shed new light on sleep's vital role in boosting our memory.

Sleep, they show, helps us to use our memory in the most flexible and adaptable manner possible by strengthening new and old versions of the same memory to similar extents.

The University of York researchers also demonstrated that when a memory is retrieved - when we remember something - it is updated with new information present at the time of remembering. The brain appears not to 'overwrite' the old version of the memory, but instead generates and stores multiple (new and old) versions of the same experience.

Lead researcher Scott Cairney said the study demonstrated that sleep



strengthens both old and new versions of an experience, helping us to use our memories adaptively.

"In this way, sleep is allowing us to use our memory in the most efficient way possible, enabling us to

update our knowledge of the world and to adapt our memories for future experiences," he added.

Corresponding author Gareth Gaskell noted that the study reveals that sleep has a protective effect on memory

and facilitates the adaptive updating of memories.

Gaskell added, "For the sleep group, we found that sleep strengthened both their memory of the original location as well as the new location. In this way, we were able to demonstrate that sleep benefits all the multiple representations of the same experience in our brain."

The researchers pointed out that although this process helps us by allowing our memories to adapt to changes in the world around us, it can also hinder us by incorporating incorrect information into our memory stores. Over time, our memory will draw on both accurate and inaccurate versions of the same experience, causing distortions in how we remember previous events.

Source: ANI

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FIREFOX OPTS FOR GOOGLE AS DEFAULT SEARCH IN US



SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Alphabet Inc's Google reclaimed on Tuesday its spot as the default search engine on Mozilla Corp's Firefox Internet browser in the United States and other regions as the browser maker stunned Verizon Communication Inc's Yahoo by canceling their deal.

Google confirmed the move but declined, along with Mozilla, to disclose revenue-sharing terms of the multiyear agreement.

Google's growing spending to be the primary search provider on apps and devices such as Apple Inc's iPhone has been a major investor concern.

Google will be Firefox's default search provider on desktop and mobile in the United States, Canada, Hong Kong and Taiwan, said Mozilla spokeswoman Erica Jostedt.

Yahoo had been the default in the United States, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Firefox did not have an official partner in Canada.

Verizon said Mozilla terminating the Yahoo agreement caught it off guard.

"We are surprised that Mozilla has decided to take another path, and we are in discussions with them regarding the terms of our agreement," said Charles Stewart, a spokesman for Verizon's Oath unit, which oversees Yahoo.

For a decade until 2014, Google had been Firefox's worldwide search provider. Google then remained the default in Europe while regional rivals such as Yahoo, Russia's Yandex and China's Baidu Inc replaced it elsewhere. Former Yahoo Chief Executive Marissa Mayer won a five-year contract with Mozilla in 2014 when Firefox and Google's Chrome browser were battling for users.

Chrome's US market share has since doubled to about 60 percent, according to data from analytics provider StatCounter, with Mozilla, Apple Inc and Microsoft Corp browsers capturing the rest.

Yahoo paid Mozilla \$375 million in 2015 and said that it would pay at least the same amount annually through 2019, according to regulatory filings. Denelle Dixon, Mozilla's chief business and legal officer, said in a statement that the company had "exercised our contractual right to terminate our agreement with Yahoo based on a number of factors including doing what's best for our brand, our effort to provide quality web search and the broader content experience for our users."

She continued, "We believe there are opportunities to work with Oath and Verizon outside of search." Yahoo and Google aim to recoup placement fees by selling ads alongside search results and collecting valuable user data. *Source: Reuters*

US APPROVES FIRST PILL WITH DIGITAL TRACKING DEVICE

WASHINGTON (TIP): US regulators have approved the first pill that contains a digital tracking sensor to alert doctors and caregivers as to whether a patient is taking a medication as scheduled.

The pill, called Abilify MyCite (aripiprazole tablets with sensor), is designed for patients with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression, according to the US Food and Drug Administration.

A patient ingests the pill, and a sensor inside the pill activates when it reaches the stomach fluids, sending a message to a wearable patch. This patch then transmits the information to a mobile app, so that a doctor and up to four caregivers, friends or family members can see the information through a web-based portal.

"Being able to track ingestion of medications prescribed for mental illness may be useful for some patients," said Mitchell Mathis, director of the division of psychiatry products in the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, in a statement. *Source: AFP*

FB TO SUPPORT NEW POLITICAL AD RULES IN US

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Facing scrutiny over the presence of Russian ads on its platform during the 2016 US presidential poll, Facebook has agreed to support new limited federal rules on online political ads.

The US Federal Election Commission (FEC) has asked tech companies and campaigns to disclose the origin of political ads from now on.

In its comments filed with the government, Facebook said it supports the FEC's efforts, ReCode reported on Tuesday.

However, the social media giant did not mention about issue-focused ads which Russian agents bought on its platform during the 2016 US election.

Several Russian ads during the 2016 presidential election were issue-based ads, focusing around immigration, gun control and "Black Lives Matter".

