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550 Years of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Founder of Sikhism

Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539), is the Founder of Sikhism, the youngest and the fifth largest religion of the world, with a following of around 25 million worldwide. It is a monotheistic faith founded in the Punjab region of India more than 500 years ago. Most of the world's 25 million Sikhs live in India, but more than 500,000 have made the U.S. their home.

Guru Nanak was a precursor to modern world of democratic values. His teachings, universal in nature, include equality, brotherhood, compassion, charity- the values the civilized world cherishes.

The Indian Panorama, with this issue, begins year-long celebration of the Great Master until His 550th birth anniversary in November 2019.

Readers may please contribute articles for publication. E mail to salujaindra@gmail.com

Sikhs in Queens Take out an Impressive Parade to Mark the 549th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak



Devotees follow the Float carrying their Living Guru Shri Guru Granth Sahib. Priests are seen in attendance of Guru Sahib. Photo / Baldev- BJ Video & Photography

I.S. SALUJA

RICHMOND HILL (TIP): Dedicated to the 499th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Founder of Sikhism, world's youngest and the fifth largest religion, Sikhs of New York took out an impressive parade through Richmond Hill in Queens, New York, Saturday, November 17.

Organized by Gurdwara Baba Makhana Shah Lubana, located in Richmond Hill, the colorful parade was a treat to watch. There was a gorgeously decorated float to carry the Living Guru of the Sikhs, Shri Guru Granth Sahib. This float was at the head of the parade. The Panj Piaras (the five beloveds of the Tenth Master Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji) marched ahead of the float carrying Shri Guru Granth Sahib, with ragis singing devotional hymns and the priests attending on Guru Granth Sahib.

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Brigadier Kuldip Singh Chandpuri, hero of 1971 Battle of Longewala, dies at 78

India, Pak to develop Kartarpur corridor on respective sides

No clarity yet on bilateral consensus to make corridor functional

NEW DELHI (TIP): After a long wait, and much dithering, India and Pakistan, on the eve of Guru Nanak birth anniversary, Thursday, Nov 22, claimed moving forward on opening of the Kartarpur Sahib corridor. *contd on Page 32*

Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib, now in Pakistan, is one of the most sacred shrines of the Sikhs, where Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikhism, settled and assembled a Sikh community after his missionary travels. The present gurdwara is built on the site where Guru Nanak left for heavenly abode on 22 September 1539.



Guru Nanak's message of inter-faith dialogue is the best solution to contain terrorism, radicalism: Dr. Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI (TIP): Dr. Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of India said, November 22, that Guru Nanak Dev's message of inter-faith dialogue was the best solution to terrorism and fundamentalism and should be followed to promote harmony in the country, which is witnessing social strife, religious acrimonies and caste rivalries. *contd on Page 32*

Dr Manmohan Singh, Former Prime Minister of India. Photo / Courtesy Mukesh Aggarwal



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ANUJ SHARMA, ESQ.
ATTORNEY AT LAW

'Passport Seva Kendras' to be opened in each 543 parliamentary constituencies: V K Singh

The year 2017 registered a 19 per cent growth in passport related services

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The Indian government plans to open a 'Passport Seva Kendra' in each of the 543 parliamentary constituencies across the country by March next year to ensure convenient passport services to its people, Minister of State for External Affairs V K Singh said here, November 21.

"We plan to have a Passport Kendra in each head post office (in India) so that any citizen doesn't have to travel beyond 50-60 km for his or her passport services," Singh said.

The government is trying to ensure that Indian citizens do not face any difficulty in obtaining their passports whether in India or abroad, he said as he launched the 'Passport Seva' project at India's Consulate here.

The 'Passport Seva' project has brought in a huge transformation towards delivery of passport services in India, Singh said while handing over passports to a few Indian citizens who had used the new program to renew their passports. "This project will ensure better services for our citizens abroad. It is a service which is truly meant for citizens," he said at the global launch of the program here. The new system will ensure an easy and convenient application submission process, usher-in standardization, digital overhauling, end-to-end status tracking and enhance security, the minister said.

The year 2017 registered a 19 per cent growth in passport related services. The monthly submission of applications has crossed one million mark for the first time and more than six crore passports have been issued through the 'Passport Seva' system, the minister said. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has taken several measures to improve the passport service delivery experience, including by simplifying several passport rules and doing away with cumbersome requirements that delayed the process and led to unnecessary hurdles, he said. The MEA with the Department of Posts took the decision to start 'Passport Seva Kendras' in head post offices. As a result, 236 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendras'



General Vijay Kumar Singh (Retd), Minister of State for External Affairs (center) lights the at the Global launch of "Passport Seva Project" at the Indian Consulate in New York City, Wednesday, November 21. Also seen are Taruna Chakravorty, wife of Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty (extreme left), and . Deputy Consul General Shatrughan Sinha (extreme right)

Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment

(POPSKs) have been operationalized to date and many more are in the pipeline. This, when added to 36 passport offices and 93 erstwhile 'Passport Seva Kendras', makes a total of 365 passport offices for public.

