

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

DEEPAVALI
Festival of Lights

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Articles and advertisements are invited for Deepavali Special edition of The Indian Panorama. Please email to editor@theindianpanorama.com & salujaindra@gmail.com

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For any question, please call 646-247-9458

Air India Regional Manager - Americas Vandana Sharma given a warm send off

Congressman Tom Suozzi recommends Stronger US India relationship

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): Mrs. Vandana Sharma, Regional Manager of Air India was hosted to a warm send off by the Indian American community here, October 8.

The dinner co-hosted by Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, Publisher/Editor of The Indian Panorama, Attorney Ravi Batra and his wife Ranju Batra at Antun's in Hicksville, was attended by over a hundred community representatives and officials, which included Consul General of India in New York,

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Congressman Tom Suozzi presenting a Congressional Recognition to Mrs. Vandana Sharma, Regional Manager-Americas, Air India, October 8

Automaker Ford plans layoffs, blames Trump tariffs for \$1 billion loss: report



NEW YORK (TIP):

Ford's reorganization could include upwards of 24,000 job cuts, NBC News reported Monday, Oct 8. The automaker has not provided hard figures on the number of employees it

will let go, but its leaders have said President Donald Trump's tariff war with China could impact the company's overhaul.

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Hurricane Michael batters Florida Panhandle: At least Six Dead; 1.3 Million without Power

PANAMA CITY (TIP): At least six people were killed by the most powerful storm to hit the Florida Panhandle in recorded history. Officials warned Thursday, October 11, that the number was likely to rise as search crews struggled to gain access to ravaged areas and sift through the piles of debris.

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Asia Society Honors Indra Nooyi and other Inspiring Game Changers in Dazzling Ceremony

NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP): Asia Society honored Indra Nooyi, the barrier-shattering chairman and former CEO of PepsiCo, as 2018 Game Changer of the Year at the fifth annual Asia Game Changer Awards. In a dazzling ceremony held Tuesday, October 9 night in lower Manhattan, the India-born Nooyi, who served as PepsiCo's chief from 2006 until her retirement earlier this month, was recognized for her transformative stewardship of the iconic American company.

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton presented Nooyi with the honor, recognizing her work to steer Pepsi toward healthier products in spite of investor pressure not to.

"Yes, she's my friend," Clinton said. "And I'd be here under any circumstances. But she's the real deal."

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PepsiCo Chairman and former CEO Indra Nooyi receives the 2018 Asia Game Changer of the Year Award, presented by the 42nd President of the United States, Bill Clinton, in New York, October 9

Photo / Courtesy Josh Wong Photography

3 Illegal Aliens With Child Sex Crime Records Arrested in Texas

TEXAS (TIP): Three illegal aliens with criminals records involving sex offenses against children were arrested in three separate incidents in Texas, reported the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency (CBP).

The agency said that on Tuesday, Oct. 9, its officers in McAllen, Texas "arrested a Mexican national after he illegally entered the United States near Mission, Texas." During his processing, a records showed that the alien had been arrested previously for "indecent with a child" and had served a three-year prison sentence.

Also on Tuesday, Fort Brown CBP agents arrested a Mexican national near Brownsville, Texas. A records check showed the Mexican had been arrested in Greer, South Carolina, "for sexual conduct with a minor," and had served a 12-year prison sentence.

On Wednesday, Oct. 10, CBP agents arrested a Salvadoran national near a



border checkpoint. The Salvadoran had previously been arrested in Dallas for "aggravated sexual assault of a child," said the CBP.

"The public is encouraged to take a

stand against crime in their communities and to help save lives by reporting suspicious activity at 800-863-9382," said the CBP in its press release.

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

NEW YORK- DALLAS

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We are looking for marketing persons for The Indian Panorama print editions and the web portal at a couple of locations which include Long Island, Queens, Manhattan and Buffalo in New York, Jersey City and Edison in New Jersey, Stamford in Connecticut, Atlanta in Georgia, Houston and Dallas in Texas, and Chicago in Illinois.

Persons with experience in newspaper reporting will be preferred.

The individual must be a person with experience in marketing and public relations, confident, independent and able to handle marketing on his/her own with minimum support from the management.

Compensation will be based on experience with up to 40% revenue created by the individual.

Anyone who would like to work with us part time and on the basis of revenue sharing may email to salujaindra@gmail.com or contact at 646-247-9458.

Air India Regional Manager - Americas Vandana Sharma given a warm send off

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Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty who was accompanied by wife Taruna Chakravorty, and Congressman Tom Suozzi, besides leaders of various community organizations, officials from different sectors, and friends.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty recalled the tremendous work done by Mrs. Vandana Sharma to take the Indian national carrier Air India to new heights. He mentioned how Mrs. Sharma played a leadership role in times of emergencies and set an example of customer care. He congratulated Mrs. Sharma for her achievements and wished her well in her new position.

Ambassador Chakravorty also spoke about the ever-strengthening relationship

between India and the US and said much more needed to be done. He appreciated the large Indian Diaspora in the US for their contribution to ever growing relationship between India and US. He mentioned briefly the enormous contribution of Indians in various spheres in the US.

Congressman Tom Suozzi spoke at length about his long and happy relationship with the South Asian community, of which Indian American community is a large segment. He said he represents New York's Congressional District 3 which includes the largest number of South Asians in a District in the whole of US. He spoke about how the Indian American community has been growing in his district both in numbers and in strength, economically and politically.

Speaking about US India relations, the

Congressman commended both US and India for having worked in close cooperation in various fields. He said there was need to not only keep up the pace of cooperation but also to accelerate it. He referred to growing ambition of China to "dominate" the world "economically and militarily". It is in the interest of both the US and India to come together to counter China's growing power, he said. He called upon the Indian American community to continue their effort at strengthening the close cooperation between the two great democracies of the world.

Mr. Suozzi also recalled his memorable visit to India where besides meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi (The Indian Panorama had published the news report) and other leaders including India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, he went for sightseeing. He grew nostalgic about the Taj Mahal in Agra in his mention of the places. He said he found India a great place and Indians a great people.

Referring to the contribution of the Indian American community (which he never fails to do), he observed that the community has done well and is influential. However, he suggested that the community should get more involved in the political system.

All through his address, he repeatedly returned to Mrs. Vandana Sharma, praising her as a fine person and as an efficient administrator of India's largest airline Air India. He wished her "continued success and happiness in your future endeavors" and presented the Congressional Recognition which said "I thank you for spending your time, talent and treasure with Air India-Americas. Your sincerity and dedication to those you serve has not gone unnoticed and is appreciated. Best wishes for continued success and happiness in your future endeavors".

Attorney Ravi Batra, a co-host of the send off dinner, dwelt on how important it is for the Indian American community to intelligently define their relationship with the country of their adoption.

Ranju Batra who introduced Vandana Sharma, spoke very highly of Mrs. Sharma, describing her as the finest human being and a true friend. She recalled how Mrs. Sharma had extended all cooperation when she was waging a relentless struggle to have the Diwali stamp issued.

Mrs. Vandana Sharma was visibly emotional while speaking to the gathering. She thanked the community for their cooperation and love during her 3 year stay in New York. She said she had received immense love from all quarters- her colleagues, customers, and community. She invited the gathering to Delhi where she said she would love to receive them with all warmth and live over the happy days spent in New York.

Earlier, Prof. Indrajit Saluja extended a word of welcome and mentioned how Mrs. Sharma endeared herself to all with her affable nature. He described Mrs. Sharma as a pleasant person who will be deeply missed. However, he said, most people land at Delhi airport while visiting India, and since Mrs. Sharma is taking over as Deputy General Manager, Delhi Airport, it will be easier to look her up.

The presentation of bouquets to guests was ably handled by 7-year-old Kabir Raj Beri, Prof. Saluja's grandson.

Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, presented, on behalf of the community a good wishes card signed by over 100 persons present in the room.



Pratibha Goyal who gave a superb performance of Kathak



Prof. Indrajit S Saluja extending a word of welcome



Ranju Batra recalled how Mrs. Sharma helped her at every step in her effort to have the Diwali Stamp issued



Kolkata based Sarod virtuoso Apratim Majumdar and Tabla Player Amit Chatterjee cast a magic spell on the audience



A view of the gathering

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Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty, Consul General of India in New York had all praise for Mrs. Vandana Sharma



Attorney Ravi Batra spoke about the tremendous contribution in refurbishing the image of Air India



Congressman Tom Suozzi extended his good wishes to Mrs. Sharma and presented her a Congressional Recognition for the great work she did as Regional Manager of Air India



Mrs. Vandana Sharma expressed her gratitude to the Indian American community for their cooperation and love

Kolkata based Sarod virtuoso Apratim Majumdar and Tabla Player Amit Chatterjee cast a magic spell on the audience. Apratim is the most thinking and creative Sarod player, a composer of a very special quality, and a brilliant performer.

Chatterjee is a highly gifted Tabla player who received training from the famous internationally reputed Tabla Maestro Pandit Sankha Chatterjee.

The two were joined by another gifted artist- Suresh Kumar Ketwaroe who was not only incredible with his Guitar, but also entertained the gathering with superb rendering of Hindi and Punjabi songs.

Mrs. Purnima Desai, Founder and Director of Shikshayatan and Sriniketan- the two institutions dedicated to promoting Indian culture and classical music and dances, who had only last week organized a



two-day International music concert in which around 50 eminent artists participated, was kind enough to invite all three to the send off dinner to Mrs. Vandana Sharma.

Another extremely talented artist present and performing was Pratibha Goyal who gave a superb performance of Kathak. Mrs. Gunjan Rastogi, President of India Association of Long Island discovered the artist for the occasion.

Mrs. Vandana Sharma surprised all with a soulful playing on Violin



Mrs. Vandana Sharma with community leaders who penned down their good wishes for her on a Card which was presented on their behalf to Mrs. Sharma by Prof. Indrajit S Saluja

Photos / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

Asia Society Honors Indra Nooyi and other Inspiring Game Changers in Dazzling Ceremony



Lulu & Anthony Wang Asia Society President & CEO Josette Sheeran delivers welcoming remarks at the 2018 Asia Game Changer awards. Photo / Jamie Watts - Asia Society



PepsiCo Chairman and former CEO Indra Nooyi delivers an acceptance speech. Photo / Courtesy Jamie Watts- Asia Society



Asia Society Trustee and businesswoman Betsy Cohen (L) distance runner Mira Raj @, and Asia Society Trustee and businesswoman Zhang Xin @ pose with Raj's Asia Gamechanger Award. Photo / Courtesy Jamie Watts- Asia Society

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Under Nooyi's leadership, PepsiCo experienced remarkable financial success. But in her acceptance speech, the pioneering executive cited achievements that transcended the company's bottom line. "I believe that a company has to be more than creating value for shareholders, but for society as a whole," she said. "I ran a company that championed women, sustainability, health, and wellness. A company that lifted people up and built bridges. A company that did well by doing good. These were the values from my first days in India to my last days at Pepsi. They're also the values of the Asia Society."

In addition to Nooyi, Asia Society recognized eight other individuals and groups on Tuesday: Wang Shi, the Chinese real estate developer and great advocate for environmental sustainability; Mira Rai, child soldier turned champion distance runner from Nepal; Munjed Al Muderis, a doctor who fled Iraq only to become a pioneering surgeon in Australia; the founders of Koolulam, a musical initiative building bridges through song in Israel; the remarkable, award-winning Afghan Girls Robotics Team; heroes who saved lives during Japan's Fukushima nuclear disaster; the incomparably brave and determined White Helmets of Syria; and, in their first-ever appearance on American soil, survivors from this summer's incredible rescue at Thailand's Tham Luang caves.

Adul Sam-on, one of the 12 Thai boys whose rescue captivated the entire world, was joined on stage by Ekkapol Chantawong, the boys' soccer coach, and Naronsak Osatanakorn, the local governor who coordinated the international group of rescuers with efficiency and grace.

"I hope this experience inspires people to start living for others," Osatanakorn said. "That would be a game changer for

the world."

It was a night to celebrate remarkable women from across Asia. Nooyi, a daughter of India turned celebrated leader of U.S. corporate giant. Rai, an internationally celebrated runner from a country, Nepal, where athletic opportunities for girls and women are scarce. And the Afghan Girls Robotics Team, a group of remarkable young women who overcame tremendous obstacles - and personal tragedy - to thrive in competitions around the world.

Speaking on behalf of the Afghan girls, Roya Mahboob, founder of the Afghan Citadel software company, said: "We need to cast aside the misconceptions of the past and embrace the potential of Afghan girls and women to succeed."

The Asia Game Changer Awards was also an occasion to recognize those who have braved extraordinary risks to save lives. Syria's White Helmets, a group of volunteers pulled from all walks of life, have rescued many thousands of innocent civilians trapped in the country's civil war. The heroes of Fukushima worked tirelessly in the desperate days after the 2011 earthquake to contain a crisis that threatened Japan. And Dr. Al Muderis, who fled Iraq and endured many trying months as a refugee in Australia, pioneered a surgical procedure that has given injured men and women the gift of mobility.

"I dream that one day we'll wake up and not spend money on war machines, but [rather] foresting the desert and managing the earth's large population," he said.

But before the 2018 class of Asia Game Changers parted ways, they made time for music. Koolulam, whose sold-out concerts in their native Israel have created a sensation, convened their first-ever performance outside their homeland. As Koolulam founder Or Taicher directed



Afghan Citadel Software Company Founder Roya Mahboob, Afghan Girls Robotics team members Kawsar Roshan and Fatemah Qaderayn, and Asia Society Trustee and former US Ambassador to Japan, Caroline Kennedy pose with an Asia Gamechanger Award. Photo / Courtesy Jamie Watts- Asia Society



All the Asia Gamechangers from the class of 2018 pose for a group photo.

Photo / Courtesy Jamie Watts- Asia Society



Heroes from Thai Cave Rescue accept the Asia Gamechanger Award. Naronsak Osatanakorn, governor of Chaing Rai, Thailand, accepts the Asia Gamechanger Award alongside Ekkapol Chantawong (L) and Adul Sam-on (R), two survivors rescued from the Tham Luang Caves in Thailand this June. Photo / Courtesy Jamie Watts- Asia Society

proceedings from the stage, the assembled guests, native to dozens of countries from around the world, stood and, in unison, clapped their hands, danced, and sang. It was living proof that, as President Clinton said a few hours before, "our differences make life interesting - but our common humanity matters more."

Indian American entrepreneur invests \$60 million in medical device company

FLORIDA (TIP): Indian American entrepreneur Dr. Kiran Patel has invested \$60 million at "an undisclosed valuation" in Concept Medical Inc., a Florida-based medical device company.

The newly infused funds will support clinical trials on cardiac devices, the company said in a press release.

"Cardiovascular diseases are the number 1 cause of death globally, representing 31 percent of all global deaths, and it is increasing due to changes in lifestyle and the increase in hypertension amongst the young and old," Patel said. "I am excited to be part of the CMI whose research and innovative technologies will meet a major unmet need in patients with diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. This venture enables me to contribute to the millions of hearts beating around the world."

Concept Medical founder and Managing Director Manish Doshi said Patel's "investment brings a series value add," as his "vast experience" as a cardiologist "is synergistic." "We want to make a world of difference to the way medical devices companies operate globally," he said. "We are a young organization and innovation runs in the soul of our entire organization. This investment enables us in advancing innovation platforms vigorously."

Doshi, an Indian American, founded Concept Medical in 2008. It has a manufacturing subsidiary in India, Envision Scientific Pvt. Ltd. Concept Medical said it has approached the US Food and Drug Administration for an "Investigative Device



A philanthropist, Dr. Kiran Patel has invested \$60 million to support clinical trials on cardiac devices

Exemption" for its newly developed stents and balloons that open blocked coronary arteries. The balloon is coated with a substance called Sirolimus, which reduces rejection.

An FDA exemption will allow these devices to be used in clinical studies. The company said the new funds will also be used to increase clinical data and registries to qualify for cost reimbursements in Europe, where the product is already in the market.

Parts of the funds will be used to increase manufacturing operations, the company said.

According to the release, Concept Medical has received 96 patents and dozens more under process in different countries, including the United States, China, Japan,

India and several European nations.

