

Shinzo Abe Wins Party Vote: Poised to Become Japan's Longest-Serving Leader



In his victory speech, Abe said, "Let's work together to make a new Japan".

TOKYO (TIP): Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was re-elected as head of his ruling Liberal Democratic Party in a landslide Thursday, September 20, paving the way for up to three more years as the nation's leader.

"It's time to tackle a constitutional revision," Abe said in a victory speech. "Now the fight is over."

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Air India Regional Manager (Americas) Vandana Sharma Transferred to Delhi



Ms Sharma's tenure of nearly 3 years (she took over as RM Americas in 2015) has been an eventful one. She has since helped Air India to grow from 21 flights per week out of

NEW YORK (TIP) Air India Regional Manager Vandana Sharma has been transferred to Delhi. She will assume charge as Deputy General Manager at the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

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In 41 trips to 52 countries in 4 years, PM Narendra Modi spent Rs 355 crore: RTI

Read story on Page 6

The Accuser of Sexual Assault by Judge Kavanaugh to Testify Next Week

Christine Blasey Ford seeks 'fair terms and her safety' Protests against Kavanaugh's confirmation; 56 arrested

NEW YORK (TIP): The woman who has accused Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh of sexual assault is prepared to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee next week, so long as senators offer "terms that are fair and which ensure her safety," her lawyer told the committee on Thursday, September 20, according to a news report in New York Times. The accuser, Christine Blasey Ford, ruled out Monday as a possibility, but also appeared to leave the door open to

contd on Page 32

Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, a psychologist and professor of statistics at Palo Alto University, has accused Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh, of sexually assaulting her way back in 1982. The accusation has rocked Washington



Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan to meet on the sidelines of UNGA in New York

India's positive response to Pakistan PM Imran Khan's call for a dialogue

Swaraj to discuss Kartarpur corridor with Pak foreign minister

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Thursday, September 20, accepted Pakistan's proposal for talks between the Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the ongoing 73rd annual UN General Assembly session in New York.

"On the request of the Pakistani side, a meeting between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi will take place on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly at a mutually decided date

contd on Page 32



India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Pak counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi. File photos

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Jaipur Literature Festival New York Debuts at New York Asia Society - Thursday, September 20, 2018

"The greatest literary show on Earth", brought an iconic event - JLF at New York - featuring internationally acclaimed authors and thinkers. JLF at New York runs from September 19-20 with a range of provocative panels and debates to discuss the issues that shape our thoughts and perspectives.



Sufi Singer Zila Khan Performs during Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) event at Asia Society in NY City, September 20, 2018



Ambassador Navtej Sarna in conversation with Navina Haidar, Curator of Islamic Art at the MET Museum and Historian William Dairyple at JLF event at Asia Society, Sept 20, 2018



Member of Parliament and Acclaimed writer, Shashi Tharoor in conversation with Namita Gokhale, Director, JLF at Asia Society in New York, September 20, 2017



L to R: Consul General of India in New York Sandeep Chakravorty, Shashi Tharoor and Ambassador Navtej Sarna enjoying a lighter moment at the festival
Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment

Vijay Jolly, BJP Leader from India meets with local BJP leaders



American Indian Muslim Leader Selman Khan welcoming BJP Leader Vijay Jolly at New York Namo Tea Party in USA, September 15



BJP Leader Vijay Jolly with American -Indian BJP leaders including New York State Assembly Member Andrew P. Raia at Chai pe Charcha on Modi Govt.'s Achievements in USA, September 15

Mayor Bill de Blasio appoints Amy Peterson as Director of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Mayor Bill de Blasio appointed Amy Peterson as the Director of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development. The office is responsible for equipping New Yorkers with a variety of skills and connecting them to quality jobs across the city. Peterson will continue to lead the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery and Build it Back as the office and program enter the final stages of their Sandy recovery efforts.



Controversial Amy Peterson has been named Director of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, besides continuing to lead the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery and Build it Back program

"When I was elected, the Build it Back program suffered from bureaucratic entanglement, and thousands of New Yorkers were left to fend for themselves. Then Amy Peterson took over, streamlined the program and people finally began getting the help they needed to recover," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "Amy has nearly worked herself out of a job, and she managed to do this while training and connecting over 1,600 New Yorkers affected by Hurricane Sandy to quality jobs. I'm confident Amy will continue this great work at the Office of Workforce Development and connect countless more New Yorkers to high quality jobs, taking us a step closer to creating the fairest big city in America."

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-Origin British Businessman First Person to get top Royal Navy Post



Raj Aggarwal is the first ever Indian origin person to be appointed Honorary Lieutenant Commander in the UK's Royal Navy

LONDON (TIP): Wales-based Indian-origin businessman has become the first ever Indian origin person to be appointed Honorary Lieutenant Commander in the UK's Royal Navy.

Raj Aggarwal, who is India's Honorary Consul in Wales, was appointed to his naval post by Admiral Sir Philip Jones following the formal approval of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

The move will see the pharmacist and healthcare expert take on the rank of honorary lieutenant commander in the Royal Navy, which is equivalent to the rank of an army major, and he will be affiliated to the Royal Navy ship 'HMS Dragon' in his new role.

"Raj is a great friend and advocate of the Naval service and his appointment will deepen the relationship between the community and the Royal Navy," Royal Marine Brigadier Graeme Fraser told the 'Wales Online' newspaper. "Our Armed Forces are inclusive employers; we recognize the value of diversity and proudly serve all members of our communities at home and overseas. As the only Honorary Royal Navy officer in Wales, it is fitting that we celebrate his appointment. He will wear his Naval officer's uniform at the ceremony with pride," Mr Fraser said.

Read full story on
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian- Origin couple arrested for not allowing tests on baby daughter

F O R T LAUDERDALE, FL

(TIP): An Indian-origin couple in the US was granted bail after being arrested for allegedly neglecting and abusing their six-month-old daughter. They were arrested weeks after they took



Prakash Settu and Mala Paneerselvam were arrested for allegedly neglecting and abusing their six-month-old daughter

her to a hospital at Broward County in Florida with a swollen left arm. However, Child Protective Services will continue to have custody of their six-month-old babies, with no parental access.

Authorities booked them for child neglect and abuse after the couple from Tamil Nadu, India allegedly questioned why the girl had to undergo expensive tests at the medical establishment and attempted to take the child from the hospital against doctors' advice.

The couple, Prakash Settu and Mala Paneerselvam, was earlier sent to a prison in Fort Lauderdale with the bail amount set at \$200,000. A person familiar with the matter told the media that "the bail amount was ultimately reduced to \$30,000, and the couple released just a few hours ago". The baby, Himisha, and her twin brother were taken away from them by Child Protective Services a few weeks ago.

Friends of the family, who deny the allegations levelled against the couple, have organized an online fundraiser to help them wage a legal battle against the US authorities. "Separating newborn twins from biological parents is a sin.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-Origin British Officer Honored in UK for "Toughest Policing Role"

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin British counter-terrorism chief has won the Asian Achievers' Award in the Uniformed and Civil Services category for his contribution to policing in the UK.

Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu, who is the Metropolitan Police's National Lead for Counter Terrorism and the Head of the Met Police's Specialist Operations, had sent a colleague from the force to receive the award on his behalf at the 18th annual awards event, organized by UK-based media house Asian Business Publications Limited (ABPL) Group.

The award citation described Mr Basu's job as "one of the toughest policing roles in the country" and praised his hard work and dedication in achieving such seniority within the force as the "first officer of Asian heritage to hold the post in the UK".

"(British Asians) continue to excel across all spheres of society...I am determined to ensure the government looks more like the country it serves, and to see a new generation creating opportunities for people across the whole of the UK," Prime Minister Theresa May noted in her message for the awards night at Grosvenor House Hotel in Mayfair, London.

Among some of the other key winners, selected by a panel of judges made up of academics and entrepreneurs, included Rishi Khosla, the CEO of unicorn start-up OakNorth who was named Businessperson of the Year; and Adarsh Radia, the founder of the popular Dishoom chain of Indian restaurants in the UK who was named Entrepreneur of the Year. "The awards have grown in stature year after year and once again we received an overwhelming number of nominations, which is an indication that the success of the British Asian community in various fields continues unabated," said CB Patel, the founder-



Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu has won the Asian Achievers' Award in the Uniformed and Civil Services category for his contribution to policing in the UK

chairman of ABPL Group and Editor and Publisher of 'Asian Voice' and 'Gujarat Samachar' - the weekly newspapers which invite its readers to nominate achievers for the annual awards

"Our awards recognize all those unsung heroes within the Asian community - many of whom arrived here as migrants. They have made great strides, not just within their communities and professional sectors but have made huge contributions to British society and the UK economy," added Patel, who presented a special Editor's Award to leading NRI hotelier and Chair of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in London, Joginder Sanger, for his contributions in the field of business and philanthropy.

The Asian Achievers Awards has helped to raise around 1.5 million pounds for various causes and charities since its launch in 2000. This year's chosen beneficiary was Oracle Cancer, a leading charity funding research into head and

neck cancer, which attracted nearly 100,000 pounds through donations and an auction hosted by famous British author Lord Jeffrey Archer.

The high-selling auction lots for the night included a shirt signed by the Indian cricket team, which went under the hammer for 5,000 pounds, and a seven-night luxury tour aboard India's 'Deccan Odyssey' train clinching 10,000 pounds.

Leading general practitioner (GP) and honorary secretary of the Welsh Division of the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) Hasamukh Shah was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Other major winners on the night were Indian-origin BBC presenter, author and documentary filmmaker Babita Sharma in the media and arts category and healthcare entrepreneur and CEO of Regent's Park Healthcare Anil Kumar Ohri, who was named Professional of the Year.

Indian-Origin Bus Driver Who Killed 2 in UK Crash was Suffering from Dementia

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin bus driver, suffering from dementia was found by a UK court to have caused the deaths of two people with his dangerous driving in the city of Coventry nearly three years ago.

Kailash Chander was deemed unfit to stand trial for the fatal crash due to his mental state and the jury at a "trial of facts" hearing at Birmingham Crown Court was directed to only determine whether Kailash Chander "did the acts".

Kailash Chander, a former town mayor of Leamington Spa, mistook the accelerator for the brake before the fatal smash, which caused the death of seven-year-old schoolboy Rowan Fitzgerald, who was sitting at the front of the upper deck of the bus and died of a head injury. A 76-year-old pedestrian, Dora Hancox, died from multiple injuries after being hit by the double-decker bus and a falling lamppost when it crashed into a supermarket in October 2015. Kailash Chander had been warned about his "erratic" driving after four crashes in the previous

three years, the court was told. It was said he had struggled to punch a ticket seconds before the fatal crash because his hands were shaking. Judge Paul Farrer, summing up the case at the hearing, said one witness had described the movement of Kailash Chander's double-decker bus as appearing to have "no driver with the accelerator jammed on".

The court heard that Kailash Chander had experienced suicidal thoughts, was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, and was "very preoccupied" by the crash. The 80-year-old may face a supervision order at a further hearing in November. Bus company Midland Red South, which has pleaded guilty to health and safety law breaches, faces an unlimited fine and will also be sentenced later.

Lawyers for Kailash Chander, who was 77 at the time of the crash, argued he was driving carelessly and should not be found guilty of dangerous driving.

Read full story on
www.theindianpanorama.news



Kailash Chander, suffering from dementia was found by a UK court to have caused the deaths of two people with his dangerous driving in the city of Coventry nearly three years ago.



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In 41 trips to 52 countries in 4 years, PM Narendra Modi spent Rs 355 crore: RTI

NEW YORK (TIP): Of the 41 trips by Modi to 52 countries, the highest amount was spent on his nine-day tri-nation visit to France, Germany and Canada.

In his 48 months as Prime Minister, Narendra Modi made 41 trips to over 50 countries, at a total cost of Rs 355 crore. He was abroad for a cumulative 165 days. The figures are up to Mid-June 2018.

This was revealed through replies to Right to Information (RTI) queries submitted to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) by RTI activist Bhimappa Gadad, who shared these replies with the media.

Of these 41 trips by PM Modi to 52 countries, the highest amount was spent on his nine-day tri-nation visit to France, Germany and Canada between April 9 and 15, 2015, which incurred expenses to the tune of Rs 31,25,78,000; and the least expensive trip was his very first one as Prime Minister, to Bhutan on June 15-16,



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during a period of 48 months, undertook trips to 52 countries at a cost of Rs. 355 Crore (close to US \$50,000,000).

2014 at a cost of Rs 2,45,27,465.

Gadad, who filed the RTI petition seeking details about expenses on PM's foreign

trips, said he filed it out of curiosity. "A few years ago, I had applied for details of foreign visits by chief ministers of

Karnataka. Recently, I was going through news reports wherein Prime Minister's foreign visits were heavily criticized. Then I applied under RTI seeking details of PM's foreign visits and I was really shocked to know the details," he said.

He is bitter about the PMO not providing information on domestic travels of the Prime Minister. "They have not furnished details of domestic visits and expenses for security provided during the visits. I did not ask for details of security measures. I just asked for the expenses, but they refused, saying the SPG security organization, which takes care of PM security, is exempted from the purview of RTI," he said.

"Though I got the information out of curiosity, I want it to reach the public. Everyone should know about it," he said, adding that the Centre should also release reports on the benefits to the country emerging from these visits.

SKN Foundation to host Annual Gala to highlight the South Asian Diabetes Education and Resource Center to address Diabetes Epidemic

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (TIP): The 2018 Shri Krishna Nidhi (SKN) Foundation Gala for Diabetes Care is being held to highlight the South Asian Diabetes Education and Resource Center, at Marigold Hotel in Somerset, NJ on Friday, September 28th starting at 6:00pm

Special Guests for the evening include Vikas Khanna, Celebrity Chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, filmmaker, humanitarian and TV judge for Master Chef India, along with Charlie Kimball, IndyCar series driver with type 1 diabetes, and celebrity host Indian Actress and Fashion designer, Mandira Bedi.

Shri Krishna Nidhi (SKN) Foundation is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to promote total wellness of the person and community through education. In alignment with its mission, the SKN Foundation, in partnership with Saint Peter's Healthcare System, operates the South Asian Diabetes Education and Resource Center a comprehensive prevention program with academic, clinical and community support. The program is relevant to all South Asian people as the prevalence of Diabetes has mounted to 80 million people where one out of two do not know they have it.

The SKN South Asian Diabetes Education and Resource Center is located in the Department Medicine, Saint Peter's University Hospital, 254 Easton Avenue, CARES Building, 4th Floor, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. As part of this partnership with Saint Peter's, SKN Foundation develops awareness and outreach programs on various chronic illnesses, beginning with a diabetes risk assessment in the South Asian community; facilitates access to early detection, self-management and care programs at the South Asian Institute at Saint Peter's. It also directs and coordinates research on chronic disease at the South Asian Institute, creating South Asian specific educational materials.

"The SKN resource center is designed to enhance culturally appropriate care to South Asians in New Jersey," Dr. Naveen Mehrotra said, "which is an ongoing need within this



Vikas Khanna, Charlie Kimball and Mandira Bedi will be gracing the event with their presence

community. Disease among South Asians is greatly influenced by genetics and cultural beliefs, each of which can be addressed to positively affect health outcomes through research, education and promotion of equitable patient care."

Saint Peter's Thyroid and Diabetes Center, now enhanced by SKN resources, offers early screening with a focus on prevention, comprehensive consultation and management, specialized care for women, Diabetes self-management education, nutritional guidance specific to South Asian diet and South Asian support groups. The center's Director and a key advisor for SKN Foundation, Dr. Meena Murthy noted: "South Asians residing in the US have the highest



burden of diabetes with the prevalence reaching up to 25% in this population, the highest of any ethnic group in USA. More than half are undiagnosed. A silent killer, diabetes leads to premature disability and death with more than half of the deaths in South Asians occurring before age 60."

Murthy added: "At the Saint Peter's South Asian Institute we meet the unique health challenges faced by the South Asian people. Our holistic approach is based on respect for the patient's cultural background, spiritual needs and healthcare values."

About SKN Foundation: SKN Foundation is a non-profit organization under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. "Shri Krishna Nidhi (SKN) mission is to promote total



wellness of the person and community through education. This mission is accomplished through coordinating volunteer activities, raising funds to provide health related educational resources, and working with other organizations focused on the community. For more information about SKN, visit www.sknfoundation.org or call (908)643-1744.

Tickets for the gala start at \$175 and can be purchased at <https://sknfoundation.org/hope-gala-2018/>

To learn more about SKN Foundation and how you can help, please visit: <https://sknfoundation.org/>

(Based on a press release issued by Neerja Patel)

Autumn Adventures rolling in with three excursions; Rails of Terror premieres; Fall Flyer and Pumpkin Express return

NEW YORK (TIP): With Halloween not far away, Catskill Mountain Railroad has rolled out attractive rides. Take a ride on the dark side of the tracks on Catskill Mountain Railroad's Rails of Terror with spook-tacular hostess Lady Eloise. When the train leaves the safety of Kingston passengers are tossed into the hands of the unknown with creatures sure to frighten and tales of local ghosts sure to haunt. This event is recommended for teens and adults.

Catskill Mountain Railroad's Fall Flyer and Pumpkin Express return with host and ancestor of famed Jack-O-Lantern are fun for adults and children! Take a spectacular journey unveiling the fictional legend behind the Jack-O-Lantern and learn details of the historic lineage of the Catskill O'Lanterns. See the natural beauty of the Catskills from our railroad's unique perspective aboard Ulster County's scenic train. Come ride in one of our vintage coaches, or enjoy the fresh air and beautiful views from our open cars. Pumpkin Express trains have added bonus - Passengers will be able to select their own pumpkin to take home and decorate. Wear your Halloween costumes and join the fun!



Rails of Terror

All trains are round trip departing from the Westbrook Station in the Kingston Plaza and travel through the Hurley Flats and return. Children under 2 ride free with paid adult fare. An adult must accompany all children.

FALL SCHEDULE: Catskill Fall Flyer -



September 29-30, October 6-7-8 & 13-14 (11am, 1pm & 3pm) \$14.00- Adults, \$8.00 - Children (ages 2-12), \$13.00 - Discount Adult (Senior/Military/Veteran). Pumpkin Express - October 20-22 & 27-28 (11am, 1pm & 3pm) \$18.00- Adults, \$12.00 - Children (ages 2-12), \$16.00 - Discount Adult (Senior/Military/Veteran). Rails of Terror - October 12-13, 19-20, 26-27 (6pm and 7:30pm) \$38.00 - Adults, \$30.00 - Children (ages 2-12), \$36.00 - Discount Adult (Senior/Military/Veteran)

For more information and to purchase tickets please visit our website www.CatskillMountainRailroad.com or call our office (845) 332-4854 or e-mail us at reservations@CatskillMountainRailroad.com. The fun doesn't stop with our Autumn Adventures; Polar Express begins November 16th!

For our current schedule of events please visit www.CatskillMountainRailroad.com/Excursions.

(Based on a press release issued by Rob Gaston)



Pumpkin Express

Success without Stress: Free Lecture series in NJ

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (TIP): Teresa Lopez announced, September 21, a fascinating lecture series on the theme of ancient wisdom and its role in everyday life. The speaker is the eminent philosopher from India Sunandaji, who is the daughter-disciple of world- renowned Guru and author Swami Parthasarathy.

The topic is "The Perfect Action" from Chapter 3 of the Bhagavad Gita, which explains the art of making your actions more dynamic, focused and productive, while remaining mentally peaceful and stress-free.

To be held at the beautiful Traves Hall in Rutgers University, New Brunswick from September 28th to 30th, this series is organized as a service to the community and is free to the public. Everyone is invited to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to benefit from this timeless wisdom.

Where: Traves Hall at Rutgers University, 100 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ

When: September 28 to 30, 2018, 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm.

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**GUEST
COMMENT**

The Big Bank Theory: Mergers should not be Tools to hide NPA Mess

The government has opted for a convenient tactic to address the Rs 10 lakh plus crore mess in public sector banks (PSBs). Dena Bank - one of the worst performing PSBs - was forbidden by the RBI from extending new credits under its stringent prompt corrective action (PCA). But it has now received a fresh lease of life by the recent three-bank merger. With this deft move, the government has effortlessly shifted Dena Bank's liabilities to two healthier siblings - Bank of Baroda and Vijaya Bank. The logic is appealing. Two strong banks will absorb a weak bank and create India's third largest bank with much greater lending power. The government seems unmindful of the fact that rogue banks such as Dena got into trouble because of indiscriminate, often fraudulent, lending. Will the merger absolve Dena Bank of its misdemeanors? If not, who are the culprits for the sorry state of Dena Bank? Will the merger become a cover to conceal a financial crime and protect the offenders, including irresponsible bank officials, forever? The people, the ultimate owners of public sector banks, must be informed unambiguously.