The MEA has also initiated the integration of 'Passport Seva Program' at all Indian Embassies and Consulates across the globe.

The MEA has successfully initiated a pilot project at the High Commission of India in London followed by the Consulate General of India in Birmingham and Edinburgh.

After launching the global 'Passport Seva' program at the Consulate General of India in New York for the Indian diaspora, the MEA will launch the program at the Indian Embassy in Washington followed by the Consulate in Atlanta.

It aims to operationalize all Embassy/Consulates in the US during the course of next 15 days.

The Indian government plans to roll out the global 'Passport Seva' program at all Embassies/Consulates within the next three to four months, a move that will ensure that "our 'Passport Seva' globally is inter-linked and centrally controlled," Singh added.

To a question raised by the editor of The Indian Panorama with regard to those from Punjab who sought asylum, not being issued passport, the minister said the government was looking in to the issue.

Asked to make a statement on the dissolution of the Jammu & Kashmir State Assembly, the minister told The Indian Panorama that it was the Governor who in his wisdom considered the situation and recommended the dissolution of Assembly to the President. He admitted that the government in J & K, in which the BJP was a partner, was not exactly functioning for some time. Asked if he thought it was the



Johann Dunet, the youngest recipient, accepts a new passport from the Minister
Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment



Gen V.K. Singh said, "We plan to have a Passport Kendra in each head post office (in India) so that any citizen doesn't have to travel beyond 50-60 km for his or her passport services,

Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment

achievement of Indian diplomacy that the US cancelled its aid to Pakistan, the minister gave a smile and quipped that it as for the US to decide, and his government had no hand in the issue. On Thursday, November 22, General Singh launched the Passport Seva Project and had an interaction with the community at TV Asia in Edison, New Jersey.

(With inputs from PTI)

New York State Sen. Jose Peralta dies



Sen. Jose Peralta, the first Dominican-American to be elected to NY State Senate died of heart attack Nov 21 evening.

NEW YORK (TIP): Sen. Jose Peralta, the 47-year-old Queens lawmaker, who lost his reelection bid, died of a heart attack on Wednesday, November 21 night, according to news reports. The Democrat was pronounced dead at 8 p.m. at Elmhurst Hospital Center in Queens, according to the Daily Mail, and his family was with him at the time. Peralta was first elected to the state Senate in a special election in 2010, becoming the first Dominican-American in the chamber. Peralta, whose district

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New Yorkers Brave Freezing Cold to Participate in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): New York City's huge Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade marched on Thursday, November 22, despite frigid cold and strong winds that earlier threatened to ground the giant character balloons. From early morning, families were seen braving the cold in the thousands to see the annual spectacle roll through the city, despite it being the most frigid parade on record. Diana Ross, John Legend, Martina McBride and the Muppets from "Sesame Street" performed in the brutal cold, among others.

The police department were monitoring wind gauges along the 2.5-mile parade route in case balloons needed to be lowered or taken down. However, at parade start winds were low enough to allow for all balloons to fly and there were no incidents. The three-hour event kicked off on 77 St. and Central Park West at 9 a.m. Beforehand, New York City issued an extreme cold weather alert for Thursday and urged anyone going outside to wear hats, scarves, gloves and layered clothing and to keep their fingertips, earlobes, and noses covered to prevent frostbite.

"Get ready for an amazing parade but put on every layer you have in your household, wear



Parade participants with the Macy's float take part in the 92nd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York, Thursday, Nov. 22, 2018.
(NBC Screenshot)

every glove you can find, every scarf, hand warmers, whatever you got, you're going to need it tomorrow," Mayor Bill de Blasio told crowds gathered to watch the parade's giant balloons being inflated. In addition to giant

balloons of Charlie Brown, The Grinch, Ronald McDonald, and others, the parade featured about 8,000 marchers, performances from singers such as

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Amazon's Recent New York Campaign Contributions Mostly to Members of Congress

NEW YORK (TIP): Gotham Gazette reports that before Amazon announced the placement of one of its next satellite "headquarters" in Queens, drawing mixed reactions from local lawmakers and significant overall pushback, the company's campaign finance footprint in New York shows it was spreading its money around to many New York politicians, mostly those at the federal level.