Patel and his wife, Dr. Pallavi Patel, have built and sold two-billion-dollar healthcare companies in the past two decades. In 2002, they sold WellCare, one of the largest HMOs in Florida, with more than 400,000 members and revenue in excess of \$1 billion.

They sold Freedom Health and Optimum Healthcare nearly a year ago.

The Patels now run one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the state of Florida, the Drs. Kiran and Pallavi Patel Family Foundation. In September 2017, the foundation announced a \$20 million contribution to the Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

Newsweek magazine's former parent company hit with \$10M fraud indictment

NEW YORK (TIP): The former parent company of beleaguered Newsweek ran a \$10 million fraud scheme, tricking lenders into loaning out large sums to pay for high-end computer servers they never bought, according to an indictment unsealed Wednesday.

The magazine's former owners, Christian Media Corp. and IBT Media, and its executives instead diverted the money to pay for day-to-day operations and past financial obligations, Manhattan prosecutors allege.

The indictment comes nearly 10 months after investigators with the Manhattan DA's office raided Newsweek's offices for information about the magazine's computer servers.

A few weeks after the raid, Newsweek sacked its editor in chief and deputy editor and targeted for firing three reporters who were covering the DA's investigation and a sexual harassment scandal at the magazine.

Those fired included former Daily News reporter Celeste Katz, who co-wrote an expose in Newsweek about its parent company that ran in February, months after she was fired.

"As we were reporting this story, Newsweek Media Group fired Newsweek Editor Bob Roe, Executive Editor Ken Li and Senior Politics Reporter Celeste Katz for doing their jobs," an editor's note atop the story read. "Reporters Josh Keefe and Josh Saul were targeted for firing before an editor persuaded the company to reverse its decision." The fraud indictment names IBT co-owner Etienne Uzac, former Christian Media CEO William Anderson and Oikos Networks, a computer company that falsely claimed it had sold Dell servers with price tags ranging from \$130,000 to \$180,000 to the magazine. **Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news**

Indian American USIBC President Nisha Biswal will deliver keynote at Ekal Vidyalaya's Washington gala

WASHINGTON, DC (TIP): Indian American USIBC President Nisha Desai Biswal will deliver the keynote address at the Ekal Vidyalaya's Washington, DC, area gala, which will be held at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, MD, on October 12.

The event will consist of a dinner, auction, and fundraiser to support rural development in India.

Biswal, who served as an assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian Affairs from 2014 to 2017, is one of a number of prominent Indian Americans scheduled to attend the event. Others include Sonal Shah, executive director of the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation at Georgetown University, and Vinod Prakash, president & CEO of the India Development and Relief Fund Inc. USA (IDRF).

Prakash, an economist who worked for the World Bank for several years, will be honored at the event for his lifetime of service.

"The goal of the gala is to raise money for the integrated development of Indian villages," said Dr. Sudhir Sekhsaria, convener and chair of the gala. "Ekal mainly focuses on four areas for the development of villages: primary education, preventive healthcare, economic empowerment of villagers through skills training, and spreading awareness among villagers about right to information."

Sekhsaria, a prominent physician in the Washington area, said Ekal's village adoption program costs \$1,000 per village, and the goal of the gala is to facilitate the adoption of 300 villages.

A number of prominent Ekal leaders, including Ekal USA President Suresh Iyer, its former President Vinod Jhunjhunwala, Executive Director Ranjani Saigal, Ekal Abhayan Trust Board secretary Bajrang Lal Bagra and gala co-chair Dr. Suresh C. Gupta, will speak at the event.

Popular Indian American actor Omi Vaidya will be the master of ceremonies.

Another feature of the gala will be a concert by Bollywood playback singer Sumitra Iyer.



Nisha Desai Biswal will deliver the keynote address at the Ekal Vidyalaya's Washington, DC, area gala, October 12

15 SAUDI REPORTERS ARRESTED IN PAST YEAR: REPORT

NEW YORK (TIP): At least 15 Saudi journalists and bloggers have been arrested over the past year, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said on Wednesday, October 10, following the disappearance of Saudi columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

"In most cases, their arrests have never been officially confirmed and no official has ever said where they are being held or what they are charged with," RSF, which defends press freedom around the world, said in a statement.

Cases included that of Saleh al-Shihi, a journalist whose arrest was only confirmed in February when his family learned he had been sentenced to five years in prison, RSF said.

He disappeared in December 2017, but his detention was not revealed until his conviction and sentence were announced in the kingdom, the organisation added.

Economist and citizen-journalist Essam al-Zamel was put on trial this month for criticising the government's economic strategy in a series of tweets and reports. It was only then officially confirmed he has been in jail for the past year.

Another journalist and commentator, Turad al-Amri, has been missing since November 2016 after protesting in a tweet to a clampdown on Saudi media, including the blocking of an online newspaper for which he had written.

Fayez bin Damakh, another reporter and poet, has also been reported missing since September 2017 when he was about to launch a TV news channel in neighbouring Kuwait.

Local press reports suggested he was abducted and taken to Saudi Arabia, though this has never been confirmed.

"The traditionally opaque methods used by Saudi Arabia to silence critical journalists constitute grounds for fearing the worst in the case of Khashoggi's disappearance," said Sophie Anmuth, head of RSF's Middle East desk.

Khashoggi, who lived in self-imposed exile in the United States, vanished on October 2 after entering Riyadh's consulate in Istanbul to obtain official documents ahead of his marriage to his Turkish fiancée.

On Wednesday, Turkish television released CCTV footage of him entering the consulate. Saudi authorities have said the journalist left the building after his visit and rejected Turkish police suggestions he might have been killed there.

RSF is calling for an independent international investigation to determine his fate.

A total of 25 to 30 professional and non-professional journalists are currently believed to be detained in Saudi Arabia, which is ranked 169th out of 180 countries in RSF's 2018 World Press Freedom Index, the organisation also said.



GODMAN RAMPAL CONVICTED IN TWO MURDER CASES

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Rampal, the self-styled godman who heads the Satlok Ashram in Haryana, was found guilty of murder in two separate cases on Oct 11.

Rampal was convicted on the charges of murder in a 2006 case relating to the death of a woman supporter. Rampal was also convicted on the charges of murder in a 2014 case that dealt with the deaths of four women and a child.

In both the cases, Rampal was charged under section 302 (murder) and section 120B (criminal conspiracy) of Indian Penal Code.

The quantum of punishment will be announced on October 16 (in the case relating to the deaths of four women and a child) and October 17 (in the 2006 case relating to the death of a woman).

The guilty verdict was pronounced at the Hisar Central Jail. Rampal was not taken out of the prison. He was instead produced inside the makeshift court via video conferencing.

Born Rampal Singh Jatun in September 1951, Rampal once worked as an engineer in Haryana's irrigation department. He renounced Hinduism and adopted Kabir Panth, a sect based on the teachings of medieval period poet-saint Kabir, after meeting Swami Ramdevanand.

Rampal later founded the Satlok Ashram in Haryana's Rohtak and rose to become one of the most prominent leaders of Kabir Panth sect.

Rampal was accused of murder in two separate cases. The first case was related to the death of a woman at the Satlok Ashram in 2006 during clashes between the followers of Rampal and those of the Arya Samaj.

In the second case, four women and a child had died near the same Satlok Ashram. The deaths took place in 2014 during clashes between Rampal's supporters and security personnel, who had come to the Satlok Ashram in order to arrest the godman for the 2006 murder case.

Rampal was arrested on November 19, 2014 after thousands of security personnel laid siege to the Satlok Ashram. Rampal's followers had resisted the previous attempts by police to arrest him.

Threats won't stop future defence deals with India: Russia on US sanctions

NEW DELHI (TIP): Russia won't be pressured by the threat of US sanctions while finalising big-ticket military hardware deals with India, including contracts for four frigates and production of Kalashnikov assault rifles, said Russian ambassador Nikolay Kudashev on Thursday.

A day after President Donald Trump remarked New Delhi will find out "sooner than you think" about Washington's response to the \$5.4 billion deal for Russian S-400 air defence systems that comes under the purview of Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), Kudashev said India is "too big and too large to depend on or be afraid of somebody".

Kudashev described the S-400 deal as the "largest contract" in the history of military-technical cooperation with India, and also "one of the speediest contracts". Implementation of the deal, signed during President Vladimir Putin's annual summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 5, will start in 2020 and be completed in five years, he said.

"In the coming months, you could expect more deals, talks are on, this is a normal process and I hope that within two to three months...we could soon have a deal on frigates and...on the Kalashnikov assault rifles. There could be other deals also," Kudashev told a group of journalists.

Asked whether it would be right to state that India and Russia wouldn't be deterred by the threat of sanctions under CAATSA, Kudashev replied: "Yes. It was specifically mentioned by defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman and foreign minister Sushma Swaraj that India will not acknowledge sanctions



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

other than those adopted by the UN Security Council."

He added, "CAATSA is bad, it is not the way to do things...It is an instrument of political pressure, an instrument of unfair competition."

India plans to acquire four more Krivak/Talwar-class frigates from Russia and begin licenced production of Kalashnikov assault rifles to fully utilise the capacity of ordinance factories and boost its "Make in India" programme.

Kudashev said Russia is expecting India to decide "as soon as possible" on the site for a new nuclear power project with six reactors, even as work continues on the Koodankulam nuclear project. The construction of the third and fourth reactors at Koodankulam has started and both sides are "ready to start" work on the fifth and sixth reactors, he said.

Referring to the new nuclear power project, he said, "the Indian government feels it needs to have some more

consultations with local communities (for selecting a site) and there is no clarity as yet."

The two sides are also making progress on the Rooppur nuclear power project in Bangladesh and looking at the possibility of taking up similar joint projects in other countries, he said.

Kudashev also said Russia could consider signing pacts similar to the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) inked by New Delhi and Washington to give legal basis to ongoing military-technical cooperation.

The Russian envoy was critical of the US strategy in Afghanistan, saying it had "failed" as there had been a deterioration of the security situation and a spike in violence. India and Russia, he said, could take up joint projects for capacity building and training in Afghanistan. *Source: HT*

'Dassault will say what Indian govt wants it to say': Rahul Gandhi says Rafale deal is 'clear-cut' case of corruption

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday called Prime Minister Narendra Modi "corrupt" over the Rafale deal. The Congress-led opposition and the BJP have been sparring over the issue for more than a month.

While addressing a press conference, Rahul said that the "reality is that the Prime Minister of India is corrupt." Incidentally, defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman is on a three-day visit to France amid controversy around the procurement of 36 Rafale jets from French aerospace major Dassault Aviation. Official sources said Sitharaman will hold wide-ranging talks with her French counterpart Florence Parly on ways to deepen strategic cooperation and also deliberate on major regional and global issues of mutual interests.

Dassault Aviation, the company manufacturing the aircraft had issued a statement clarifying on the pact with the Indian government, reiterating that it "freely



chosen to make partnership with India's Reliance Group".

Rahul quoted the document citing a senior executive at Dassault, which was reported by French journal Mediapart. He further drew links between Anil Ambani, whose company is the Indian partner in the manufacturing of the Rafale aircraft, and Modi, saying that "the prime minister is not India's chowkidaar, he is Ambani's chowkidaar". He added, "What is Ambani being compensated for (by being given the deal)?"

After the press conference, Rahul also tweeted about Sitharaman's France trip and said, "To try and show the deal is legit, Raksha Mantri will need to generate minutes of imaginary meetings held between the French & our MOD & both sides will need to agree on a common story to be spun to the media."

In the statement released on the company's official website, titled 'Rafale contract for India: clarifications by Dassault Aviation', the company also said that, it has committed to offsets in India worth 50 percent of the value of the purchase of 36 Rafale jets "within the

framework of the September 2016 Inter-Government Agreement between France and India" and in "compliance with the Indian regulations".

In conclusion, Rahul said that "Rafale is a clear-cut case of corruption." He said that "the country will realise that the prime minister is corrupt as truths come out one by one".

Addressing the youth of the country, the Congress president said, "Modi came to power on the expressed purpose of fighting corruption, but I want to tell the young people that the prime minister is corrupt." Making further allegations, Rahul said that Rafale is "not the only contract" and added that soon there would be information on other such contracts.

He also demanded a JPC probe into the controversy that has dominated national headlines for over a month. Rahul also questioned Sitharaman's visit to France. "What is the emergency for which the defence minister needed to go to France?" he said.

BJP silent among growing calls for minister MJ Akbar's resignation

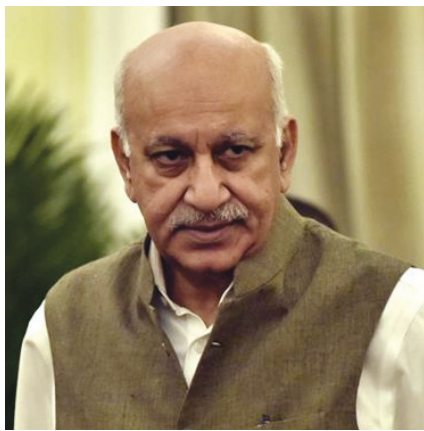
NEW DELHI (TIP): The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) continued to maintain a stoic silence on whether it would ask journalist-turned-politician and junior minister for external affairs, MJ Akbar, to step down, in the face of escalating demands for his resignation. Akbar has been accused of sexual misconduct by several women journalists on social media.

Even as opposition clamour for Akbar's dismissal mounts, the BJP brass has issued a diktat to party spokespersons to not comment on the issue. Party leaders and spokespersons have steadfastly refused questions on the subject. Belying rumours that he has been asked to cut short his Africa visit and return, Akbar left Nigeria for Malabo in Equatorial Guinea on Thursday.

He is expected back on Saturday or early on Sunday, people familiar with the matter said.

Both the Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) have demanded that the government remove Akbar from his position after the allegations of sexual misconduct surfaced. "Seven women journalists have come forward recounting their experience of sexual harassment and unacceptable behaviour from M.J. Akbar when he was the editor of various newspapers," the CPI (M) said in a statement. On Wednesday, the Congress' S Jaipal reddy said it was untenable for Akbar to continue as a minister.

"I appreciate that the media is accosting his (former) female colleagues, but I think it is for the gentleman concerned to issue a



MJ Akbar

statement (and) not for me because I was personally not present there," Smriti Irani, the Union minister of textiles, told journalists in Mumbai. A few party functionaries declined to comment on the course of action the party is likely to follow, but said it is only "fair" that the minister is given a chance to reply to the allegations. Among them was Uttar Pradesh tourism minister Rita Bahuguna Joshi who said a thorough probe is needed before any discussion on resignation.

A senior functionary, not wishing to be named said the issue was "informally" discussed by the party, with some senior leaders underlining that the issue has cast a cloud on the party's claims of empowering women.

"When Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat, he used to go door-to-door to encourage families to send girls to school. He gave Rs 21 lakh from his personal savings to set up a fund for the girls of drivers and peons in government offices just before becoming PM. So, it is reasonable that

the party should send a message that it is serious about the safety and empowerment of women," the functionary said.

The decision to appoint as many as six women in the Modi cabinet, two of whom are in the cabinet committee on security, the fight to ban triple talaq among Muslims and the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign have all been women-centric policies.

The BJP's ideological mentor, RashtriyaSwayamsevak Sangh, did not make a formal statement on the issue, but a senior functionary of the organisation said it is for the party to take a decision. One RSS joint general secretary, Dattatreya Hosable, posted a comment on Twitter that suggested his support for the #metoo campaign.

He shared a post from a woman named Ankhi Das which said, "You needn't have a #MeToo moment to support the women journalists who have narrated their victimisation. You needn't even be a woman. You just need to have a sensibility of what is right and what is wrong."

Although neither external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj nor the ministry have not commented on allegations against Akbar, two people familiar with development said on condition of anonymity that it had been left to the minister of state to decide on whether he should continue in his post after his return, given the serious nature of the allegations against him.

However, the thinking within the party is that a resignation could set a precedent and open the doors for the opposition to seek the resignation of other ministers facing allegations of impropriety. *Source: HT*

ED ATTACHES KARTI'S ASSETS WORTH RS 54 CRORE IN INDIA, UK, SPAIN

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday said it had attached assets worth Rs 54 crore of Karti Chidambaram, son of former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, in India, the UK and Spain in connection with the INX Media money laundering case.