In its hurry to contain the rising non-performing assets (NPAs), the government should not commit another blunder. It should professionally evaluate the State Bank of India experiment before proclaiming it as a universal solution. The net profit of SBI has dropped alarmingly after it was forced to absorb five of its associate banks besides the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Similarly, the takeover of the ailing IDBI by LIC cannot be termed as a sound business decision.

There is nothing wrong in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) per se. They are acceptable tools for corporates to expand and consolidate their businesses. M&As must, however, happen purely on commercial considerations and must not be politically imposed. While PSBs are promoted by the government, they are run by their respective professional boards, which alone should take such decisions. Their state of affairs suggests that the right approach should be to change their governance structure to eliminate excessive political interference that resulted in unmanageable NPAs. (*Tribune, Chandigarh*)



By G Parthasarthy

While public attention was focused on the highly publicized 2+2 Dialogue between the Foreign and Defense Ministers of India and the US, two interesting developments took place in India's relations with China. The first was a remarkably warm meeting that Prime Minister Modi had with the visiting Chinese Defense Minister, General Wei Fenghe, on August 21. The Prime Minister appreciated that differences between the two countries were being handled with "sensitivity and maturity", which was evident from the prevailing peace along the China-India borders. He also welcomed the growing cooperation between the two countries, including in areas of defense and military exchanges.

Unlike its earlier behavior, which resulted in three million people being stranded and 130 killed in floods in Assam last year, China provided India information on the rising levels of the Brahmaputra, this year well in advance. This enabled India to deal with the flood situation effectively. It would, however, be naïve to infer that these developments signal any change in China's efforts to undermine India's influence across its Indian Ocean neighborhood, or moderate its economic, diplomatic and military support for Pakistan and terrorist groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammed. But it does indicate that after the Modi-Xi Jinping summit in Wuhan last year, China would not like tensions like those witnessed in Doklam last year, to arise again, in the near future.

These developments give India more diplomatic space to deal with Trump's US, which has offended friends and foes alike. The Trump Administration has unilaterally renounced many past American bilateral, regional and global commitments, with its "America First" policies. It is an Administration that has offended and dealt arbitrarily, even with long-term allies like Canada, Germany and Japan. India needs to be totally realistic in dealing with the Trump Administration. Even before commencing discussions with New Delhi, the Trump Administration filed a complaint against India in the World Trade Organization challenging our export programs. Ironically, this move came at a time, when the US had levied heavy duties on India's exports of steel and aluminum.

The Americans are indicating a desire for an early, face-saving exit, from Afghanistan. The Afghan armed Forces will, hopefully, continue to be armed, equipped and financed to meet challenges posed by the Pakistan-backed Taliban. A far more active engagement by India, with parties that respect the Constitution in Afghanistan, is imperative, so that the Afghans can ensure that Pakistan does not lead the Americans up the garden path, with a promise of good behavior, by the Taliban. Russia and China, for different reasons, now have a cozy

AS I SEE IT

Leveraging China vis-a-vis Uncle Sam

"It would be naïve to infer any change in China's efforts to undermine India's influence across its Indian Ocean neighborhood or moderate its support for Pakistan and terrorist groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammed. But it does indicate that China would not like Doklam-like tensions again. Also, it gives India more space to deal with Trump's US.", says the author.


It takes two to tango": Military cooperation between India and the US received a boost during the Pompeo-Mattis visit.

relationship with the Taliban. They evidently hope that the Taliban will join them in taking on the Islamic state. Neither the Russians nor the Chinese, however, have a past record of understanding Afghanistan and its people objectively. China will also inevitably face the consequences of brutal suppression of its Muslim population in Xinjiang, bordering Afghanistan.

Military cooperation between India and the US received a boost during the Pompeo-Mattis visit, with the establishment of formal links between India's Western Naval Command and the American Fifth Fleet, based in Bahrain. Maritime cooperation with this Fleet would be very helpful, in events affecting the safety and security of over six million Indians, living in the Gulf region. Moreover, the Communications and Security Agreement signed during the recent talks would give India access to valuable intelligence information that Americans could provide. The US and India have shared concerns about growing Chinese assertiveness across the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans. These include Beijing seeking the establishment of a "string of pearls" across sea-lanes, from Kyaukpyu in Myanmar, to Djibouti. India, the US and Japan have been carrying out tripartite naval exercises. These exercises should now be extended across India's west coast.

Recent US legislation, popularly alluded to as CAATSA, enables it to impose sanctions on countries, which have "significant transactions" with Russian arms industries. These would adversely affect all banks having dollar transactions, which virtually all major Indian banks have. After strong lobbying by India, the Trump Administration got the legislation amended to enable it to exempt countries like India, Indonesia and Vietnam from its provisions. India has also been affected by recent sanctions imposed by the Trump Administration on oil purchases from Iran, a major supplier, after the Obama Administration revoked UN sanctions. With

the reintroduction of sanctions on Iran by the Trump Administration, New Delhi would have to get a sanctions waiver from President Trump, for oil imports from Iran, after November.

China escapes the effect of these sanctions, because it has a largely balanced trade with Iran and Russia and no dollar transfers are required. India has trade deficits and cannot arrange payments through bilateral settlement mechanisms, with either Russia or Iran. These are the two most crucial issues, affecting India-US relations presently. But what is interesting is that not a word was uttered officially about these crucial issues, by either side, after the recent 2+2 Dialogue. The American move, imposing sanctions on purchase of Russian arms, are obviously as motivated by a desire to promote its own arms sales, as by geopolitical considerations, to pressurize Russia. India will lose face internationally if it backs off from getting crucial S400 air defense missiles from Russia, for which negotiations have been completed.

India could consider devising measures to modify its arms relationship with Russia, to one linked to its "Make in India" program. Payments will, of course, be made easier, if the Russians import more from India, by resorting to rupee trade, like the Soviet Union did. While US sanctions are not likely to be applied for India's Chabahar port project in Iran, New Delhi will inevitably have to progressively reduce oil imports from Iran, after persuading the US not to oppose dollar payments, for a specified time, beyond November.

In a long-term perspective, international cooperation has to be sought, if the US is to be prevented from acting in an arbitrary manner. Even its allies like Germany, which could face US sanctions for gas imports from Russia, may not be averse to considering such actions, to end the dominance of the US dollar, in international transactions.

(The author is a former Indian diplomat.)

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Where Goes the Rupee?



By Bhaskar Dutta

“There are several moderate but effective instruments available to the government to help the rupee find an equilibrium”, says the author.

The travails of the rupee have dominated newspaper headlines over the last fortnight. Its value has fallen precipitously against the dollar and is now hovering around the 72 level; it was just under 64 at the beginning of the year. There is now intense debate in the media on whether the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should step in and take steps to defend the dollar.

The U.S. honeypot

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has rightly observed that external factors are the cause. In particular, global capital and perhaps currency speculators have been flocking to the American economy. This is not really surprising because the U.S. economy has become a very attractive option. Some months ago, U.S. President Donald Trump announced a massive decrease in corporate tax rates. More recently, the U.S. Federal Reserve has also increased interest rates. The icing on the global investors' cake is the booming U.S. economy.

Not surprisingly, the dollar has appreciated sharply against practically all other currencies too. For instance, it has moved up against both the euro and the pound. Developing economies are typically even harder hit since global portfolio investors tend to withdraw from these markets, perhaps because their economic or political fundamentals are relatively more unstable. Countries such as Turkey and South Africa have experienced significantly higher rates of devaluation than India.

A long time ago, the 'standard' or textbook prescription for countries with severe balance of payments deficits was to devalue their currencies. The underlying rationale was that devaluation decreases the price of exports in foreign countries and so provides a boost to exports by making them more competitive. Correspondingly, imports become more expensive in the domestic economy, in turn reducing the volume of imports. Unfortunately, this seemingly plausible reasoning does not always work. For instance, if several countries are devaluing at the same time - as it seems to be happening now - then none of these countries benefit from their exports being cheaper abroad. In other words, there may not be any surge in Indian exports following the current round of devaluation. Neither will there be a huge fall in imports. Crude oil is by far the biggest item in the list of Indian imports, and this is price-inelastic. Imports from China now constitute a tenth of overall imports. Since the yuan has also depreciated against the dollar, there is not much reason to believe that Chinese imports will be costlier than earlier.

Ripple effects

Fortunately, the RBI has a huge stock of foreign exchange reserves and so the balance of payments situation is not (at least in the immediate future) the main cause of anxiety for the steady decline in the value of the rupee. What must concern policy-makers is that the slide in the rupee can have adverse effects on the domestic economy. For instance, the surge in the landed price of crude oil has already resulted in a steep rise in the prices of petroleum and diesel. Diesel price hikes increase the cost of transportation of goods being transported by road. Unfortunately, many food items fall in this category. Obviously, any increase in food prices must set alarm bells ringing in the Union Finance Ministry. The devaluation will also increase prices of imported inputs, particularly those for which there are no alternative domestic sources of supply. This can have some effect on output expansion. Many domestic companies that have taken dollar loans will also face significantly higher servicing costs.

Corrective options

What are appropriate policy responses in such a situation? Should the monetary and fiscal authorities sit tight, hope and pray that self-correcting mechanisms will gradually cause the rupee to appreciate against the dollar? Or should the RBI and the government come out with guns blazing? Certainly, neither the government nor the RBI can afford the option of inaction. The other extreme of knee-jerk, overkill options must also be avoided. Luckily, there are several moderate but effective instruments available to the government.

Consider, for instance, the problems caused by the spiraling prices of petroleum products. Both the Central and State governments earn huge revenues from excise duties and value-added tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel. In fact, excise duties were raised in the recent past by the Central government when crude oil prices were low, merely as a revenue-gathering device. Now that the rupee cost of crude has shot through the roof, the Centre should certainly lower duties. Rates of VAT should also be lowered by State governments. A small reduction in VAT may even be revenue neutral since VAT is levied as a percentage of price paid by dealer. Some State governments have done so. However, the Centre and most States are busy passing on the buck, because no one wants to part with tax revenue.

The RBI has several policy options. It could, of course, take the most direct route - of offloading large amounts of dollars. This would increase the supply of dollars and so check the appreciation of the dollar, but at the cost of decreased liquidity. Clearly, this weapon has to be used with caution. Of course, the RBI does intervene in the foreign exchange market from time to time to manage a soft landing for the rupee, and this has to continue.

The Central bank now has an explicit inflation target of 4%, a level that is almost certain to be breached if the rupee remains at its current level. This is very likely to induce the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI to raise interest rates again in order to dampen inflationary tendencies. But, the MPC must moderate any rate increase. Any sharp increase has an obvious downside risk to it - any increase

in interest rates can have an adverse effect on growth. This can actually backfire if profitability of companies goes down. Any 'big' negative change in profitability may make foreign portfolio investors pull out of Indian stocks and actually exacerbate the rupee's woes.

The NRI route again

Perhaps the best option for the government would be to borrow from non-resident Indians (NRIs) by floating special NRI bonds that have to be purchased with foreign exchange, and with maturity periods of at least three years. Interest rates have to be attractive, and investors must of course be protected from exchange rate fluctuations. Since interest rates in countries like the U.K. and even the U.S. are quite low, the promised interest rate does not really have to be very high by prevailing Indian levels.

This has been tried before, the last time being in 2013 when too the rupee was under stress. It worked then and there is no reason why it should not work again.

Hopefully, the storm will pass over and the rupee will soon find an equilibrium. In the near future, the rupee is unlikely to return to anything below 70 to the dollar. This should not be cause for much concern because the economy will adjust to the lower value of the rupee. What must be avoided is any sharp fluctuation in the exchange rate - in either direction. Much will depend on whether the economy can continue to grow at a reasonably high rate, for this will steady the nerves of portfolio investors and prevent them from pulling out of the Indian stock market.

(The author is Professor with Ashoka University. He can be reached at bhaskar.dutta@ashoka.edu.in)

Why did Christine Blasey Ford wait so long? I'll tell you ...



By Leslie Marshall

"Remaining silent doesn't mean forgetting. It just means suffering in silence", says the author.

Christine Blasey Ford has publicly accused Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault decades ago. A look at what she is saying and how top lawmakers are responding.

The nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh seemed all but certain a few days ago, until a woman named Christine Blasey Ford came forward accusing him of sexual assault when they were in high school. The alleged crime having taken place decades ago has prompted many to ask: Why did she wait so long?

I can tell you why.

In a word ... Fear

In my freshman year of college, I was the victim of something quite similar; on my 18th birthday. I understand why Dr. Ford

remained silent. She was afraid. Afraid that no one would believe her - after all, she had been drinking. Fear if it went to court, her sex life would be revealed. Fear she would be judged. Fear her name would be dragged through the mud. And she's not alone.

Rape and sexual assault are the most underreported crimes in our nation. Worldwide, one in three women experience some sexual violence in their lifetime, according to the World Health Organization. Yet it is fear that keeps them from coming forward.

Remaining silent doesn't mean forgetting. It just means suffering in silence.

We judge victims of sexual violence harshly in our society. Juries have at times acquitted the accused simply based on the way a woman was dressed.

The issue of how much time has lapsed has even been the subject of a landmark legal case: 1994's *People v. Brown*.

But remaining silent doesn't mean forgetting. It just means suffering in silence. Dr. Ford spoke of the psychological trauma. If you Google "psychological factors that inhibit reporting of sexual violence" you'll find there are numerous articles and studies on this very issue. But the question still remains: Does the length of time that has lapsed after the alleged incident lessen the significance of a victim's claim?

It shouldn't, but it does. And should she or any other victim be believed? Well the National Sexual Violence Resource Center states that 2 to 10 percent of victims' claims are false. Meaning at least 90 percent are telling the truth.

So, if fear prevented her from reporting this, why come forward now? Well for any woman who has been abused by a man and sees



Christine Blasey Ford has accused Supreme Court nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her back in 1982.

that individual gain influence and power years later, it hits you in the face like a bucket of cold water. It's shocking, startling, unjust. And it's a reminder. A reminder of the incident, a reminder of the pain and a reminder that you remained silent. Even in light of the #MeToo movement, only a handful will come forward like Dr. Ford. For the rest, the silence continues.

I am guilty of that silence. Just last year, someone from college re-connected with me on Facebook. We talked about what some of our classmates are doing now, including the one from my 18th birthday. When I found out he is a successful professional in chosen career, it sickened me. I wanted to tell someone. But I didn't. Fear prevented me from picking up the phone.

In coming forward, Dr. Ford is overcoming her fear. And that, I would imagine, will truly help her to heal.

I only wish I could be as brave.

(The author joined Fox News Channel as a contributor in 2009; providing analysis on both political and social issues from a liberal point of view. A nationally syndicated talk host, whose program, "The Leslie Marshall Show" can be heard on radio, stream, "Tune In," "The Progressive Voices Radio Network," and "The Armed Forces Radio Network.") (Source: Facebook)

Canada declares Myanmar treatment of Rohingya Muslims to be genocide

MYANMAR (TIP): Canada's Parliament has unanimously adopted a motion declaring crimes committed against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar to be genocide. The motion on September 20 also endorsed the findings of a United Nations mission that outlined how crimes against humanity have been committed by the Myanmar military against Rohingya and other minorities.

In Washington, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland praised members of Parliament for passing the motion to recognize "this atrocity." Human rights observers called the declaration as a significant milestone. Some 700,000 Rohingya crossed into Bangladesh after a brutal counter-insurgency campaign by Myanmar security forces. The U.N. report alleged widespread rights violations, including rape, murder, torture and the burning of Rohingya homes and villages. Myanmar denies any organized abuses. (AP)

Ex-PM Najib Razak faces new corruption charges in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (MALAYSIA) (TIP): Malaysia's detained former Prime Minister Najib Razak will face at least two dozen fresh charges of abuse of power and money laundering over the multimillion-dollar looting of a state investment fund, police and the anti-graft agency said Thursday. Najib was detained by the anti-graft agency Wednesday over the transfer of \$681 million into his bank account and was expected in court later Thursday. Najib, who has since been transferred into police custody, has called the case political vengeance.

National deputy police chief Noor Rashid Ibrahim said in a statement that 21 charges prepared against Najib involve receiving, using and transferring of illicit funds. Najib will also face several charges under Section 23 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act, according to the anti-graft agency. It didn't give details, but the section deals with the abuse of power.

Najib was earlier charged with multiple counts of criminal breach of trust, corruption and money laundering over the scandal at the 1MDB fund, just months after his shocking electoral defeat. He has pleaded not guilty and his trial is due to start next year. Najib set up 1MDB when he took power in 2009 to promote economic development, but the fund amassed billions in debts and is being investigated in the US and several other countries for alleged cross-border embezzlement and money laundering.

The 1MDB scandal first broke in 2015 when leaked documents showed that \$681 million was transferred into Najib's bank account, leading to massive street rallies calling on him to resign. Najib fired critics in his government, including a deputy prime minister and the attorney-general, and muzzled the media to try to survive the fallout. A new attorney-general cleared Najib in January 2016, saying it was a political donation from Saudi Arabia's royal family and most of it had been returned — an explanation that was met with widespread skepticism. US investigators say Najib's associates stole and laundered \$4.5 billion from the fund, some of which landed in Najib's bank account. Public anger over the 1MDB scandal eventually led to the ouster of Najib's long-ruling coalition in May 9 polls and ushered in the first change of power since Malaysia's independence from Britain in 1957. (AP)

Pakistan Court Releases Nawaz Sharif, Ex-Prime Minister, From Prison

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN (TIP): — A Pakistani court on Wednesday ordered that the jailed former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his daughter and son-in-law be released on bail as they appeal convictions on corruption charges, inching the family closer to restoring their status as political juggernauts in the country.

They had been convicted by an anticorruption court in July over luxury properties that the family owns in London, but a two-member bench of the Islamabad High Court suspended their sentences on Wednesday — a decision that may portend well for their appeal to overturn the verdict completely.

The conviction, by a lower court known as the accountability court, upended Pakistani politics and helped weaken Mr. Sharif and his political party just weeks ahead of July 25 elections, which his rival, Imran Khan, won. Mr. Sharif was sentenced to 10 years in prison, Maryam Nawaz to seven years, and her husband, Muhammad Safdar, to one year.

The Islamabad High Court's ruling was seen by some as a stinging censure of Pakistan's legal system and its lack of independence. By suspending the sentences, observers said, the court signaled that the evidence used to convict the Sharifs was too weak to stand. "These decisions are a judgment on the integrity of our justice system, and it will animate politics in Pakistan," said Babar Sattar, a lawyer at Pakistan's Supreme Court and a columnist.

Wednesday's decision could restore Mr. Sharif's political fortunes and pave the way for his daughter — widely perceived to be his political heir — to lead the family party, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. The courts ruled earlier this year to bar Mr. Sharif and Maryam Nawaz from holding political office for life. Mr. Sharif had been ousted from the prime minister's office last year by the Supreme Court as it investigated revelations in the so-called Panama Papers that his family owned expensive properties in London and could not explain how he came to buy the apartments on a government salary. The Sharif family has denied wrongdoing and corruption, and has maintained that the cases



were politically motivated, pushed by the military.

Many independent analysts and lawyers viewed the July convictions as flawed and weak, as the prosecutors could not establish a direct link between Mr. Sharif and the properties.

Mr. Sharif and his supporters have accused the military of influencing the courts to hurt his re-election chances. The former prime minister's contentious relationship with the military began shortly after he took office in 2013. The military has ruled Pakistan through various coups for about half of the country's history, and no prime minister has ever completed a full term.

"One of the big criticisms surrounding Nawaz being ousted by the Supreme Court is that this wasn't a fair trial with due process," said Mr. Sattar, the lawyer. "Today's judgment now brings up these questions again, about due process and the independence of these trials."

The Islamabad High Court ordered that Mr. Sharif, his daughter Maryam and her husband each post a bond of half a million rupees, or about \$4,000, for their release. The three were released from a high-security prison in Rawalpindi late Wednesday. They are still barred from leaving the country.

Mr. Sharif has tried to portray himself as a

champion of civilian supremacy and a challenger to the military's overarching influence in policymaking. His first term as prime minister in the 1990s ended in a resignation under military pressure, and the second term was cut short by a military coup in 1999. Differences with powerful generals also hobbled his third term as prime minister.

But political opponents accuse Mr. Sharif of amassing vast wealth during his terms as prime minister, and the accusations after the Panama Papers surfaced dented his reputation and political standing.

His conviction in July provided a major lift to his main political opponent, Mr. Khan, whose party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, won the general elections. Mr. Khan, who was widely seen as the military's preferred choice to lead the country, was sworn in as prime minister last month.

On Wednesday afternoon, as jubilant supporters of Mr. Sharif chanted slogans in solidarity, officials of his political party reiterated claims that the convictions were a ploy to deny the party a level playing field.