Eight members of the U.S. House of Representatives from New York City, all Democrats, who signed a now infamous letter last year to compel Amazon to consider the city, received more than \$26,000 in total campaign contributions from Amazon from the beginning of 2017 to October 2018, according to Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings, with four of the members receiving \$7,500 of that total before signing the letter. Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, whose district includes part of Queens, received \$8,000 total from Amazon in four separate contributions to his campaign since 2017, including \$1,500 before he had signed the letter and \$6,500 afterward, a time period that coincided with Jeffries' recent reelection to the House, though he did not face serious opposition. Jeffries' office did not respond to a request for comment for this story, but he said in a statement to Cheddar that the deal "will supercharge New York City's reputation as the single best place to do business in America."

Brooklyn Rep. Yvette Clarke received \$5,000 from Amazon, half before signing the letter and half since -- Clarke did face a tough primary challenge this year, narrowly defeating Adem Bunkedeko before cruising to victory in the general. In a statement for the city's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that was sent to members of the media upon the Amazon announcement, Clarke said, "Amazon's decision to locate a headquarters in New York City is a testament to the strength of our technology sector."

Other letter signees who received Amazon contributions include Rep. Eliot Engel, Rep. Carolyn Maloney (whose district includes Long Island City), Rep. Gregory Meeks, Rep. Nydia Velazquez, and Rep. Adriano Espaillat, all of the five boroughs. Maloney called for a fair "public review" of the deal in a statement to Politico, arguing that "[a] beneficial deal will withstand public scrutiny."

*Read full story on
www.theindianpanorama.news*

World Vegan Vision Celebrates Thanksgiving at the Capitol

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi recognizes contribution of H.K. Shah & Malti Shah

WASHINGTON (TIP): World Vegan Vision- formerly Vegetarian Vision Inc., a non-profit Organization established in 1992, celebrated Vegan Thanksgiving event at Capitol in Cannon Office Complex, in Washington DC, November 13th.

World Vegan Vision promotes healthy living by eating Vegan/ Vegetarian foods, Save the animal from cruelty and killing and save the environment and planet Earth from Climate changes.

The mission of World Vegan Vision is to help people live healthy life by eating Plant based foods. During the last 25 years Vegetarian Vision had organized many noteworthy events, Food shows, Speakers seminars on health awareness programs, published health newsletters, Essay Competitions, Vegan Cooking demonstrations, and turkey free Thanksgiving Dinners.

The Thanksgiving celebration started at Cannon House, with Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi addressing the gathering. He spoke about his early life and success in America and the progress he made up to US Congress. He spoke about the healthcare and the benefits of Vegan/Vegetarian food. Also, he encouraged the promoters of Vegan Vision for the Vegan movement in America.

Vegan-physician Dr. Moiz spoke on health and prevention of diseases with Vegan food, Alex Hershaff from Farm USA pleaded for saving farm animals. Freya Dinshaw from American Vegan Society talked on history of Vegans in USA and, importance of saving lives of animals. Erica Meier from Compassion Over Killing spoke on emotions and animal protection.

Mr. Hakki, First Secretary from Indian Ambassador's office spoke on more benefits of Vegetarian foods and need to promote Vegetarian food in USA. Jahnvi, a well-known Vegan Cook Books writer also spoke and advocated the health benefits of Vegan and plant-based foods and offered books of Vegan recipe.

World Vegan Vision, founded by H.K. Shah & Malti Shah, in 1992, has more than 1500 life members, many patrons, donors, and family



*Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi presents, on behalf of World Vegan Vision Board Members, Appreciation award to H.K. Shah & Malti Shah for their lifetime services to vegan vision at Capitol Hill Washington DC on 13th Nov 2018
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia*



*World Vegan Vision group met with Congressman Frank Pallone (far center) Capitol Hill Washington DC on 13th Nov 2018
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia*

members in New York and New Jersey Chapters.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi awarded a plaque of Appreciation for their lifetime service to H.K. Shah & Malti Shah on behalf of Board Members. Directors Vinod Shah & Nitin Vyas organized this event, and Vice Chairman Chandra Mehta, President Bina Sabapathy, and all members attended this first of its kind prestigious Vegan Thanks

giving celebration in the US Congress Complex. Devashree Parikh was the MC, conducting this prestigious event. Kamal Panchal-president designate represented the shortly to be opened Ohio chapter. Delicious variety of fresh hot Vegan food was catered under supervision of Mrs. Shalini Sood. (Winner of Mrs. United Nations 2017).