The central probe agency issued a provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) for attachment of Indian assets in Kodaikanal and Ooty in Tamil Nadu and a flat in Delhi's Jorbagh.

A cottage and house in Somerset in the UK and a tennis club located in Barcelona, Spain, had also been attached as part of the same order, the agency said.

Fixed Deposits worth Rs 90 lakh, kept in a bank in Chennai, in the name of Advantage Strategic Consulting Private Limited (ASCPL) had also been attached, it said.

The assets are in the name of Karti and ASCPL, the firm allegedly linked to him, it said.

"The attached assets collectively amount to Rs 54 crore," it said.

The ED had registered a PMLA case in this deal case on the basis of a CBI FIR and had alleged that irregularities took place in the FIPB clearance to INX Media for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 when his father P Chidambaram was the Union finance minister. The ED had grilled Karti in this case in the past. *Source: PTI*

COURT: ATTACH MALLYA'S ASSETS IN BENGALURU

NEW DELHI (TIP): A Delhi court ordered attachment of liquor baron Vijay Mallya's properties in Bengaluru in a case relating to FERA violations.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Deepak Sherawat issued fresh directions after the Bengaluru police, through Enforcement Directorate (ED), sought more time to execute its earlier order. Special public prosecutor NK Matta and advocate Samvedna Verma, representing the ED, told the court that the process to attach the properties was on and due to lack of sufficient time, could not be completed in time. Mallya was declared a proclaimed offender by the court on January 4 for evading summons. *Source: PTI*

GANGA CAMPAIGNER SWAMI GYAN SWAROOP SANAND DIES AFTER FASTING FOR 112 DAYS

NEW DELHI (TIP): Environmental activist and rationalist GD Agarwal, a former Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) professor popularly known as Swami Gyanswarup Sanand, died in a Rishikesh hospital on Thursday, the 112th day of a hunger strike demanding a law to save the Ganga, scrapping of hydropower projects on the river, and free flow of its waters.

Agarwal, who was 86, was taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh, by the administration of neighbouring Haridwar in Uttarakhand on Wednesday, a day after he stopped drinking even water. He had been accepting water with honey during the duration of his hunger strike, which he started on June 22.

"The seer is dead. On October 9 he declared (his intention) to quit water, following which the next day we admitted him at AIIMS on Wednesday afternoon," said Deepak Rawat, district magistrate (DM) of Haridwar. Dr Ravi Kant, the director of AIIMS, Rishikesh, said Agarwal died of cardiac arrest coupled with arrhythmia at around 2pm. "His potassium levels were low and his blood pressure was high," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief at the demise of the activist. "Saddened by the demise of Shri GD Agarwal Ji. His passion towards learning, education, saving the environment, particularly Ganga cleaning will always be remembered. My condolences," he tweeted.

The Centre, in a reaction to his death, said that almost all the demands made by Agarwal had been accepted. Water Resources and Ganga River Rejuvenation Minister Nitin Gadkari had said, "We have accepted almost all his demands (on cleaning of the Ganga). One demand was to ensure environmental flow and we have come out with a notification."



Agarwal was a professor at the IIT-Kanpur, and also served as a member-secretary of the anti-pollution watchdog the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Since renouncing the materialistic world seven years ago, he was staying at Matri Sadan, the epicentre of an agitation for cleansing the Ganga of pollution. Matri Sadan founder Swami

Sivananda has himself been on fast several times.

It was not the first time that Agarwal had gone on hunger strike.

His fast in 2009 led to the scrapping of two dams - Bhairon Ghati (380 Mw) and Pala Maneri (480 Mw) - on the Bhagirathi river, a tributary of the Ganga in higher reaches of Uttarakhand. His fast in 2016 forced the Haridwar administration to crack down on illegal mining in the area.

Following the flash floods in Kedarnath in June 2013, Agarwal staged a 105-day fast, citing inactivity by National Ganga River Basin Authority, which is meant to protect the Ganga from pollution and overuse. "I had resigned from authority in support of Swami Sanand (Agarwal) over the then government's apathy. Swami Sanand was quite concerned about the Ganga and was first to present himself for agitation," said Rajendra Singh, a Magsaysay awardee and close associate of Agarwal.

"Nobody wants to help the Ganga, be it the Congress or BJP," Agarwal told HT last year. "Whenever I sit on fast, they come and make promises so that I end my fast. But nothing happens. Everything is very bureaucratic."

His latest hunger strike started after he failed to receive any response from the central government to a letter seeking enactment of the Ganga Protection Act as drafted by retired judge Giridhar Malaviya, which sought a total ban on quarrying and stone crushing on the Ganga river bed and scrapping of all hydel projects on the river in Uttarakhand.

His died a day after the environment ministry issued a notification for the free flow of 20-30% of water in river Ganga in the next three years.



GUEST COMMENT

Time up for Akbar: Step aside or prove the #MeToo charges wrong

As skeletons tumble out of MJ Akbar's dark closet with alarming frequency in the form of his former women subordinates narrating harrowing tales of sexual harassment, he may well turn out to be the Harvey Weinstein of the Indian media industry. Already, nine of his former colleagues have taken the #MeToo route to call out his sexually predatory behaviors editor. The common thread running through the explicitly hellish stories is one of a powerful boss misusing his position. He would pick on young professionals, lure them with jobs and plum assignments, summon them to posh hotels for interviews and try to force himself on them even as they had little redress to fall back on during the 90s. That being a known writer he was looked up to by wannabes with awe only traumatized them more as his true colors came to the fore.

Nemesis has finally caught up with him and more such offenders in the media and entertainment fields. Emboldened by the relatively supportive and sympathetic #MeToo movement, India's victims of sexual misconduct are also baring their old scars to expose the men who had earlier escaped unscathed in the oppressively patriarchal setups they created. It seems to be the beginning of "time up" for such predators even as society scrambles to find ways - both legally and socially - to deal with this newfound aggressive non-tolerance by women to the assault of their private space comprising both body and mind. Significantly, in cases of sexual transgression, shame is now being directed at the perpetrators rather than the hapless victims. This is an encouraging trend. It needs to penetrate every section of society for true emancipation of women from regressive social shackles.

Then there is the added impetus of both the judiciary and the government actively promoting women's causes. In such circumstances, it is morally incumbent upon the beleaguered 'Super Editor', now Minister of State for External Affairs in the NDA government, to take a call on the demand for his resignation as the flood of charges shifts the onus of proving his innocence on him.

(Tribune, India)

AS I SEE IT

Ambassador Nikki Haley Capitalizes on her Resignation and Builds Political Capital



By Ven Parameswaran

Ambassador Nikki Haley sitting by President Trump in the White House Oval office announced her resignation. The event was followed by a press conference. The story was a stunt and received the widest media coverage for a couple of days. First, I must congratulate Nikki Haley for her modus operandi and political skills in getting President Trump and the public to listen to her story from the oval office. Never before, a resignation of a cabinet official has received such importance. The exchange Nikki Haley had with Trump proved that they have the best rapport and cordial and professional relationship. Perhaps, having refined her diplomatic skills at the United Nations, she emulated them at the White House.

Nikki Haley, 46 started her political career 14 years ago as State Senator in South Carolina. At the end of her third term, Nikki Haley ran as a Primary candidate for the Governor of South Carolina. This was a tough fight and she won. She won the Governor's race with a wide margin. Her performance as Governor enabled her to win her second term in 2014. President Trump appointed her as Ambassador to the U.N. in 2017. Thus, Nikki Haley became a durable political timber and unchallenged national leader.

PERFORMANCE AT THE U.N.

P stands for Performance and R stands for Reporting in Public Relations. Nikki Haley's performance as Ambassador was extraordinary and outstanding. When she took up the job, everyone underestimated her and she prove them wrong. Nikki Haley developed the best diplomatic relations with China and Russia. This helped her to get their consent when the U.S. imposed severe sanctions against these countries and also Iran and North Korea. She represented the USA and President Trump admirably and commanded the highest respect at the United Nations.

She came to the UN post without previous foreign policy experience. The position often thrust her into the spotlight and enabled her to win favor among conservatives for her staunch defense of Israel and sharp criticism of Iran and Russia.

For a time at the UN, diplomats saw her as the face of U.S. foreign policy, noting differences between Trump and then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. She made a point at the UN to project the impression that she was close to Trump and that she "had his ears," one diplomat said.

WHY DID NIKKI HALEY RESIGN? IS SHE SHOOTING FOR THE PRESIDENCY AFTER

Kathleen Parker, a columnist for The Washington Post wrote: "In decades of writing about politics, I have run across few with Haley's innate talents. She is a natural with people, whether crouching with children on the ground in Africa-reminiscent of Princess Diana on similar travels-speaking to leaders in the tense theater of the United Nations.



Nikki Haley (left) with President Trump in Oval Office, announced her resignation and pledged her support to Trump in 2020 Presidential elections (CNN Screenshot)

TRUMP?

In 14 years, Nikki Haley has accumulated substantial political experience by representing South Carolina as a State Senator and Governor, and as Ambassador to the U.N. She has proven legislative and executive experience. Everyone is speculating about her future potential, that is unlimited. Nikki Haley is very popular. Quinnipiac Poll gave her 75% approval rating by Republicans and 55% by Democrats. President Trump sent her to Sudan and other African countries and India. Ambassador Haley was well respected and received by one and all. When Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's resignation was imminent there was speculation that Trump was considering her for the Secretary of State. When the reporters asked Haley whether she would be running for President in 2020, she said she would not be running but would be supporting Trump. As a conservative Republican woman with seasoned experience one can say she has the necessary credentials to run for President in 2024. There is speculation that Trump may fire Attorney General Sessions after the Mid Term elections and was considering Senator Graham of S.C. If so, there is a possibility that Nikki Haley could be tapped to finish the term of Senator Graham till 2020, and get reelected. Senator Graham may also be interested in the U.N. Ambassador's job. There is also speculation that Trump may want a woman as his running mate in 2020 and could offer the V.P. slot to Nikki Haley.

There is also a report that Nikki Haley may

be interested in private industry. Her personal finances are not that strong and she could very well serve as CEO of a Fortune 500 company. Such an assignment could give her multimillion dollar salary. Thus, she is in demand.

Kathleen Parker, a columnist for The Washington Post wrote: "In decades of writing about politics, I have run across few with Haley's innate talents. She is a natural with people, whether crouching with children on the ground in Africa-reminiscent of Princess Diana on similar travels-speaking to leaders in the tense theater of the United Nations. As Governor, she led the legislature to remove the Confederate battle flag from the statehouse grounds, while also guiding South Carolina through the shock and grief of the 2015 church massacre in Charleston. It won't serve her presidential aspirations well to stay out of politics for long, as Haley surely knows. Thus, the burning question-what is next?-has only one certain answer: WHATEVER SHE WANTS?"

The New York Times editorial wrote: "Ms. Haley, who is expected to pursue the presidency one day, may eventually find herself having to defend facilitating some of President Trump's worst policies and instincts. But she will also be able to point to more constructive roles she played. Indeed a replacement in her mold may be the best to hope for from Mr.Trump."

(The author based in Scarsdale, N.Y is Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee (founded in 1988). He can be reached at vpwaren@gmail.com)

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Elections Matter, Our Republic, Boiling Senate, Senator Susan Collins, Dr. Ford and Godspeed Justice Kavanaugh



By Ravi Batra

Elections matter; Lindsey Graham is right about that observation. The party that controls the White House gets to nominate; and the party that controls the Senate, the "Cooling Saucer" as George Washington then-correctly noted, gets to "Advise and Consent," an act between Constitutional "partners." Only in times when a single party is controlling both White House and Senate, that Separated Powers' dissent-benefit is reduced - as in President Obama's First Term and now in President Trump's First Term.

It's on Harry Reid and Barack Obama that the Senate Rule of 60 for judicial confirmation was abandoned, and by so doing hyperpartisanship was allowed to affect the noble bench as the Senate became the "boiling pot" it now is, kept red hot by the disintermediating Social Media (SM) and each party having its own opinion-supporting media outlets. That, perhaps, is the worst of all: as the SM & Partisan Media-Genie may never go back in the bottle!

We are now a nation sharply divided, as we were before the Civil War - but for very different reasons; one structural (SM), and the other temporal: economic (as for too many Americans, the American Dream has become impossible to achieve). Dealing now only with the structural - our representative form of government - aka a Republic - its very structure was designed to cool off, at each circuit breaker-level, "hot" public sentiment and prevent induced-Mob Rule. Mob Rule doesn't mean the guillotine during the French Revolution, but rather to avoid the insufferable tyranny of simple majority - something tried and failed over 2000 years ago

“We need to save our Republic, to remain "Exceptional" and "American." If we do that, harness SM to spread equality and fairness, then the politicians who weaponize mere majorities will fall, and the Supreme Court will not be called upon to settle Political or Societal disputes, and merely abstain as it gloriously did for almost two centuries", says the author.

in the City-State of Athens during the time of Socrates. As termites can destroy the wooden structure of a house, social media is destroying our Republic, with each side fueled by their own media, and converting our Constitutionally-cool "representatives," be it the president, senators or representatives, into "warriors." "Representatives" are expected to sit, talk, deliberate, and together make bipartisan deals as our Constitution was designed to do with the Separated Powers regime & cherished-Dissent, enshrined in the First of all Amendments and core of American Exceptionalism. Political "Warriors" have weaponized politics, make war and bipartisan coming together for the greater public good be damned. We all just saw in horror the Kavanaugh Confirmation, a scandal worse than what occurred 30-plus years ago or the emotional self-defense by a nominee to the most powerful bench in history, let alone its most powerful swing seat.

What happened between then-teenagers, Dr. Ford and Justice Kavanaugh only a trial, without a statute of limitations' bar, could have proven - with presumption of innocence and cross-examination, the perfectly balanced Ying and Yang core of American Rule of Law. What we just witnessed was the grant and imposition of Presumptive Innocence without grant of the Constitutional full & free right to Cross-Examine - before an independent & impartial jury and judge. Senator Collins' historic confirmatory speech contains a core farce - as no Prosecutor could ever win a

single case in similar setting, as the accused and his supporters imposed a straight-jacketed on the Prosecutor/Accuser by denying their Constitutional right to cross-examine and present all witnesses - let alone before an independent jury and judge. Transplanting "Presumption of Innocence," without granting right to Cross-Examination and presentment of all relevant witnesses, and that too without an impartial Judge deciding what is relevant, and a verdict to be rendered by an impartial jury: believe 100% certain Accuser-Ford or 100% certain Accused who denies. Before a doctor transplants a heart, there has to be a full body into which the transplanted heart can beat. Here, the "heart" was made to beat without a body that included an impartial judge and jury.

While the Senate isn't a trial, as it lacked both an impartial & independent jury and judge, but their grant of presumptive innocence while denying the Prosecutor/Accuser right to cross-examine and present all witnesses was fundamentally un-American and fatally unjust.

That said, I supported J. Brett Kavanaugh - as what he was alleged to have done with Ford & Ramirez, his own age group as over-zealous frolicking students can (very different from a fiduciary-Priest sexually assaulting a child), is perhaps of no moment to him and unworthy of memory; while the same event had a very different effect on the "girl." A point made sharply by the different effect on Ford, as compared to Ramirez from two different

allegations: in high school and at Yale. This is a societal issue for all of us together to be address: sensitizing our children (and adults) against Sexual Assault. I expect Justice Kavanaugh in his opinions will rise to champion survivors of sexual abuse. It would be poetic justice.

On September 20th, I tweeted: "Dr. Ford do NOT become Anita Hill - UNFAIR2 daughters/mothers; reject @Chuck Grassley KindOffer. It's a fair4some: J. Kavanaugh ought not be held2TeenError:"

The 50-48 Confirmation by a boiling, not cooling saucer; Senate is our larger problem as it robs us all - both sides - of what since 1776 we have rightfully claimed to be the very best in Humanity - well past the Magna Carta.

Upon his confirmation, I tweeted: "Godspeed Mr. Justice Brett Kavanaugh - we wish your better angels to help guide you to find true & compassionate justice with logic for most of the distance and faith for the balance; and deliver on Lincoln's Gettysburg Covenant of Govt FOR the People"

We need to save our Republic, to remain "Exceptional" and "American." If we do that, harness SM to spread equality and fairness, then the politicians who weaponize mere majorities will fall, and the Supreme Court will not be called upon to settle Political or Societal disputes, and merely abstain as it gloriously did for almost two centuries.