Millions of Americans were exposed to those Facebook ads and posts between June 2015 and August 2017.

Facebook has also endorsed rules requiring greater transparency around candidate-focused ads that run in the weeks around Election Day.

"Ad formats available on Facebook have expanded dramatically since that time. Ads can now include



videos,...scrolling carousels of images, and even cover the entire screen of a mobile device," Facebook said in its comments.

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.

Facebook has also admitted that up to 270 million accounts on the platform are either fake or duplicate.

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 per cent of its accounts are duplicates of real users, suggesting that in total, up to 13 per cent of its 2.1 billion monthly users — almost 270 million accounts — are "illegitimate".

Source: IANS

INSTAGRAM TO SOON ALLOW USERS TO FOLLOW HASHTAGS



LONDON (TIP): Picture and video sharing platform Instagram will soon roll out its latest update, this time, enabling users to follow hashtags as well as accounts of their choice.

The platform, in a move to keep its consumer base engaged, is rolling out the new feature for users to find curated content more easily, thereby creating greater user engagement.

The developers noted that once the feature is in place, only "top posts and recent stories" will be pulled across, to avoid one's feed to be overly crammed up. If the feature passes its pilot phase successfully, it is likely to be rolled out for everyone in the near future, reports The Independent.

Recently, the company announced an update to its branded content tool, enabling creator accounts with access to insights to use the "Paid Partnership with" tag.

In a blog penned by Instagram, the company revealed that based on available data on usage of the branded content tool, businesses are gaining valuable insights and experiencing hassle-free communication when they are working in partnership with a business.

With the update in place, creators that have access to the branded content tool will receive in-app notifications when the systems find content that falls outside of Instagram's policy. In these cases, the content's creator will be notified through the Instagram app and will have the option to tag a business.

These notifications are intended to make it easier to use the "Paid Partnership with" tag and educate the community on Instagram's branded content. *Source: ANI*

Close new Earth-size world, where year lasts under 10 days

CAPE CANAVERAL (TIP): Astronomers have discovered a close new world about the size of Earth, where a year lasts just under 10 days.

At a distance of 11 light-years, Ross 128 b is the second-closest planet to be detected yet outside our solar system with surface temperatures potentially similar to ours.

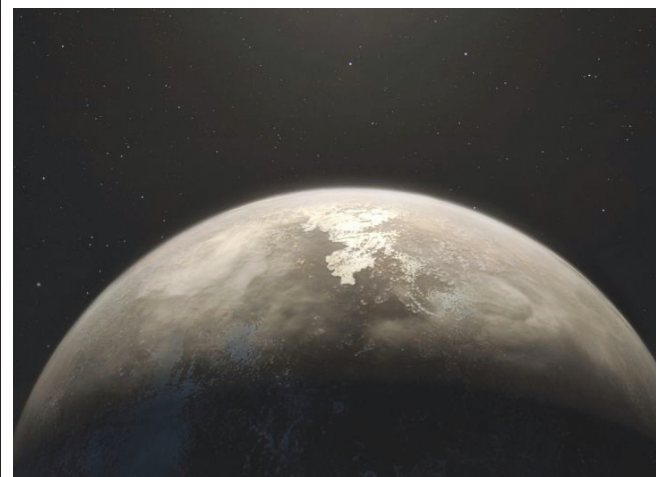
Ross 128 b is very near its star, thus the short orbit. But it doesn't get broiled because the red dwarf star is cool.

The star is also quiet, meaning no radiation flare-ups. That's encouraging news for seekers of extraterrestrial life. The planet is believed to border the so-called habitable zone.

A team led by the University of Grenoble Alps' Xavier Bonfils made the discovery using La Silla Observatory in Chile. The findings were reported Wednesday.

Nicola Astudillo-Defru from the Geneva Observatory in Switzerland, co-discoverer of the new planet, told BBC News: "Just because Proxima Centauri blasts its planet with strong flares and high energy radiation, yes, I think Ross 128 is much more comfortable for the development of life."

"But we still need to know what the atmosphere of Ross 128 b is like. Depending on its composition and the reflectivity of its clouds, the exoplanet may be life friendly with liquid water as the Earth, or sterile like Venus."



AFTER 13 YRS, MOODY'S UPGRADES INDIA'S CREDIT RATING

NEW DELHI (TIP): US-based Moody's on Friday upgraded India's sovereign credit rating by a notch to 'Baa2' with a stable outlook citing improved growth prospects driven by economic and institutional reforms.

The rating upgrade comes after a gap of 13 years—Moody's had last upgraded India's rating to 'Baa3' in 2004.

In 2015, the rating outlook was changed to 'positive' from 'stable'.

The 'Baa3' rating was the lowest investment grade—just a notch above 'junk' status.