*(Based on a press release issued by
Mohammed Jaffer)*

IRS PROVIDES TAX INFLATION ADJUSTMENTS FOR TAX YEAR 2019

NEW YORK (TIP): The Internal Revenue Service today announced the tax year 2019 annual inflation adjustments for more than 60 tax provisions, including the tax rate schedules and other tax changes. Revenue Procedure 2018-57 provides details about these annual adjustments. The tax year 2019 adjustments generally are used on tax returns filed in 2020.

The tax items for tax year 2019 of greatest interest to most taxpayers include the following dollar amounts:

The standard deduction for married filing jointly rises to \$24,400 for tax year 2019, up \$400 from the prior year. For single taxpayers and married individuals filing separately, the standard deduction rises to \$12,200 for 2019, up \$200, and for heads of households, the standard deduction will be \$18,350 for tax year 2019, up \$350. The personal exemption for tax year 2019 remains at 0, as it was for 2018, this elimination of the personal exemption was a provision in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

For tax year 2019, the top rate is 37 percent for individual single taxpayers with incomes greater than \$510,300 (\$612,350 for married couples filing jointly). The other rates are:

35 percent, for incomes over \$204,100 (\$408,200 for married couples filing jointly); 32 percent for incomes over \$160,725 (\$321,450 for married couples filing jointly); 24 percent for incomes over \$84,200 (\$168,400 for married couples filing jointly); 22 percent for incomes over \$39,475 (\$78,950 for married couples filing jointly); 12 percent for incomes over \$9,700 (\$19,400 for

married couples filing jointly). The lowest rate is 10 percent for incomes of single individuals with incomes of \$9,700 or less (\$19,400 for married couples filing jointly). For 2019, as in 2018, there is no limitation on itemized deductions, as that limitation was eliminated by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

The Alternative Minimum Tax exemption amount for tax year 2019 is \$71,700 and begins to phase out at \$510,300 (\$111,700, for married couples filing jointly for whom the exemption begins to phase out at \$1,020,600). The 2018 exemption amount was \$70,300 and began to phase out at \$500,000 (\$109,400 for married couples filing jointly and began to phase out at \$1 million). The tax year 2019 maximum Earned Income Credit amount is \$6,557 for taxpayers filing jointly who have three or more qualifying children, up from a total of \$6,431 for tax year 2018. The revenue procedure has a table providing maximum credit amounts for other categories, income thresholds and phase-outs.

For tax year 2019, the monthly limitation for the qualified transportation fringe benefit is \$265, as is the monthly limitation for qualified parking, up from \$260 for tax year 2018.

For calendar year 2019, the dollar amount used to determine the penalty for not maintaining minimum essential health coverage is 0, per the Tax Cuts and Jobs act; for 2018 the amount was \$695.

For the taxable years beginning in 2019, the dollar limitation for employee salary reductions for contributions to health

flexible spending arrangements is \$2,700, up \$50 from the limit for 2018. For tax year 2019, participants who have self-only coverage in a Medical Savings Account, the plan must have an annual deductible that is not less than \$2,350, an increase of \$50 from tax year 2018; but not more than \$3,500, an increase of \$50 from tax year 2018. For self-only coverage, the maximum out-of-pocket expense amount is \$4,650, up \$100 from 2018. For tax year 2019, participants with family coverage, the floor for the annual deductible is \$4,650, up from \$4,550 in 2018; however, the deductible cannot be more than \$7,000, up \$150 from the limit for tax year 2018. For family coverage, the out-of-pocket expense limit is \$8,550 for tax year 2019, an increase of \$150 from tax year 2018. For tax year 2019, the adjusted gross income amount used by joint filers to determine the reduction in the Lifetime Learning Credit is \$116,000, up from \$114,000 for tax year 2018.

For tax year 2019, the foreign earned income exclusion is \$105,900 up from \$103,900 for tax year 2018. Estates of decedents who die during 2019 have a basic exclusion amount of \$11,400,000, up from a total of \$11,180,000 for estates of decedents who died in 2018. The annual exclusion for gifts is \$15,000 for calendar year 2019, as it was for calendar year 2018. The maximum credit allowed for adoptions is the amount of qualified adoption expenses up to \$14,080, up from \$13,810 for 2018.

Sikhs in Queens Take out an Impressive Parade to Mark the 549th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak



Photo /Baldev-BJ Video & Photography



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Behind the float of Shri Guru Granth Sahib was a float of Sikh Martial Art. Behind this float young and the old displayed the traditional Sikh martial art, known as Gatka.