(The author is a New York based attorney. He can be reached at ravibatralaw@aol.com)

Time to stand up for a free press: We're not the enemy



By Layne Bruce

Enough already.

The last couple of years have been an unending barrage against the freedom of the press and the practitioners of this noble trade.

From being called "liars," "fake," and "sick" by irate politicians to enduring capricious and punitive tariffs that are an existential threat to newspapers, the landscape for journalists today may be as inhospitable as it has ever been in the 242-year history of this great union of ours.

All this while the public at large seems unable to break free of the social media echo chamber. We retreat there to endlessly bicker with those who don't agree, or to bolster the confidence of our own positions by seeking solace from those who do.

We've devolved into a nation of people who

simply don't want to hear it. And that's incredibly dangerous.

The bipartisan testimony of 20 members of Congress last month before the International Trade Commission in opposition to tariffs on Canadian imported newsprint is a good indicator a lot of talk about journalists being "enemies of the people" is utter hogwash. These men and women know the importance of community newspapers and their imperiled status in modern culture where too many marketers prefer digital analytics and too many readers prefer daily affirmation.

They know the men and women who work at the local paper are most definitely not the enemy - nor the problem.

But in a society where talk of the wicked media is hurled relentlessly on Twitter or cable "news" channels, all of us who take part in the honorable, constitutionally protected trade of reporting news and ferreting truth get amalgamated into a cynical act of political theater that's threatening to the very fabric of democracy.

And that's what this is really about.

We're arguing over political philosophies and cultural divides- not about whether news

is biased. I bet you a week's pay and a dozen doughnuts the people who use the argument that news is "fake" don't any more believe that than they think the Space Force is coming soon to a quadrant near us.

But the damage is being done. We as a nation are beginning to give a collective shoulder shrug the fundamental freedoms in the Bill of Rights.

And we've got to snap out of it.

We've got to accept that not all news is happy or affirming. We're not always going to get what we want. I vaguely remember being taught that as a preschooler.

Aaron Blake, a correspondent for The Washington Post, asked in a recent column if the media should go to war with the President.

"Trump seems to want a war with his 'enemy,'" Blake wrote. "But should the media oblige him? And if it doesn't, isn't it unilaterally disarming?"

No, we should not go to war with the President. But It's long past time to end the navel gazing and stand up for what we do. It's our job to provide the best obtainable version of the truth and to champion the freedoms of

the First Amendment.

Thomas Jefferson - who had a notably tempestuous relationship with the press - was a president who still often rose to defend it.

He once wrote while serving in Paris as Minister to France: "The people are the only censors of their governors, and even their errors will tend to keep them true to the principles of their Institution..."

"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them."

If we're unwilling to accept news that upsets us, or if we're indifferent to differing views simply because we don't want to deal with them, we're essentially giving up on the notion we can ever truly be "one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I know it's ironic, but I don't believe we've given up because I don't want to believe it.

(The author is executive director of the Mississippi Press Association)

Meet the 2018 Nobel laureates

The Nobel Prize is widely regarded as the most prestigious award available in the fields of literature, medicine, physics, chemistry, economics and activism for peace.

Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, was sure his creation would help bring about the end of war. "When two armies of equal strength can annihilate each other in an instant," he once wrote, "then all civilized nations will retreat and disband their troops." Things didn't quite go according to plan. What has worked out, however, is the annual set of awards, established in 1901, that bear his name. They remain the most prestigious intellectual awards in the world. On Dec. 11, 2009, President Obama will travel to Oslo to accept the 90th Nobel Peace Prize, an honor that places him in the distinguished company of the Dalai Lama, Kofi Annan and Mother Teresa.

WILLIAM NORDHAUS, NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS



William Nordhaus and Paul Romer shared the 2018 Nobel Economics Prize for adapting economic theory to take better account of environmental issues and technological progress.

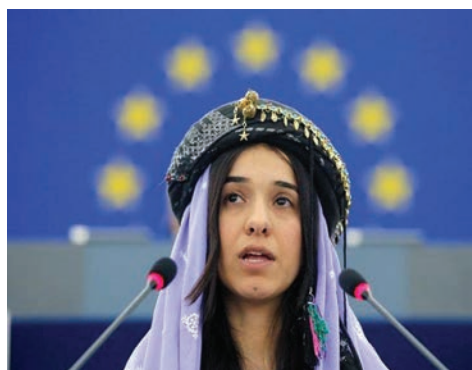
William D Nordhaus became the first person to create an integrated assessment model, a quantitative model that describes the global interplay between the economy and the climate. His model integrates theories and empirical results from physics, chemistry and economics. Nordhaus' model is used to examine the consequences of climate policy interventions, for example, carbon taxes

PAUL ROMER, NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS



Paul M Romer demonstrated how knowledge can function as a driver of long-term economic growth. Previous macroeconomic research lacked the details about economic decisions determining the creation of new technologies. Paul Romer solved this problem by demonstrating how economic forces govern the willingness of firms to produce new ideas. Romer's solution, initially published in 1990, laid the foundation of contemporary endogenous growth theory. The theory explains how ideas are different to other goods and require specific conditions to thrive in a market.

NADIA MURAD, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE



Nadia Murad, a Yazidi rights activist and survivor of sexual slavery by Islamic State shared the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize with Denis Mukwege. Murad is an advocate for the Yazidi minority in Iraq and for refugee and women's rights in general. She was enslaved and raped by Islamic State fighters in Mosul, Iraq, in 2014. Murad said she shared the award with all Yazidis with all the Iraqis, Kurds and all the minorities and all survivors of sexual violence around the world.

DENIS MUKWEGE, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE



Denis Mukwege is a doctor who helps victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mukwege heads the Panzi Hospital in the eastern Congo city of Bukavu. The clinic receives thousands of women each year, many of them requiring surgery from sexual violence. He has performed surgery on scores of women after they had been raped by armed men, and campaigned to highlight their plight. He also provides HIV/AIDS treatment as well as free maternal care. Mukwege dedicated his Nobel award to all women affected by rape and sexual violence.

FRANCES ARNOLD, NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY



Frances Arnold of the California Institute of Technology became the fifth woman to win a chemistry Nobel. She shared the award with George Smith and Gregory Winter. Arnold, Smith and Winter won the 2018 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for harnessing the power of evolution to generate novel proteins used in everything from environmentally friendly detergents to cancer drugs. She was awarded half of the \$1 million prize while Smith and Winter shared the other half

GREGORY WINTER, NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY

Gregory Winter was also awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry. His works include the world's top-selling prescription medicine -the antibody injection Humira sold by AbbVie for treating rheumatoid arthritis and other



autoimmune diseases. Humira, or adalimumab, was the first drug based on Winter's work to win regulatory approval in 2002. Winter shared half of the prize with American George Smith.

GEORGE P. SMITH, NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY



George P. Smith developed a method using a virus that infects bacteria to produce new proteins while Gregory Winter used the same phage display technique for the directed evolution of antibodies, with the aim of producing more effective medicines. Other antibody drugs at the cutting edge of medicine use the same technology, including a number of treatments that have proved highly effective against cancer.

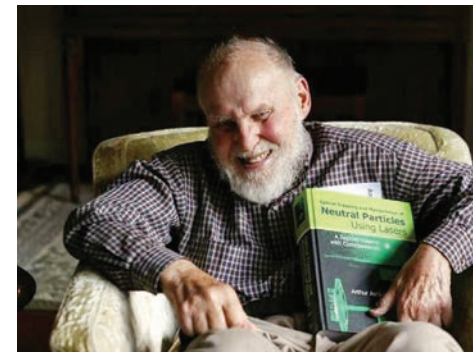
DONNA STRICKLAND, NOBEL PRIZE FOR PHYSICS



A trio of American, French and Canadian scientists won the 2018 Nobel Prize for Physics for breakthroughs in laser technology that have turned light beams into precision tools for everything from eye surgery to micro-machining. Donna Strickland became the third woman to win a Nobel for physics, after Marie Curie in 1903 and Maria Goeppert-Mayer in 1963. Strickland is the first female Nobel laureate in any field in three years.

ARTHUR ASHKIN, NOBEL PRIZE FOR PHYSICS

Arthur Ashkin of Bell Laboratories in the United States won the other half of the 2018



physics prize for inventing "optical tweezers". Ashkin's work was based on the realization that the pressure of a beam of light could push microscopic objects and trap them in position. A breakthrough came in 1987, when he used the new optical tweezers to grab living bacteria without harming them. At 96, Ashkin is the oldest ever Nobel prize winner

GERARD MOUROU, NOBEL PRIZE FOR PHYSICS



Frenchman Gerard Mourou shared half of the physics prize with Strickland, for work on high-intensity lasers. The inventions by Mourou, Strickland and Ashkin date back to the mid-1980s and over the years they have revolutionized laser physics. Mourou and Strickland's research centered on developing the most intense laser pulses ever created by humans, paving the way for the precision instruments used today in corrective eye surgery and industrial applications.

JAMES ALLISON & TASUKU HONJO, NOBEL PRIZE FOR PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE



American James Allison and Japanese Tasuku Honjo won the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for game-changing discoveries about how to harness and manipulate the immune system to fight cancer. The scientists' work in the 1990s has led to new and dramatically improved therapies for cancers such as melanoma and lung cancer, which had previously been extremely difficult to treat. Allison and Honjo showed releasing the brakes on the immune system can unleash its power to attack cancer.

Tony Blair says UK needs a referendum to stop Brexit

Less than six months before the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, there is little clarity about how the world's fifth largest economy and its preeminent international financial centre will trade with the EU after Brexit.

LONDON (TIP): The United Kingdom should call a referendum to allow voters to choose between a no-deal Brexit and staying in a reformed European Union as British politics is deadlocked over the issue, former Prime Minister Tony Blair said on Thursday.

Less than six months before the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, there is little clarity about how the world's fifth largest economy and its preeminent international financial centre will trade with the EU after Brexit.

If Prime Minister Theresa May can strike a deal with the EU, she has to get it approved by the British parliament, which is deeply divided over Brexit.

Some members of her ruling Conservative Party are unhappy about the Brexit proposals she has made, and the main opposition Labour Party has indicated it is likely to vote down any deal May brings back.

Blair, a former Labour prime minister, said he did not expect May to be able to get a deal through parliament so the country should be offered a new vote.

"It really is difficult... The alternatives are all worse because if you do get to a blockage in parliament that is what opens up the possibility of going back to the people," Blair, who was premier from 1997 to 2007, told a Reuters newsmaker in London.



"My view is this only happens if there is blockage in parliament. But if there is blockage in parliament it is a very simple argument. You say, look we have been two and a bit years trying to reach an agreement that works, parliament is blocked."

Both opponents and supporters of Brexit agree that the divorce is Britain's most significant geopolitical move since World War Two, though they cast vastly different futures for the \$2.9 trillion UK economy and the

world's biggest trading bloc.

Blair has repeatedly called for reversing Brexit, echoing other critics such as French President Emmanuel Macron and billionaire investor George Soros, who have suggested that Britain could still change its mind.

Blair said that if Brexit did happen, the economic dislocation would be such that the United Kingdom would have to pitch to investors that it would be the best place in the world to do business. (Reuters)

Death toll from floods rises to 12 on Spanish island of Mallorca

MADRID (TIP): Two people were found dead in a flood-ravaged area of Mallorca on Thursday, emergency services said, bringing to at least 12 the number of people killed after heavy rain hit the popular Spanish tourist island on Tuesday.

Emergency services were searching for a Spanish boy who is still missing.

The bodies of a man and a woman were recovered near the eastern town of Arta, close to the place where a car belonging to a missing German couple was found earlier, local emergency services said on Twitter. Video footage showed rescuers combing through brown water and foliage, and Mallorca-born tennis star Rafael Nadal sweeping away mud and water from a building in the town of Sant Llorenç. (Reuters)

Libyan official: 75 bodies of IS militants found near Sirte

BENGAZI (TIP): A Libyan official says authorities have uncovered a collective grave containing more than 75 bodies of suspected Islamic State group fighters near the coast city of Sirte, formerly the main IS stronghold in this North African country. Salem el-Ameel, a spokesman for a local force in Sirte, says a resident reported finding the grave about a month ago on his farm in al-Daheir district, east of Sirte.

He says authorities believe the remains are of IS because "we can tell from their clothes." IS were driven from Sirte in 2016, fleeing inland. Islamic militants expanded their reach in Libya after the 2011 uprising that plunged the country into chaos and toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

Libya is currently split between rival governments in the east and the west. (AP)

Dismissing past ailments, Mexico's next president Lopez Obrador says he's healthy

MEXICO (TIP): Mexican President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador chided the media on Wednesday for questioning his health, saying he is "totally healthy" five years after suffering a heart attack and recent unconfirmed reports of back pain.

The 64-year-old leftist is set to take office in December following a landslide election victory in July in his third bid for the presidency. "This conservative press takes things out of context, to say the least, or lies," Lopez Obrador said at a news conference.

"Now, for example, there's a frenzied campaign saying that I'm already getting feeble, that I'm sick. I'm 100 (per cent), I'm totally healthy," he said.

Lopez Obrador accused the media of using old medical reports to paint a picture of ill health. He acknowledged he had been sick in the past but that he was alive and well.

The former Mexico City mayor suffered a heart attack in late 2013. More recently, he confirmed a visit to a cardiac specialist this month that he described as routine and successful, but only after photos of him leaving the medical facility were published on social media. (Reuters)

Quake hits Papua New Guinea, no damage or injuries reported

According to the US Geological Survey, the quake was centered about 117 kilometers (73 miles) east of Kimbe, West New Britain, on the Pacific island nation and was about 40 kilometers (25 miles) deep.

NEW ZEALAND, WELLINGTON (TIP): An earthquake rattled part of Papua New Guinea on Thursday, but no major damage or injuries have been reported.

The magnitude 7.0 quake was deep enough that it likely did not generate a tsunami, said Chris McKee, the government's acting director of geohazards management.

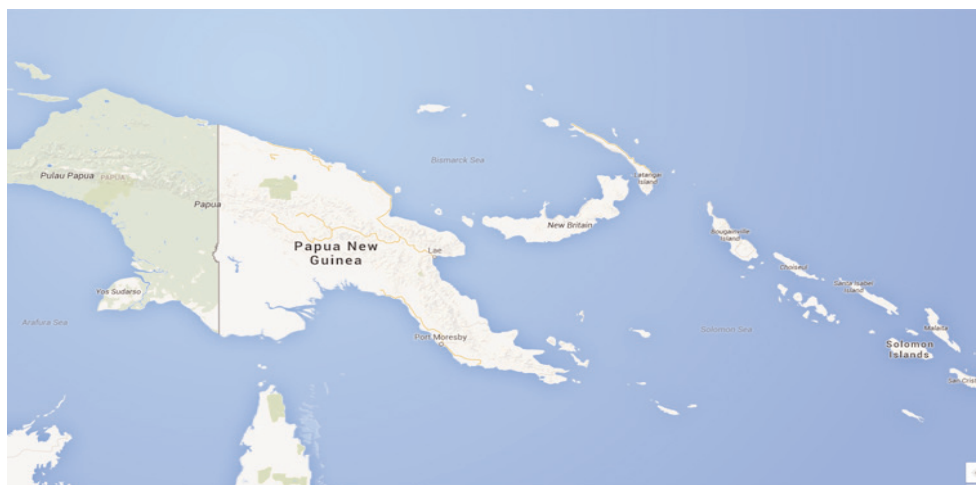
McKee said disaster officials had been reaching out to people in the Pomio District, near where the quake struck. He said that communication systems in the region were notoriously poor.

McKee said there had been no reports of any major problems from the quake, which he took as a good sign. He added that the quake was also felt in the township of Rabaul.

According to the US Geological Survey, the quake was centered about 117 kilometers (73 miles) east of Kimbe, West New Britain, on the Pacific island nation and was about 40 kilometers (25 miles) deep.

It was followed by two magnitude 5.9 aftershocks in the same region and then a magnitude 6.3 quake that was centered further northeast on the island.