"The decision to upgrade the ratings is underpinned by Moody's expectation that continued progress on economic and institutional reforms will, over time, enhance India's high growth potential and its large and stable financing base for government debt, and will likely contribute to a gradual decline in the general government debt burden over the medium term," Moody's said in a statement. The global ratings agency, however, cautioned that high debt burden



remained a constraint on the country's credit profile. "Moody's believes that the reforms put in place have reduced the risk of a sharp increase in debt, even in potential downside scenarios," it said.

Moody's Investors Service upgraded the Government of India's local and foreign currency issuer ratings to 'Baa2' from 'Baa3' and changed the outlook on the rating to stable from positive, the statement said.

Stating that reforms will foster sustainable growth prospects, the US-based agency said the government is midway through a wide-ranging programme of economic and institutional reforms.

"While a number of important reforms remain at the design phase, Moody's believes that those implemented to-date will advance the government's objective of improving the business climate, enhancing productivity, stimulating foreign and domestic investment, and ultimately fostering strong and sustainable growth," Moody's said.

The reform programme will thus complement the existing "shock-absorbance capacity" provided by India's strong growth potential and improving global competitiveness, it added.

Reforms like Goods and Services Tax will promote productivity by removing barriers to interstate trade. Also improvements to the monetary policy framework, measures to address the overhang of non-performing loans in the banking system and those like demonetisation, the Aadhaar system of biometric accounts, and targeted delivery of benefits through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system are intended to reduce informality in the economy.

Source: PTI

AIRBUS TO SELL 430 PLANES TO INDIGO FOR \$49.5 BILLION



DUBAI (TIP): Airbus has announced it will sell 430 airplanes to US firm Indigo Partners for \$49.5 billion in the European firm's biggest deal ever.

The announcement came at the Dubai Air Show and the deal includes 273 A320neos and 157 A321neos. The airlines that use the aircraft will include Frontier Airlines, JetSMART of Chile, Volaris of Mexico and Wizz Air of Hungary.

A320neos list for \$108.4 million apiece and A321neos at \$127 million. Airlines and manufacturers often negotiate lower prices for big deals like these. Indigo Partners is a Phoenix-based private equity firm.

It owns Denver-based Frontier Airlines and part of Mexico's Volaris. It's managed by William Franke, a pioneer of the cheap tickets and high fees airline business that has spread overseas and is growing in the US.

Airbus' previous biggest-ever sale came in August 2015, when it sold 250 A320neos to Indian budget airline IndiGo, a deal estimated to be worth \$26 billion at list prices.

IndiGo and Indigo Partners are separate firms with separate management.

Until today, the only major deal announced at the Dubai Air Show came on Sunday, when long-haul carrier Emirates purchased 40 Boeing 787-10 Dreamliners in a \$15.1-billion deal.

Airbus, which is based in Toulouse, France, has pinned hopes of continuing production of its A380 double-decker jumbo jet on Emirates, the world's largest operator of the aircraft.

Reports circulated before the air show that a major A380 sale would be coming.

Airbus employees even filled a news conference on Sunday, expecting the A380 sale, instead to find state-owned Emirates making the deal with Boeing in front of Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Emirates now relies solely on the Airbus 380 and the Boeing 777 for its flights, making it the largest operator of both. It has 165 Boeing 777s in its fleet today and took possession of its 100th A380 earlier this month. Source: AP

APPLE TO HELP INDIA DEVELOP ANTI-SPAM APP

NEW DELHI (TIP): Apple Inc has agreed to give limited help to the Indian government to develop an anti-spam mobile application for its iOS platform, after refusing to do so due to privacy concerns, according to sources and documents seen by Reuters.



Officials complained Apple dragged its feet on advising the government how to develop an app that would allow iPhone users to report unsolicited marketing texts or calls as spam.

The government app was launched on Google's Android platform last year, but an industry source with direct knowledge of the matter said Apple pushed back on requests for an iOS version due to concerns that a government app with access to call and text logs could compromise its customers' privacy.

Facing public criticism from the regulator, Apple executives flew to New Delhi last month and told officials the company would help develop the app, but only with limited capabilities, according to a government official aware of the matter.

An Apple spokesman confirmed the new iOS features to combat spam text messages would help the government build the app, denied comment on the app's inability to access call logs for reporting spam. Source: Reuters

INDIAN COMPANIES CREATE 113K JOBS IN US: REPORT

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian companies have created more than 113,000 jobs in the US and invested nearly US\$ 18 billion in the country, according to a CII report.

The report titled 'Indian Roots, American Soil', which was released by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) yesterday, states that Indian companies have also contributed US\$ 147 million towards corporate social responsibility and US\$ 588 million as research and development expenditures in the US.

The annual report gives state-by-state breakdown of the tangible investments made and jobs created by 100 Indian firms doing business in America and Puerto Rico a Caribbean island and unincorporated US territory.

Together, 100 Indian companies employ 113,423 people across 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, the report said, adding that the total value of tangible investments made by these companies exceeds USD 17.9 billion.