The large number of the Sikhs as also their friends from other communities joined the parade, which marched through the Liberty Avenue and then moved on to Atlantic Avenue, from where it headed towards Gurdwara Sikh Cultural Society on 118th Street. It finally terminated at the starting point- Gurdwara Makhan Shah Lubana on 114th Street and 101 Avenue.

All along the route of the parade, participants and onlookers were served with snacks and food (langar). Sikhs follow a rich tradition of serving free food to all at all their shrines and at all celebrations.

Community leaders paid rich tributes to Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. They were joined by politicians and leaders from other communities who spoke highly of Guru Nanak, Sikhism, and the Sikh community.

Sikhs will be celebrating the 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in November 2019.

Government of India has announced

yearlong celebrations in all Indian missions abroad, in preparation for the grand 550th birth anniversary celebration of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Government of Pakistan has extended invitation to Sikhs all over the world to visit Nanakana Sahib, the birth place of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, on the occasion of the Master's birth anniversary

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the apex religious body of the Sikhs, with headquarters in Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar, as also Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Managing Committee (DSGMC)

have announced ambitious plans to have year long celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th birth anniversary.

The Indian Panorama has launched with this edition year long celebration of the 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. We will carry scholarly articles on Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and His faith to educate Sikh youth, as also non-Sikh readers of The Indian Panorama about the universal message of Guru Nanak who preached equality, brotherhood and charity- values which make life beautiful and the world a happier place to live in.

New Yorkers Brave Freezing Cold to Participate in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

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Parade watchers bundled against one of the coldest Thanksgiving Days in New York City since 1901 look on during the 92nd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on Nov. 22, 2018, in New York City. (NBC Screenshot)



Diana Ross, John Legend and Martina McBride, two-dozen floats and a finale with Santa Claus. The NYPD had thousands of officers stationed along the parade route. They included counterterrorism teams with long guns, plainclothes officers mixed in with the crowd and a new squad of K-9 teams that can sniff out explosives from a few hundred feet away. All spectators were to be screened with metal detectors at security checkpoints. Backpacks, booze and e-cigarettes are banned. Certain areas near the start and finish were off-limits.

Police cars and sand-filled sanitation trucks were positioned to stop vehicles from driving into the crowd and new technology was being used to detect drones, which are illegal to fly over crowds in New York City. Federal rules now allow police to "take action" against rule-breaking drones, but that doesn't mean officers are going to be shooting them down, said NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism

John Miller: "Our job is to offer maximum protection against any incident at the parade, but it's also to make sure that we don't protect it to the point that it's not fun," Miller said. "Our people will be as accommodating as possible and make sure that people see them, they feel safe, but that they enjoy themselves." There were no known, credible threats to the city or the parade, Commissioner James O'Neill said prior to the parade. He warned spectators to be vigilant in the wake of recent mass shootings and package bombs and to alert officers if they suspected something is suspicious.

(With Inputs from NBC New York)

A balloon of Ronald McDonald floats during the 92nd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on Nov. 22, 2018, in New York City. (NBC Screenshot)

New York State Sen. Jose Peralta dies

CONTD FROM PAGE 4

included Jackson Heights, Corona, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst and parts of Woodside and Astoria, also served in the Assembly from 2002 to 2010.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, among many others, tweeted his condolence .

@NYCMayor

Jose Peralta was a proud son of Queens and the Dominican Republic. He worked his way up from the grassroots, with heart and tenacity. Chirlane and I are both pained by his sudden loss. Our prayers are with his wife Evelyn and his sons.

7:51 AM - Nov 22, 2018

He had been a longtime proponent of the state DREAM Act, a measure that would allow undocumented immigrants to qualify for state-funded financial aid for college. The measure, long stalled in the state Senate, may have a chance of passing in the 2019 session now that Democrats have won control of the chamber.

Shiv Dass, a founder President of Jackson Heights Merchants' Association, and President of Indian American Merchants' Association, has condoled the death of Sen. Peralta. He said in a statement to The Indian Panorama that Sen. Peralta was a great friend of the Indian American community who looked to him for championing their cause. He was held in high esteem by the merchant community of Jackson Heights with whom he was in regular touch, always eager to help them with any problems and issues. Mr. Dass said though the entire community has lost a supporter, it was a personal loss to him, as he has lost a longtime friend. (With inputs from agencies)



GUEST COMMENT

550 Saal Guru Nanak de Naal: Celebration, reaffirmation

As Guru Nanak's teachings stand out for their relevance in the present times of divisive turmoil even 550 years after his birth, one's head bows with humility to the Guru's deep insight into the right way of living. And, astonishingly, the right path turns out to be quite simple. It is we who have made our lives complicated. With superstitions, rituals, idolatry, barriers of caste and creed, all dressed up with the cloak of religiosity to garner acceptance. In his endeavor to open the minds of fellow humans to the society's blots and blemishes, the Guru freely dug into the preachings of his times - from those of the Hindus, the Muslims, babas, pirs, fakirs - to evolve his philosophy, that eventually became the Sikh way of life.