Pacific Tsunami Warning Center oceanographer David Walsh said scientists don't have tide gauges close to the where the earthquake happened and weren't able to say



for sure whether any tsunamis were generated, he said. But the risk was low and likely only in the immediate area.

Papua New Guinea next month hosts the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which is expected to draw world leaders beginning on November 17.

A magnitude 7.5 earthquake in February in the nation's central region killed at least 125 people and forced another 35,000 from their homes.

The Hela and Southern Highlands

provinces that were worst affected are remote and undeveloped, and assessments about the scale of the damage and injuries were slow to filter out.

Home to 7 million people, Papua New Guinea is located on the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, to the east of Indonesia.

It sits on the Pacific's "Ring of Fire," the arc of seismic faults around the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes and volcanic activity occur. (AP)



ANOTHER ACTRESS ACCUSES DIRECTOR OF HARASSMENT AFTER KANGANA RANAUT

Allegations against Vikas Bahl, director of the critically acclaimed and commercially successful Kangana Ranaut starrer *Queen*, are piling up. Days after a former employee of Phantom Films' and Kangana came out with their stories of sexual harassment at the hands of Bahl, another actress has talked about her experience with him on the condition of anonymity.

According to a report of Miss Malini, an actress has claimed that Bahl tried to 'forcibly kiss' her at a party. The actor was quoted as saying that she found Bahl "dodgy" and made sure she was never alone around him. "One day he was having a party where a lot of people I knew were going so I felt safe. But he got really drunk (or pretended to be) and he forcibly tried to kiss me on the lips, I pushed him and left immediately and he pretended not to see me leaving," she said, adding, "At least 20 other people were at this party. I left in a rush and went to my boyfriend's house because I was so disgusted but he kept sending me texts - saying 'Why did you leave, I could have dropped you'. I wasn't drinking, smoking, smoking up or doing anything. I had just had my dinner and gone with some writer buddies. That's his strategy, he pretends to be drunk."

The actress said "pretending to be drunk" is Bahl's modus operandi. "That's what he does. Pretending to be drunk then saying things like, 'I didn't do anything, did you do something?' This is why I am not requesting him for work, and have boycotted him entirely socially and professionally."

KATRINA PROVES BLACK IS HOTTEST COLOUR WITH NEW MAGAZINE COVER

Katrina Kaif is the queen of magazine covers. Every month, the *Tiger Zinda Hai* actor impresses us with a new pose, new outfit but the same old charm when she appears on the cover of yet another national or international magazine.

Katrina shared a new magazine cover on Saturday. This time, she features on *Bazaar India's* October edition which also marks their 10th anniversary. She looks stunning in an all-black outfit and has a mean air about her. Katrina is seen in a sequined black pantsuit and her hair flowing in the wind. She appears to be making an awkward flexing pose as the white chair that she is sitting on isn't really visible due to the white background.

The new edition features a cover story on Katrina written by her *Ek Tha Tiger* director, Kabir Khan. "Thank u @kabirkhankk for your lovely words," she captioned the photo on Instagram. "Because Katrina started from a place of not knowing anybody when she first came into the industry, she has worked that much harder to counter it all," Kabir wrote about her.

Bazaar shared more pictures of the actor from the shoot on their own Instagram page.

Katrina is currently shooting for her next movie with Salman Khan, *Bharat*. The two shared the first still from the film recently, which features them twirling together. Katrina looks lovely in a green Sabyasachi lehenga-choli combination while Salman keeps it simple in an all-black pathani suit.

Katrina wasn't the initial choice for *Bharat* as Priyanka Chopra was to star opposite Salman. However, India's latest global star made an abrupt exit from the film and Katrina did the team a solid by joining the film at the last moment.

Apart from *Bharat*, Katrina will also be seen with the other two Khans of Bollywood. She has *Thugs of Hindostan* with Aamir and *Zero* with Shah Rukh Khan.



Aishwarya hints at her abusive relationship with Salman Khan; reacts to #MeToo uproar

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is one of those actresses, who made it big in B-town, without having any Godfather! In her initial years in the B-town, the actress got dragged into lots of controversies but nothing grabbed eyeballs like her relationship with Salman Khan. After breaking up with the Superstar, Aishwarya had fearlessly given an interview about her abusive relationship with Salman and exposed the Superstar's misdeeds! Currently, the #MeToo campaign has taken the B-town by storm and many actresses are lending their support to the campaign. Amid all this, Aishwarya Rai reacted to the #MeToo campaign and here's what the lady said:

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who has also come out in the support of the movement, said at an event on Tuesday, "I have always spoken out, I spoke in the past, I am speaking now, and I will continue to speak."

"When it comes to helping women find

their voice, find the strength, feel confident about sharing their stories, it's not about the current time. This has been going on since a lot of time and I am glad it has found a certain momentum today," said Aishwarya Rai.

Aishwarya also praised the power of social media as it has enabled the conversation and giving strength to survivors in finding their voice. "Social media has enabled the conversation and any woman who comes from any part of the world today has a voice that will be heard."

Meanwhile, a shocking video of Salman Khan is going viral. In this viral video, Salman Khan can be heard denying the fact that he hit Aishwarya Rai and was quoted as saying, "Yeah, now that woman has said that I have. I mean there was a journalist Prabhu Chawla who asked me this long time ago, so I just banged the table he got startled, the table really broke." *Source: Filmibeat*





Ruby Rose's Batwoman costume wins Twitter

Ruby Rose's Batwoman costume has taken flight, even if the star's casting didn't necessarily.

In an image released by The CW Tuesday, Rose is clad in her superhero garb: a form-fitting black uniform, accented by a fiery shade of red, including a bat emblazoned on her chest. Rose also sports coordinating, shoulder-length locks.

Rose began filming her spot on The CW's Arrowverse crossover today in Vancouver, to air in December. Batwoman, aka Kate Kane, was reintroduced to DC Comics in 2006 as a lesbian street fighter, and while LGBTQ characters appear prominently in other DC series, if the project becomes a series, she would be the first to lead one.

Rose's casting was announced in August, a polarizing decision. While stars like Laverne Cox and Janelle Monáe congratulated the star, others shaded her acting abilities and wished a lesser-known "lesbian actress" was cast. (Rose identifies as queer.)

MARGOT ROBBIE MIGHT STAR IN BARBIE MOVIE



Margot Robbie might be going plastic soon. The live-action Barbie movie that has been stuck in development for years now may finally be moving forward with a shiny new star. For the past couple years, fans have been wondering who will play the live-action Barbie when the iconic doll is brought to life for the first time. Well, according to a new report from the Hollywood Reporter, Margot Robbie is in talks to play a living Barbie as the star of the upcoming movie.

This news comes shortly after the Barbie movie switched production studios. The live-action movie had been at Sony since 2014, but after years of delays, Sony's contract with Mattel expired recently and the doll manufacturer switched to partner with Warner Bros. for the Barbie movie instead. That studio jump definitely seems to be the reason why Margot Robbie is now in talks to star as Barbie, since her production banner LuckyChap has a first-look deal with Warner Bros. There are reportedly also early talks about Wonder Woman director Patty Jenkins boarding the new movie as its director.

Margot Robbie's attachment to the live-action Barbie movies marks the third major name in the past two years that have been in talks to take the lead role. At the end of 2016, Amy Schumer was lined up to play Barbie in the movie, but she revealed that she had to drop out in early 2017 due to scheduling conflicts.

Shortly after Schumer dropped out, Anne Hathaway was reported to be up for the Barbie role, but that wound up falling through as well.

With a switch from Sony to Warner Bros. and Margot Robbie now in talks to take the lead role, it sounds like the live-action Barbie movie may actually be moving forward now. The screenplay for the movie comes from Sex and the City scribe Jenny Bicks and Juno writer Diablo Cody, and the movie has been described as a feminist reinvention of the Barbie doll.

Angelina Jolie upset after seeing Brad Pitt embrace co-star Margaret Qualley

Angelina Jolie is reportedly upset with estranged husband Brad Pitt after he was photographed embracing his Once Upon A Time in Hollywood co-star, Margaret Qualley. This sort of situation is familiar to Jolie who has been in Qualley's shoes before. A source shared, "Angie knows first-hand how incredibly intoxicating and romantic it can be working on a movie with Brad."

She remembers how when she and Pitt would take a break together, she could not help but get charmed by him despite being at work. It is how she fell in love with him. So when she heard about Margaret, 23, hugging Brad on set, it immediately made Angelina suspicious and upset," the source added. Jolie had first met Pitt in 2004 when they

were shooting for Mr & Mrs Smith (2005).

"She feels his suffocating shadow is impossible to escape or avoid and Angelina still gets emotional whenever she thinks or hears about Brad. Especially when he is embracing a pretty actress almost half of Angelina's age. It really stings," the source revealed.

Even though it was Angelina who filed for divorce in the first place, she finds herself getting emotional whenever she thinks about Brad. "She feels his suffocating shadow is impossible to escape or avoid and Angelina still gets emotional whenever she thinks or hears about Brad," said the insider. "Especially when he is embracing a pretty actress almost half of Angelina's age. It all really stings."



Thailand to deport 70 Pakistanis fearing persecution at home

BANGKOK (TIP): Thai authorities have convicted 70 Pakistani asylum seekers of staying illegally in Thailand despite their protestations that they face persecution if they are sent home.

The Taling Chan Provincial Court on Thursday issued fines and up to two-month suspended jail sentences to the group, which was charged with overstaying their visas and illegal entry.

An officer in charge of the case said they will be held in a detention center until they are deported.

One of the defendants said the group consists mostly of Christian Pakistanis and some Ahmadi Muslims, and that members of the two religious groups risk persecution in Pakistan.

Thailand regularly deports foreigners who are in the country illegally, even if they are recognised by the United Nations as refugees fleeing persecution. (AP)

Malaysia to abolish colonial-era Sedition Act, death penalty

KUALA LUMPUR (TIP): Malaysia's cabinet has ordered the suspension of the colonial-era Sedition Act, widely used to rein in dissent, and is working on doing the same for the death penalty as it prepares to repeal both laws possibly by the end of the year.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's coalition romped to a shock win in a May general election on the back of promises to clamp down on rampant corruption and repeal oppressive laws, some of which date back to British rule.

Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo said on Thursday that cabinet had decided to suspend use of the Sedition Act as they prepare a bill to repeal it altogether.

"As far as we are concerned, a decision has been made and it has to be communicated to the attorney-general. And, of course, it's for him to decide what to do next," he said in a recording of a press conference heard by Reuters.

Before the May polls, dozens of politicians and activists were detained and charged under the Sedition Act as former Prime Minister Najib Razak's administration worked to clamp down on dissent, especially after news broke in 2015 of a multi-billion dollar scandal at state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

On Wednesday, Liew Vui Keong, the minister in charge of law, said the cabinet had decided to repeal the death penalty. "All death penalty (sic) will be abolished. Full stop," he was quoted as saying by the New Straits Times newspaper.

In a statement on Thursday, Amnesty International said the decision was a "major step forward".

"We are calling on the Malaysian parliament to completely abolish the death penalty for all crimes, with no exceptions," Amnesty secretary-general Kumi Naidoo said in the statement. Bills to repeal both the Sedition Act and the death penalty are expected to be tabled before the parliament which sits on Monday. (Reuters)

Sri Lanka rejects US claims, says no Chinese military base at Hambantota port

His comments came days after US Vice-President Mike Pence alleged China of using "debt diplomacy" to expand its global influence and said that Hambantota port "may soon become a forward military base for China's growing blue-water navy".

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has rejected US' claim that China might set up a "forward military base" at a strategic port it has leased to the communist nation, describing it as "imaginary".

Last year, Colombo had leased the Hambantota port to Beijing for 99 years after it failed to repay a Chinese loan of USD 1.4 billion for the project.

China gaining the control of the port has raised concerns that the country could use the harbour for military purposes.

Addressing a programme at London's Oxford University on Monday, Wickremesinghe said some people are seeing "imaginary Chinese Naval bases in Sri Lanka. Whereas the Hambantota Port is a commercial joint venture between our Ports Authority and China Merchants – a company listed in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange."

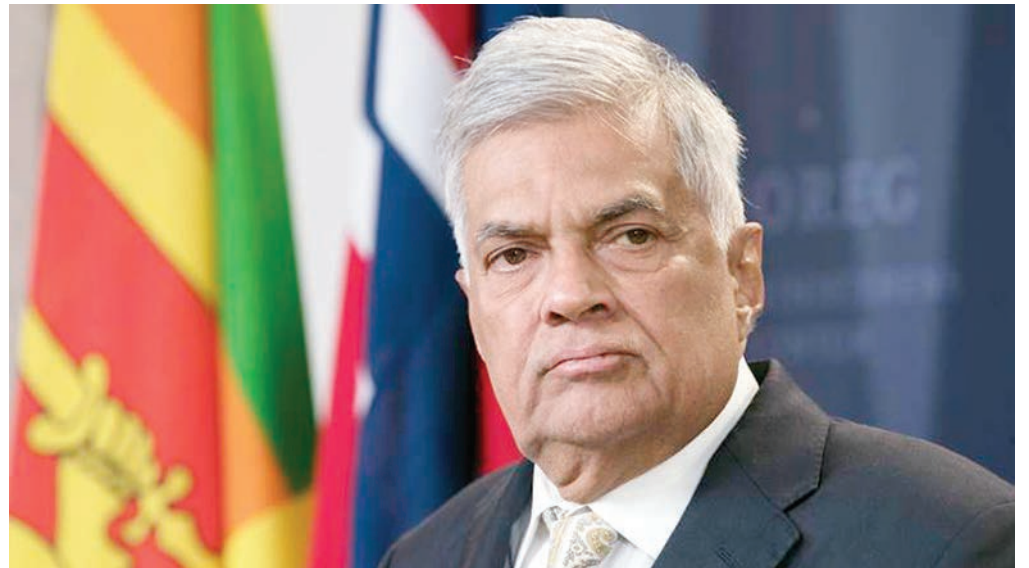
"There are no foreign naval bases in Sri Lanka," he emphasised.

His comments came days after US Vice-President Mike Pence alleged China of using "debt diplomacy" to expand its global influence and said that Hambantota "may soon become a forward military base for China's growing blue-water navy".

Several media reports suggested that the deepwater port, which is near a main shipping route between Asia and Europe, is likely to play a major role in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The BRI, also known as the Silk Road Economic Belt, is a development strategy proposed by the Chinese government which focuses on connectivity and cooperation between Eurasian countries.

The Chinese government calls the initiative "a bid to enhance regional connectivity and embrace a brighter future".



However, other nations, including India, see it as a push by Beijing to take a larger role in global affairs with a China-centred trading network.

India's has been vocal in expressing its opposition to the BRI, which includes the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that traverses through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Wickremesinghe said Lankan Navy's Southern Command was being relocated in the Hambantota port to control security and "the US Defence Department has been briefed on these developments".

He said Sri Lanka was also concluding a commercial agreement that would see the Airport Authority of India (AAI) taking over the control of the Hambantota airport, which was built with high-interest commercial loan from China.

The Prime Minister said, "In this

atmosphere of suspicion, many countries fear that the South China Sea issues can spill over, leading to future militarisation and military competition in the Indian Ocean."

"This has resulted in a number of stakeholders intensifying their interest and presence in the Indian Ocean by expanding their fleets, upgrading their bases, securing access to foreign ports, and aggressive naval posturing via joint exercises, extended sorties, and live-fire drills.

"The Indian Ocean region requires a common understanding that will ensure peace and stability within the region...There is also a need to work towards building a regional framework for both trade and security – while ensuring that the region remains free, open and inclusive...The interests of the smaller states are best served by advocating for and upholding a rule-based order in the region," he said. (PTI)

PAKISTAN SEEKS LARGEST LOAN PACKAGE FROM IMF

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan is seeking its largest loan package of up to USD 8 billion from the IMF to bail itself out from a severe balance-of-payments crisis that threatens to cripple the country's economy, a media report said Thursday.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) could place strict conditionalities, forcing Pakistan to seek additional loans for meeting those restrictions and this could expand the loan facility to USD 12 billion, said the report in the Dawn newspaper.