The top five states in which Indian companies have generated maximum employment are New Jersey (8,572 jobs), Texas (7,271 jobs), California (6,749 jobs), New York (5,135 jobs) and Georgia



(4,554 jobs).

According to the report, the top five states in which Indian companies have contributed the highest foreign direct investment are New York (US\$ 1.57 billion), New Jersey (US\$ 1.56 billion), Massachusetts (US\$ 931 million), California (US\$ 542 million) and Wyoming (US\$ 435 million).

The average amount of investment received from Indian companies per state/territory is US\$ 187 million, the report said, noting that 85 per cent of the companies plan to make more investments in the US.

As many as 87 per cent of the companies plan to hire more employees locally in the next five years. Indian industry and professionals are making significant contributions to the US economy, said Indian

Ambassador to the US Navtej Sarna.

"The presence and reach of Indian companies continue to grow each year as they invest billions of dollars and create jobs across the United States," he said.

Chandrajit Banerjee, CII director general, said the story of Indian investment in the US is one that showcases how intertwined the two countries are that contribute to each other's success.

Indian firms are among the fastest growing investors in the US, contributing to growth and job creation in the US economy, said Senator Chris Van Hollen. As the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy, a strong US-India partnership is vital for the 21st century, said Congressman Ami Bera.

Source: PTI

Wholesale inflation rises to six-month high

NEW DELHI (TIP): The sharper-than-expected spike in wholesale inflation to a six-month high of 3.6% in October has increased chances of a pause in the monetary policy review.

Wholesale level rose to six-month high of 3.59% in October as the prices of food articles rose sharply. Inflation, based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), was 2.60% in September.

The government said it expects the spike in inflation due to rising prices of vegetables to remain seasonal in nature. Subhash Chandra Garg, Economic Affairs Secretary tweeted, "Hopefully, increasing trend proves to be seasonal and we will continue to have sub-4% inflation". Aditi Nayar, Principal Economist, ICRA, said the spike in WPI inflation was broad-based, led by vegetables, fruit, crude oil, natural gas, fuels, minerals and electricity.

"The sharper-than-anticipated uptick in the WPI inflation reinforces our expectation of a status quo in the upcoming monetary policy review", Nayar said.

FICCI said under the present scenario inflation targeting by the central bank may not be the best approach.

cont from Page 1

House Passes Tax Bill in Major...

number of tax brackets to four from seven, switches the United States to an international tax system that is more in line with the rest of the world, and eliminates or scales back many popular deductions, including one for state and local taxes paid.

The House easily passed its tax bill, with lawmakers voting shortly after Mr. Trump came to Capitol Hill to address House Republicans. Representatives voted along party lines, except for 13 Republicans, many of whom fought to keep the deduction for state and local taxes. The Republicans who voted no were from New York, New Jersey, California and North Carolina. Zero Democrats voted for it. Attention now turns to the Senate, which was grappling on Thursday with another setback after a congressional analysis found that their revised tax bill would actually raise taxes on lower-income Americans within a few years.

The Joint Committee on Taxation projected that Americans earning \$30,000 or less would see their taxes increase beginning in 2021, if the Senate bill becomes law. The committee also projected that Americans earning \$75,000 or less would face large tax increases in 2027, after the individual tax cuts expire. The updated analysis stems from the Senate's last-minute inclusion of a provision that would repeal the Affordable Care Act's requirement that most people buy health insurance. The repeal would lead many lower-income Americans to choose not to buy insurance, and thus not claim tax subsidies that currently help them defray the costs of health coverage.

The tax overhaul still faces significant obstacles, as Republicans must align the House legislation with the bill that is working its way through the Senate Finance Committee this week and contains big differences that will have to be bridged.

Republicans are under pressure to get legislation to Mr. Trump's desk by Christmas, especially after failing in their attempt to dismantle the Affordable Care Act this year, even though their party has full control of government. Lawmakers also want to push the legislation through quickly to avoid giving lobbyists and Democrats time to mobilize.

Republicans do not wish to witness a replay of their health care catastrophe, during which the House managed to pass a repeal bill in May, but the narrowly divided Senate could never do so.

"For the first time in 31 years we are wiping the tax code clean and replacing it with one that is fairer and simpler for everyone," said Representative Devin Nunes, Republican of California and a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

House Republican leaders were unable to win over a number of Republicans from high-tax states like New York and New Jersey, who have fought to preserve the deduction for state and local taxes. The House bill allows the deduction of up to \$10,000 in property taxes, but that provision was not enough of a concession for them.

At least five Republicans from New York and three from New Jersey had come out against the bill before Thursday's vote.

"I just have too many constituents who are going to see their taxes go up," said Representative Lee Zeldin, who represents a district on Long Island and was one of several New York Republicans who spoke out against the tax bill on Thursday morning. "You're taking more money from a place like New York in order to pay for deeper tax cuts elsewhere," Mr. Zeldin said.

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40) said: "The fact is, this bill is so skewed to benefit the wealthiest 1% in America that it could more accurately be named 'H.R. 1%'."