Also, equally astonishingly, it turns out that treading on that simple way of life is not quite so easy. One is easily led by ego, anger, lust, greed towards diversions, blind to the potholes that mark such digressions. After all, why is it so tough to consider all fellow beings as equal; that there is one nameless God, who constitutes the eternal truth and he resides in his creations? Why is truthfulness so hard to come by? Yet, that is the only way for a peaceful and fulfilling life. Be good, work hard, share fortunes. Vand khao, khand khao. Each one of us needs to learn and abide by this credo. The planet would then be a paradise.

It is in this context that the year-round global festivities around the 550th anniversary of Gurburab assume importance. Whether it is the announcement of the Kartarpur corridor from Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur to the International Border for further connection with Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur, Pakistan, or the development of Sultanpur Lodhi as a spiritual center, the activities hold value only if they underscore the Guru's message of overcoming divisiveness. He denounced the dogmas of the caste system, and taught that everyone is equal. Through the spiritual pursuits of love, equality, fraternity and virtue, one can be purged of falsehood.

(Tribune, India)

The Usurpation of Free Speech

AS I SEE IT



By Vidya Ram

The notion that the far right is being muzzled despite the inordinate media attention it has garnered - from print, television, radio and digital - is one that it has managed to project with great success, feeding into the wider image the far right has attempted to propagate of it being an anti-establishment, revolutionary force

Last month, 'Newsnight', a weekday BBC current affairs program, faced much criticism online over a segment due to be aired that evening on 35-year-old Stephen Christopher Yaxley-Lennon, better known to the world as Tommy Robinson, co-founder of the English Defence League and a cause célèbre of the far right globally. Alongside the provision of yet another platform to him, it was the way the story was promoted that troubled observers the most. Ahead of the program, 'Newsnight' ran images of Mr. Robinson staring determinedly into the camera, his mouth covered with duct tape. "Is Tommy Robinson a man raising concerns that others ignore, or a far-right figure exploiting the victims of sexual abuse for his own ends?" asked the program on its social media promotional.

This image of Mr. Robinson muzzled was the very one that he and his supporters had been seeking to project, despite the fact that as Miqdaad Versi, a spokesperson for the Muslim Council of Britain, noted on Twitter that in the last three months he has been mentioned on broadcast over 100 times. Far from him being shunned by the media, he has been interviewed on prominent news shows in recent years, as well as being an invitee at the Oxford Union. "Is Tommy Robinson being ignored and silenced by the media asks the media who won't stop reporting on him," tweeted Amna Saleem, a Scottish-Pakistani writer rather fittingly. The preposterousness of the suggestion that he is being silenced is also evidenced by his social media profile: clips of him speaking, often looking furtively into the camera as if to emphasize the supposed silencing, attract millions of viewers.

Image Management

The notion that the far right is being muzzled despite the inordinate media attention it has garnered - from print, television, radio and digital - is one that it has managed to project with great success, feeding into the wider image the far right has attempted to propagate of it being an anti-establishment, revolutionary force. It also appears to be something that many of its proponents ardently believe. "We are being gagged," a supporter of Mr. Robinson, wearing a t-shirt with the logo "#Free Speech #Free Tommy", told the Canadian media website The Rebel Media outside a court recently. Hundreds of his supporters gathered outside the Old Bailey last month for a hearing over allegations of contempt of court that Mr. Robinson is facing over his filming of suspects in a criminal trial involving "grooming gangs". While his supporters have insisted he is a "martyr" to the British cause, and the only one to speak out, others have rightly pointed out that he has simply exploited the case of grooming gangs to further his toxic, Islamophobic world view, exacerbating the situation and taking the attention away from the victims and the debate on real practicable ways in which grooming gangs could be prevented from harming more people in the future.

He is far from the only figure on the right in Britain to present himself as a "brave soldier" of free speech, and the "oppressed" - as among the only ones willing to take on the "dangerous liberals" supposedly trying to clamp down on free speech and impose their world view to the detriment of the marginalized majority Katie Hopkins, an ultra-right campaigner, proclaimed herself the "Jesus of the outspoken". In May, a "Day for Freedom" protest took place on London's Parliament Square that attracted leading figures on the right. In April, Mark Meechan, a right-wing comedian, sought to portray a fine of £800 by a court in the U.K. for teaching a dog to do a Nazi salute for a YouTube video in terms of the curtailment of free speech.