Pakistan began exploring the possibility of yet another loan package with the IMF while the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) PML-N was still in power and the exploratory talks continued under the interim government as well, it said. The final decision, however, was announced on Monday night when Finance Minister Asad Umar confirmed that the government was going to the IMF to bail Pakistan out of its foreign

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) could place strict conditionalities, forcing Pakistan to seek additional loans for meeting those restrictions and this could expand the loan facility to USD 12 billion, said the report in the Dawn newspaper.

currency crisis.

The announcement followed the highest single-day loss in a decade in the stock market, which plunged by over 1,300 points, losing almost Rs 270 billion of its capitalisation.

On Tuesday, the IMF said that it would listen to Pakistan's request for financial support "very, very attentively", as it did with any member with

good standing.

Pakistan has received more than a dozen financial support packages from the IMF in the past. It completed the last three-year package of USD 6.4 billion in August 2016, which was 216 per cent of Pakistan's quota at the IMF.

Meanwhile, the government came under heavy criticism after announcing that it would seek bailout assistance from the IMF, but Prime Minister Imran Khan Wednesday defended the decision. Khan said that the country was burdened due to debts incurred by the previous government and his government was constrained to borrow more money to pay back those debts. "There has been a lot of noise in the country (after decision to go to IMF) during the last 48 hours as if the heaven is going to fall. But we need to do it (go to IMF) before our reforms start yielding results in about six months," he said. (The Economic Times)

WINTERS IN LADAKH

While most of the people believe that Ladakh is inaccessible in the winters, this may be the best time to visit Ladakh for the adventurous souls. Winters in Ladakh hardly see any tourists and you can have all of its stunning barrenness to yourself. Visiting Ladakh in winters is a chance to see this magic land as it has existed for centuries.

Winter in Ladakh is very harsh and temperatures can plummet to lesser than -30 degree Celsius at night. So, be prepared for cold (brrr very cold) days and even colder nights. Everything will be frozen and there will be no running water in the taps. The streets look deserted and yet life goes on as usual. If you are lucky (or unlucky, depending on the severity of the snow), there is a huge possibility of experiencing snowfall while in Ladakh in the winters.

While the aim of this winter travel guide to Ladakh is to help prospective travellers prepare, it is best to prepare yourself for thinking practically and trusting the locals when it comes to dicey situations. Follow this winter guide to Ladakh and it is quite possible to have a holiday to remember and boast about!

A warning—if you are someone who is not fond of the cold or cannot bear cold climates, please give up the idea of visiting Ladakh in winter. The biggest battle will be with the cold, and it is more a mind game than anything else. It is better to be prepared for extreme cold conditions before landing at 3300m above sea level.

How to reach?

Travelling by both the road routes, the Manali-Leh Highway and Srinagar-Leh Highway, is not possible since they are not open in the snowy winters of Ladakh. Flying is the only way to reach Ladakh once roads are closed for the winter due to snow at the high passes. The Manali-Leh and Srinagar-Leh highways are generally closed by October-November and November-December respectively.

There are several airlines that operate regular flights to Leh in the winter. You can get on to one of the early morning flights from Delhi or Jammu and Srinagar; the frequency of flights from Delhi is impressively high. The airfare is quite cheap (if you book in advance) as there only a handful of people come to Ladakh in the winters.

TIP: It is better to wear 4-5 layers of clothing at the departing airport itself to prepare yourself for the imminent cold of the Leh airport.

While you are in the flight, there are dazzling endless views of the snowy Himalayas on a clear day. There are chances of flights being cancelled or postponed due to fog and sudden changes in weather, so do remember to keep buffer of a day or two while flying into/out of Leh in winter.

Transportation in Ladakh

There are a few buses that ply in the winters in Ladakh and proper information about them can be obtained at the bus station in Leh. Depending on the snowfall at various places, the frequency and routes of the buses is decided. Buses are a great way to travel for budget travellers, also giving a chance to mingle with the locals. Commuting by motorcycle is not advised due to the harsh cold and increased chances of slipping on snow.

If you are looking for a comfortable way to



travel, hired taxis (SUVs) are the best bet for travelling in the winter in Ladakh. Although taxi fares in Ladakh are quite steep, it is the most convenient option and also gives the flexibility to stop as often as you want for photography and sightseeing. Add to it the fact that the drivers, usually, will know someone at the destination to provide for a home stay in the bitter cold.

Shared taxis run for some places near the Polo Ground early in the morning, and it is best to make a reservation. The taxi drivers

will be reluctant to take direct bookings and will, instead, direct you to a travel agent. The main reason for it lies in the fact that if they get stuck somewhere the travel agents are liable to send another car to take you out safely. Dreamland Tours & Travels is a trusted choice and is a well-known name; remember to bargain when you are making a deal.

A recommended tip for winter travel within Ladakh, is to make sure that you arrive before dark to arrange for

accommodation and food without any hassle.

Places that can and cannot be visited

Most of the internal roads in Ladakh are open even in the winter and traffic is sparse. So it is possible to visit most of the places in Ladakh even in the winter. Roads to Nubra Valley, Pangong Tso, Tso Moriri, remnants of the Indus Valley Civilisation, Sham Valley, Lamayuru, Kargil etc are all open and accessible throughout the winter.

It is important to know that in case of heavy snowfall, there are chances of the road being closed for a day or two and might hamper your plans. It is better to keep a day or two extra as heavy snowfall at Khardung La and Chang La may cause the roads to be shut for vehicular traffic.

The weather is bitterly cold in Changthang (near Tso Moriri) and the regions of Chushul and Hanle may be out of bounds in the winters. Stay prepared, for the unbearable cold (sometimes -40 degrees Celsius) makes Changthang a difficult place to visit in the winters even if you reach it.

It is also advisable to make have the vehicle window panes always rolled up so that there is minimal contact with the frigid air. Also remember that it is unbearably cold at Khardung La and Chang La (two of the highest passes in the world) and it makes sense to stay back in the vehicle while the driver makes the entries with the Army at the check post.

Remember to check with the locals in Leh about the prevailing weather and road conditions for the places you are heading to before embarking on a journey in the wintry Ladakh.

Major Ladakh attractions in winters

Although the attractions in Ladakh for summers and winters stay, largely, the same; the drastic change in landscape means it is quite possible to think of Ladakh as an entirely different land. There are frozen waterfalls, crimson coloured trees, towering bare poplars, pristine freezing rivers in the winter—all making it a beautiful and novel experience.

It is a good idea to first explore the various sights in Leh, including the Shanti Stupa, Leh Palace, Tsemo Fort while acclimatising and also visit the old Jama Masjid while exploring the main market. The important monasteries of Alchi, Likir, Spituk all lie on the route to Kargil and can be clubbed with a visit to Basgo Fort, Gurudwara Pathar Sahib, the spectacular confluence of Indus and Zaskar at Nimmo and the optical illusion at Magnetic Hill.

Apart from the monasteries at Hemis and Thikse, there are other noteworthy monasteries of Shey, Stok, Matho and Chemrey, where you can experience zen-like bliss in the winters. These monasteries are located in vicinity of Leh.

Major attraction in the winters is crossing the 5350 m high Chang La and the possibility of walking on the frozen Pangong Tso (this has serious environmental implications though). A visit to the Tso Moriri is also an attraction for the diehard adventurers out there. You can also go for a drive to Khardung La via what is, supposedly, world's highest motorable road, crossing a sea of white and cross over to Nubra Valley. Turtuk village is prettier in winter and the landscape is a gamut of colours as the blue Shyok goes gurgling towards Pakistan. Also, kids around Leh can be seen playing ice hockey over frozen surfaces.

PACKS FOR YOUR HAIR

Egg-Yogurt Hair Pack

Prep Time: 5 minutes

You Will Need

- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons yogurt

Method

- Beat the egg and yogurt together in a bowl until you get a smooth paste. (If your hair is extremely dry, only use the yolk of the egg. If it is oily, use the egg white. If you have normal or combination hair, use the whole egg.)
- Apply the mixture to your scalp and hair.
- Leave it in for 30 minutes.
- Rinse out the hair pack with cool water.
- Shampoo and condition.
- You can use this hair pack up to twice a week.

Precautions

You can add a few drops of a fragrant essential oil, such as lavender, to the hair pack to avoid the "egg smell."

Benefits

Eggs are power-packed with proteins and leave your hair feeling smooth and shiny. The yogurt effectively cleans your scalp and hair. After using this pack, your hair will be left feeling soft and silky.

Egg Yolk-Honey Hair Pack

Prep Time: 5 minutes

You Will Need

- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon almond oil

Method

- Mix the ingredients in a bowl until you get a smooth consistency.
- Apply the pack to your hair and leave it in for 15-20 minutes.
- Rinse out the pack with cool water.
- Shampoo and condition.
- You can use this pack up to twice a week.

Precautions

- Do not use this hair pack if you



have oily hair.

- Do not leave the pack in for more than 20 minutes as honey has bleaching properties that can lighten your hair color if left in too long.

Benefits

This is one of the best hair packs to use if your hair lacks moisture as well as protein. The egg gives your hair the protein it needs while the almond oil and honey condition your hair and seal in moisture.

It is also an excellent way to give yourself some natural highlights thanks to the bleaching properties that honey possesses.

Avocado-Coconut Milk Pack

Prep Time: 5 minutes

You Will Need

- 1 ripe avocado
- 2 tablespoons coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon olive oil

Method

- Mash the avocado until there are no lumps and to it add the coconut milk and olive oil.
- Mix until you get a smooth consistency.
- Apply the mixture to your scalp and hair. Leave it in for 30 minutes.
- Wash off with shampoo and condition.

Precautions

Do not use this pack if you have oily hair as the avocado can weigh your hair down.

Benefits

Coconut milk is a rich source of protein while avocados contain vitamins A, B, and E, all of which are vital for hair health. This pack also boosts the production of collagen which promotes hair growth. The olive oil present in the hair pack conditions your hair, leaving it feeling soft and silky.



HOW TO GET THICKER EYEBROWS NATURALLY

Over the last few years, big and bushy brows have become a rage. The latest brow trend has replaced skinny or pencil-thin brows, which was a big beauty trend in the 90's. Eyebrows define your face and thicker brows add a youthful touch to your face. If you're not blessed with a thicker pair of brows, you can always fill in the sparse areas or make them look thicker using brow gels. But if you're looking for something natural and long-lasting, then we've got the right tips for you.

Don't pluck

First things first, don't over pluck your eyebrows. Excessive plucking and even waxing will prevent the hair from growing back. Eyebrows grow in 2-3 months cycle, so not tweezing for a few months can actually show a lot of difference.

Moisturise

Your brow area needs to stay hydrated and nourished. Use some petroleum jelly to lock the moisture. You can apply this 2-3 times a day to promote hair growth.

Oil massage

The way oil works for your hair, it will do the same for your eyebrows. You can use castor, olive or coconut oil to promote hair growth. Dip a cotton swab in oil and gently massage before you sleep.

Egg whites

Egg contains protein, which helps to promote hair growth and nourishes hair follicles. Beat white egg and apply this solution for 20 minutes.

GET RID OF SMELLY ARMPITS

Body odour is normal, but smelly armpits can sometimes get out of hands. Even regular baths, good amount of perfumes can't seem to solve this issue. We all know that that the underarm odour can be embarrassing. To solve this discomforting issue, we have listed 6 ways you can get rid of smelly armpits.

Anti-bacteria body wash

It's the bacteria that smells and not the perspiration. Look for body washes with Benzoyl Peroxide, which can help to reduce bacteria and prevent the body odour.

Apple cider vinegar

You can also apply some apple cider vinegar to fight off the bacteria. It will help to reduce the odour by balancing the pH level of the skin. Don't worry about the smell of apple cider vinegar, as it fades out when dry. Avoid this hack on days you have recently shaved or waxed.

Always dry before applying anything

Not drying properly before applying antiperspirant or deodorant can also trigger the bad odour. Make sure you dry yourself properly before applying the stick.

Try a different brand

A lot of times, a specific deodorant or antiperspirant doesn't blend with our skin. If you feel that your stick or spray is not making the cut, then you must change your brand or product. Sometimes the chemistry of your skin and fragrance doesn't work and makes you smell bad instead.

Hand sanitizer

If you don't have an antiperspirant or deodorant handy, you can use a hand sanitizer for a quick hack. This germ-fighting solution can help to tame bad odour.

FOOD CORNER

KHEER KADAM OR RASKADAM

INGREDIENTS

1 kilograms khoya, 2 teaspoon saffron, 1 kilograms sugar, grated coconut as required, 4 drops edible food color, 2 litre milk, powdered green cardamom as required, 4 teaspoon icing sugar, water as required

Method

- To begin with, take a deep-bottomed pan and put it on medium flame. Pour milk in the pan and bring it to a boil, then add lemon juice in the pan and prepare the chenna. Then using a strainer, extract the chenna in a bowl and knead it to make a soft dough.
- Now, part the dough into small portions and roll it into small balls resembling a rasgulla. Keep them aside until needed again.
- Meanwhile, take another deep-bottomed pan and put it on medium flame. Add water in it followed by sugar and bring the mixture to a boil and cook it until you get a one string like consistency. Add in the saffron (kesar) and red edible colour to this mixture. Stir to prepare a nice red sugar syrup and turn off the flame.
- Soak the prepared rasgulla (see step-2 for reference) in the sugar syrup and leave it undisturbed for 50 to 60 minutes.
- Meanwhile, to prepare the outer coating, take a non-stick pan and put in on medium flame. Add khoya in the pan and cook it until



it changes its colour to pink. Add in grated coconut (finely grated) followed by adding cardamom powder in the pan. Once done, prepare flat circles resembling a puri from the khoya mixture and keep them aside.

- After that, remove the soaked rasgulla from the saffron-sugar mixture using a strainer. Add in the prepared rasgulla in the khoya puri (see step-5) and secure it. Repeat the same process with the remaining rasgullas.

- Once done, mix together the grated coconut and icing sugar in a plate and roll the prepared rasgullas in the mixture. Refrigerate these rasgullas for about an hour, kheer kadam is ready to eat.

SLEEP IS GOOD FOR BRAIN HEALTH, HELPS YOUR BRAIN ORGANISE MEMORIES

Sleep helps to consolidate memories, as per a new study. Researchers from Ruhr-Universität Bochum and the University of Bonn have investigated the activity patterns that occur in the brain when people remember or forget things. They were interested in how the brain replays and stores during sleep what it had learned before.

The team recorded the brain activity of epilepsy patients who had electrodes implanted into their brain for the purpose of surgical planning. One result: During sleep, the brain even reactivates memory traces that it can no longer remember later on.

For the experiment, the test participants were given a series of pictures to memorise. They then took an afternoon nap. When looking at a picture, the activity in the brain shows a pattern that differs somewhat from picture to picture. The researchers were able to measure these differences in high-frequency activity fluctuations — called gamma band activity.

They analysed brain activity not only during the learning task but also during sleep. They then tested which images the participants could remember after sleep and which they could not. The gamma band activity that was typical of certain motifs occurred not only when looking at the images, but also during sleep. The brain reactivated the activity patterns — both for images the participants later remembered and for those they later forgot. “The forgotten images do not simply disappear from the brain,” said Dr. Hui Zhang.

The decisive factor in whether an image was forgotten or retained was not the reactivation of the image-specific gamma band activity, but the activity in a brain region that is important for memory: the hippocampus.



This region shows extremely rapid fluctuations in activity, called ripples. A picture was only recalled later on when the reactivation occurred at the same time as the ripples in the hippocampus. This phenomenon only occurred during certain sleep phases, but not when the participants were awake.

Specifically, whether an image is remembered or not depended on another factor, namely how detailed the image was processed in the brain. The

researchers differentiated the gamma band activity measured when viewing the images into a superficial and deep processing stage.

Only when the gamma band activity from the deep processing phase was reactivated during the ripples did the participants later remember the image. If the activity from the early processing phase was reactivated, the image was forgotten.

Source: ANI

Weight loss in postmenopausal women can cut down risk of breast cancer

Weight loss is associated with lower breast cancer risk in postmenopausal women, suggests a study. Women with weight loss greater than or equal to 5% had a 12% lower breast cancer risk compared to women with a stable, with no interaction by body mass index. Weight gain of greater than or equal to 5% was not associated with risk of breast cancer overall but was associated with a 54% higher incidence of triple negative breast cancer.