"Even a blind man could see that these trials are nothing but revenge and pre-poll rigging, to keep Nawaz Sharif out and make way for the win of Imran Khan," Ahsan Iqbal, a senior party leader, told reporters outside the Islamabad High Court. (NYT)

China Could Spoil Sri Lanka's Chance To Become A Breakout Nation Again

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka is ready to rise again -- a nation on the path to sustained growth path, that is. That's according to a recent McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) study, which names Sri Lanka among the few countries that are well-prepared to rise among emerging markets in the next decade-- provided that China doesn't stand on the way, it should be added.

Among Sri Lanka's strengths is its human capital. Sri Lanka's HDI value for 2015 was 0.766—which put the country in the high human development category—positioning it at 73 out of 188 countries and territories, according to a World Bank Report. Between 1990 and 2015, Sri Lanka's HDI value increased from 0.626 to 0.766, an increase of 22.4%.

There was a time, Sri Lanka was ready to grasp the Asian growth miracle. That was in the three decades that followed the country's independence. Then came the revolution, which threw the country into chaos, shattering its growth prospects.

In the 1960s Sri Lanka was billed as the next Asian growth miracle, only to be stymied by a tryst of socialism that played a direct role in igniting a civil war," says Ruchir Sharma, author of Breakout Nations. "Following the independence in 1948, leaders of the Sinhalese majority set out to correct the injustices of British colonial rule, which had heavily favored the country's Tamil minority." The rest is history. "What followed instead was the Tamil rebellion," explains Sharma. "Launched in 1977, the revolt coalesced under the "Liberation Tigers" of Tamil Eelam, whose pioneering brutality in the use of child soldiers and suicide bombers—would derail Sri Lanka's development for thirty years. During the war the central government used sanctions to effectively cut off the rebel-held region from the rest of the country and the world."

But that's the past, and the country is getting a second chance to become a 'break-out nation.' "The civil war is over, the process of healing is under way, and there is every chance that Sri Lanka will again become a breakout nation," adds Sharma. Not so fast, because there's China, which could spoil Sri Lanka's second chance to become a break-out nation. For an obvious reason. Sri Lanka has been ceding control of its major ports to Beijing in effort to pay back for the debt it owes to China. Last year, CM Port made a \$584 million payment as part of a \$1.12 billion deal to operate Sri Lanka's deep-sea Hambantota port, according to a Reuters report.

Bhutan elections watched closely by India, China

THIMPHU (TIP): The defeat of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) of Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay in Bhutan is seen as a major upset in an election being closely watched by India and China.

With a population of about 800,000, Bhutan is considered a buffer between China and India. The country, cloistered for many years, started opening up slowly to the world over a decade ago. The king is still widely respected and holds a lot of power but the country transitioned to a democracy in 2007 when it held its first parliamentary elections.

The Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (DNT), a relatively new party which was formed in 2013 and came third in the elections that year, won first place at last Saturday's polls, Bhutan's third elections, taking 92,722 out of 291,098 votes in the first round of voting.

The Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (DPT) came in second with 90,020 votes, while Mr Tobgay's party won 79,883 votes. According to the Bhutanese Constitution, only two parties will face off in the last round of general elections, which has been set for Oct 18. (ST)

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ICE arrested undocumented immigrants who came forward to take in undocumented children

WASHINGTON (TIP): Federal officers have arrested dozens of undocumented immigrants who came forward to take care of undocumented immigrant children in government custody, and the Trump administration is pledging to go after more.

The news will serve as confirmation of the worst fears of immigrants and their advocates: that a recent move by President Donald Trump's administration to more fully vet people who come forward to care for undocumented immigrant children who are alone in the US has been a way for the administration to track down and arrest more undocumented immigrants.

On Tuesday, September 18, Immigration and Customs Enforcement senior official Matthew Albence testified to Congress that, after Health and Human Services and ICE signed a memorandum of agreement to background-check and fingerprint potential "sponsors" of immigrant children, ICE arrested 41 people who came forward.

Trump administration admits it lost track of nearly 1,500 immigrant children

"We've arrested 41 individuals thus far that we've identified pursuant to that (memorandum)," Albence testified Tuesday. "Close to 80% of the individuals that are either sponsors or household members of sponsors are here in the country illegally, and a large chunk of those are criminal aliens. So, we are continuing to pursue those individuals." ICE made those arrests from early July through early September; of those, only 12 were criminal arrests, according to an ICE official speaking on condition their name not be used. The remaining 29 were what are known as non-criminal or "administrative" arrests -- as in immigration violations. *(Source: CNN)*

The UN Shudders as 'Trump Week' Closes in

NEW YORK (TIP): A year after his bombastic debut at the United Nations as president of the United States, Donald Trump returns on Monday, Sept. 24, to lead a US effort to spur global action to stem the narcotics and opioid plagues. Could the US be asking the UN for help this time?

The morning meeting on drugs on Monday, in which Secretary-General António Guterres is also scheduled to speak, may be a soft landing in New York for Trump. On Tuesday morning, Sept. 25, he will address the opening session of the 73rd General Assembly, the centerpiece of his visit and his opportunity to vent about his enemies, his friends and the organizations he disparages. The audience will be politely hunkered down.

On Wednesday, Sept. 26, however, diplomats and commentators expect a potentially explosive scene in the Security Council when Trump will take the Council president's chair, coincidentally held by the US for September. He could turn the occasion into a sustained attack on Iran and a defense of his decision to withdraw from an internationally backed nuclear deal with the Iranians.

On Sept. 4, Nikki Haley, Trump's loyal ambassador and accomplice at the UN, told reporters in a televised briefing there that the Sept. 26 Council meeting would be solely about Iran. She acknowledged that under Council rules the meeting would give the Iranians the right to speak in their defense.

A personal confrontation between Trump and an Iranian official, possibly President Hassan Rouhani, and tense arguments with Europeans and other supporters of the Iranian deal apparently caused a scramble in



Donald Trump, president of the United States, prepares for the first time to address the General Assembly's annual general debate, Sept. 19, 2017. He is scheduled to speak at the UN this year, starting with a brief meeting on the global drug problem on Sept. 24. Photo courtesy / UN

the White House to change how to define the Council meeting. The scramble seems to confirm recent reports that high-ranking officials close to the president have been working behind the scenes to curb his worst

instincts for his compulsive behavior and combative language - especially weeks before the US midterm elections.

Read the full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

American Hindus Plan to Celebrate 125th Anniversary of Vivekananda's Chicago Speech in 100 US Cities



CHICAGO, IL (TIP): The United States Hindu Alliance (USHA), a national Hindu advocacy organization, announced a one year 100 city celebration of the 125th anniversary of the historic speech of Swami Vivekananda on September 11, 1893 at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The parliament was a landmark event in the history of religions. More than 7,000 religious leaders representing various religions, faiths and Dharma traditions from all over the world took part in the event, including the young Swami Vivekananda from India who represented Hindu Dharma. By virtue of his message, that advanced ideas of tolerance, acceptance, harmony and co-existence, he became an instant celebrity within and outside the parliament. According to the Smithsonian Institute, he is one of the 25 most influential leaders who have ever visited the United States. The launch event took place on September 11, 2018 at the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago, the first Hindu temple of Chicago.

Among the eminent personalities who addressed the audience included 4 senior leaders of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, the apex body of all the Heads of Hindu monastic orders (Sanyasi Paramparas) of India, representing more than 1.7 million Hindu monks. Poojya Swami Paramatmananda Saraswatiiji, General Secretary of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, Poojya Swami Vishweshwarananda Giriji Maharajji, Poojya Madhavapriya Das Swamiji and Poojya Acharya Shri Krishnamaniji Maharaj addressed the audience. In addition, Poojya Swami Vigyananandaji, Chairman of World Hindu Foundation, Neeta Bhushan, Consul General of India in Chicago, Rajiv Malhotra, author and founder of Infinity Foundation, Poojya Swami Sharananandaji of Chinmaya Mission and Gokul Kunnath, President of USHA spoke at the event. **Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news**

Women at the UN General Assembly 2018

NEW YORK (TIP): The 73rd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 73), is set to open on 18 September 2018 at the UN Secretariat in New York. Presiding over this session is Ecuadorean Foreign Minister María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, under the theme: "Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies". Garcés is only the fourth woman President of the UNGA in its 73 years.

For two weeks, leaders from governments, civil society and the private sector, as well as experts, activists, celebrities and other change-makers committed to global good are gathering to discuss a range of challenges-from gender equality to addressing poverty, climate change and inclusive urbanization. The High-level General Debate is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, 25 September, and run until 1 October.

Three years on from the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNGA 73 is an opportunity for countries to renew their commitments to gender equality and to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. As the recent UN Women's flagship report "Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" shows, gender inequalities prevail in every dimension of sustainable development. In many areas, progress for women and girls remains too slow to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Women's equality and empowerment is not only one of the SDGs (Goal 5), but also integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development.

Throughout the session, a wide range of pressing



topics for the gender equality agenda is being discussed, such as the pandemic of violence against women and girls, equal pay, gender-responsive migration policies, and the role of men and boys in advancing gender equality. A key pledging event will examine opportunities for the private sector and philanthropists to accelerate progress.

Goodwill Ambassadors from many UN agencies are also participating in events and advocating for specific issues. UN Women's Goodwill Ambassador Anne Hathaway is speaking at the HeForShe IMPACT Summit on 26 September, and Kristen Bell, an advocate for the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, is attending the 27 September event on Accelerating the Women's Movement for Peace and Humanitarian Action. Later in the session (on 5 and 8 October), the General Assembly is paying particular attention to ending all forms of violence against women and girls, trafficking in women and girls, and female genital mutilations.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian American former US ambassador comes out in support of Preston Kulkarni

HOUSTON, TX (TIP): Indian American Democrat Sri Kulkarni has received a helping hand from an ex-colleague at Foggy Bottom, former US Ambassador to India Richard Verma.

Verma, the first and the only Indian American who served as a US ambassador in India, Wednesday, September 19, sent out an email on behalf of Kulkarni requesting campaign donation and help to elect the Texan.

Highlighting Kulkarni's 14-year stint at the Department of State, Verma stated in the email, "Today, more than ever, we need leaders like Sri who will champion diplomatic solutions and put country over politics."

The 22nd district, which includes several Houston suburbs, has the largest Indian American population in the state. A quarter of the district's population is Hispanic and Asian Americans comprise 18 percent.

If he wins, Kulkarni will become the first Indian American congressman from Texas.

Verma served as US ambassador to India from 2014 to 2017. He is currently a vice chairman and partner at The Asia Group, which provides strategic and business advisory services to companies and organizations working in Asia.

Verma's email:

"I want to tell you about my friend, Sri Kulkarni. Sri and I both served at the State Department together when I was the U.S. Ambassador to India - Sri is a proven leader who has served his family, community, and country for his entire life.

Sri represented America for 14 years as a Foreign Service Officer with overseas tours in Iraq, Israel, Russia, Taiwan and Jamaica. He then served as a foreign policy and defense advisor on Capitol Hill assisting Senator Kirsten Gillibrand on the Senate Armed



Former US Ambassador to India Richard Verma has appealed for support to Sri Kulkarni in his Congressional bid from the 22nd District in Texas

Verma, the first and the only Indian American who served as a US ambassador in India, Wednesday, September 19, sent out an email on behalf of Kulkarni requesting campaign donation and help to elect the Texan.

Services Committee.

Sri has spent his career fighting to ensure that American values are represented in our foreign policy. Now, he's returned to Texas to fight for them here at home.

Today more than ever, we need leaders like Sri who will champion diplomatic solutions and put country over politics. Make a

contribution of \$25, \$50 or \$100 right now to help Sri share his message with voters in TX-22 and bring his diplomatic experience to Congress.

Sri isn't just talking about our values: he's acting on them right now. His team is committed to expanding voter turnout in their district and has volunteers reaching out to people in over a dozen languages. He is committed to making sure that everyone's voice is heard in our democracy.

But with only 48 days left until the election, we're running out of time to make sure everyone in Sri's district hears his message. Make a contribution of \$25, \$50, \$100 or whatever you can, and let's help Sri fight for our values in Congress.

*Rich Verma
United States Ambassador to India, 2014-2017"*

Illegal immigrants among 8 killed in Arizona head-on crash, officials say

NEW YORK (TIP): A head-on collision in Arizona Wednesday, September 19 night killed eight people, including some undocumented immigrants, officials said.

The two-vehicle crash happened around 10 p.m. on State Route 79 south of Florence, Arizona, a news release from the state's Department of Public Safety said. The area is more than 120 miles north of the Mexico border.

A Chevy Suburban with nine individuals inside was driving north on the highway before a Buick traveling the opposite direction slammed into it, officials said.

"It is unknown why the southbound Buick went left of center and collided head on with the Suburban," officials said.

The deceased individuals in the Chevy Suburban were the driver, front seat passenger and four other riders - who were illegal immigrants, according to the news release.

The remaining three passengers - also illegal immigrants - sustained "serious to life-threatening injuries" and were transported to nearby hospitals, officials said.

"Of the nine occupants in the Suburban, the driver, front seat passenger and four additional passengers were killed as a result. Three other passengers are at area hospitals with serious to life-threatening injuries," the news release said. "The driver and front seat passenger are U.S. citizens and the additional seven occupants are undocumented immigrants."

Authorities, with the help of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), are trying to identify the deceased individuals in order to notify their families.

Two people in the Buick - the driver and the person riding in the front seat - also died, officials said, adding that "troopers are working to make next-of-kin notifications." (Source: Fox News)

Acclaimed Kathak dancer Anindita dazzled the audience with her spectacular performance



CHICAGO, IL (TIP): The two - day colorful Indian classical dance festival, Nriya Samarpana 2018 concluded on Sept 15-16, 2018 at Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) Temple here. It was a breathtaking festival which featured top artists from different states of USA and India. There were total 9 featured performers along with performances by the veteran teachers of the Chicagoland area like Gauri Jog, Sobha Tamanna, Ipsita Satpathy and Asha Adiga with their students. It was a glorious two days of vivid showcase of extremely talented artists. The fest showcased artists from classical Indian dances including Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Mohiniattam, Odissi and so on. (Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Florida architect building home from old shipping containers: report

NEW YORK (TIP): It was a few years ago, in 2011, when a Bangalore-based sports instructor, Kameshwar Rao, decided to build a house with containers, which are used to haul cargo in ships. He felt it was better than building an RCC house.

And now it is a man in Florida, USA in 2018, Asghar Fathi who is building a dwelling house with containers in Davie, Florida, which he plans to live in alongside his family, he told the Sun Sentinel in a report Wednesday, September 19.

Elizabeth Zwirz of Fox news in a story quoted Fathi as describing the project materials as "recycling," Fathi said he was hoping "to make an example" of the house.

"It's my own home," he told the outlet. "I am going to live in it."

After the 3,000-square-foot residence is finished in a few months, it'll have several bedrooms and living spaces, as well as a carport and an outdoor deck, according to the Sentinel. It'll also reportedly be constructed to withstand natural forces, like a hurricane.

"This is sustainable, economical and easy to put together if you have the right crew," Fathi said. "It will be hurricane- and termite-proof."



Florida architect Asghar Fathi reportedly found a unique way to build his new home - with old shipping containers

And with the addition of windows and stucco to the home's exterior, "you won't be able to tell there was a container here," Fathi said.

The shipping container home has become a "passion" for Fathi, who told the outlet that he pulled from the work of architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

"He tried to standardize materials, so everyone can do it," Fathi said. "I am basically following his footsteps with a different material so people can have a home without spending millions and millions of dollars."

The price tag for the venture is anticipated to come in at around \$250,000 at completion, he told the Sun Sentinel.

GOVT MOOTS PLAN TO DIGITISE CITIZEN HEALTH RECORDS BY 2022



NEW DELHI (TIP): The government has mooted an ambitious plan to digitise health records of all Indians by 2022.

A new paper by National Institute for Transforming India speaks of creating a national digital health framework usable by the Centre and states across government and private sectors, a framework resting on two pillars -- national health registry and personal health records of citizens.

Entitled, "National Health Stack: Strategy and Approach", the paper has a message from VK Paul, Member, Health, NITI Aayog, who says, "The National Health Stack (NHS) represents a holistic platform that supports a multitude of health verticals and their disparate branches, and is capable of integrating future IT solutions for a sector poised for rapid, disruptive changes and unforeseen twists. It is now conceivable to aim for digital health records for all citizens by the year 2022."

11 lions found dead in Gir

AHMEDABAD (TIP): The sudden death of 11 lions in the last few days in the Gir sanctuary in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat has caused anxiety to forest department officials. Sources confirmed the recovery of 11 bodies of lions and at least four of them are believed to have died in some infectious disease. The bodies of the lions have been sent for post-mortem. Sources said most of the bodies were found near Dekhaniya village in the Amreli-Dhari range.

Three policemen abducted and killed by militants in Kashmir's Shopian

SRINAGAR (TIP): Three policemen, two of them special police officers, were kidnapped on Thursday night and killed hours later in south Kashmir's Shopian, considered the hotbed of militancy in the state.

A fourth person, brother of a policeman, who had also been abducted was, however, released on Friday morning.

The kidnappings took place in Kapran village. No militant group has yet claimed responsibility.

But terror group, Hizbul Mujahideen, had recently delivered what it had called was the "final warning" to the special police officers, or SPOs, to quit by September 19.

In recent times, militants have targeted policemen. Last week, suspected militants killed a 45-year-old army man, who was home to mourn the death of his teenage son in Kulgam.

Last month, 11 members of police families were abducted but later released unharmed.

In June, Army soldier Aurangzeb was abducted from a private vehicle when he was going home for Eid in Shopian. His body was recovered from a Pulwama village.

MILITANT KILLED IN ENCOUNTER

An unidentified militant was killed in an ongoing encounter with security forces in the forest area of Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, police said, taking the number of ultras killed in the operation to two.



An Army official said while one militant was killed on Thursday, the body of another militant was recovered on Friday morning.

INDIA TO TAKE UP WITH PAK BSF MAN'S 'BARBARIC KILLING'

India said on Thursday it will take up the "barbaric" killing of a Border Security Force (BSF) jawan with Pakistan in an "appropriate manner" and added that the incident was "against all international norms".

BSF jawan Narender Singh's body was found on Wednesday with bullet wounds and his throat slit in Jammu along the border with Pakistan, according to two officials who asked not to be named. They suspected Pakistani troops to be behind the act.

"We are ascertaining the facts on this matter.. I can say (it is) a barbaric incident which not only defies logic, not

only defies civilised behaviour, but also is against all international norms," external affairs ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.

"It is a very serious issue and definitely we will take it up with the Pakistani side in an appropriate manner," Kumar added. The BSF also registered a protest with Pakistan Rangers over the "unsoldierly" act, an official of the agency said on the condition of anonymity.

Union home minister Rajnath Singh told reporters that he spoke to BSF chief KK Sharma on the day the mutilated body of the BSF jawan was found at the India-Pakistan border.

A home ministry official said the BSF, which guards the international border, has been given a "free hand" to deal with such incidents at the border. "The BSF has been asked to give appropriate reply to the murder of BSF jawan by the Pakistani forces," the official added.

271 million people moved out of poverty in India: UN Development Programme

NEW DELHI (TIP): India has made momentous progress in reducing multidimensional poverty with its incidence almost halving between 2005-6 and 2015-16, climbing down to 27.5 per cent from 54.7 per cent, according to estimates from the 2018 global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

"In India, the first country for which progress over time has been estimated, 271 million people moved out of poverty between 2005-06 and 2015-16. The poverty rate here has nearly halved, falling from around 55 per cent to around 28 per cent over the 10-year period," said the estimates released on Thursday by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

Among South Asian countries, only Maldives has a lower headcount ratio than India at 1.9 per cent, with Nepal (35.3), Bangladesh (41.1), and Pakistan (43.9) having higher incidences of multidimensional poverty.

According to a UNDP statement, though the traditionally disadvantaged groups - across states, castes, religions, and ages - are still the poorest, they have also experienced the biggest reductions in MPI through the decade, showing that they have been "catching up".

It said this is in line with global trends, where deeper progress among the poorest groups is reflected in the global MPI being cut by half.

The release said that pockets of poverty are



found across India, but multidimensional poverty is particularly acute -- and significant -- in the four states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. These accounted for 196 million MPI poor people -- more than half of all MPI poor in India.

But there was also progress. Jharkhand made the biggest strides among all states in reducing multidimensional poverty, with Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Nagaland only slightly behind.

Delhi, Kerala and Goa have the lowest

incidence of multidimensional poverty.

Across nearly every state, poor nutrition is the largest contributor to multidimensional poverty. Not having a household member with at least six years of education is the second largest contributor. Insufficient access to clean water and child mortality contribute least. Relatively fewer people living in poverty experience deprivations in school attendance - a significant gain.

The MPI looks beyond income to understand how people experience poverty in

India has made momentous progress in reducing multidimensional poverty with its incidence almost halving between 2005-6 and 2015-16, climbing down to 27.5 percent from 54.7 percent

multiple and simultaneous ways. It identifies how people are being left behind across three key dimensions: health, education and living standards, and 10 indicators - nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, sanitation, cooking fuel, drinking water, electricity, housing and assets.