In academia



Furor over a BBC program captures the worldwide success of the far right in capturing space on diverse platforms

black authors and only retracted the factually incorrect story after huge public outrage and a torrent of abuse directed at the student herself.

It has also manifested itself in other ways. Last year Britain's Universities Minister gave priority to a requirement that universities be required to guarantee free speech or face fines and potential de-registration in a consultation that was set to take place, pointing to "examples of censorship". This again appeared to be an acknowledgement of an argument propagated by those on the right that "snowflake" students - too easy to take offence - were somehow stifling voices on the right through no-platforming initiatives that sought to protest the space given to them to voice offensive perspectives. There have been a handful of cases where students have pushed for particularly controversial speakers not to be allowed to speak on campus, yet the right managed to put the issue at the top of the government's agenda, despite the many challenges facing Britain's university sector.

The mainstreaming of this perspective has been toxic and debilitating on public life in the U.K. and beyond. A fear of being perceived to be closed to the perspectives of the right - which has been labelled "balance" - has led to a willingness by media outlets to offer voices even on issues where scientific consensus leaves little doubt. Earlier this year, the BBC faced much criticism over the space it provided to climate change deniers, until a briefing note sent to the staff in September pointed to the danger of a "false balance". "You do not need a 'denier' to balance the debate," the organization was forced to clarify to its staff in a reference to man-made climate change.

Meanwhile, the far right has continued to rise steadily, spurred on by burgeoning acceptance of the issues raised by them that would once have been unthinkable, including by the media. There are over 100 live terror investigations related to the far-right as of October, while it emerged that MI5 is to take the lead in dealing with right-wing terrorism amid rising concern about its reach. Last week at least five men were arrested in connection with a video that showed the burning of an effigy of London's Grenfell Tower. The blaze at the tower, home to largely ethnic minority residents, in June 2017 killed 72 people.

Beyond Britain

The usurpation of the free speech debate by the far right is, of course, not confined to Britain. It has become an essential part of the playbook of the movement across the world, while Mr. Robinson himself is held up by right-wing figures across the world as a poster-boy. The unwillingness of the media in Britain and beyond to call out those efforts for what they are will only continue to bolster that effort. The ability of the media to confront the far right, without unconsciously or otherwise adopting its rules of engagement, and its positioning of debates, is likely to be one of its biggest challenges going forward.

(Source: The Hindu. The author can be reached at vidya.ram@thehindu.co.in)

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How Modi and Jaitley Gamed World Bank's Doing Business Rankings

BJP government adopted a competitive-exam strategy to improve India's rankings, meeting minutes and official correspondence show.



By Akshay
Deshmane

“The elaborate filing requirements of the Goods and Services Tax had hurt medium and small enterprises while demonetization had hamstrung their cash flows, Hazari said and added, “I would think it is surprising if the MSMEs have said that their ease of doing business has improved.” Yet, Modi and his government have been quick to market this improvement in India's rank on an index prepared for mid-size firms operating in two of the most prosperous cities of India as evidence of an actual improvement of economic conditions across the country”.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unhealthy obsession with the World Bank's Doing Business ranking hijacked India's reform agenda over the course of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government's four-year tenure, according to hundreds of pages of meeting minutes, interviews with key players and official correspondence reviewed by HuffPost India.

The documents reveal how the Modi government first sought to lobby the World Bank into changing its methodology to reflect a better rank for India. When that didn't achieve any significant success, the government prioritized minor institutional and procedural tweaks to game the ranking system, rather than embark on a bold agenda of economic reform as promised.

This monomaniacal focus on putting India among the top 50 countries in the ranking, economists said, gave the World Bank disproportionate influence in India's economic reform process. It has also revived a persistent concern that the Modi government preferred to focus its energies on optics instead of actual governance and reform.

This monomaniacal focus on putting India among the top 50 countries in the ranking, economists said, gave the World Bank disproportionate influence in India's economic reform process

"If you keep on finding the easiest things to change, then you are effectively letting the World Bank's ratings decide what kind of changes you want, rather than deciding what is your own sense of priorities," said Laveesh Bhandari, an economist and director of the Indicus Foundation, who had written a column for The Indian Express outlining these concerns.