“Our study indicates that moderate, relatively short-term weight reduction was associated with a statistically significant reduction in breast cancer risk for postmenopausal women,” said Dr. Rowan Chlebowski of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, California.

“These are observational results, but they are also supported by randomised clinical trial evidence from the Women’s Health Initiative Dietary Modification trial where, in a randomised clinical trial setting, adopting a low-fat dietary pattern that was associated with a similar magnitude of weight loss resulted in a significant improvement in breast cancer overall survival. These findings, taken together, provide strong correlative evidence that a modest weight loss program can impact breast cancer.”

Source: ANI



How bad is the air quality in your home?

What if you could see the microscopic air pollutants in your home? In a new study, engineers have discovered that visualising how bad air quality is in your home can help mitigate pollution.

They conducted a study to determine if homeowners change the way they live if they could visualize the air quality in their house. It turns out, their behaviour changes a lot.

Lead author Jason Wiese said, “The idea behind this study was to help people understand something about this invisible air quality in their home.”

During the day, the air pollution inside your home can be worse than outside due to activities such as vacuuming, cooking, dusting or running the clothes dryer. The results can cause health problems, especially for the young and elderly with asthma.

University of Utah engineers from both the School of Computing and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering built a series of portable air quality monitors with Wi-Fi and connected them to a university server.

To help identify when there might be spikes in the air pollution, homeowners were given a voice-activated Google Home speaker so they could tell the server to label a particular moment in time when the air quality was being measured, such as when a person was cooking or vacuuming. Participants also were sent an SMS text message warning them whenever the indoor air quality changed rapidly.

During the study, researchers discovered some interesting trends from their system of sensors, which they called MAAV (Measure Air quality, Annotate data streams, and Visualise real-time PM2.5 levels).

Researchers also learned that circumstances that made the air pollution worse differed in each home. Vacuuming in the home, for example, would cause different reactions to the air quality. They also learned that if homeowners could visualize the air quality in their home, they always stayed on top of labeling and looking at the data. The study involves engineering in collaboration with other University of Utah scientists, including biomedical informatics and clinical asthma researchers. The full findings are present in Proceedings of the ACM on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Tech.

Source: ANI

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FACEBOOK TESTING VOICE COMMANDS IN MESSENGER

Facebook is testing voice commands for chat and calls in its Messenger platform. According to a report in TechCrunch on Friday, the feature could soon let you use voice to dictate and send messages, initiate voice calls and create reminders.

A Facebook Messenger spokesperson confirmed that Facebook is internally testing the voice command feature.

"We often experiment with new experiences on Messenger with employees. We have nothing more to share at this time," the spokesperson was quoted as saying.

Voice control could make Messenger simpler to use hands-free.

Facebook Messenger was previously spotted testing speech transcription as part of the Aloha voice assistant believed to be part of Facebook's upcoming Portal video chat screen device.

"Facebook Messenger is eager to differentiate itself from SMS, Snapchat, Android Messages and other texting platforms," said the report.

Messenger has over 1.3 billion monthly active users. Its "Stories" feature now has over 300 million daily active users.

Source: IANS



Samsung Galaxy A9 launched with four rear cameras

After having launched Galaxy A7 with triple rear camera set up, Samsung on Thursday unveiled Galaxy A9 (2018) with whopping four cameras on the back. Galaxy A9 will be available in select markets from November.

Samsung Galaxy A9 sports a 3D glass curved back available in three colour options of 'Caviar Black', 'Lemonade Blue' and 'Bubblegum Pink'.

Samsung Galaxy A9's four camera setup aims to club all possible kinds of sensors and combine them to deliver better quality photos. The first sensor is an ultra wide sensor with 120-degree field of view, f/2.4 aperture, and 8-megapixel resolution. The second sensor is a telephoto lens with 2x optical zoom, f/2.4 aperture and 10-megapixel resolution.

The third sensor is the main camera with 24-megapixel resolution and f/1.7 aperture. And the fourth one is the depth camera with 5-megapixel resolution and f/2.2 aperture. Theoretically, Samsung Galaxy A9 2018 will be capable of delivering photos that will cover more real estate, have clarity and sharpness and bokeh mode.

On the front Samsung Galaxy A9 2018 has an 24-megapixel camera.

Apart from the four-camera setup, Galaxy A9 2018 offers mid-range level specifications. On the front, it has 6.28-inch Super AMOLED display with full HD+ resolution. It runs on Android Oreo-based TouchWiz UI and is powered by Snapdragon 660 processor along with 6GB and 8GB of RAM. It comes with 128GB storage which can be further expanded up to 512GB. A 3,800mAh battery powers the phone.

NEW SYSTEM CAN TRACK ROBOTS, SOLDIERS WITHOUT GPS

WASHINGTON (TIP): Scientists, including one of Indian origin, have developed an algorithm that can help locate humans and robots in areas where GPS is unavailable.

According to scientists at the US Army Research Laboratory (ARL), they need to be able to localise agents operating in physically complex, unknown and infrastructure-poor environments.

"This capability is critical to help find dismantled Soldiers and for humans and robotic agents to team together effectively," said Gunjan Verma, a researchers at ARL.

"In most civilian applications, solutions such as GPS work well for this task, and help us, for example, navigate to a destination via our car," said Verma.

However, such solutions are not suitable for the military environment.

"For example, an adversary may destroy the infrastructure (eg satellites) needed for GPS; alternatively, complex environments (eg inside a building) are hard for the GPS signal to penetrate," said Fikadu Dagefu from ARL.

"This is because complex and cluttered environments impede the straight-line propagation of wireless signals," he said.

Dagefu said that obstacles inside the building, especially when their size is much larger than the wavelength of the wireless signal, weaken the power of the signal and re-direct its flow, making a wireless signal very unreliable for communicating information about location.



According to the researchers, typical approaches to localisation, which use a wireless signal's power or delay, work well in outdoor scenes with minimal obstacles; however, they perform poorly in obstacle-rich scenes.

Scientists developed a novel technique for determining the direction of arrival (DoA) of a radio frequency signal source, which is a fundamental enabler of localisation.

The underlying idea is that the gradient of the spatially sampled received signal strength, or RSS, carries information about the source direction.

"Extracting the DoA requires a theoretically grounded analysis to obtain a robust estimator in the presence of undesirable propagation phenomena," Verma said.

"For example, large obstacles cause

the RSS samples nearby to become highly correlated (so-called "correlated shadowing"). If left uncorrected, this correlation can seriously bias the DoA estimate." The key invention according to the researchers is an algorithm that statistically models the RSS gradient and controls for spatial outliers and correlations.

When the signal is extremely noisy, the estimator correctly outputs that no DoA is present, rather than incorrectly estimating an arbitrary direction.

The researchers have validated the approach with several publically available as well as in-house collected measurement datasets.

The technique works in conditions of heavy multipath in which classical phase or time of arrival based estimates would fail.

Source: PTI

Instagram ramps up battle against bullying

Instagram has added more weapons to battle cyber bullying, using artificial intelligence to scan photos for abusive content at the Facebook-owned service.

The move comes after Facebook also increased anti-harassment measures, following a survey which said young victims of online abuse feel social media firms aren't doing enough to fight the problem.

Instagram chief Adam Mosseri on Tuesday said artificial intelligence is being used to detect signs of bullying and then automatically flag content for review by staff from the image-oriented social network.

"This change will help us identify and remove significantly more bullying," Mosseri said in a blog post.

"It's a crucial next step since many people who experience or observe bullying don't report it." Rolling the technology out across the entire social network is expected to take a few weeks.

In another move, a filter that enables Instagram users to detect and hide bullying remarks from Instagram feeds or profiles was extended to comments on live videos, according to Mosseri.

In the spirit of inspiring people to be nice to one another, Instagram also added a camera effect which can be used to adorn images with hearts or the word "kindness" in a variety of languages.

"Online bullying is complex, and we know we have more work to do to further limit bullying and spread kindness on



Instagram," Mosseri said.

Last week Facebook said its users will be able to hide or delete groups of comments, including responses, instead of having to remove them one at a time.

The network also began letting people report bullying or harassment on behalf of friends reluctant to complain to the social network themselves.

A majority of US teenagers say they have been victims of online harassment or bullying, most commonly name-calling, a Pew Research Center survey

found in September.

It said that 59 per cent of US teens reported online abuse, and 63 per cent said it was a major problem for people their age.

The survey found that most young people harassment victims feel that teachers, social media firms and politicians are doing a poor or fair job in addressing the problem of cyber bullying—an issue which has drawn the attention of US First Lady Melania Trump and Britain's Prince William.

Source: AFP

Jeff Bezos' fortune drops \$9.1 billion as market rout hits the wealthy

LONDON (TIP): Plunging global markets lopped \$99 billion from the fortunes of the world's 500 wealthiest people on Wednesday, the year's second-steepest one-day drop for the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Amazon.Com Inc. founder Jeff Bezos lost \$9.1 billion, the most of anyone on the index, as shares of the online retailer fell the most in more than two years. The plunge lowered Bezos's net worth to \$145.2 billion, its lowest since July.

The fortune of Europe's wealthiest person, Bernard Arnault, tumbled \$4.5 billion to \$66.9 billion as shares of his luxury empire LVMH fell after the company confirmed China was tightening border checks. Arnault saw more than half of his gains for the year erased. The French tycoon lost \$3.5 billion on Friday as rumors began to circulate on social media about the stepped-up border checks, which are intended to curb unauthorized imports of items like Louis Vuitton handbags and Berluti boots.

In all, 17 people lost more than \$1 billion, with the carnage equally



distributed across sectors. Berkshire Hathaway Inc.'s Warren Buffett was among the biggest losers in percentage terms as his net worth slid \$4.5 billion, or 4.9 percent. The world's 67 wealthiest tech moguls, a group including Bill Gates and Facebook Inc.'s Mark Zuckerberg, had \$32.1 billion wiped from their collective net worth. America's billionaires were the hardest hit at \$54.5 billion, more than any other country represented on the index.



ORDERLY DEPRECIATION OF RUPEE TO INCREASE COMPETITIVENESS: OFFICIAL

WASHINGTON (TIP): An orderly depreciation of the rupee would increase competitiveness and relieve some of the pressures in capital market, according to a top World Bank official who described it as a "positive development" if done in a right way.

The remarks by Martin Rama, the Chief Economist for the South Asia region of the World Bank, came as the rupee hit an all-time low of 74.45 against the US dollar on Thursday. "We think that an orderly depreciation of the rupee would increase competitiveness and relieve some of the pressures that we are seeing in general in capital market," Rama told PTI.

As such the World Bank sees the depreciation of the rupees as a "positive development provided it is done in the right way, Rama said when asked about the rapid depreciation of the Indian rupee in recent weeks, which has now dropped to a historic low. He said that South Asian countries may be tempted to slow down the devaluation of their currency, because that translates into inflation, and not being very popular. Responding to a question, Rama said it is a bit early to say how it will have an impact on India's economy. "I feel a bit early, but we will expect that a combination of a strong input demand in Europe and especially in the US, together with a more competitive exchange rate will help (India) on the trade side," he said, adding that this will help boost exports, not only in India, but also in other countries in the region too. In its latest South Asia Economic Focus Report, released early this week, the World Bank projected India's growth to rise to 7.3 per cent in FY 2018/19, and to 7.5 per cent in the following two years, with stronger private spending and export growth as the key drivers. Prompted by the adoption of the Goods and Services Tax and the recapitalisation of banks, growth in India is firming up and it is projected to accelerate further, it said. The slow down in India's economic growth in previous years was partly the result of demonetisation and some other policy uncertainty, he said.

Source: PTI

Facebook to boost India efforts to expand startup ecosystem

NEW DELHI (TIP): Facebook on Tuesday said it aims to boost its efforts to expand the startup ecosystem in India, reiterating its commitment to widen its support to include technology entrepreneurs in different cities.

"We are committed to paving the way for the success of the new generation of start-ups in India and understand that access to resources, people and networks can be a powerful catalyst for their growth," said Facebook's Satyajeet Singh, the head of Platform Partnerships for India and South Asia.

India is the world's third largest startup hub and has one of the fastest growing base of software developers.

"Our initiatives seek to empower India's start-up ecosystem. Be it helping them with the use of emerging technologies like Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality, giving women-led start-ups the right channels or supporting companies that are building solutions for social impact," Singh told reporters here.

Hence, the social media giant is creating programmes that can spur the entrepreneurs to build businesses of tomorrow through mentoring, regular training, workshops and meet-ups, Singh said.

Facebook said its first batch of 10 people at the School of Innovation has built its virtual reality ideas into working product prototypes, which will be showcased in 2019.

Source: IANS

IMF cuts forecast for global growth as trade war takes its toll

WASHINGTON (TIP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said the world economy is plateauing as the lender cut its growth forecast for the first time in more than two years, blaming escalating trade tensions and stresses in emerging markets.

On the eve of its annual meetings in Bali, Indonesia, the fund on Tuesday projected a global expansion of 3.7 per cent this year and next, down from the 3.9 percent projected three months ago. It was the first downgrade since July 2016.

While the global economy is still on track to match last year's pace, which was the strongest since 2011, the new outlook suggests fatigue is setting in and the overall performance masked mounting weakness in emerging markets from Brazil to Turkey.

The fund left its 2018 US forecast unchanged but cut its expectation for next year, citing the impact of the trade conflict. "The outlook is one of less balanced and more tentative expansion than we hoped for last April," IMF chief economist Maurice Obstfeld said in the report.

Risks to the global outlook have risen in the last three months and tilt to the downside, the IMF said. Threats include a further inflaming of the trade war between the US and countries including China, and a sharper-than-expected rise in interest rates, which would accelerate capital flight from emerging markets.

The warning comes as finance ministers and central bankers from the IMF's 189 member nations prepare to meet this week in Bali, Indonesia for the



annual meetings of the fund and its sister institution, the World Bank.

The Trump administration's trade dispute with China is expected to be front and centre, as are the consequences of the Federal Reserve and other major central banks tightening monetary conditions after a decade of easy money.

If the trade war continues, it could take a significant bite out of global growth, according to the fund. It estimates global output could fall by more than 0.8 percent in 2020 and remain 0.4 per cent below its trend line over the long term, in a scenario where Trump follows through on all his threats, including global duties on cars. Output could fall by more than 1.6 per cent in China and over 0.9 percent in the

US next year, according to the IMF's models.

The IMF's cut to its outlook was broad-based. The fund downgraded its forecast for US growth next year to 2.5 per cent, down 0.2 percentage point from July, after factoring in the impact of tariffs imposed by the Trump administration and retaliatory duties by other nations. It left its U.S. growth projection for this year at 2.9 per cent.

President Donald Trump has slapped tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods this year, and Beijing has retaliated with levies \$110 billion of American products. The IMF projections don't take into account Trump's threat to expand the tariffs to effectively all of the more than \$500 billion in goods the U.S. bought from China last year.

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contd from page 1

Automaker Ford plans layoffs blames Trump tariffs for \$1 billion loss: report

The NBC report cited a Morgan Stanley analysis that estimates a 12 percent reduction in Ford's global workforce, resulting in the loss of roughly 24,000 workers. Bob Shanks, Ford's chief financial officer, described the cutbacks as a "redesign" that would include its 70,000 white-collar employees.

With sales lagging well behind its domestic competitor General Motors, Ford has launched a \$25.5 billion reorganization plan. It began in earnest in May 2017 when then-CEO Mark Fields was removed.

The company has previously announced it would drop production of its sedan, wagon and coupe models -- save for the popular Mustang -- and concentrate on SUVs and trucks.

Meanwhile, Ford has found itself regularly at odds with the president. As a candidate, Trump threatened Ford with tariffs when it proposed building a plant in Mexico. The company backed out of those plans and opted to expand in China instead.

The main blow from the Trump tariffs have delivered to automakers has been in the cost they have added to many of the parts they import from China. (Source: NOLA.com)

Hurricane Michael batters Florida Panhandle: At least Six Dead; 1.3 Million without Power

Utility companies said more than 1.3 million customers remained without power from Florida to Virginia on Thursday evening as Michael - still a tropical storm more than a day after landfall - remained dangerous, with maximum sustained winds of 50 mph.