Congressman's statement further said, "On behalf of America's future generations who will be saddled with an unsurmountable debt created by H.R. 1, the Republican tax plan, I strongly opposed this bill. This rushed piece of legislation will not only add more than \$1.7 trillion to the national debt over the next 10 years, but it will also shift the burden of paying for that debt to our hardworking families.

"Despite our Republican colleagues' assertions that this tax plan will benefit the majority of Americans, numerous economists disagree. They note that nearly 45% of all households with children will see a tax increase, while 80% of our wealthiest citizens will receive a tax cut by 2027.

"Even more egregious, this tax bill seeks to eliminate the long-standing state and local tax deduction, subjecting every wage earner's income to double taxation. This defeats the original framers' intent to avoid a system of double taxation. The original tax code, drafted in 1913, consisted of three pages in its entirety and included the state and local tax deduction at the core of its responsible tax policy to ensure state and local governments could raise revenues for public schools, police, fire, and emergency services.

"Plain and simple, this tax plan is a tremendous windfall for our wealthiest 1% and large corporations. It favors large businesses over small businesses, it favors sending jobs overseas rather than creating jobs at home, it favors the wealthy over hourly wage earners, and it pays for these tax cuts for the wealthy by raising taxes on our middle class families to the detriment of Medicare, Medicaid, education, and other vital public services.

"The fact is, this bill is so skewed to benefit the wealthiest 1% in

America that it could more accurately be named 'H.R. 1%' In the name of the other 99% of Americans, I voted against H.R. 1."

Ambanis beat Lees of Samsung...

The Ambanis are the only Indian family on the top 10 richest families list in Asia. "No family highlights this surge better than the Ambanis of India, this year's biggest gainer in dollar and percentage terms," Forbes said. It noted that shares in Mukesh Ambani's conglomerate Reliance Industries soared on the back of improved refining margins and the demand produced by its telecom arm, Reliance Jio, which notched up 140 million subscribers since it was launched in 2016.

On the list of Asia's Richest Families 2017, compiled by Forbes, India enjoys the biggest presence in the ranking for the third time with as many as 18 families.

Other richest Indian families on the list feature the Premjis (rank 11, \$19.2 billion net worth), the Hinduja (12th, \$18.8 billion), the Mittals (14th, \$17.2 billion), the Mistrys (16th, \$16.1 billion) and the Birlas (19th, \$14.1 billion). Motherson Sumi Systems Sehgal family (41st, \$6.2 billion), the Wadia family (42nd, \$6.14 billion), DLF's Kushal Pal Singh (44th, \$6.1 billion), the Patel family which controls Cadila (45th, \$6 billion), the Piramals (47th, \$5.38 billion) and the Munjals (48th, \$5.37 billion) also made the cut. Collectively, the 50 families in the club are worth a record \$699 billion, up by nearly \$200 billion from last year, according to Forbes.

The list of Asia's 50 Richest Families is a snapshot of wealth using stock prices and currency exchange rates from the close of markets on November 3. Private companies were valued by using financial ratios and other comparisons with similar publicly traded firms. The ticket to entry for this year's list was \$5 billion, \$1.6 billion more than in 2016.

(Source: PTI)

Congressional Committee Votes...

restrictions on the work visa, popular among IT professionals from India.

The Protect and Grow American Jobs Act (HR 170) - introduced by Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet Subcommittee Chairman Darrell Issa - was passed by the House Judiciary Committee during a markup hearing today morning.

The bill now heads to the full House for necessary action.

A similar version of the bill needs to be passed by the Senate before it can be sent to the White House for the US President Donald Trump to be signed into law.

Given the sharp differences that the Democratic and Republican lawmakers and the White House has on various aspects of immigration reform including H-1B, the Congressional passage of the bill and its becoming a law as of now appears to be a tall order.

The bill prohibits H-1B dependent employers from replacing American workers with H-1B employees, there are no longer any exceptions. It also lengthens the no-layoff policy for H-1B dependent employers and their client companies for as long as an H-1B employee works at the company, which means they cannot lay off equivalent US workers.

For H-1B dependent employers to be exempted from the requirement that US workers be recruited first, the Protect and Grow American Jobs Act dramatically increases the salary requirements for H-1B workers.

"They must pay the lower of \$135,000--which is indexed for inflation--or the average wage for the occupation in the area of employment, but with a floor of \$90,000," said a media release issued by the House Judiciary Committee.

NASSCOM president R Chandrashekhara in a statement said that HR 170, as adopted by House Judiciary Committee, would harm US businesses and impose an extraordinary amount of bureaucratic red tape on a program that contributes greatly to US prosperity. "It also could disrupt the marketplace, threaten thousands of US jobs, and stifle US innovation by unfairly and arbitrarily targeting a handful of companies who used just 16 per cent of the new H-1B visas in FY 2016 while imposing no new requirements on the vast majority of companies that use the visas to do the same exact same things," Chandrashekhara said.