The 2018 report, which is now closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, cover almost three-quarters of the world's population.

Despite the massive gains made in reducing multidimensional poverty, 364 million Indians continue to experience acute deprivations in health, nutrition, schooling and sanitation.

Globally, around 1.3 billion people live in multidimensional poverty, which is almost a quarter of the population of the 104 countries for which the 2018 MPI is calculated. Of these 1.3 billion, almost half -- 46 per cent -- are thought to be living in severe poverty and are deprived in at least half of the dimensions covered in the MPI. *Source: IANS*

Govt orders probe into crisis on Jet Airways flight, 35 passengers suffered bleeding

MUMBAI (TIP): What should have been an uneventful 105-minute hop from Mumbai to Jaipur turned into a nightmare for 166 passengers Jet Airways flight 9W 697, after the crew forgot to turn on the so-called “bleed switch” resulting in a drop in cabin pressure that caused headaches, and bleeding noses and ears and forcing the flight to return to Mumbai. It was all over in 48 minutes but it left the passengers scared and mentally scarred and prompted the civil aviation minister to set up a probe.

The flight’s cockpit crew has been taken off scheduled duties pending investigation.

The pilot in command (PIC) of the flight had an experience of 14 years with five years as a commander.

The incident, possibly the first of its kind in India, saw emergency masks being automatically deployed and 30 passengers being rushed to a hospital for treatment.

Experts said fluctuations in air pressure inside aircraft cabins is not unusual but it is rare for cabin pressure to change drastically because of human error.

9W697, carrying 166 passengers and five crew members, was originally scheduled to depart at 5.55am, but took off at 6.16am.

According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the crew forgot to select the bleed switch during the climb due to which cabin pressure could not be maintained, causing discomfort to passengers. The flight



Passengers on board the Mumbai-Jaipur Jet Airways flight wear oxygen masks during an emergency after cabin pressure drop, in Mumbai.

returned to the airport at around 7.04 am. Minister of civil aviation Suresh Prabhu has instituted an investigation into the incident by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau.

“The 9W 697 Mumbai-Jaipur flight was turned back to Mumbai after takeoff as, during the climb, crew forgot to select switch to maintain cabin pressure. This resulted in the oxygen masks dropping. Thirty out of 166 passengers experienced nose and ear bleeding, some also complained of headache,” Lalit Gupta, deputy director general, DGCA said. Jet Airways, in a statement, said it would assist DGCA in the investigation. “Following the air-turn back of Jet Airways’ flight of 20th September, 2018; 144 of the 166 guests of the original flight traveled to Jaipur via an alternative

flight of the airline, while 17 of them wished to travel at another point in time. 5 guests who were referred to a hospital for additional medical check-up accompanied by the Jet Airways’ Care team have since been released, post medical examination.” The airline didn’t apologise for the incident. Loss of cabin pressure could result in hypoxia or the deprivation of oxygen. In on extreme case in 2005, a Helios Airline flight crashed into a mountain after the pilots lost consciousness from hypoxia. Oxygen deprivation is also the cause of headaches, nausea, and nosebleeds. A sudden drop in air pressure can be fatal for people with pre-existing conditions such as hypertension and cardiac anomalies, doctors said. “There is a cavity in our oral and nasal passages and sudden change in air pressure of the surroundings negatively impairs the internal air pressure maintained in these cavities, thus causing bleeding through nose, ears or mouth. At the same time, the sudden drop in the pressure and lack of oxygen supply to the brain can also cause strokes, paralysis or convulsions in some people,” said Dr Ashwinikumar Patil, assistant professor, neurology and stroke specialist at KEM Hospital.

Doctors said that the drop in air-pressure in the surrounding affects people differently. “While it usually causes heaviness in the head, dizziness and drowsiness in some, it can also be fatal for people with high blood pressure and a history of heart attacks,” Dr Patil added.

Source: HT

ARUN JAITLEY CALLS RAHUL GANDHI A ‘CLOWN PRINCE’ WHO SPREADS LIES



NEW DELHI (TIP): Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, in a Facebook note titled: ‘Falsehood of a Clown Prince’, has accused Congress President Rahul Gandhi of leading a falsehood campaign on the Rafale deal and waving loans worth Rs 2,50,000 crores given to 15 industrialists.

“You lied on the Rafale deal, you lied on the NPAs. Your temperament to concoct facts raises a legitimate question – do people whose natural preference is falsehood deserve to be a part of the public discourse.

“Public discourse is a serious activity. It is not a laughter challenge. It cannot be reduced to a hug, a wink or repetition of falsehood. The world’s largest democracy must seriously introspect whether public discourse should be allowed to be polluted by the falsehood of a ‘Clown Prince’,” Jaitley wrote.

On NPAs, Jaitley alleged a bulk of the bad loans were hidden under the carpet by the UPA government and they took no steps to recover them. He credited the NDA government for introducing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and enabling banks to recover the defaulted loans.

“The banks under UPA took no steps to recover these loans. They did not prosecute a single major debtor who had siphoned off money. It is the NDA Government which through IBC, changed the debtor-creditor relationship and enabled the banks to effectively pursue the recovery. The truth, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, is that your Government allowed the banks to be looted. The loans were inadequately securitized. Your Government was in complicity. The recoveries are being done by the banks only now,” he wrote.

Swaraj to raise Kartarpur Sahib issue during meet with Pakistan foreign minister: MEA

NEW DELHI (TIP): External affairs minister Sushma Swaraj will raise the issue of allowing access to Indian pilgrims to the Sikh holy shrine of Kartarpur Sahib during her meeting with Pakistan foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in New York, officials said.

Swaraj will have a meeting with Qureshi on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

At a media briefing, external affairs ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said the issue of Kartarpur Sahib will be raised by Swaraj during the meeting. He said India has been taking up the issue with Pakistan on inclusion of the Sikh holy shrine in the protocol between India and Pakistan on visit to religious shrines.

“The matter has been taken up with the Pakistani side several times in the past,” he said. However, Kumar said, Pakistan is yet to respond to India’s request.

“Even now, we have not received any official communication that the Pakistani government is willing to consider this matter. The external affairs minister will, therefore, raise this issue in her meeting with the Pakistani foreign minister on the sidelines of UNGA,” he said.

After his visit to Pakistan last month, cricketer-turned politician Navjot Singh Sidhu had claimed that Pakistan Army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa told him that Islamabad was working for opening Kartarpur Sahib corridor for Sikh pilgrims from Indian state of Punjab.



Mohan Bhagwat rejects MS Golwalkar’s rigid Hindutva norms in quest to project RSS as a progressive organisation

NEW DELHI (TIP): When Mohan Bhagwat publicly repudiated RSS’ second and longest-serving chief MS Golwalkar’s radical Hindutva thoughts as contained in Bunch of Thoughts during a two-hour long question-answer session on the concluding day of his three-day lecture series in New Delhi’s Vigyan Bhawan he was not making an off the cuff remark. He was stating a considered view, which has been in vogue within the Sangh Parivar for over a decade but had so far not been made public.

The serving fountainhead of Sangh Parivar, Bhagwat thought it was time to let it be known to the wider world that the organisation has evolved beyond those thoughts and has not shied away in discarding ideas and philosophies which were not in sync with changing time.

By doing so and by talking at length with clarity on all contentious issues — ranging from “remote control or phone call from Nagpur to Modi government”, position of women, Hindu, Hindutva, Hindu Rashtra, belief in Indian Constitution, position on national flag, dictatorial divisive organisation, Section 377, its position on Muslims and



Christians, Ram Mandir and whole lot of other issues — the three-day lecture series by Bhagwat, the first of its kind in RSS’ 93-year-old history in a way succeeded in what it strived to achieve, to portray it as a liberal nationalist socio-cultural organisation, which was inclusive and not “divisive Hindu force”.

But the biggest takeaway was his redefinition of what Hindu, Hindutva, Hindu Rashtra meant for them. To do so it was important that he clarified RSS’ position on Golwalkar’s contention.

Consider what Bhagwat as the then Sarkayawah of RSS wrote in the foreword of the book, MS Golwalkar: His Vision and Mission: “Twelve volumes containing Sri Guruji speeches writings conversation and letters they have already been brought out. Naturally,

they cover many subjects, some of them of contemporary relevance and some others of all time relevance. Time never stands still and circumstances do change. But thoughts of eternal values have relevance all through, they are ever sought for as and when occasions arise and in turn, they give right guidance providing right solutions. With this belief, a small team of capable hands joined together to gather such abiding thoughts of Sri Guruji from the aforesaid volumes and this anthology is the results.”

The book was released in India and abroad in 2008 and was republished in October 2016.

Golwalkar who is popularly called as Guruji in Sangh Parivar circles is credited for the aggressive expansion of the organisation including allowing Swayamsewaks to branch out in various fields and work as its affiliates. But his radical thoughts about Hindus, democracy, Muslims, Hindu Rashtra as contained in his book Bunch of Thoughts have often been embarrassing to the RSS and to the BJP. Critics, Left-liberals and ideological opponents would pick up a portion or two to run down the RSS.

AGELESS ICON TONY BENNETT With Antonia Bennett, Special Guest Perform At NJPAC

Bennett & Krall Reincarnate Gershwin Classics, Tony Bennett Celebrates his 92nd Birthday

"No one expected me to compose music. I just did. What I have done is what was in me; the combination of New York, where I was born, and the rising, exhilarating rhythm of it, with centuries of hereditary feeling back of me." - **George Gershwin, 1926**

At 92, TONY BENNETT is not slowing down. Tony's newest album, a collaborative project with longtime-friend-and-colleague Diana Krall, is their 1st full album project together. The album titled, LOVE IS HERE TO STAY, released on September 14, 2018 celebrates the music of the brothers and composer-collaborators George and Ira Gershwin on Verve Records/Columbia Records just in time for the 120th Anniversary of George Gershwin's birthday, September 26th.

On the same day, a new book, TONY BENNETT: ON STAGE AND IN THE STUDIO, has been released. It provides an insightful look into Tony's illustrious recording career highlighted by an extensive array of photographs, memorabilia, and artwork.

Tony Bennett's recent album, Tony Bennett Celebrates 90, won a Grammy Award this past February for his son Dae Bennett who produced the album. Bennett also appeared on the 60th Anniversary Grammy Awards telecast and presented an award with John Legend, who sang with Tony on the 2006 Tony Bennett: DUETS recording. This past November, the Library Of Congress presented Bennett with The Gershwin Prize marking the first time that an interpretive singer has been honored. The event was broadcast on PBS Nationally last January and featured tribute performances by Stevie Wonder, Josh Groban, Michael Bublé, Gloria Estefan and many others. His signature song, I Left My Heart In San Francisco, was inducted this year in the National Recordings Registry.

His long list of achievements, spanning over 60 years, includes nineteen Grammy Awards, including the prestigious Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, a Kennedy Center Honoree, an NEA Jazz Master and a recipient of the United Nation's Humanitarian and Citizen of the World honors. His signature tunes, such as Steppin' Out With My Baby and I Left My Heart In San Francisco form part of the fabric of American music culture. Often billed as the world's most boyish octogenarian, TONY BENNETT is a vital musical artist at the peak of his powers.

To learn more about Diana Krall, visit www.dianakrall.com

Facebook: <https://Verve.Ink.to/DianaFBPR>

Twitter: <https://Verve.Ink.to/DianaTwitterPR>

Instagram: <https://Verve.Ink.to/DianaIGPR>

LOVE IS HERE TO STAY: TRACK LISTING

1. 'S Wonderful
2. My One And Only
3. But Not For Me (Diana Krall solo)
4. Nice Work If You Can Get It
5. Love Is Here To Stay
6. I Got Rhythm
7. Somebody Loves Me
8. Do It Again
9. I've Got A Crush On You
10. Fascinating Rhythm
11. They Can't Take That Away From Me
12. Who Cares? (Tony Bennett solo)

For more information on the Gershwins, visit: www.gershwin.com

To learn more about Verve, visit www.vervelabelgroup.com

To learn more about Columbia Records, visit www.columbiarecords.com

By Mabel Pais

"We aren't likely to see a recording career like this again." - **The New York Times**

"...his voice is still a technical marvel, and no one else on Earth can make a lyric written eight decades ago sound as natural as a conversation at a coffee shop." - **New York Magazine**

"Ageless" TONY BENNETT, as he has been called, the 19-time Grammy Award-winning musician whose music spans over six decades returns once again to The New Jersey Performing Art Center (NJPAC) via Metropolitan Entertainment and NJPAC on Saturday, October 6, 2018 at 8pm. Bennett returns, having sold out previous concerts at NJPAC.

Tony Bennett's daughter, Antonia Bennett has been touring with her father and will open the performance with a collection of jazz/pop standards. Antonia Bennett is a graduate of the prestigious Berklee College of Music.

ABOUT TONY BENNETT: Tony Bennett's Life and Philosophy is the embodiment of the Great American Story. His 90th birthday on August 3, 2016, unprecedented, marked his career as the pre-eminent singer of the 20th and 21st centuries. He continues to be embraced and loved by audiences of all generations. In the last ten years alone he has sold ten million records.

Through his dedication to excellence and his insistence on quality, he has become the keeper of the flame by extolling the virtues and values represented by the Great American Songbook.

His love for his country has earned him the distinction of national treasure and United Nations has named him a Citizen of the World as one of their foremost ambassadors.

Through his music, His life story is compelling in the lessons and values that it teaches: dedication, commitment, courage, and compassion.



Tony Bennett with daughter Antonia Bennett
Photo / Courtesy, www.AntoniaBennett.com

The essence of his longevity and high artistic achievement was imbued in him in his loving childhood home in Astoria, Queens, New York where he was born on August 3, 1926 and nurtured his two passions: singing and painting. From the radio, he developed a love of music hearing Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong, and James Durante.

Bennett's big break came in 1949 when comedian Bob Hope noticed him working with Pearl Bailey in Greenwich Village in New York City. "We'll call you Tony Bennett," said Bob Hope.

Tony Bennett is one of a handful of artists to have new albums charting in the 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's, and now in the first two decades of the 21st century. He has introduced a multitude of songs into the Great American Songbook that have since become standards for pop music.

On August 3rd 2016, Tony Bennett celebrated his 90th birthday which was marked by the lighting of the Empire State Building in honor of his musical legacy along with a star-studded celebration at the famed Rainbow Room. Later that year NBC aired a two-hour prime time special, TONY BENNETT CELEBRATES 90: THE BEST IS YET TO COME which featured performances by Lady Gaga, Stevie Wonder, Billy Joel, Bob Dylan, Michael Buble and many more. Columbia Records released a Grammy-winning companion CD to the television special, and Tony's fifth



Tony Bennett
Photo/ Courtesy Larry Busacca

book, Just Getting Started was published.

He continues to paint every day, even as he tours internationally. Three of his paintings are part of the Smithsonian Museums permanent collections including his portrait of his friend Duke Ellington that became part of the National Portrait Gallery's collection in 2009.

Throughout his career, Tony Bennett has been active in environmental concerns and social justice.

In 1999, Tony Bennett, with his wife Susan Benedetto, a former public school teacher, founded Exploring the Arts (ETA) to strengthen the role of the arts in public high school education. ETA programs are designed to help school principals and teachers sustain the arts in the face of budget cuts and better leverage the arts to strengthen student learning and engagement.

To learn more about Tony Bennett, visit www.tonybennett.com.

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(Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Health and Wellness, and Spirituality)



Tony Bennett with Diana Krall

Photo / Courtesy, www.TonyBennett.com

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DEEPIKA PADUKONE TO STAR IN MEGHNA GULZAR'S NEXT?

After the super-successful 'Padmavat', Deepika Padukone hasn't signed any projects. She was supposed to star in Vishal Bharadwaj's next opposite Irrfan Khan but the project has been kept on the back burner due to the actor's illness.

However, if reports are to be believed, Deepika is currently in talks with Raazi director Meghna Gulzar for a project. According to a report published by DNA, the 'Om Shanti Om' star has signed a film with Meghna Gulzar. The duo are currently discussing the project and the details regarding the project are being strictly guarded.

Moreover, Deepika is also rumoured to have signed the Chalbaaz remake where she will play a double role and step into the shoes of late actress Sridevi who starred in the original.

At present, the actress is in news for her fairytale Italian wedding with rumoured beau Ranveer Singh in November this year. The wedding will supposedly be a private affair with only 30 guests attending the ceremony. This will be followed by grand receptions in Mumbai and Bengaluru.

The rumoured couple, affectionately called DeepVeer by fans, have been reportedly dating since 2013. They have kept their relationship under wraps since the very beginning and refused to comment on their love life.

SUNNY LEONE UNVEILS WAX STATUE AT DELHI'S MADAME TUSSAUDS



Sunny Leone has got waxed and will be sharing the space with Bollywood's who's who at Delhi's Madame Tussauds. The adult star-turned Bollywood actor shared her excitement about unveiling her wax statue on her Instagram handle. "So excited to be going to the unveiling of my @madametussaudsdelhi figure in Delhi today," she posted.

Other personalities that have their statues at Madame Tussauds, Delhi, include Amitabh Bachchan, Virat Kohli, Shah Rukh Khan and Anil Kapoor. Sunny had earlier spoken about her statue finding

a place at the museum. "I am thrilled and grateful to Madame Tussauds for creating my figure. Having my own wax figure is completely overwhelming. This is the first time I have undergone a sitting and I must thank the entire team for making it a unique and memorable experience. I am equally excited to see 'me' at the attraction. Madame Tussauds is a 'one-of-a-kind' attraction and I am so thrilled to be chosen for this incredible honour," she had said.

Over 200 specific measurements of Sunny by a team of experts from London. Unlike many of the earlier statues of

Bollywood actors, Sunny's looks almost lifelike. Earlier, the actor launched the second season of a web series based on her life, Karenjit Kaur: The Untold Story of Sunny Leone. "The experience was a lot more difficult than I thought it was going to be. I have told the stories and I know what they are. It can't be as difficult as some other film. It was very hard emotional journey for me. But I am happy that I got to tell the truth, no matter how difficult it was for me," she said about the web show.

Source: HT

Salman Khan introduces veteran actress Nutan's granddaughter Pranutan Bahl

Superstar Salman Khan on Monday introduced Pranutan Bahl, who would star in a film opposite debutante Zaheer Iqbal. Pranutan Bahl is the granddaughter of late veteran actress Nutan and the daughter of actor Mohnish Bahl who has worked with Salman in hits like 'Maine Pyaar Kiya' and 'Hum Apke Hain Kaun'.

Taking to twitter, Salman wrote, "Yeh lo! Zahero ki heroine mil gayi. Swagat karo Pranutan Bahl ka. Proud to introduce Nutanji's granddaughter & Monya's daughter to the big screen."

Produced by Salman Khan Films, Murad Khetani and Ashwin Varde, the film will be directed by Nitin Kakkar. The shooting, which will take place entirely in Kashmir, is touted to begin later this month.

Salman had made a huge show of introducing his fans to Zaheer, building up to the reveal on Twitter. Zaheer, who is the son of Salman's childhood friend, does not have a film background. The actor wrote that he still owes him money and launching Zaheer is a payback of sorts. "N this is

my childhood frnd Iqbal, as a teen he was my bank, I still owe him 2011rs . thnk God he did not take interest bete ko launch Kar raha hoon toh baap ka post toh karsakta hoon na. Lv the pic," he wrote.

Salman had been personally overseeing Zaheer's training for the last few months. In fact, he's the one who named him 'Zahero'.

Zaheer and Pranutan are not the first ones to be introduced or mentored by Salman. They join a long list of stars and star kids including Hrithik Roshan, Sooraj Pancholi, Arjun Kapoor, Pulkit Samrat and Katrina Kaif, among several others, whom Salman has mentored. However, refusing to be acknowledged as a godfather to many Bollywood star, Salman had said, "Somebody gave me a break so I am doing the same. It's also because my upbringing has been very correct. There's no insecurity or jealousy. I like people to be successful and have a great future ahead. If you are doing well, your family is doing well. Every day that I don't work I feel guilty."





SINGING FOR A BOLLYWOOD FILM WILL BE A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE: SELENA GOMEZ

Singer-actor Selena Gomez is open to singing in a Bollywood film, and says it will be a beautiful experience.

Asked if she would consider singing for a Bollywood film, she told IANS: "I've never been asked that! Why not, I think that would be beautiful."

Gomez found fame as a child through a Disney show *Wizards of Waverly Place*. She is known for making hits such as *Come and Get It*, *The Heart Wants What It Wants*, *Bad Liar*, *Wolves and Back to You*.

She has said in the past that she prefers acting over singing and does not like to sing in her acting projects. "I don't know. My heart has always been in acting. But music has been extremely dominating in my life and I am grateful for both... I love both, but I would like to be more in acting," she told IANS.

As an actor she has been a part of projects such as *The Greatest Showman* and the hugely popular *Hotel Transylvania* franchise. The third part, *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation*, was released in India in July.