Michael made landfall in Mexico Beach, Florida, on Wednesday just shy of Category 5 hurricane strength, with winds gusting at 155 mph. While the storm weakened through the night as it passed over Georgia, it still proved deadly.

"Unfortunately, in these types of things as we go through and sift through damage, ultimately those who didn't heed warnings, particularly around the Mexico Beach area - we typically see deaths climb, unfortunately," Brock Long, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said on CBS on Thursday.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott said Thursday morning: "This hurricane was an absolute monster. And the damage left in its wake is still yet to be fully understood."

Get to the Point



The INDIAN PANORAMA

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DURGA ASHTAMI

Durga Ashtami also known as 'Maha Ashtami' is an important Hindu ritual dedicated to Goddess Shakti. It is observed on the 'ashtami' (8th day) of the 'Shukla Paksha' (the bright fortnight of moon) of every lunar month. On this day the weapons of Goddess Durga are worshiped and the celebration is known as 'Astra Puja'. This day is also popularly referred as 'Virashtami' owing to the display of arms and other forms of martial arts. Hindu devotees offer prayers to Goddess Durga and keep a strict fast to seek Her divine blessings. Durga Ashtami Vrat is observed with complete devotion in the northern and western regions of India. In some regions of Andhra Pradesh, Durga Ashtami is celebrated as 'Bathukamma Panduga'. Durga Ashtami Vrat is a significant observance for followers of Hinduism.

Rituals during Durga Ashtami Vrat

On the day of Durga Ashtami, devotees pray to Goddess Durga. They get up early in the morning and make several offerings to Goddess in the form of flowers, chandan and dhoop. In some places, Kumari Puja is also performed on the day of Durga Ashtami Vrat. Hindus worship girls aged between 6-12 years as the Kanya (virgin) form of Goddess Durga. Special 'Naivedyam' is prepared for offering to the Goddess.

Fasting is an important ritual of the day. the observer of Durga Ashtami Vrat abstains from eating or drinking all through the day. the fast is observed by men and women alike. the Durga Ashtami Vrat is observed to acquire spiritual gains and seek the blessings of Goddess Durga. Some devotees keep the fast by drinking only milk or eating fruits. Consuming non-vegetarian food and alcohol is strictly prohibited on this day. the observer of the Durga Ashtami Vrat must sleep on the floor and keep away from the comforts and luxuries.

In some regions of western India there is also a custom of sowing barley seeds. After the seeds reach a height of 3-5 inches they are offered to the Goddess and later distributed among all family members.

Devotees chant various Devi mantras on this day. It is also considered rewarding to read Durga Chalisa on this day. At the end of puja, devotees also read the Durga Ashtami Vrat katha.

Hindu devotees provide food and santarpana or dakshina to Brahmins after completing the puja rituals.

The observer of Durga Ashtami Vrat visit Shakti temples in the evening. Special pujas are conducted on the day of Mahashtami that is witnessed by thousands of devotees.

Significance of Durga Ashtami Vrat

In Sanskrit language the word 'durga' means 'undefeatable' and 'ashtami' signifies 'eight day'. According to the Hindu legends the fierce and powerful form of Goddess Durga, known as 'Goddess Bhadrakali' was incarnated. The day of Durga Ashtami is celebrated as the victory of Goddess Durga over the demon named 'Mahishasura'. It is believed that one who observes the Durga Ashtami Vrat with full dedication will be bestowed with happiness and good fortune in their lives.

When is Durgashtami celebrated?

Durgashtami is celebrated on the eighth day of Navratri that commences from 'Mahalaya' in the Indian month of Ashwin. This falls in the Shukla paksha of the month. According to the Gregorian calendar, it is celebrated in the month of September-October every year.



GODDESS SHAKTI

The story of Durgashtami

Goddess Kali culminated from the forehead of Devi Durga on this day and killed Mahishasur — the king of Demons and his associates—Chanda and Munda.

On this day, Mother Durga annihilated Bhaironath, an evil 'tantric' in the form of Vaishno Devi. This incident leads to the history of establishment of the pilgrimage of Vaishno devi and it is said that the famous Bhaironath temple lies at the site where the head of Bhaironath fell after being chucked off by the Goddess.

Other names of Durgashtami

Durgashtami that is celebrated as apart of the Navratri festival is known as Mahaashtami.

Devotees of Goddess Durga keep a day long fast on this day.

On this day, all the weapons and artillery that were used for killing Mahishasur by Goddess Durga are worshipped along with the enchanting of mantras. This ritual is known as Astra puja.

This day is also referred to as Virashtami as several weapons, arms and martial art calibers are displayed by experts.

During the worship of the Mother, the eight avatars of Durga called Ashtanayikas are also worshipped which include Brahmani, Indrani, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Narasinghi, Kameshwari, Maheshwari and Chamunda.

Goddess Durga is worshipped by

establishing a 'ghat' in front, red sandalwood paste, fruits, flowers, sweets, betel leaves, cardamom and coins are distributed among the kin.

The Goddess is shown a lighted lamp for 7 times and the special Durga Satshati mantra is recited for 108 times.

64 Yoginis who are considered the Devi's associates are also worshipped along with.

Other minor deities and guards of the Mother are also worshipped on this day that also includes Bhairava.

On this day, the deity is worshipped as Goddess Gauri. To observe this, nine small

virgin girls are worshipped, their feet are washed and they are offered halwa (a sweet dish made of semolina, milk, ghee and nuts), puri and kheer a part of the ritual.

Several temples of the deity organize big scale pujas and 'havans' that are attended by devotees in large numbers.

Durgashtami ends with the sandhi puja that ushers the next day Mahanavami.

It is believed that people who observe a staunch fast on this day to please Mother Durga are always taken care by her benevolence and such people are always free of delusions of any kind in life.

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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?"

"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

Maiden call-up for Pant as India prepare Dhoni's succession plan



Rishabh Pant (right), who had scored 114 and 92 in his previous two Test appearances, has been a prolific white ball player who replaced the inconsistent Dinesh Karthik as Dhoni's cover.

HYDERABAD (TIP): Dashing keeper-batsman Rishabh Pant forced his way into the Indian ODI set-up for the first time as the national selection committee got down to put in place a succession plan for the legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Pant, who had scored 114 and 92 in his previous two Test appearances, has been a prolific white ball player who replaced the inconsistent Dinesh Karthik as Dhoni's cover.

The southpaw is expected to be one of the missing links in the Indian ODI team's middle order jigsaw puzzle.

Asked if Pant will be playing purely as batsman, chairman of selectors MSK Prasad said: "Yes, definitely but if need arises he will be the back-up keeper."

While Dhoni remains the first-choice keeper till the World Cup, Prasad indicated that young Pant is a long-term investment.

"It is no brainer who is our No 1 wicketkeeper. In search of second wicketkeeper, we have given opportunities to DK and right now we are giving opportunity to Rishabh Pant. At an appropriate time, we will take a call as to who is the best among the two."

Prasad indicated that they have now zeroed in on a couple of names for the two middle-order slots.

Another interesting inclusion was of Mohammed Shami, who last played an ODI in September last year. He will be looked at as a potential third seamer option.

"I have been telling this for a quite some time that we are just 18 ODIs away from now before we play first game of the World Cup and so we need to figure out our fast bowlers and in this process we have picked Shami," said Prasad.

It is learnt that skipper Virat Kohli, who was rested for the Asia Cup, returns to play all five ODIs while Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Jasprit Bumrah are set to comeback during the second phase of the series.

HYDERABAD TEST PRESENTS ASHWIN A CHANCE TO JOIN ELITE LIST OF INDIAN BOWLERS

Ravichandran Ashwin started his Test career in emphatic fashion, almost eight years ago, against West Indies on home soil. He ended the three-match series with 22 wickets, also winning the Man of the series award and in the process established himself as Team India's premier wicket-taker in the longest format.

Since then Ashwin has obliterated several record with his wicket-taking spree and helped India reach the zenith of Test rankings, by virtue of a rock solid home record. As the off-spin wizard races towards more milestones, the second Test against the Windies in Hyderabad provides him with an opportunity to join an elite list of Indian bowlers.

Ashwin has currently picked up 57 wickets from 10 Test matches against the Windies and is the sixth most successful Indian bowler against the Caribbean team. The Chennai-based tweaker can enter the top five in Hyderabad if he takes 6 wickets in the match, which doesn't look beyond him given the quality of opposition. Those ahead of Ashwin in the list include some of India's finest bowlers ever. The list is headed by Kapil Dev, who picked up 89 wickets in 25 Tests against Windies. He is followed by Anil Kumble who has 74 wickets to his name from 17 Tests.

The chairman of selectors also said that Dhoni will take part in the Vijay Hazare Trophy knock-out phase, representing Jharkhand.

"He (Dhoni) will play the knock-outs. About Ambati Rayudu, I need to confirm."

He also gave a couple of injury updates with Hardik Pandya unavailable till the second week of November as he is suffering from acute lower back injury.

About his future in red-ball cricket, Prasad said: "Well, it is a workload management program going on and it all depends on his recovery from the injury he has now. At an appropriate time, we can answer as and when he recovers from injury." On Kedar Jadhav, it was learnt that he will be available for the last three

ODIs as he is still recovering from a hamstring injury.

Prasad also in his own way rubbished multiple captaincy theory which was doing the rounds since India's Asia Cup triumph under Rohit Sharma's leadership.

"Well, I would like to tell in 2015, Virat took over Test captaincy and subsequently in 2017, he took over ODI captaincy. He has excelled in all formats, led from the front and India are No 1 side in all formats (only in Tests). We want all 15 players to think as leaders and we will be an unbeatable team. Rohit and Ajinkya (Rahane) has done well in that aspect but we want others to think like leaders and rise to the occasion," Prasad added. *Source: PTI*

PAKISTAN VS OZ: KHAWAJA, PAINE DIG DEEP TO SNATCH A DRAW FOR TOURISTS

DUBAI (TIP): Opener Usman Khawaja hit a fighting hundred to foil Pakistan and help Australia escape with a draw in the first Test in Dubai on Thursday.

The left-hander hit a solid 141 for his seventh Test hundred, while skipper Tim Paine (61 not out) and Travis Head (72) also hit half centuries as Australia finished at 362-8 late in the day with lights coming on at Dubai stadium.

After Khawaja was dismissed with 14.3 overs left and Yasir Shah quickly removed Mitchell Starc (one) and Peter Siddle (nought), Paine and number ten Nathan Lyon (five not out) survived 12.1 overs.

Both had some anxious moments before players shook hands with one ball to go in leg-spinner Yasir's final over.

Yasir had shaken the Australian innings with 4-114 but Australia clung on. They have now won two and drawn two of their 16 Tests in Asia since 2012.

Australia's hero was Khawaja, who started the day on 50 not out as Australia resumed on 136-3.

Khawaja and Head added 79 before lunch as Pakistan failed to take a wicket in the first session. The pair eventually put on an invaluable 132 runs for the fourth wicket.

Khawaja, who was born in Pakistan but moved to Australia as a child, batted for eight hours 44 minutes and faced 302 balls before he was sixth man out in the final session. He was trapped leg-before sweeping Yasir.

Khawaja, who hit 11 boundaries, had a top score of 26 in five previous Tests in Asia.

His innings was the second longest in the fourth innings of a Test, behind England's Michael Atherton's 645 minute vigil in scoring 185 not out against South Africa in Johannesburg in 1995. It was the highest fourth-innings score by any visiting batsman in Asia, beating New Zealand's Daniel Vettori's 140 made at Colombo against Sri Lanka nine years ago.

Pakistan started the day needing seven wickets to win but nothing worked for skipper Sarfraz Ahmed, despite multiple bowling changes.

Pakistan could have had Head leg-before off leg-spinner Yasir on 44, but Sarfraz did not review umpire Richard Kettleborough's not out decision. Replays showed the ball was hitting the stumps.

Pakistan were only rewarded when they took the second new ball as soon as it was due and Hafeez trapped Head leg-before with the first ball. Australia wobbled but Khawaja and Paine, who batted for 3 hours and 39 minutes, ensured a draw.

The second Test starts in Abu Dhabi from October 16.

Pakistan opener Imam-ul-Haq will miss the match after he suffered a fractured finger fielding on Thursday.

Source: AFP





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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE OCTOBER 15 - OCTOBER 21, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says you crave emotional excitement and a change in routine. You are bored with the status quo. You want to do something radically different and seek out people you would normally have no intercourse with in any way whatsoever. This has its dangers but you are ready for the fallout. You know what you are doing. You are impulsive but not dangerously rash. You break the rules and if you are a team leader you pioneer new and better way of doing things.

Taurus:

This is an interesting period with several possibilities. There are obsessions and indulgences and you are prone to compulsive behavior. If you have addictions, you may sink deep into the quagmire. You need to look at yourself with honesty and clarity. This is a period of introspection and self-analysis, and confrontations with the self. There could be altercations too, as others may how you a mirror and you don't like the reflection.

Gemini:

There is more stability now and this can be an excellent period for all kinds of mental work. You plan for the future with decisiveness. You are positive, confident and determined to make something of yourself. You are not one to wallow in muddy waters for too long. You realize your mistakes and work on yourself. You realize that you have to work in a team and this sudden realization and humility are met with applause. There is work-related travel and business expansion.

Cancer:

You are moved ahead like the latest bullet train. You are disciplined, and your critical faculties are sharp. This is an excellent time for business transactions and negotiations. You want to be the top gun, and that could be the only hitch. You are open to divergent views, as they invest in the larger vision. Ego drives are high, and you attract arguments and altercations, but you manage to get your way through in the end.

Leo:

There are different and opposing trends this period. There could be confusion and uncertainty, new awareness and sensitivity, aggression, conciliation, withdrawal, competition, confrontation and self-assertion. You could act surreptitiously and face the consequences too. You also go looking for a guru and take recourse to yantra, tantra and mantra. There are expenses and family time, ill health and remission, generation, rejuvenation and eccentricities.

Virgo:

You are fascinated by every vista of life that opens before your eyes. There are surprises and upsets. Plans may go away, and you will have to move like water. 'The species that adapts to change is the species that survives,' said Darwin. If you are rigid, you are stuck. In this phase you may embark on one course of action and then move on to something completely different. You are the lichen riding the ocean waves.

Libra:

'Truth is a pathless land,' said J. Krihnamurti. Relationships are the prime focus now. You look for reliable, stable partners. Those in long-term relationships go about sorting out issues that may have caused possible rifts. You can be objective and you understand the realities of life. You do not make unrealistic demands and just expect partners to live up to their obligations. There is steadiness and sobriety in all your exchanges.

Scorpio:

You make money and spend it. There are many new investments, holiday plans and new deals in the offing. You are a mover and shaker, filled with zest, zeal and energy. You want to be a person of renown, and the winter chill won't dampen your inherent desires to excel. There are love and longing, fun, festivities, joyous moments and family reunions. Children bring happiness. There could also be an addition to the family.

Sagittarius:

This is a great period for physical activity, as your energies are high. You are filled with hope, joy and bonhomie. You are strong, vigorous, hard-working and determined. Your exuberance is contagious, and it draws everyone around you in its sweep. You are not foolishly overconfident. You watch your step and take calculated risks. You live and love large. Success crowns you without a doubt.

Capricorn:

There is travel on the cards. It may be time for a foreign holiday. You also look seriously at spirituality and go searching for a guru. You are looking for answers to life's profound questions. Certain queries may never be answered but ask you must. New vistas open and someone from a different culture may make a lasting impression on you. It needn't be a romantic liaison, but it could well change the way you look at the world.

Aquarius:

You take a break from the rush of life and meet with your buddies at cafes and over dinners and movies. You visit art galleries and attend poetry readings and private screenings of offbeat cinema. If you are artistically inclined, you find time for your creative urges. You take off into the woods and frolic with rabbits and foxes. You have been there and done that. And the winner of the rat race remains a rat. You want a clean break from it all. Ganesha smiles.

Pisces:

'Instead of getting depressed or falling into guilt when we see what is wrong in ourselves, we need to say, Wow! Creator, thank you for letting me see my demons. Now, how can I go above them?' said Karen Berg of the Kabbalah Centre. You may be inclined to identify your ego with your possessions and wealth. This can set tongues wagging and you could come in for some flak. You could also look at short cuts and unethical means to reach your ends.



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