Defending the passage of the bill, Congressman Issa said lawmakers have a responsibility to ensure that H-1B is not abused by those misusing it to outsource jobs and undercut American workers. "Unfortunately, the loopholes left open in H-1B have allowed a small handful of companies to game the system and crowd out employers who need the limited slots available to bring in the best and brightest individuals from around the world," he said. "The Protect and Grow American Jobs Act is a common-sense update that will go a long way to protecting American workers while helping companies have better access to the talent they need to grow their businesses and create new jobs here in America," Issa said.

Congressman Bon Goodlatte, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, said the immigration programs must put American workers and nation's interests first, and "unfortunately" that is not the case currently with the H-1B visa

program.

"The Protect and Grow American Jobs Act makes much-needed reforms to the H-1B program to curtail abuse of the system and protect American workers," he said.

NASSCOM strongly disagrees with the US lawmakers.

"Unfortunately, this legislation is being driven by myths, not reality. US government data show very significant shortages of high skill talent around the country. The data show that the high skill visa programs are not a major cause of US unemployment, and IT specialists working on temporary visas are not cheap labor," said Chandrashekhara.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, across the US economy, approximately 20 million people per year lose their jobs due to reasons not linked to hiring H-1B employees.

Compared to that, the annual number of H-1Bs granted to the top 10 India-centric IT service companies in 2016 was only a tiny fraction of the US workforce, he said.

According to a study by the Pew Research Center, based on fiscal 2016 data from US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data, for eight of the top 10 India-centric IT companies, the average salary for workers on H-1B visas was higher than the median salary for US citizens in computer and mathematical jobs, Chandrashekhara argued.

"Employers who use the H-1B program are highly regulated and scrutinized already, and NASSCOM member companies abide by all applicable laws and regulations.

"According to the US government, the rate of compliance problems is very low, and the overwhelming majority of problems occur at American companies with fewer than 50 employees," he said.

Chandrashekhara said NASSCOM continues to support efforts to root out any fraud or abuse in the H-1B system.

"Quite simply, our members do not deserve to be treated differently from their American or European counterparts," he said.

(Source: PTI)

'Padmavati' Sets India on Fire...

Surpanakha nose-chopping incident and warned Deepika Padukone against "inciting" sentiments.

Reacting to the development, the Mumbai police have stepped up the actor's security.

Meanwhile, protests were held in several parts of the country, including Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, against the movie, which is slated to be released on December 1.

Amid raging row over Bollywood movie 'Padmavati' and Rajput Karni Sena's open threat to actress Deepika Padukone, Union minister Uma Bharti said, November 16 she had been assured that the Censor Board would take care of the issues being raised by the Rajput community.

Her Cabinet colleague Nitin Gadkari also reacted on the issue. "Filmmakers must also keep cultural sensitivities in mind," he said. "I have been assured that the Censor Board will take care of all issues. I am confident that they are already informed about the concerns being raised by the people... The director and his associate are responsible for the film story. They should have taken care of the sentiments and historical facts," she added.

Just like disrespect to Padmavati was "immoral", so was that to the film's artistes (read Padukone), she said. "If we are talking about respect of Padmavati, it is our moral obligation that we respect every woman... Disrespect of any actress or actor of 'Padmavati' is uncalled for and immoral," Bharti said, an obvious reference to the threat of physical harm to Deepika.

President of the Rajasthan unit of Karni Sena Mahipal Singh Makrana has been quoted as saying that they would not hesitate to chop off Deepika's nose like Shurpanakha. "Rajputs never raise hand on women, but if the need be, we will do to Deepika what Lakshman did to Shurpanakha," he said. Padukone had recently termed as "appalling" the violent protests over the film.

Meanwhile, Ajmer dargah deewan Sayed Zainul on Thursday, November 16, compared filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali with Salman Rushdie, Tasleema Nasreen and Tareq Fateh.

He urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ban the movie that hurt "religious sentiments" of every citizen, including Rajput community at large.

"Bhansali's character is like that of Rushdie, Tasleema and Tareq who always twists or distorts historical facts and hurts religious feelings of people, hence every Muslim should support the cause of Rajput community," Deewan said in a statement in Jaipur.

Defending the film maker and the film artist Padukone, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor took a dig at those criticizing Padukone by questioning their silence during British era.

"Every single one of these so-called valorous maharajas, who today are after a Mumbai filmmaker, were less concerned about their honor when the British were trampling all over it. They scurried to accommodate themselves. So, let's face it, there is no question, that we were complicit", said Shashi Tharoor.

The uproar against Padmavati has once again revived the question of freedom of expression. We may see the debate getting louder over the next few days.