KATE HUDSON ALL SET TO WELCOME BABY GIRL



Kate Hudson and Danny Fujikawa are counting down the days until their baby girl makes her grand entrance into the world.

The mom and dad prepared for the little one's arrival on Wednesday afternoon by testing out all the gadgets and gizmos they stocked up on ahead of the birth. In one photo from the actress' Instagram Story, Danny models a baby bjorn and white hat.

Since announcing they were expecting their first child together in April, the pair has been feverishly decorating their home and, of course, the nursery. The actress shared a photo of a bare bones room in

June, just as workers began demolishing the Hudson and Fujikawa's home. "So...I've just begun a big renovation on my home and seeing as I love nothing more than a good home reno show on tv, I thought I would share mine with you and let you in on some of my choices," she wrote. "This has been a long time coming for me and now that I'm in 'nesting' mode it couldn't come at a more perfect time."

She later shared a sneak peek of her ambitious plans for her bathroom, as well as other items of inspiration.

The couple isn't alone in their eagerness to hold their baby girl, because their family

and friends are probably just as excited. When Kate and Danny revealed they were expecting a daughter, Kate's close friend and Danny's step-sister, Sara Foster, elatedly wrote on Instagram, "I'm so excited!!!! Finally a girl!!!!!!"

And Erin Foster echoed the same excitement when she talked to E! News' Sibley Scoles, but she also made sure to make a not-so-subtle suggestion that she should be godmother since she basically helped the pair get together. "It's the right thing to do," the star joked.

It's safe to say this is going to be one happy and loved-up baby.

Kate Beckinsale won't do another Underworld

Having appeared in five of the series' six instalments between 2003 and 2017, Kate Beckinsale has revealed to *Variety* that she has no interest reprising the role of Selene for another entry in the action horror franchise *Underworld*, with the actress stating that her work on blockbusters "were the worst misery" of her life.

"I wouldn't return," said Beckinsale. "I've done plenty of those. I've done indie movies where I'm sitting on a piece of folded carpet and it was wonderful. I've done great big movies that were the worst misery of my life. It all depends. At university, I studied Russian and French. I never studied drama, so I always felt like from the beginning of my career that it was an apprenticeship. That freed me up to try a lot of things. It gave me a lot of latitude. I started out in the indie space. I never anticipated doing one of those heavy-weight, very physical franchise things. It was scary to see myself on movie posters on the side of every single bus."

While there hasn't been any talk of a seventh *Underworld* movie (yet), Beckinsale's ex-husband and series creator Len Wiseman is



working on a TV spinoff, which he has said "will be a pretty big departure from the films."

The actress knows happiness isn't

serendipitous — it's something that requires work.

"I think it's really hard to remain happy. I

don't think we're supposed to be in a state of happiness all the time," Beckinsale, star of the "Underworld" movies and "Pearl Harbor", told *TODAY*, during recent a trip to New York City. "Being content or being OK is hard in this day and age when there is so much information flying at you, so much anxiety and all that."

The actress, who is also the U.S. brand ambassador for Russell Hobbs, a small domestic appliance brand in the UK, recently took up meditation to enhance her days, at first with skepticism.

"The meditating thing is something I resisted for decades. It used to irritate me when people used to say, 'you should do that.' Actually, I've found it completely transformative."

Since incorporating meditation into her daily schedule a few months ago, Beckinsale practices every day for 15 minutes at a time.

"As a culture, we've become not used to taking a still pause. It's so good for you. I'm blown away by how helpful it's been," she said.

The 45-year-old doesn't use a phone app, but she Skypes with an instructor in Los Angeles who helps her practice.



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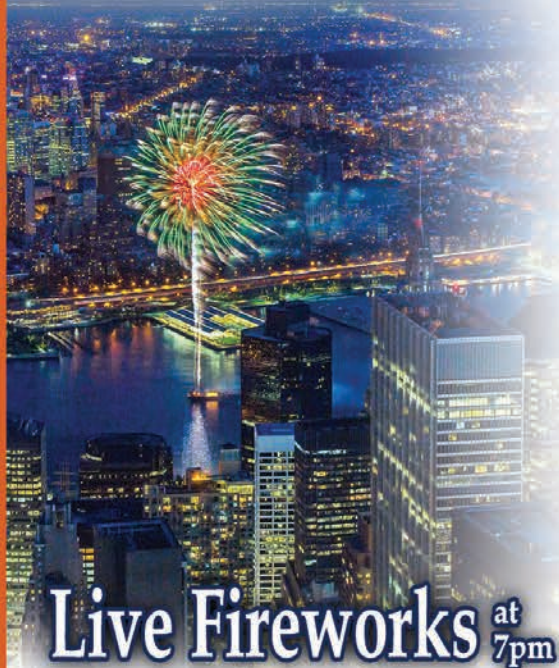
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World will be celebrating 550th birth anniversary of the First Master of the Sikhs, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the year 2019. The Indian Panorama is launching from the current edition a series of articles by eminent scholars on Guru Nanak.

The first in the series is an article by eminent Sikh scholar Dr. Harbans Lal.

Dr. Lal in the present article pleads for a corridor to connect Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan's Narowal district with Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak Sahib on the Eastern side of the river Ravi, saying it will be a befitting tribute to Guru Nanak on his 550th birth anniversary in the Year 2019.- EDITOR

International Peace Bridge Connecting Kartarpur in Pakistan and Dera Baba Nanak in India



**By Harbans Lal, Ph.D.;
D.Litt. (Hons)**



In the past few days, Punjab minister Navjot Singh Sidhu brought good news. He announced that the Pakistan Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa had told him that Islamabad would open a corridor to connect Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan's Narowal district with Gurdwara Dera Sahib on the Eastern side of the river Ravi. This was a gesture on the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in the Year 2019.

General Bajwa's announcement expressed the honest and far-sighted view of the newly elected Pakistan Prime Minister, Imran Khan - who confirmed the promise soon after by a direct statement from the Prime Minister's office.

Navjot was not alone, the Chief Minister of Punjab Sardar Amarinder Singh was right behind the long-awaited gesture between the two countries. They have already submitted a letter of proposal to the Government of India on their corridor plan.

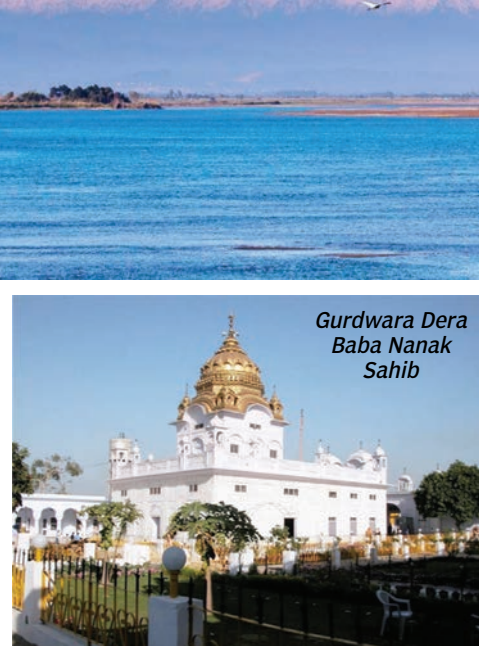
India and Pakistan have been at each other's throat for the past seven decades. The wounds of partition were not tending to heal. Instead, they were waiting for the skies to open to shower any healing balm from the above. The 550th year of Guru Nanak's advent may well be such a juncture.



**Gurdwara
Kartarpur
Sahib**

Guru Nanak was born at Talwandi that was later named after him as Nanakana. It is only 170 km from the West banks of the river Ravi, where Guru Nanak established the town of Kartarpur and spent last 18 years of his life. There, he founded a worldwide movement which is now known as Sikhism. That, in turn, made Kartarpur Gurdwara as the Sikhs' most sacred and most historic Gurdwara, akin to Holy Medina for the Muslim world. Besides, Kartarpur is holy to not only Sikhs but to civil societies at large because of the universal peace message that its unique history imparts for all civil societies.

Kartarpur is situated on the Western banks of river Ravi. Across from Kartarpur on the Eastern banks of Ravi is the town of Dera Baba Nanak, where Guru Nanak visited often. His in-laws lived there, and Guru Nanak's family was taken care in the same city during his long journeys.



**Gurdwara Dera
Baba Nanak
Sahib**

For centuries during and after the days of Guru Nanak, devotees routinely traveled both ways on the bridge across Ravi to pay obeisance to Gurdwaras in Kartarpur and Dera Baba Nanak. They visited there for daily prayers and inspirations as well as to touch the dust of the land where Guru Nanak ingrained his footsteps.



A Painting of Kartarpur Bridge. The road and railroad bridge connecting the two holy shrines was constructed by the British Govt, around 1927 AD.

However, the war between Pakistan and India broke out, and this sacred bridge became a casualty; the air-force bombed it for defense reasons. Although the war was only short-lived, the loss of the bridge was forever to the agony of all lovers of Guru Nanak; the offending government never rebuilt the fatally damaged bridge. Soon after the war, Sri Nanakana Sahib Foundation under the leadership of Sardar Ganga Singh made as its agenda to restore the corridor bridge.

At the Annual meeting of the Nanakana Foundation at its 25th Anniversary in Lahore, we resolved to ask for the reconstruction of the bridge and constituted a delegation under the leadership of Sardar Ganga Singh to meet with the President of Pakistan and other Pakistani authorities. It was so done. The Sikh delegation met with the President of Pakistan and other Pakistani authorities to move forward our

proposal. Similarly, we held a National conference of the Pakistani Muslim Ulemas (Islamic religious scholars) in Lahore to establish the Muslim-Sikh Itihad (unity) organization in order to promote the issue further

Peace Bridge. The caviar was that both Pakistan and India had to consent and apply for the loan together. Initial inquiries told us that it would not be possible to have Govt. of India to support the bridge on account of security concerns.

There was no follow up of the proposals and



International delegation of Sikhs in Pakistan

The international representatives who took active part in the deliberations in Lahore meetings included, Col. Chaudhary Hamid Ali, President Nanakana Foundation, Sardar Ganga Singh Dhillon, Dr. Bhai Harbans Lal, Sardar Joginder Singh advocate, Sardar Hukam Singh, Sardar Harbhajan Singh, Sardar Kesar Singh Dhaliwal, Sardar and Sardarni Bawa Ujagar Singh, Bibi Kanwaljit Kaur, Sardar Balwant Singh Goraya, Sardar Kesar Singh, Sardar Kartar Singh Bal, Sardar Bhupinder Singh, Sardar Satnam Singh Bhugra, Sardar Gyan Singh, Sardar Harpal Singh Bhullar, Sardar Permindar Singh Soch and others.

(My apology for the names that I have forgotten since the Lahore conference, and group photos including everyone that I do not have in my records-HL).

Among other issues of the free excess to the Sikh shrines in Pakistan, we asked that a corridor bridge is built and designated as the Baba Nanak International Peace Bridge. We explored various avenues for the construction and financing the International Peace Bridge on Ravi to connect the two Sikh historical sight. At this time, the Pakistan Govt had already announced the formation of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak (management) Committee. The Govt. thus was friendly towards our proposals.

It is at about the same time; the then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan on the opening of the Delhi-Lahore bus service. His inner circles told us that he talked about the corridor issue with Pakistan Government. Obviously, these conversations were perhaps off the record. Perhaps because of all these pressures that, in November 2000, on the birthday of Guru Nanak, a proclamation was held in Lahore that the Government of Pakistan was ready to make collaboration on the corridor project if there was a positive response from the Government of India.

It was on that occasion that with the help of Sardar Harbhajan Singh of the World Bank office in Washington DC, our delegation also met with the World Bank authorities in Pakistan. There, in response to our proposal of the Guru Nanak International Peace Bridge, we were told that the World Bank could advance a loan of up to 15 million dollars to build the International

announcements of those years on the governmental level to my knowledge. Despite all demands, due to a non-mutual agreement between the two sides, the joint corridor has not been undertaken. Although, it is often claimed that both the governments of the two sides are showing strenuous efforts to initiate a peace process. Since the diplomatic view of both sides is not clear, the plan for this project is not succeeding.

In 2001, an old colleague of the All India Sikh Students' Federation, Jathedar Kuldeep Singh Wadala founded 'Kartarpur Sahib-Ravi Darshan Abhalashashi Sanstha' in order to raise the public consciousness in both Punjab. He spoke at numerous public meetings and widely distributed literature supporting this issue. After this, nearly half-a-dozen organizations sprang up into action to realize this goal of building the corridor.

Waiting for three-quarters of a century to travel around two miles, the news from our current Sikh Punjab ministers, Navjot Singh and Amarinder Singh, is very welcome news. Nearly 300 million admirers of Guru Nanak all over the world are very jubilant; they will be more so when they walk over the peace bridge in the name of Guru Nanak.

Presently Sikhs in India visit the Indian side of the river Ravi to have a glimpse of the Gurdwara Kartarpur located on the Pakistani side of the river. They use binoculars provided by the security forces. This is all because of the wrangles in obtaining visas. The Baba Nanak International Bridge will be not only a welcome gesture for the Sikhs all over the world, but it will enhance the psyche of the peace process in the subcontinent. Let us pray that Pakistani Naval Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Punjab Cabinet Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu succeed in the efforts they jointly initiated. When the bridge is complete, its name as The Baba Nanak International Peace Bridge will be very appropriate. Sri Nanakana Sahib Foundation conceived this name in 2000 to pay homage to the Guru Nanak's efforts across the continents to unite the warring communities in South East Asia and the Islamic countries.

*Visit for articles on Sikhism,
Dr. Harbans Lal's Blog
<https://seekingwisdomblog.wordpress.com/>
Dr. Lal can be reached at Japji2050@gmail.com*

Support in UK for more tax and spending at 15-year high: Survey

The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) said its survey, based on interviews conducted in 2017, showed 60 per cent of respondents backed more tax and spending, up from 49 per cent in 2016 and 31 per cent in 2010.

LONDON (TIP): Support in Britain for increased levels of tax to fund more public spending has hit a 15-year high, according to a survey published on Friday, after nearly a decade of government efforts to cut its budget deficits.

The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) said its survey, based on interviews conducted in 2017, showed 60 per cent of respondents backed more tax and spending, up from 49 per cent in 2016 and 31 per cent in 2010. "Since 2010 the proportion of people who want more tax and spend has nearly doubled and shows the country is clearly tiring of austerity," NatCen's Head of Public Attitudes, Roger Harding, said.

The survey showed majority support for more tax and spending from voters for the ruling centre-right Conservative Party, which typically favours lower taxes, as well as supporters of the left-wing opposition Labour Party, NatCen said.

The last time more than half of Conservative voters thought the government should raise tax and spending was in 2002, it said.

With many voters angry about a fall in their earnings over the past 10 years, when adjusted for inflation, Prime Minister Theresa May promised in June to spend more money on the health service.



Britain has slashed its budget deficit from about 10 per cent of economic output in 2010 to around 2 per cent now. Finance minister Philip Hammond has said his priority is to bring down the stockpile of public debt, which he says remains too high at around 85 per cent of GDP.

More spending on the health service was the top priority for 54 per cent of respondents in the NatCen poll, followed by education with 26 per cent and housing 7 per cent. A third of those polled said tax and

spending levels should stay unchanged and 4 per cent thought the government should tax and spend less.

The NatCen survey on tax and spending was based on responses from 2,963 people interviewed between July and October last year as part of its broad British Attitudes Survey, other findings of which have been published in recent months.

A NatCen spokeswoman said the delay in publishing the findings was typical for the British Attitudes Survey. (Reuters)

Britain to create 2,000-strong cyber force to tackle Russia threat: Report

LONDON (TIP): Britain is significantly increasing its ability to wage war in cyberspace with the creation of a new offensive cyber force of up to 2,000 personnel, Sky News reported on September 20.

The new force which is expected to be announced soon would represent a near four-fold increase in manpower focused on offensive cyber operations, Sky said.

Made up of Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) officials, military personnel and contractors, it looks set to receive more than 250 million pounds in funding, a source told Sky.

Sky also reported that a second source said that the figure would likely be higher.

The plan by the Ministry of Defence and GCHQ comes amid a growing cyber threat from Russia and after Britain used cyber weapons for the first time to fight Islamic State, Sky said.

Britain and Russia have been at loggerheads over many issues including an incident in Salisbury when London accused Moscow of poisoning a former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter with the nerve agent Novichok. (Reuters)

China tightens embrace of Hong Kong with bullet train, other mega projects

HONG KONG (TIP): Hong Kong's first bullet train glides out of a sleek harbourfront railway station bound for mainland China on Saturday, launching a new era of integration and raising fears for some for the territory's cherished freedoms. Unlike other cross-border connections, the \$11 billion train project has stoked considerable controversy, with Hong Kong, a former British colony, having had to concede part of its jurisdiction to China for the first time.

Passengers entering the modernist building will have their documents stamped by Chinese immigration officers and will be subject to Chinese law while zipping across Hong Kong at 200 kph (120 mph) to the mainland.

Hong Kong and Beijing officials have justified the unusual arrangement as a one-off, while touting its logistical and economic benefits. But critics say the railway is a symbol of continuing Chinese assimilation of Hong Kong, which returned to Chinese rule in 1997 with guarantees of widespread autonomy and freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland, including an independent legal system. "I worry that Hong Kong will no longer be Hong Kong," said Martin Lee, a veteran

democrat and barrister who is fighting to derail the project in the city's courts.

He said Hong Kong risked losing its allure as a financial hub underpinned by strong rule of law, as Beijing steps up a push to fuse the city into a vast hinterland of the Pearl River Delta including nine Chinese cities dubbed the Greater Bay Area. Several other infrastructure projects will open this year including a \$20 billion sea bridge to Macau and Zhuhai, while Beijing is now working with Chinese tech giant Tencent to let people replace their travel documents by using a mobile phone WeChat app to cross the border in future.

"LITTLE ANT IN A BOX": "Hong Kong will be completely submerged into the Greater Bay, and we don't know what it's going to be like," said the 80-year-old Lee, who helped found the city's Democratic Party. "That's the worrying thing. Hong Kong is going to be put like a little ant into a box." In recent years, especially since mass pro-democracy protests in 2014 that ended with no concessions from the government, Beijing has struggled to win hearts and minds, especially among those youths who reject any notion of being part of mainland China and have chafed at perceived meddling in Hong Kong's affairs.

Indian-Origin Family Faces Hate Crime Attack in UK



LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin family of four faces hate crime according to police in the UK. They had a lucky escape when their house was targeted in an "unprovoked" arson attack.

Mayur Karlekar, called as Mac Karlekar, and his wife Ritu and two young children were asleep in their home when they were woken up by their neighbors, who had called in the fire brigade to tackle a huge blaze outside their home in south-east London's Borkwood Park area of Orpington.

"The Metropolitan Police is investigating this as a hate crime. It is being dealt with as a case of arson and criminal damage. No arrests have been made so far," a Metropolitan Police spokesperson said.

CCTV images from the area reportedly show a group of four-five youths, dressed in hoodies, attempting to start a fire on the hedges outside the Karlekars' home.

"We all were sleeping and were luckily woken up by neighbors on time. Though most of the damage was done to the hedges leaving the house now exposed, my son's bedroom was just saved - he was sleeping in it at the time of the incident," said Mayur Karlekar, a digital consultant who move to the UK from Mumbai in the late 1990s.

"We are glad it was stopped on time but the damage to our neighborhood, our society, to our home has been done, irrecoverably. We have not caused any trouble to anyone and have only helped others in all our lifetime. I was special police myself doing voluntary unpaid work. This act happening to us was a complete shock," said the 43-year-old, who has been appealing for information to bring the suspects to justice across various social media channels.

Mayur Karlekar, originally from Dombivali in Thane district of Maharashtra, said he wanted to ensure no other families in the neighborhood become victims of a similar hate crime.

"Hope this kind of arson attack does not happen to any family as it happened on ours unprovoked. If you know anyone or seen any video floating around on social media of dares, please help stop it. Be safe, be vigilant," he said in his appeal.

Images posted on social media reveal huge flames and extensive damage to the outside of the property in the residential suburb in the borough of Bromley in London. Mayur Karlekar has expressed his unhappiness with the nearly 32-hour delay in the Met Police starting their investigation into the case.

"This is the second incident in this area, the first one being a robbery, but we feel more may have happened or are going unreported. We want those people to come out and raise their voice too," he said.

British police describe hate crimes as those perceived as motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic and monitor it under five strands - race or ethnicity; religion or beliefs; sexual orientation; disability; or transgender identity.

According to official figures released earlier this year, incidents of hate crime had registered a spike in the immediate aftermath of the Brexit referendum in 2016. There were 80,393 offences in 2016-17, compared with 62,518 in 2015-16, the largest increase since the UK Home Office began recording these figures in 2011-12.