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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

Buddhism is not only a religion but a way of living for many. Home to a number of monasteries and temples, Gaya is among those few places in the world where one can experience all the colours of Buddhist culture and traditions. Among several interesting things to do in Gaya, experiencing Buddhism by living among the monks inside a monastery is one of the favourite activities of travellers visiting the land of Buddha. Living here is bliss for those unaware of the beautiful culture and traditions of Buddhists. There are several monasteries in Gaya that keep organising a number of retreats as well as yoga, meditation and interactive sessions on day-to-day life issues; thus, helping and guiding individuals with the sermons and teachings of Lord Buddha. The monasteries, including Thai Monastery, Chinese Monastery, Tibetan Monastery and Bhutan Monastery, have resident monks who conduct courses based on the principles of Buddhism.

TIBETAN MONASTERY

Embellished with Tibetan scriptures and a number of Buddhist symbols, Tibetan Monastery is another prime religious centre in Gaya that holds a significant place among Buddhists. Situated close to the Mahabodhi Temple, this monastery was established in the year 1938. The monastery is renowned for housing a 10-metre high dharmachakra (Wheel of Law), which is painted in golden and red. It is believed that rotating this wheel thrice from left to right can free one of all the sins he/she has committed. Another highlight of this site is the image of Maitreya Buddha, which as per Buddhists is the future incarnation of Lord Buddha.

MAHABODHI TEMPLE

As you enter the 4.8-hectare temple premises, the 55 m tall temple stands out with its immaculate architecture. This is the main temple, with a pyramidal tall tower marking its significance. It is carved with intricate designs of Buddha and supported by four identical but small towers on each corner. One of the oldest brick temples in India, it has a classical Indian architectural style with motifs and layers.

The main shrine faces eastwards and this is where the gold plated statue of Gautam Buddha is placed. A small but overcrowded passage leads to the statue. Alongside, there are monks offering prayers and chanting. This space is rather small and visitors are only allowed to halt here for a very short period of time. The statue is believed to have been built by the Pala kings of Bengal. It now lies within the safe glass case and is heavily guarded by monks. Photography and shoes are not permitted.

THAI TEMPLE & MONASTERY

With the aim of spreading the messages of Lord Buddha and principles of Buddhism among the masses, some Buddhist monks in collaboration with the government of Thailand established the Thai Temple and Monastery in Gaya in the year 1957. A fine example of Thai architecture, this beautiful site displays myriad colours of Thai culture and tradition. The monks residing here play an important role in spreading the ideologies and teachings of Lord Buddha. Inside the temple, you can see an enormous Bronze statue of Buddha surrounded by equally beautiful paintings of him. Every year in the month of January, the monastery organises retreats that are held in complete silence. More than a hundred people participate in the retreat and together they practice meditation and yoga here.

ROYAL BHUTAN MONASTERY

Another place to learn and practise Buddhism in Gaya is the Royal Bhutan Monastery, which is also considered as one of the most magnificent monasteries in the region. The King of Bhutan got this monastery

BODH GAYA: THE LAND OF BUDDHA



constructed as a tribute to Lord Buddha. This monastery will surely impress you with its splendid architecture, serenity and the seven feet tall statue of Buddha inside. What add to

the fame of this monastery are the clay carvings depicting Lord Buddha's life. Buddhism followers from across the globe visit here to witness these brilliant carvings.

Bhutanese monks living in this monastery organise peace prayers and also conduct courses on Buddhism and guide people accordingly.

Source: HappyTrips

ITALY MISS OUT ON WORLD CUP AS SWEDEN QUALIFY

ROME (TIP): Italians, who consider a spot in the World Cup finals a virtual birthright, slumped into collective depression on Tuesday after the national team failed to win a place among soccer's elite for the first time in 60 years.

"Disaster", "nightmare", "humiliation", were just a few of the words splashed across the front pages of Italy's newspapers to describe the shock of the team's elimination at the hands of a little-fancied Sweden on Monday.

"Apocalypse Azzurra," said the headline of La Stampa newspaper, referring to the unofficial name of the team whose bright blue jerseys reflect the azure of the Mediterranean Sea.

Italy have played in the last 14 World Cup finals, winning two of them. In all, they have triumphed four times, a tally only exceeded by Brazil, who have won five times.

Italy are the only former champions not to make it to next year's finals.

"This is disgusting, the World Cup can't exist without Italy. It just can't exist," said Francesco Macella, a fan who was in Milan's San Siro stadium to watch as Italy failed to overcome Sweden in a tense 0-0 draw in the second leg of their European playoff, having lost the first leg 1-0 in Stockholm.

Every four years, Italy has come together over the World Cup, putting aside its historic city-state rivalries to become a united nation for a brief moment in time, cheering on all the players regardless if they came from Milan, Rome or Naples.

"We have failed and at a social level this could have been so important," said Italy's storied goalkeeper, Gianluigi Buffon, in a tearful interview minutes after the final



Italy's forward Ciro Immobile reacts at the end of the match against Sweden at the San Siro stadium in Milan.

whistle on Monday, recognising the broader significance of the national team.

POLITICAL FALLOUT

While newspapers laid the blame squarely on team coach Gian Piero Ventura and soccer federation chief Carlo Tavecchio, some fans thought the failure reflected wider problems.

"This match mirrors our country which is falling apart," said a disappointed Stefano Martufello as he left the San Siro.

Italy is slowly recovering from a prolonged recession, but most people say they see no sign of the pick-up, with wages stagnant and unemployment stuck above 11 per cent. On the political front, opinion polls predict that

parliamentary elections due by next May will result in a deadlock.

Governments normally hope that the feel-good factor from sporting triumphs feeds over into the political sphere.

In the wake of Monday's downfall, the normally busy Twitter feeds of ruling politicians were quiet, while some opposition leaders sought to score quick points.

"There are too many foreigners on (our) pitches, from youth teams to Serie A and this is the result," said Matteo Salvini, head of the anti-immigrant Northern League, echoing criticism in far-right quarters over the space given in sport to outsiders.

"STOPTHEINVASION. Give more room to Italian lads," he wrote, drawing hundreds of largely negative comments on his Twitter feed.

Italy last won the World Cup in 2006, but exited at the group stage in 2010 and 2014 after lacklustre displays. This latest setback showed how far the team has drifted from their peak, belying the widespread expectation that they would have eased past Sweden.

"For years I've had this feeling that Italian football is a little like Italy itself, which lives a lot in the past when the reality is that it finds itself dealing with things that are quite intense, even shocking," said Matteo Maragnano, peeling oranges in a cafe near Milan's gothic cathedral.

Grasping for silver linings, newspaper commentators recognised that the Italian team was weak and would not have got very far in Russia.

"The only consolation is that we would have made utter fools of ourselves at the finals," La Stampa said. *Source: Reuters*

LOOK AT YOUR CAREER BEFORE COMMENTING ON DHONI: SHASTRI

KOLKATA (TIP): India's chief coach Ravi Shastri on Tuesday once again extended unflinching support to Mahendra Singh Dhoni, saying those commenting on the two-time World Cup winning former skipper should look back at their own careers.

A few former India players, including VVS Laxman and Ajit Agarkar, recently raised questions about Dhoni's T20I future, creating quite a storm in the country's cricketing circles.

"People should look back at their career before commenting on Dhoni. The captain has a lot of cricket left in him and it is the duty of the team to back the legend," Shastri said.

Shastri was having a look at the bat autographed by the 2011 World Cup winning Indian team at the Fanatic Sports Museum.

The coach further said the culture of the current team is based on performance and quality.

"There is no one better than Dhoni on the field given his ability behind the wicket and with the bat and his presence of mind and sharpness on the field."

Shastri lauded the players' athleticism and said: "In terms of fielding this team is the very best in the world at the moment and that's something that separates this team



from Indian teams of the past."

India will take on Sri Lanka in three Tests beginning with the Eden five-dayer on November 16, and this will be Shastri's first home Test series.

"This team always turns up on the park to

win. We hope to win the series spread over one and half months before going to South Africa."

Hardik Pandya has been rested for the series and Shastri said: "This team is not about one particular individual, we lose together, we win together."

Earlier, accompanied by bowling coach Bharat Arun, Shastri spent about two hours admiring the Fanatic Sports Museum curated and set up by sports historian Boria Majumdar.

While taking a stance with Sir Donald Bradman's bat from 1948, the former all-rounder said: "The quality of wood is such you can still play a few shots with it."

He compared Virat Kohli's bat with Sir Don's and donated his 2015 World Cup team directors' jersey and cap to the museum collection, and was particularly impressed with the Usain Bolt memorabilia.

Picking Bolt and Mohammed Ali as two of his personal favourites, Shastri said: "Every Indian cricketer should make a trip to the museum and enjoy the collection."

Arun, too, was impressed and said: "I would love youngsters training at the NCA to come to a place like this and absorb in cricket history." *Source: PTI*

CHINA OPEN: SINDHU EASES INTO ROUND 3

FUZHOU (TIP):

Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu advanced while Saina Nehwal and HS Prannoy bowed out of the China Open World Superseries Premier. Sindhu outplayed Han Yue of China 21-15 21-13 in 40 minutes to enter the third round. Sindhu dominated both games right from the word go and her opponent never looked to be in contention.

Earlier, Japan's Akane Yamaguchi defeated Saina 21-18 21-11 in just 37 minutes to advance in the women's singles, while Lee Cheuk Yiu overpowered Prannoy 21-19 21-17 in 42 minutes in the men's singles category.

Saina played to her potential in the opening game but lost the momentum towards the end. In the second game, it was all about the Japanese shuttler. Saina struggled and as a result Yamaguchi wrapped up the match with ease.

Chen Long of China and Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei defeated Anders Antonsen of Denmark and Brice Leverdez of France, respectively. Rio Olympics champion Chen, the sixth seed, overcame Antonsen 21-17 21-13, while three-time Olympics silver medallist Lee drubbed Leverdez 21-6 21-9.

Source: IANS





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