DRESS ACCORDING TO YOUR BODY SHAPE

Trends change fast, and it's not always easy to know how to adapt them for our unique body shapes. We believe that fashion is about feeling great in the looks we love and feeling great in who we are. But, you could say that we follow guidelines, not rules. So we created this handy guide to help you learn how to dress your body shape and play up your most favorite features with styles you have (or should have) in your closet.

An apple-shaped body

- Wear clothes that draw attention away from your mid-section and waist. V-neck empire waist dresses and tops, wrap dresses and A-line dresses will do wonders for you. Choose tops that cover the entire belly area and extend just below your hips.
- Avoid double breasted jackets, bulky tops and clingy silhouettes. Go for layered tops, ruched tops and tunics.
- Avoid skinny jeans and straight leg pants if you are top heavy. Flared or boot cut pants with back pockets are the right choice for you.
- Instead of wearing a belt around the waist, wear it just below your bust. This will create curves and minimize your waist.

A pear-shaped body

- Highlight your shoulders to balance the shape of your figure. For this you can use scarves, pashminas and colorful necklaces.
- Choose patterned and embellished tops and dresses. Make your shoulders look broader with a bateau neckline, cap and puff sleeves.
- Avoid tight pants, capri pants, short skirts and pencil skirts. Choose tailored, flared pants and A-line skirts instead.
- Wear dark, solid colors for your



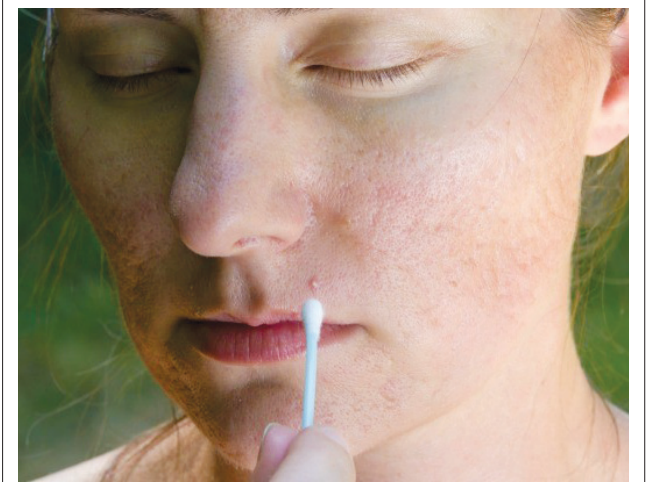
bottom half and lighter, brightly colored tops.

A rectangular body shape

- If you don't have natural curves, you can use clothes and accessories to create them. Wear a belt at the narrowest part of your waist to accentuate it. Choose empire-waist and wrap dresses.
- Wear tops that end at the mid-section of the hips. Enhance your shoulders and bust line with ruffled or pleated tops, and choose accessories that add volume to your upper part.
- Choose underwear that provides good breast support and makes your waist more defined.
- Peplum jackets, tops, dresses and skirts will create the illusion of an hourglass shape

An hourglass shape

- Highlight your curves. For this, it's essential to choose clothes that draw attention to your waist.
- Avoid baggy clothing. Remember that drawing focus to your narrow waist is the best way to highlight your hips and bust.
- Wear undergarments that fit correctly. If your bust is large, be sure to use the right kind of bra. Avoid using padded cups or unstructured bras that make your cleavage look droopy.
- Go for V-neck tops and dresses, pencil skirts, and shirts that accentuate your breasts.
- Remember that whatever you wear, it's essential that the clothes focus on your advantages. This way, you'll feel more confident and appear more attractive in the eyes of others.



MINIMISE UGLY PORES ON FACE

While acne breakouts and greasy skin top the list of most common beauty problems, we end up neglecting the primary reason behind these issues. Enlarged pores. They cause majority of our skin problems. But first you gotta understand the formation of large pores. Sometimes when our oil glands produce more oil, the pores gets clogged with dirt and grime. Now when these dirty pores come in contact with air, they get oxidized and turn into ugly-looking blackheads.

Apple Cider Vinegar

This is a great way to reduce the production of excessive oils, and the breakout of acnes and pimples. In this process, it also tightens large pores and restores the pH balance of the skin. Is there anything that this wonder ingredient can't do?

Ice Cubes

Perhaps, the easiest way to minimise enlarged pores at home is to rub ice cubes for 10 minutes every day. Not only does it soothe irritated skin, it is also a great way to curb the heat during summer months. And obviously, it's the most economical option J

Baking Soda

Try this DIY face pack to treat enlarged pores at home. Mix a spoon of baking soda with water and apply it as a face mask. Once it has dried, rinse it off with cold water, and see its magic on your pores.

Egg White

One of the best ways to tighten skin is to apply an egg-white mask over your face. Allow it to dry before rinsing it off with cold water.

Apart from treating enlarged pores, you can also avoid it right from the start by:

- Keeping the exfoliation routine to a minimal. Plus, avoid using a scrub that has too large granules.
- Not using makeup brushes with bristles that are too stiff
- Removing every trace of makeup before you hit the bed at night, no matter how tired you are
- Swearing by sunscreen irrespective of the amount of sunlight that you're gonna be exposed to



FOOD CORNER

BAINGAN BHURTA

INGREDIENTS

- Eggplant, halved lengthwise -- 1 to 1 1/2 pounds, or about 2 large, Onion, chopped: 1, Garlic, crushed: 2 to 3 cloves, Ginger, minced: 1 tablespoon, Chili peppers, minced: 1 to 2, Oil or ghee: 3 tablespoons, Cumin seed: 2 teaspoons, Turmeric: 1 teaspoon, Tomatoes, chopped: 2, Water: 1/2 cup, Salt and pepper to taste, Garam masala: 2 teaspoons, Cilantro, chopped: 1/2 bunch

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Place the eggplant, cut side down, on an oiled baking sheet and roast in the oven until softened, about 20 to 30 minutes. Allow to cool somewhat, then peel, cut into chunks and set aside.
- Puree the onion, garlic, ginger and chilies in a food processor or blender until smooth, adding a little water if necessary.
- Heat the oil or ghee over medium heat in a large pot, karahi or wok. Add the cumin seed and turmeric and stir until it is lightly browned and fragrant. Immediately stir in the onion puree and saute until any excess liquid has evaporated and the raw onion taste is cooked out, about 5 to 8 minutes. Take care not to burn the mixture.



- Stir in the chopped tomatoes and simmer until the tomatoes are cooked down and the liquid is reduced somewhat, around 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in the roasted eggplant and the water and salt. Bring to a simmer, and then reduce heat to low, cover and cook slowly for another 15 to 20 minutes. The eggplant will break down into a puree.
- Remove from heat, stir in the garam masala and adjust seasoning to taste. Sprinkle with the chopped cilantro and serve.

WALKING FOR HALF AN HOUR A DAY CAN REDUCE SEVERITY OF STROKE

People who walk just 35 minutes a day or participate in light to moderate physical activity, such as swimming two to three hours a week, may have less severe strokes than people who are physically inactive. In a new study to determine physical activity, participants were asked after the stroke how much they moved or exercised during leisure time before the stroke. Questions about duration and intensity of exercise were used to determine the average amount of physical activity. Relatives were asked to confirm exercise levels when needed.

Study author Katharina S Sunnerhagen, said, "Stroke is a major cause of serious disability, so finding ways to prevent stroke or reduce the disability caused by stroke are important. While exercise benefits health in many ways, our research suggests that even simply getting in a small amount of physical activity each week may have a big impact later by possibly reducing the severity of a stroke."

Light physical activity was defined as walking at least four hours a week. Moderate physical activity was defined as a more intense exercise such as swimming, brisk walking, or running two to three hours a week. Of study participants, 52% said they were physically inactive before having their stroke.

Researchers found that people who engaged in light to moderate physical activity before their stroke were twice as likely to have a mild stroke rather than a moderate or severe stroke when compared to people who were physically



inactive. Sunnerhagen added, "There is a growing body of evidence that physical activity may have a protective effect on the brain and our research adds to that evidence. Further research is needed to better understand just how physical activity influences the severity of a stroke." Sunnerhagen noted that the

difference in physical activity did not account for a large amount of the difference in stroke severity. When combined with younger age, greater physical activity accounted for only 6.8% of the difference between the two groups. The full study is present in the journal *Neurology*. *Source: ANI*

PARACETAMOL USE IN INFANCY MAY UP ASTHMA RISK OF IN TEENS

Children who take paracetamol during the first two years of life may be at a higher risk of developing asthma by the age of 18, scientists have found.

The link between paracetamol use and asthma seemed strongest in those who had a particular variant of the glutathione S-transferase (GST) gene, GSTP1, researchers said.

However, the research showed only that there was an association between paracetamol and asthma, not that paracetamol caused the condition.

Further research was needed to confirm the findings. Another GST gene variant, GSTM1, was linked with reduced lung function, researchers found.

GST genes contain the instructions for making enzymes that use an antioxidant called glutathione to mop up the effects of exposure to toxins in the body and the lungs.

This mechanism helps to prevent damage to cells and inflammation.

"Paracetamol, on the other hand, consumes glutathione, reducing the



body's capacity to deal with toxic exposure," said Xin Dai, a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne in Australia.

"We hypothesised that people who did not have full GST enzyme activity because of common genetic variations or deletions may be more susceptible to adverse effects on the lungs from paracetamol use," said Dai.

Researchers investigated their hypothesis in 620 children who had been followed from birth to 18 years old.

The children had been recruited to the

study before they were born because they were considered to be potentially at high risk of developing an allergy-related disease.

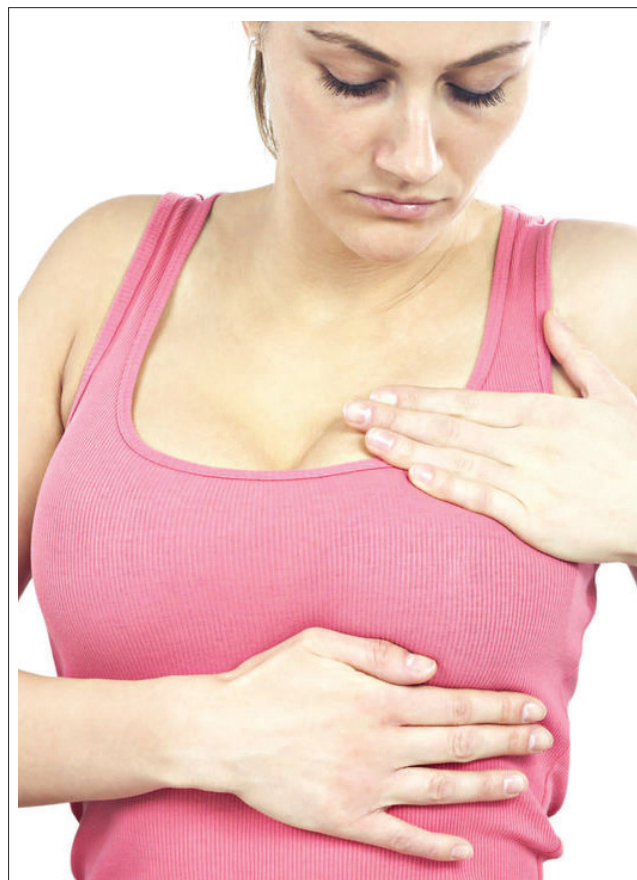
They had at least one family member with a self-reported allergic disease (asthma, eczema, hay fever or a severe food allergy). After their birth, a research nurse rang the family every four weeks for the first 15 months, and then at 18 months and at two years old to ask how many days in the previous weeks had the child taken paracetamol.

When the children were 18 years old, they gave a blood or saliva sample, which was tested for variants of the GST genes: GSTT1, GSTM1 and GSTP1.

They were also assessed for asthma, and a spirometry test was performed to measure the amount of air inhaled and exhaled when breathing through a mouthpiece.

One variant of the GSTP1 gene, GSTP1 Ile/Ile (in which the amino acid Isoleucine (Ile) is inherited from both parents), was associated with a higher risk of developing asthma.

Source: PTI



OBESITY, VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY RAISES BREAST CANCER RISK

Obesity coupled with vitamin D deficiency in postmenopausal women may pose a significant risk of breast cancer — the most common and leading cause of death in women, finds a study.

The findings showed that higher levels of vitamin D — well known for its benefits in building healthy bones — may reduce breast cancer mortality by 50 per cent in women with lower body mass index (BMI).

Vitamin D reduces cancer risk by inhibiting cell proliferation, the researchers said.

"This study suggests that higher levels of vitamin D in the body are associated with lowered breast cancer risk," said JoAnn Pinkerton, Executive Director at The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) in the US.

"Vitamin D may play a role in controlling breast cancer cells or stopping them from growing. Vitamin D comes from direct sunlight exposure, vitamin D3 supplements, or foods rich in vitamin D," Pinkerton added.

Reproductive risk factors such as early onset of puberty, late menopause, later age at first pregnancy, never having been pregnant, obesity, and a family history have all been shown to be associated with breast cancer development.

For the study, published in the journal *Menopause*, the team involved more than 600 Brazilian women.

They found that postmenopausal women had an increased risk of vitamin D deficiency at the time of their breast cancer diagnoses, associated with higher rates of obesity, than women of the same age group without cancer.

The results showed that women in the highest quartile of vitamin D concentrations, in fact, had a 50 per cent lower death rate from breast cancer than those in the lower quartile, suggesting that vitamin D levels should be restored to a normal range in all women with breast cancer.

Source: IANS

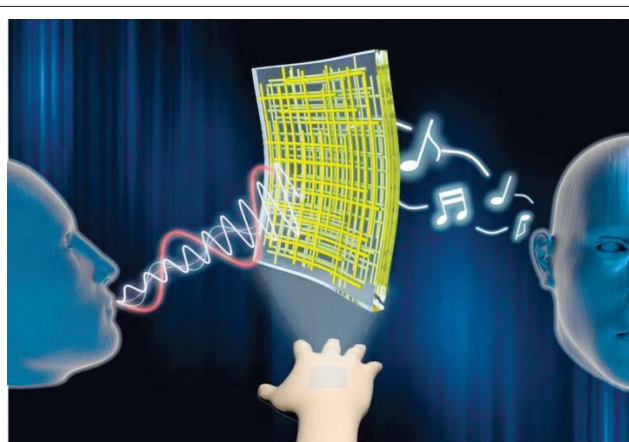
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TRANSPARENT LOUDSPEAKERS LET YOUR SKIN PLAY MUSIC

Scientists have developed a transparent, ultrathin device that can turn your skin into a loudspeaker, paving the way for a new generation of wearable sensors and devices.

Created in part to help the hearing and speech impaired, the technology can be further explored for various potential applications, such as Internet of Things sensors and conformal health care devices.

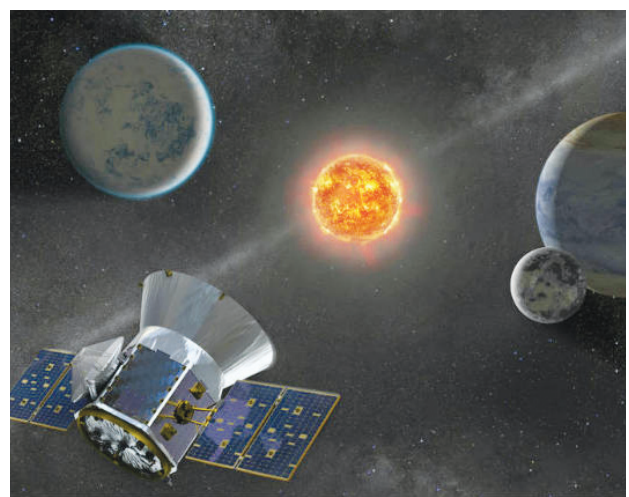
Researchers from Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology (UNIST) in South Korea developed ultrathin, transparent, and conductive hybrid nanomembranes with nanoscale thickness, consisting of an orthogonal silver nanowire array embedded in a polymer matrix.

They, then, demonstrated their nanomembrane by making it into a loudspeaker that can be attached to almost anything to produce sounds.

The researchers also introduced a similar device, acting as a microphone, which can be connected to smartphones and computers to unlock voice-activated security systems.

Nanomembranes (NMs) are molecularly thin separation layers with nanoscale thickness.

Polymer NMs have attracted considerable attention owing to their outstanding advantages, such as extreme flexibility, ultralight weight, and excellent adhesibility in that they can be attached directly to almost any surface. *Source: PTI*



NASA's newest planet hunter telescope shares first image

NASA's newest planet hunter telescope, the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), has now shared the first science image that it captured as part of its initial round of data collection.

Part of the data from TESS' initial science orbit includes a detailed picture of the southern sky taken with all four of the spacecraft's wide-field cameras, NASA said in a statement on Monday.

This image captures a wealth of stars and other objects, including systems previously known to have exoplanets.

"In a sea of stars brimming with new worlds, TESS is casting a wide net and will haul in a bounty of promising planets for further study," said Paul Hertz, Astrophysics Division Director at NASA headquarters in Washington.

"This first light science image shows the capabilities of TESS' cameras, and shows that the mission will realise its incredible potential in our search for another Earth," Hertz said. TESS acquired the image using all four cameras during a 30-minute period on August 7, NASA said.

The images include parts of a dozen constellations, from Capricornus to Pictor, and both the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds, the galaxies nearest to our own. *Source: IANS*

PORTABLE ULTRASOUND MACHINE CAN BE POWERED BY SMARTPHONE

Scientists have developed a low-cost, wearable ultrasound probe that can be powered by a smartphone and could dramatically lower the cost of medical scans.

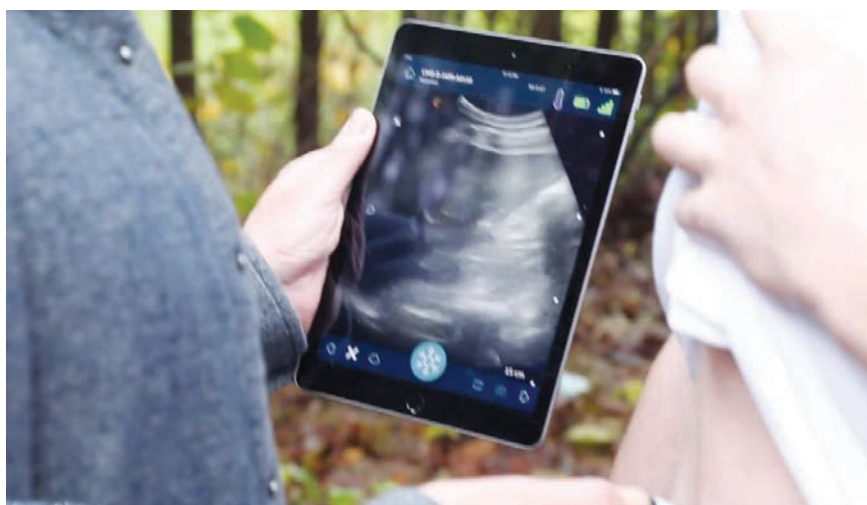
Conventional ultrasound scanners use piezoelectric crystals to create images of the inside of the body and send them to a computer to create sonograms.

Engineers at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada developed a portable device—no bigger than a Band-Aid—that could dramatically lower the cost of ultrasound scanners to as little as USD 100.

Researchers replaced the piezoelectric crystals with tiny vibrating drums made of polymer resin, called polyCMUTs (polymer capacitive micro-machined ultrasound transducers), which are cheaper to manufacture.

"Transducer drums have typically been made out of rigid silicon materials that require costly, environment-controlled manufacturing processes, and this has hampered their use in ultrasound," said Carlos Gerardo, a PhD candidate at UBC.

"By using polymer resin, we were able to produce polyCMUTs in fewer



fabrication steps, using a minimum amount of equipment, resulting in significant cost savings," said Gerardo.

Sonograms produced by the device were as sharp as or even more detailed than traditional sonograms produced by piezoelectric transducers, said Edmond Cretu, a professor at UBC.

"Since our transducer needs just 10 volts to operate, it can be powered by a smartphone, making it suitable for use in remote or low-power locations," Cretu said. "And unlike rigid ultrasound probes, our transducer has the potential

to be built into a flexible material that can be wrapped around the body for easier scanning and more detailed views—without dramatically increasing costs," he said.

"You could miniaturise these transducers and use them to look inside your arteries and veins. You could stick them on your chest and do live continuous monitoring of your heart in your daily life. It opens up so many different possibilities," said Robert Rohling, a professor at UBC. *Source: PTI*

Hackers target Bitcoin with leaked NSA software tip

Hackers are illegally generating Monero, Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies by exploiting a software flaw that was leaked from the US government, according to new research, raising questions about the security of one of the fastest-growing corners of financial markets.

Detected cases of illicit cryptocurrency mining -- the digital equivalent of minting money -- have surged 459% in 2018 compared to last year, Cyber Threat Alliance said in a report released Wednesday.

The spike is tied to the 2017 leak of Eternal Blue, a tool to exploit vulnerabilities in outdated Microsoft Systems software. When the tool became known, it tipped hackers to a previously unknown flaw in the software, now the basis of some hackers' efforts to commandeer computing power of others to generate digital currency.

As of July this year, 85% of all illicit cryptocurrency mining has targeted Monero, according to the report. Bitcoin made up about 8%, while other cryptocurrencies accounted for 7%. Hackers can "sit back and watch the money roll in," said Neil Jenkins, chief analytic officer of Cyber Threat Alliance, a group formed in 2014 by a consortium of cybersecurity firms to share intelligence about cyber-threats. While the hacks are occurring across the globe, a significant portion are in the US, he added.



YouTube Gaming to shut down as Google launches new hub



Google is finally pulling the plug on YouTube Gaming after the dedicated platform failed to take off with the gaming enthusiasts around the world. Google is now merging the platform with a new gaming hub. The company is also focusing on popular and new gamers to boost its new hub with dedicated pages for particular games.

YouTube Gaming was introduced in 2015 as Google hoped to cash in on growing gaming community on its video sharing platform. The new platform also competed with other gaming streaming platforms like Twitch. The idea behind the dedicated platform was to build a larger gaming community with personalised features. The platform allowed users to stream games at 60fps along with a number of creators-focused features.

As of now, YouTube Gaming has 5,000,000+ downloads on Google Play Store with 4.2 average rating (out of 5). The app will be available till the transition completes, and will shut down officially in March, 2019.

Ryan Wyatt, head of YouTube Gaming, told Polygon that the dedicated app for gaming wasn't helping creators extend their visibility much. *Source: HT*

RBI eases norms for overseas fund raising in line with govt measures to prop up rupee

MUMBAI (TIP): The Reserve Bank Wednesday eased norms for companies in manufacturing sector to raise overseas funds and allowed Indian banks to market Masala Bonds in line with the government's measures to prop up the rupee.

Following a review of the economy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week, the government announced an array of measures to check the decline of rupee and curb the widening current account deficit (CAD).

Liberalisation of the External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) norms was among other measures announced by the government.

"It has been decided, in consultation with the government, to liberalise some aspects of the ECB policy including policy on rupee denominated bonds (Masala Bonds) ...," the RBI said in a notification.

As per the revised policy, eligible ECB borrowers who are into manufacturing sector, will be allowed to raise ECB up to \$ 50 million or its equivalent with minimum average maturity period of 1 year. The earlier average minimum maturity period was three years.

The central bank has also made changes in norms wherein Indian banks



can market Masala Bonds overseas.

Presently, Indian banks can act only as arranger/ underwriter for such bonds and in case of underwriting an issue, their holding cannot be more than 5 per cent of the issue size after 6 months of issue.

Now, the banks can "participate as arrangers/ underwriters/ market

makers/ traders in RDBs issued overseas subject to applicable prudential norms," the notification said.

The rupee has been losing value against the US dollar, and had almost touched 73 on Tuesday. However, the domestic unit Wednesday bounced back by 61 paise to end at 72.37 against the dollar. *Source: PTI*

ASTON MARTIN TO GO PUBLIC, VALUED AT \$6.7 BILLION IN IPO



LONDON (TIP): Aston Martin Lagonda, the maker of James Bond's favourite sports car, plans to raise as much as 1.27 billion pounds (\$1.67 billion) when it sells shares to investors for the first time.

The luxury carmaker says it will sell a 25 percent stake for between 17.50 pounds and 22.50 pounds a share, valuing the company at as much as 5.07 billion pounds (\$6.7 billion). Aston Martin said Thursday the exact price would be set around October 3.

The company says Daimler will remain a shareholder and won't reduce its 4.9 per cent stake for 12 months.

Aston Martin CEO Andy Palmer says the share sale "will provide investors with a fitting opportunity to participate in our future success."

The carmaker was founded in London in 1913 and is headquartered in Gaydon. *Source: AP*

Merger of three banks may see spurt in bad assets, warns report

MUMBAI (TIP): The merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank by the government poses short-term challenges like spurt in bad assets, but will be beneficial over a longer term, a report said on Thursday.

Slippages may increase in the short-term as recognition of non-performing assets is harmonised and accelerated, India Ratings said in a note.

Stating that it may take appropriate rating actions after the merger proposed earlier this week gets a formal approval, it said the combined entity will require "significant bandwidth" in the management for business growth and NPA resolutions.

Dena Bank's lower capital buffers are offset by Vijaya Bank's higher capital buffers, it said, adding that the merged bank may need additional tier 1 capital depending on internal accruals for FY19.

However, from a longer term perspective, the merger will be positive with benefits like reducing combined operating costs, lower funding cost and strengthened risk management practices, it said. The asset-liability mismatch issues at smaller banks (Vijaya & Dena) can be better addressed at the consolidated level, it said. *Source: PTI*

Now, fly Delhi to United States, Canada in just Rs 13,499

NEW DELHI (TIP): Now, you have a choice to fly to destinations in the US and Canada from the national capital by shelling out just Rs 13,499, with Iceland's WOW air offering low fares for its flights. It will start flights from Delhi to their hub in Reykjavik, Iceland (KEF) from December 7.

To begin with, WOW air will operate three weekly flights connecting passengers to North America and Europe over their hub in Reykjavik and from January, it would be increased to five weekly flights. "For Rs 13,499, passengers can visit Chicago, Orlando, Newark, Detroit, San Francisco, Boston, Pittsburgh, LA, Washington, St Louis in the US," the airline said. The fare is also available for flights to Toronto and Montreal. *Source: PTI*



As US sanctions come into effect, Iran left with 2 Indian clients for oil

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's Chennai Petroleum will stop processing Iranian crude oil from October to keep its insurance coverage once new sanctions by the United States against Iran go into effect, three sources familiar with the issue said.

Iran's Naftiran Intertrade Co Ltd, a trading arm for state-owned National Iranian Oil Co, owns a 15.4 percent stake in Chennai Petroleum, which has two refineries with a total combined capacity of 230,000 barrels of oil per day (bpd).

In May, US President Donald Trump pulled out of an international nuclear deal with Iran and announced new sanctions against the country, the third-largest producer among the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Washington is pushing allies to cut Iranian oil imports to zero once the sanctions on the petroleum sector start up on Nov. 4.

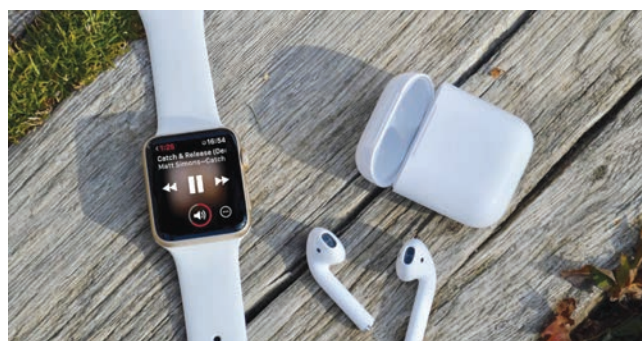
United India Insurance has informed Chennai Petroleum that its new annual policy that is set to take effect from October will not cover any liability related to processing crude from Iran, the three sources said. This has forced the refiner to cancel a scheduled loading of 1 million barrels in October, they said.

Indian insurers do not fall directly under the sanctions, but need to hedge their own risk on the Western reinsurance market, which will not accept Iranian exposure.

"It is quite complicated.. reinsurers are quite apprehensive about extending cover for Chennai Petroleum," said one of the sources, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue. *Source: Reuters*



NEW US TARIFFS ON CHINESE IMPORTS SPARE APPLE WATCH, AIRPODS



In a huge relief to Apple and its investors, Apple's smart watch, smart speaker and AirPods are not among the products that will be affected by the Trump administration's latest tariffs on Chinese imports, the media reported.

Some Apple products, including its MacMini, will still be affected, CNBC reported on Monday, citing a list of products that will be affected.

Apple had feared that US President Donald Trump's proposed tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods would affect several of its products, including the Apple Watch, AirPods, and adapters and chargers for a large number of products.

The tech giant, therefore, sent a letter to the US Trade Representative asking the office to spare its products.

The Trump's administration's proposed 10 per cent tariff on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods is set to come into effect later in September, increasing to 25 per cent at the end of 2018, a move that will sharply escalate the American trade war with Beijing.

The administration announced on Monday that the additional tariffs which would take effect from September 24, were on top of penalties enacted earlier in 2018 on \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods, CNN reported.

Taken together, it means roughly half of the products that China sells to the US each year will be hit by American tariffs.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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@bejandaruwala.com and on phone **011-91-8141234275 www.bejandaruwala.com**

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE SEPTEMBER 24 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says if you don't have a good relationship with yourself, you cannot understand the dharma, and your body and mind will not be properly coordinated,' says Chogyam Trungpa, the Buddhist meditation master. The start of last period was phenomenal. I am afraid you won't have a similar start to this period. You will still be the top draw in the food chain! You are spending like there is no tomorrow.

Taurus:

'Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow,' said Ralph Waldo Emerson. You roll up your sleeves and get to work. There is a lot to be done and you are ambitious to make a mark in the world. There is a lot happening in your war room. It is strewn with marriages, divorces, separations, out-of-court settlements, windfall gains, inheritances, lotteries, new vistas, breakthrough deals and so on.

Gemini:

You are moving fast and furious like an antelope in the savannah pursued by a pack of wild dogs. You know that you have to get away, you have to stay alive, you have to see another day to make your dreams happen, and you put your all into it. Of course, you succeed. You have put in a soul effort and that sees no failure. Ego drives, and passion rule this period. You play the field and make loving a hobby. Ganesha watches with some concern.

Cancer:

There are money and honey, awards and rewards, accolades and applause. The period started slowly but you have picked up momentum like the Rajdhani Express on its famed run. You more than make up for a bad start, quite like Usain Bolt. Business flourishes and you make substantial gains. Domestic life is many - splendored. It is as colorful as a valley of flowers. Ganesha asks you to avoid avarice and unethical means. I believe in karma and dharma.

Leo:

You continue to be powered. The tendencies of last period spill over, as it often does. There are secret deals and negotiations. You may be signing on the dotted line. But ensure that you don't trip or get booby-trapped. Get assistance. Try to stop being too full of yourself. Ego and passion rule, much to your discomfiture. Your peer group could also find your company trying. You will always be too much of something for someone. You are in esteemed company for sure.

Virgo:

The shadow side of your life takes over and bleeds you. All of us have many shades and you could well wear the maudlin hat this period. You go down memory lane and get morbid and morose. Of course, you have lived life to the hilt and made several errors. 'If you want to make the right decision for the future, fear is not a very good consultant,' says Markus Dohe, chairman and CEO, Random House. It may be a good time to take a back seat and let the moment pass as it will.

Libra:

There is more stability now and you get out of the rut. Work calls, and the sweet fragrance of money is the ultimate seductress. It jerks you out of your stupor and you get down to the business of living, with its challenges and rewards. 'Age is no barrier. It's a limitation you put on your mind,' said Jackie Joyner-Kersey, the legendary athlete. There is no other way, as genius is simply perspiration and nothing else.

Scorpio:

You are terra firma. You don't have to hold on to the railings for balance. Your emotions and drives are well under control. You are sedate and self-assured and that is quite a change from your normal flamboyant, loud and colorful self. You make your plans happen with quiet efficiency, with the minimum noise. In the process, there is significant progress. Family life is also stable. If married, there are no roadblocks. Life is beautiful for the singles too.

Sagittarius:

There is lot of movement in your life. You are racing away, almost without brakes. There is international travel and reaching out to people, places and events. The universe gives you several experiences to mull over. You examine your life and the structures you have built and decide on some chopping and churning. You want to be more fine-tuned, fast and sleek. This is not a great time for detailed study.

Capricorn:

The softer side of you takes over. It is underbelly time. We all have our blind spots. Some of us are aware of them. But most of us aren't. Like Jung said, 'Show me a sane man and I will cure him.' You take off into the woods and saunter along the green glades. You want to spend time with nature. Animals, plants, music, poetry and dance grab your time. You may take the family for a holiday. There may be an addition to the family, even an adoption.

Aquarius:

'You came to earth to learn to know yourself,' said the Mother of Pondicherry. In this phase you reach out to all and sundry. You are net worthy with purpose and determination. Your ideas reach the four corners of the globe in no time, thanks to the modern marvels in gadgetry. You learn to live in gratitude and thank existence for all its favors.

Pisces:

You are zooming ahead of the opposition. You are an asset to the organization with your hard work, ethics, amiability and reliability. There are ego drives and you brook no opposition. Your appreciation of beauty, your interest in art, music or poetry are heightened now. You are also filled with love and want to share it with that special person. There are expenses and purchases and many investments. Mutual funds, shares, stocks, capital-raising and all other money matters come to the fore. You live large.

PITRU PAKSHA: FORTNIGHT OF THE ANCESTORS



Pitru Paksha is a sixteen day period in which Hindus honor and give respect to their ancestors. During this time period – which begins on the first Purnima (full moon) following Ganesh Chaturthi and ends on Peddala Amavasya – allows participants to not only honor those from their direct biological lineage, but also those who have contributed to their spiritual, moral and/or their intellectual development either in this life or during previous lives. These individuals can be family, friends, mentors, teachers or anyone else who has touched their lives in a meaningful way.

Mythology Relating to King Karna

Traditionally pitru paksha or shradh is a custom that is followed by the Hindus on a regular basis. It is said that if you fail to offer water and food to the ancestors in the pitru paksha then in the afterlife you will also remain without food and water.

We all know of the king Karna from Mahabharata. He was the son of sun god. During his life he was considered to be very deeply involved in charity. He could not say no to anyone. When he died and went to heaven the gods would give him food made of gold. Karna asked the gods that he was such a famous king and would do so much charity then why was he given food made of gold. The king of the gods Indra told him that this was so as Karna in his life was only donating gold and gems.

He never offered food and water to the poor and neither to his ancestors. King Karna realised his mistake and he wanted to correct the same. The gods decided that Karna will be allowed to get back to earth for sixteen days and feed the poor and the needy. This would help him to get rid of the problem.

These sixteen days when king Karna was on Earth were called the pitru paksha. These days are considered very inauspicious and even today no new activity or a good task is done on these days. The Hindus offer prayers and food to the ancestors in this time. This ensures that the pitru dosha is done away with. It also ensures that the entire family is blessed. The pitru paksha is followed only by

the male members of the family.

Avoid New Activity During This Period

If you are planning to start any new activity then please avoid this period as it is not a good time. The manner and way in which pitru paksha rituals are performed differs from region to region.

On the shradh day many people keep fast for the ancestors to rest in peace. Many people do not cut their hair during the pitru paksha as it is considered a bad omen. Many people have different names for the pitru paksha. We are mentioning them so that you do not get confused to hear the other terms. These are

- Tarpanam
- Sola shradha
- Shradham

Why Please Ancestors?

You may ask why you should please the ancestors or whether there is life after death? If they are dead then why should we bother about them? Well when your ancestors are not resting in peace you too will not be able to be in peace. You will often face some problem or the other. There will be disputes in the family. Women will not be able to bear children. The family members will be meeting with unforeseen accidents and the list will just go on.

When the ancestors are resting in peace you can see that your home and family will be prospering. Just because the ancestors are dead we should not forget them. They should be prayed to and offered food and water. If the deceased do not have a son then the immediate family members can also do the shradha puja. This puja also cleans the sinful deeds of the deceased soul and ensures that they rest in peace.

The person who is performing the shradha puja during the pitru paksha must do it with complete dedication and with whole heart. You could also do it under guidance of a learned priest.

You must keep handy the list of your ancestors who have left for their heavenly abode. Try to keep the names of at least the previous seven generations. The puja must be

offered to both the men as well as the women. After the puja food must be offered to the ancestors. We will deal in more details with the shradha puja done in pitru paksha in our next article.

Significance In Modern Day Concept

We always try to present all information and knowledge with relevance to changing society and the modern age as well. For those who have faith, the above should be more than enough reason to follow pitru paksha but for others there are reasons too, some of them being outlined as follows:

- The society is becoming extremely materialistic and things like giving something to someone without a reasons, like food and clothing are getting scarce. Hence the celebration of pitru paksha should act to somehow awaken these habits in people.
- Even if you do not think that the people who have left for their heavenly abode do not need anything, still the actual things you are offering are to the poor and the needy so in a way you are helping them out

■ It is always good to remain connected with the past and the ancestors and not completely forget them. This time at least acts as a special fortnight where you can do so and try and learn something about your ancestors and possibly draw a leaf from the book of their lives.

■ Apart from the ancestors who have departed, this also symbolizes taking care of the elders which is very important in modern day society where the aged people are not getting proper care and get isolated

So we do urge that you celebrate pitru paksha for at least one of the reasons mentioned above. We hope that by reading this article you will be able to understand better what pitru paksha is. Do try to follow the important points that we have mentioned in this article.

This will help you to get more peace and happiness for yourself and your family. Now that you know the importance of these days then do ensure that you do the puja this year and seek blessings of your ancestors. You will see the impact in your life over time for sure.

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'If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it? If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it? Indian alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one.'

Film Maker, Entrepreneur and Ayurveda Speaker Tirlok Malik speaks to senior citizens: Understand golden years and retirement, and be better lovers of life



Tirlok Malik, an Ayurveda Lifestyle Speaker and Motivational Guide, will speak to the Seniors at a seminar in Long Island on September 25

LONG ISLAND, NY (TIP): The Indian American Forum, one of the oldest organizations of Indian Americans on Long Island, NY has organized a seminar for senior citizens on September 25, 2018, from 10 AM. at Bethpage Senior Community Center, located at 103 West Gruman Road, Bethpage, NY 11714.

Tirlok Malik, an Ayurveda Lifestyle Speaker and Motivational Guide, will speak to the Seniors and tell them how to use the tools of Ayurveda for complete balance-mind, body, and spirit-as well as how to apply the concept of Indian Philosophy to achieve, health and happiness.

Tirlok Malik lives a healthy lifestyle. He is the creator of the successful Ayurveda Café New York in 1998. He also had Ayurveda Center on the Upper West Side of Manhattan for 15 years and has been a speaker at various events and expos.

As the CEO of Apple Productions, he has produced many films since 1990 starting with "Lonely In America" which was shown in 74

countries, as well as on HBO and at 37 international film festivals.

For more information about the seminar, please contact:

**Nirmala Rametra (631 269 1144); Anu Gulati (516 795 1588);
Vijay Goswamy (516 731 5250)**

Tirlok Malik can be reached at appleproduction1@gmail.com

US blacklists Chinese agency for buying Russian military equipment

The US State Department said it would immediately impose sanctions on China's Equipment Development Department, which oversees defense technology.

WASHINGTON (TIP): The United States on Sept 21 imposed sanctions on a Chinese military agency and its director for buying defense equipment from Russia in breach of a sweeping US sanctions bill enacted in 2017. The US State Department said it would immediately impose sanctions on China's Equipment Development Department, which oversees defense technology, and its director, Li Shangfu, for engaging in "significant transactions" with Rosoboronexport, Russia's main arms exporter.

The Trump administration also blacklisted a further 33 people and entities associated with Russian military and intelligence, adding them to a sanctions list under the 2017 law, Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, or CAATSA. One State Department official, who briefed reporters and speaking on condition of anonymity, insisted that the China sanctions targeted Moscow only, not Beijing or its military.

"The ultimate target of these sanctions is Russia. CAATSA sanctions in this context are not intended to undermine the defense capabilities of any particular country," the official told reporters on a conference call. "They are instead aimed at imposing costs upon Russia in response to its malign activities." The measures come as President Donald Trump's administration

The Trump administration also blacklisted a further 33 people and entities associated with Russian military and intelligence, adding them to a sanctions list under the 2017 law, Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, or CAATSA.

pursues a variety of strategies to clamp down on China and faces growing pressure to respond strongly to US intelligence agency reports that Russia is continuing to meddle in US politics.

Members of Congress, including many of Trump's fellow Republicans, who passed the sanctions bill nearly unanimously, have repeatedly called on the administration to take a harder line against Moscow.

The State Department official said the sanctions were related to China's purchase of 10 SU-35 combat aircraft in 2017 and S-400 surface-to-air missile system-related equipment in 2018.

The sanctions block the Chinese agency from applying for export licenses and from participating in foreign exchange transactions under US jurisdictions. (Reuters)

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contd from page 1

The Accuser of Sexual Assault...

testifying even if the F.B.I. does not investigate her accusations, as she had previously requested. The surprise offer was the latest twist in an on-again, off-again negotiation between Dr. Blasey and Senate Republicans, who have scheduled a hearing for Monday and set Friday as a deadline for Dr. Blasey to tell them whether she would attend.

"She wishes to testify, provided that we can agree on terms that are fair and which ensure her safety. A hearing on Monday is not possible, and the committee's insistence that it occur then is arbitrary in any event," wrote the lawyer, Debra S. Katz, adding, "Her strong preference continues to be for the Senate Judiciary Committee to allow for a full investigation prior to her testimony."

Dr. Blasey's accusations have rocked Washington, upending the confirmation proceeding for Judge Kavanaugh, President Trump's second nominee to the Supreme Court, only days before he was to receive a vote in the committee. A research psychologist in Northern California, Dr. Blasey - who is sometimes called by her married name, Ford - has accused Judge Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her when the two were in high school in the early 1980s - an allegation he has vigorously denied.

Thursday's email jump-started talks between Dr. Blasey's lawyers and Democratic and Republican committee aides that continued into the evening. They centered mostly on logistical issues, such as timing and security for Dr. Blasey, and whether there might be additional witnesses; the discussions were cordial, according to several people familiar with them.

But there were a number of sticking points. Dr. Blasey's lawyers asked for the committee to subpoena other witnesses, and for Judge Kavanaugh to testify first, but both requests are viewed by Republicans as nonstarters. Republicans had proposed bringing in an outside counsel to do the questioning, but the lawyers objected, fearing that the hearing would take a prosecutorial tone and arguing that senators themselves should be engaged. The lawyers suggested Thursday as a hearing date, which Mr. Grassley is considering and taking up with his colleagues. And there was one point of agreement: Both Democrats and Republicans agreed that they needed to take steps to ensure Dr. Blasey's security.

The talks came only a day after Republicans and Dr. Blasey appeared to reach a stalemate, with Republicans - backed by President Trump - demanding that Dr. Blasey testify on Monday or not at all, and Dr. Blasey resisting.

For his part, Judge Kavanaugh said he wants a hearing as soon as possible, so that "I can clear my name."

"Since the moment I first heard this allegation, I have categorically and unequivocally denied it," he wrote in a letter released by the White House. "I remain committed to defending my integrity."

Dr. Blasey's offer seemed to catch the White House off-guard. Trump advisers and people close to Judge Kavanaugh were betting that she was unlikely to testify, and her decision to do so left Mr. Trump less bullish on the judge's chances for confirmation than he was earlier this week.

The way forward - and what effect it might have on Judge Kavanaugh's chances for confirmation - remained unclear. On Wednesday, Republicans, sensing Judge Kavanaugh had enough support to be confirmed despite the allegations, set a committee meeting for Wednesday for a possible vote to move the nomination to the floor. That session is now in question.

George Hartmann, a spokesman for Senator Charles E. Grassley, Republican of Iowa and the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, declined on Thursday to say whether Mr. Grassley would accept a date other than Monday.

"We're glad to hear back," Mr. Hartmann said, "but that's about the extent to which we can comment."

The Blasey email appeared to put Republicans - who on Wednesday were accusing Dr. Blasey of backing out and calling her sincerity into question - back on the defensive. Republicans are aware that they can ill afford to look as if they are railroading a sexual assault survivor. If they stick to their position that Dr. Blasey can testify on Monday or not at all, they risk looking like bullies - just weeks before midterm elections when their party is already expected to suffer from a backlash from women.

With the Senate out of session and many members back in their home states, Republicans were noticeably silent on Thursday on Dr. Blasey's offer. Democrats, meanwhile, appeared to be sticking to their position that an F.B.I. investigation should precede any hearing.

"Our view on the Democratic side seems to be hardening and deepening that an F.B.I. investigation should be done, and I'm going to be reaching out to my Republican colleagues to set a timetable," Senator Richard Blumenthal, Democrat of Connecticut, said in an interview before the Blasey email.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Foreign Ministers of India and...

and time," said Raveesh Kumar, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs.

India's response came within hours of the news that Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan proposed talks between the two senior Ministers. However, India said the talks would not be aimed at a broader scheme of dialogue.

The MEA spokesperson emphasized that despite agreeing to the meeting, India stuck to its position that talks and terror could not go together.

He said, "This [the upcoming meeting] does not indicate any change as far as our policies on terrorism and cross-border terrorism are concerned."

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan proposed the new round of talks in a letter to his Indian counterpart, handed over on September 17.

"Building on the mutual desire for peace between our two countries, I wish to propose a meeting between Foreign Minister Qureshi and External Affairs Minister Swaraj, before the informal meeting of the SAARC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York," he said, seeking resumption of the dialogue started by his predecessor Nawaz Sharif. The Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue stalled after the January 2016 terror strike on the Pathankot airbase.

In the letter, Mr. Khan also suggested that the Foreign Ministers discuss the holding of the SAARC summit in Islamabad, which has been delayed by India's reluctance to join.

However, the MEA spokesperson said India's position on joining the SAARC summit in Islamabad remained unchanged.

"Time and again we have said that the atmosphere in the region is not conducive. Under the shadow of cross-border terrorism, it is difficult to hold the summit that is to be hosted by Pakistan."

Minister of State for Agriculture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, while addressing a presser at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi, responded to questions on the proposed meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, announced a day after the body of a Border Security Force jawan was found with obvious torture marks.

"We must have faith in the Indian forces that they would retaliate at an appropriate time. There should not be any politics on the bodies of martyrs," he said.

Amid a political row over the Kartarpur Sahib corridor opening issue, India has announced that it will raise the matter formally with Pakistan once again next week.

The issue will be flagged by India when External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj travels to New York for UNGA (United Nations General Assembly). Swaraj will hold a meeting with her Pakistani counterpart Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi along the UNGA sidelines, announced India today. MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar clarified that no formal proposal for opening up of the nearly 4-km long corridor revered by Sikh pilgrims has been received from Islamabad.

"Even now, we have not received any official communication that the Pakistani government is willing to consider this matter. EAM will, therefore, raise this issue in her meeting with the Pakistani Foreign Minister on the sidelines of UNGA," said Raveesh Kumar.

India also underlined that despite several requests, including during late PM Vajpayee's Lahore visit in 1999, to consider a visa free visit to the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara, the shrine is still not a part of the list under the 1974 Protocol. The Protocol lists out the religious shrines between India and Pakistan to facilitate visits of pilgrims from each side. Subsequently the matter was raised between 2004 and 2005 by former PM Manmohan Singh, former Punjab CM Prakash Singh Badal and at the Foreign Secretary level talks.

"In 2005, Pakistan agreed to allow visit to three shrines with visas, including to Kartarpur but did not include it in Protocol. In 2008, the then EAM (External Affairs Minister) raised the issue of Kartarpur Sahib corridor with the then Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. However, there has not been any official response from Pakistani side since then," said Raveesh Kumar. Incidentally, Qureshi is now back in the Imran Khan government as the Pakistani Foreign Minister.

The matter snowballed into a fresh controversy following visit of Punjab Minister Navjot Sidhu to Islamabad for Imran Khan's swearing in ceremony and his interaction with Pak Army chief Bajwa reportedly on the matter. Since then political parties have traded charges in the state while trying to stake claim as the credible interlocutor on the matter. Sidhu as well as Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Badal wrote letters to Swaraj on the matter.

Shinzo Abe Wins Party Vote...

Abe said he's determined to use his last term to pursue his

policy goals to "sum up" Japan's postwar diplomacy to ensure peace in the country.

"Let's work together to make a new Japan," he said.

Abe, who has been prime minister since December 2012, has cemented control of his party and received support from conservatives for bringing stability and continuity to economic and diplomatic policies. With a third term as party leader, Abe is poised to become Japan's longest-serving leader in August 2021.

Still, he faces several challenges, including dealing with Japan's aging and declining population, a royal succession in the spring, and a consumption tax hike to 10% he has already delayed twice. He faces security concerns stemming from North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, and China's increasingly assertive activity in the region, as well as intensifying trade friction with the U.S. which could shake his friendly relations with President Donald Trump.

Abe has said he is determined to push for a revision to the U.S.-drafted 1947 constitution, a decades-old pledge of the Liberal Democratic Party since its foundation in 1955 and a goal that none of Abe's predecessors has been able to achieve.

Abe has said he hopes his party could submit a draft constitution revision to a parliamentary session later this year ahead of a national referendum. Abe is proposing to add a clause to Article 9, which bans the use of force in settling international disputes, to explicitly permit the existence of Japan's military, now called the Self-Defense Force.

Many conservatives see the constitution as a humiliation imposed on Japan following its World War II defeat. Among them was Abe's grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi, who served as prime minister 1957-1960. Kishi was imprisoned as a suspected war criminal during the U.S. occupation.

Constitutional revision is divisive and it's unclear whether Abe could get enough votes for passage.

Abe and his senior party members want to rush a revision while their ruling coalition still holds two-thirds super majority in both houses - a requirement to propose a revision. The next parliamentary election is due next summer.

For the public, the constitution is a lesser concern than issues such as pay, education and the high cost of child care, surveys show.

If a revision is voted down in a national referendum, Abe would likely have to step down.

Abe has survived a series of scandals, including cronyism allegations against him and his wife. Despite attacks from opposition parties and criticism in the media, he has seen his support ratings bounce back to about 40%, considered high for a Japanese leader after nearly six years in office.

An extended term for Abe is generally seen as good news for stability and continuity.

"A stable government under a strong leader is good for the economy and diplomacy, and Prime Minister Abe has established a rather significant presence in diplomacy," said Yu Uchiyama, a University of Tokyo politics professor.

But his long and strong leadership has caused a lack of political competitiveness, Uchiyama said.

"The biggest concern about Japanese politics is how to restore competition in politics and reactivate democracy," Uchiyama said.

In Thursday's leadership vote, Abe handily defeated his sole challenger, Shigeru Ishiba, a former defense minister. Abe won 553, or about 70%, of 807 votes.

Abe took 80% of parliamentary votes, while support from regional rank-and-file party members was at 55%, though it fell within projections.

Experts see the margin of victory in regional member votes as a more accurate indicator of general public sentiment than the parliamentary votes. Abe's softer showing there means he will have to be more mindful of voices coming from outside parliament.

Abe's dominance has been bolstered by the strengthening of the Prime Minister's Office, allowing him and his party executives to monopolize decisions over policies and personnel affairs, experts say. The system has accommodated Abe's long reign, as many lawmakers are primarily interested in getting Abe and other senior lawmakers' backing in elections. *(Source: Agencies)*

Air India Regional Manager (Americas)...

three gateways in the United States to approximately 36 flights per week out of five gateways.

Having achieved a high leadership role at Air India-which she noted has the highest percentage of women pilots in the world-Sharma said she believed that it is important that companies hire an equal number of men and women.

A workaholic, Ms Sharma says: "Each day is a test of skills and capabilities and gives me an opportunity to learn".

DALHOUSIE: A PRISTINE HILL STATION



A quaint hill station perched at an altitude of 8000 ft, Dalhousie sprawls across five hills at the foothills of the Dhauladhar range in Himachal Pradesh. This picture-perfect destination was founded during India's colonial occupation back in 1854, when it served as a summer retreat for the British. Named after the then British Viceroy Lord Dalhousie, the town is a throwback to the colonial era, replete with Scottish churches and Victorian bungalows scattered across its hilly terrain.

DAINKUND

Dainkund is a short trek in the Himalayan range near Dalhousie. It starts at Alha village, at some six km from the town centre. Ranked as easy to moderately easy, the trek winds through a dense deodar and pine forest. The trek up leads to some stunning views of the Himalayas to the north. The four and a half kilometre trek ends at the 800 plus year old Pohlani Devi Temple. Legend has it that this hillside was infested by witches and demons who were later slayed by none other than Goddess Kali herself. The hillside is also referred to as the Singing Hill owing to the sound made by wind rustling through the woods here. The sound becomes all the more audible during spring and early monsoon when the forest grows denser. The trek is quite easy apart from a few spots in the ridge and is perfect for kids as well.

KHAJJAR

Often referred to as the Switzerland of India, Khajjar is located a little outside of Dalhousie towards Chamba, and ideally warrants an overnight visit. This tranquil saucer-shaped meadow is ensconced within a deodar forest which forms a ring around its periphery. Little forest trails fan out from the meadow which are best seen on a hack ride:

you'll find lots of pony operators offering their services at the meadow. Visitors also make a beeline to the Khajinag temple which features fine wood carvings and a gold dome.

TRINKET SHOPPING

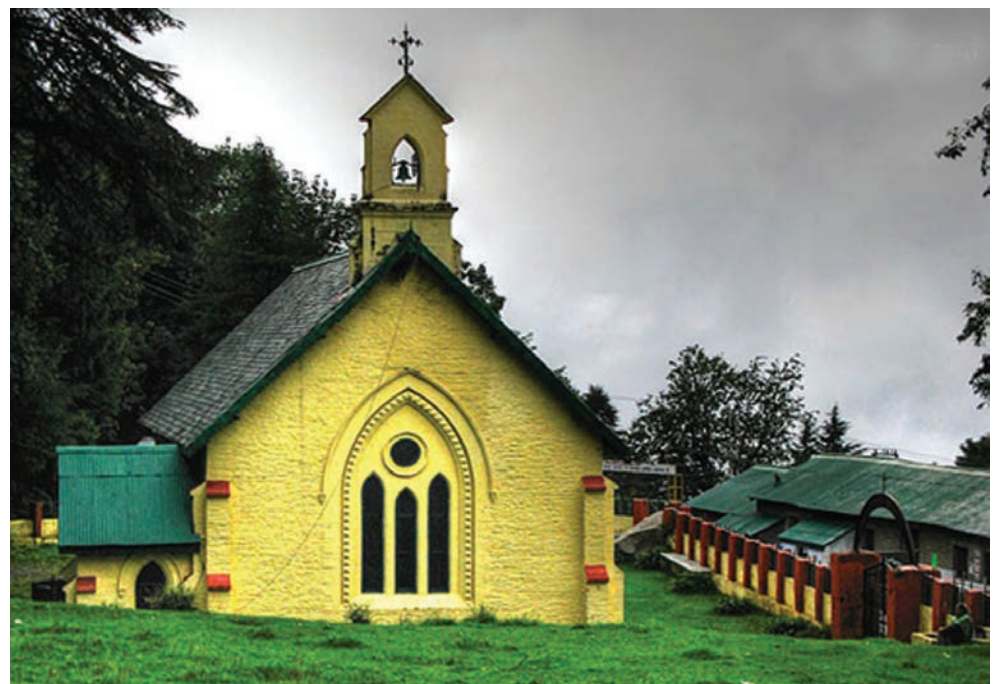
Most shops in Dalhousie are clustered around Gandhi Chowk, and there are good bargains to be had. Street stalls hawk everything from rugs and jackets to quaint Tibetan jewellery. If you're looking for something with a little more finesse, then stop by at the Tibetan Handicrafts Centre and the Himachal Handicrafts Emporium which stock some beautifully crafted curios among other bric-a-brac.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

This Protestant Church in Dalhousie is a throwback to the Victorian era and holds great historical significance as the first religious site to be built here, dating all the way back to 1863. Within, the Church houses a library with a rich compilation of books and rare photographs accounting for the history and culture of Dalhousie.

KALATOP WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

About nine kilometres from Gandhi Chowk, Kalatop's dense deodar canopy shields a variety of animals and birds, including about 117 rare species. Carry along your binoculars for some birding, and try to spot the chestnut billed rock thrush and Eurasian jay. Deeper in the more intensely wooded areas, sightings can be difficult, but langurs, musk deer and barking deer can be spotted with relative ease. Exploring the sanctuary can take up to six hours; one word of caution, do not venture deep into the sanctuary on foot—bear sightings while not common, have been reported from the area.



Asia Cup: India beat Pakistan by 8 wickets

DUBAI (TIP): After a lacklustre performance against minnows Hong Kong, India aced in all three departments as they thrashed Pakistan by eight wickets in a one-sided Asia Cup group league match in Dubai on Wednesday.

It was a superlative effort from the bowling unit that saw them shot out Pakistan for a paltry 162 in 43.1 overs before Rohit Sharma (52 off 39 balls) and Shikhat Dhawan (46 off 54 balls) added 86 for the opening wicket to ensure a smooth chase for the 'Men In Blue' in only 29 overs.

The Pakistan match was a near perfect performance for India as Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/15 in 7 overs) and Kedar Jadhav (3/23 in 9 overs) were perfectly complemented by Jasprit Bumrah (2/23 in 7.1 overs) and Kuldeep Yadav (1/37 in 8 overs).

If Kuldeep's googly to snuff out Babar Azam was the turning point, Kedar Jadhav's unconventional side-arm off-breaks broke the lower middle-order as Pakistan never recovered from the batting collapse.

With the pressure of scoreboard virtually non-existent, Rohit and Dhawan showed why they are one of the most formidable opening pair in white ball cricket.

The eighth over from Usman Khan enabled India cut loose as Rohit first hooked him for a six using the pace of the delivery and followed it with a 'Nataraja' pull shot for boundary and then short arm pull in-front of the square for another six. With 19 runs coming off that over, there was no looking back for India.

Rohit's third six was a another hook shot off Hasan Ali followed by a drive through mid-off to complete his 35th half century in ODIs. He was fooled by a googly from Shadab Khan but by then India were on course for a comprehensive victory. Ambati Rayudu and Dinesh Karthik both contributed 31 to take India past finish line with consummate ease.

Earlier Jadhav produced a laudable performance as he did the job of a frontline spinner after Hardik Pandya (0/24 in 4.5 overs) was stretchered off the field due to an acute lower back injury.

This was after young Babar Azam (47) and veteran Shoaib Malik (43) added 82 runs for the third wicket and looked like taking control of the proceedings.

However, Pakistan suffered a batting collapse losing five wickets for 36 runs before Faheem Ashraf (21) and Mohammed Aamir (16) added an invaluable 37 runs for the eighth wicket to take the total past 150-run mark.

Put into bat, Pakistan were in trouble straight away as Bhuvneshwar dealt a twin blow removing the in-form duo of Imam ul



Rohit was thrilled with Bhuvneshwar Kumar's early exploits as that left Pakistan struggling from the word go. Bhuvi was awarded the Man of the Match award for finishing with figures of 3/15 from his seven overs

Haq (2) and Fakhar Zaman (0) to reduce them to 2 for 3.

Imam charged to a short of length delivery that climbed on him and the thickish outside edge was taken by Dhoni. Zaman, India's tormentor in the Champions Trophy, mistimed a pull-shot and Yuzvendra Chahal took a well-judged catch.

Babar and Malik then resurrected the innings with a fine partnership. The half-volleys on both sides of the wicket were driven with ferocity.

Malik, who is a good player of spin bowling, gave Kuldeep Yadav the charge to hit him for a six and rotated the strike well.



VIRAT KOHLI, MIRABAI CHANU TO RECEIVE KHEL RATNA ON SEPTEMBER 25

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli and world champion weightlifter Mirabai Chanu will receive the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna on September 25, the Sports Ministry announced Thursday.

The list was already out but the ministry made it official on Thursday.

Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was among 20 sportspersons picked for the Arjuna Awards, and they will be honoured by President Ram Nath Kovind at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

On Wednesday, archery coach Jiwanjot Singh Teja was dropped from the list of Dronacharya award nominees due to a past case of indiscipline.

Teja was among five coaches named by the selection committee for Dronacharya award but it came to light that he had served a one-year ban following an incident of indiscipline during the 2015 World University Games in Korea. Kohli, the world's No.1 Test batsman as per the ICC rankings, has been in stupendous form in the past three years though he missed out of the top award despite nominations in 2016 and 2017.

The 29-year-old Kohli has 6147 runs in 71 Tests with 23



centuries and 9779 runs in 211 ODIs, including 35 tons.

Chanu was chosen for the prestigious award following her gold medal in 48kg category at the World Championships last year. She also bagged the yellow metal in this year's Commonwealth Games but didn't compete at the Asian Games due to injury.

The President will also present the Dronacharya and Dhyan



Chand Awards on the same day.

The List of Awardees:

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award: Virat Kohli and Mirabai Chanu.

Arjuna Awards: Neeraj Chopra, Jinson Johnson and Hima Das (Athletics); N Sikki Reddy (Badminton); Satish Kumar (Boxing); Smriti Mandhana (Cricket); Shubhankar Sharma (Golf); Manpreet Singh, Savita (Hockey); Ravi Rathore (Polo); Rahi Sarnobat, Ankur Mittal, Shreyasi Singh (Shooting); Manika Batra, G Sathiyam (Table Tennis); Rohan Bopanna (Tennis); Sumit (Wrestling); Pooja Kadian (Wushu); Ankur Dhama (Para-Athletics); Manoj Sarkar (Para-Badminton).

Dronacharya Awards: C A Kuttappa (Boxing); Vijay Sharma (Weightlifting); A Srinivasa Rao (Table Tennis); Sukhdev Singh Pannu (Athletics); Clarence Lobo (Hockey, Lifetime); Tarak Sinha (Cricket, Lifetime); Jiwan Kumar Sharma (Judo, Lifetime); V R Beedu (Athletics, Lifetime).

Dhyan Chand Awards: Satyadev Prasad (Archery); Bharat Kumar Chetry (Hockey); Bobby Aloysius (Athletics); Chougale Dadu Dattatray (Wrestling).

Source: PTI



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