Reports published immediately after India's dramatic rise up the rankings- from 142 to 77 over four years- have surmised as much. But this is the first comprehensive account that relies on previously unreported documents- accessed through the Right To Information- to provide a blow-by-blow account of how Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and officials in the Prime Minister's Office adopted the "competitive exam", tuition-center approach familiar to most Indians eager to improve their rank in a competitive setting.

"You have literally to crack the code," Jaitley said, at a self-congratulatory press conference on 31 October, the day when the latest ranking showed India rising up to the 77th position from 100 last year.

Yet cracking the code, former bureaucrats involved in the process said, wasn't necessarily good for the economy, much like cracking the board exams isn't a good indicator of actual learning.

"If we are improving our position, why are we not getting more investment?" said Arvind Mayaram, who served as Finance Secretary for the first few months of the Modi government's tenure before he was shunted out to the Tourism Ministry.

"I would only say that the proof of pudding is in the eating. If the investment rate was



around 38% of the GDP in 2011, obviously ease of doing business must have been much superior than it is in 2018, when it is around 27%," Mayaram said.

Cracking the code, former bureaucrats involved in the process said, wasn't necessarily good for the economy, much like cracking the board exams isn't a good indicator of actual learning.

Amitabh Kant, a Modi favorite and former secretary of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), pushed back at this characterization of his government's performance.

"A lot of work has happened in the past four years on business reforms and the rankings are a reflection of that," said Kant, now CEO of the NITI Aayog.

Yet much of this work, HuffPost India found, was akin to rearranging the procedural deck chairs on the listing ship of India's faltering economy.

Preparing to crack the code

On 26 December 2017, Jaitley held an important meeting at his ministry's office in North Block with the Modi government's most senior bureaucrats-revenue secretary Hasmukh Adhia, DIPP secretary Ramesh Abhishek, economic affairs secretary and former World Bank Executive Director Subhash Chandra Garg, among others-to address a pressing problem.

The World Bank had moved the "cut-off date" for finalizing the Ease of Doing Business Report 2019 by a whole month. As a consequence, "the time available to introduce reforms is shorter by a month", said DIPP secretary Abhishek, according to meeting minutes reviewed by HuffPost India.

Abhishek could not be reached for comments on this story.

The timeline and sequencing of the so-called reforms being discussed in the meeting, the minutes make clear, were not dictated by political considerations, discussions with coalition partners or, heaven forbid, an overarching economic vision or strategy. Rather, the reform process was treated like a World Bank-provided syllabus to be completed

on time.

The World Bank would send out its questionnaires to respondents by February 2018, said Abhishek, and "it is therefore important that these reforms are implemented at the earliest". The questionnaires Abhishek referred to are sent to select businessmen, analysts and other private parties to corroborate claims of reforms made by governments.

There are 10 quantitative indicators which the bank considers, including the ease of starting a business, getting construction permits and trading across borders, among others, for a mid-size firm, and each indicator is scored and ranked separately. These scores are then aggregated into an overall score for each country. Across the world, the Bank measures performance on the 10 indicators in two cities in the case of all large economies-in India, these cities are Mumbai and Delhi.

The agenda of Jaitley's meeting was to ram through as many quick changes as possible.

To be sure, many of the changes sought in the meeting could have real benefits for a few. But while the government's attempts to reduce red tape were laudable, analysts said, they were not a substitute for macro-economic reform.

At Jaitley's meeting, for instance, proposed "reforms" included eliminating the need for a company seal or rubber stamp to open a bank account, and eliminating the need to submit a cancelled cheque as part of the employee provident fund application process.

His bureaucrats quickly identified streamlining cross-border trading as an easy way to improve rankings. Thus the department of revenue eliminated the need for traders to submit hard documents, and tried to improve the capacity of the online customs payment gateway.

According to the minutes, Gopal Krishna, Secretary of the Shipping Ministry, said the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, which handles about 40% of India's oceanic trade, would digitize import and export related documentation. Interestingly, the port had made the same claim in 2015 for exactly the same reason .

The focus on cross-border trade would pay off handsomely for the government, as India's rankings in this specific indicator jumped to 80 in the Doing Business Report 2019 that was released on 31 October. A similar improvement of construction permit procedures saw India's ranking jump from 181 to 52.

Another area of focus was the time and paperwork needed to start a new business.

At the meeting, Abhishek said India needed to reduce the number of official procedures to start a business to six, and the number of days to complete these procedures down to five, to rank amongst the top 50 economies.

At the time, it took 30 days to start a new business, and required 11 procedures in Mumbai and 12 in Delhi.

The latest report shows the government managed to eliminate one step by reducing procedures to 10, and also seemingly reduced the time required to 16 days for Delhi and 17 days for Mumbai. The rank for this indicator also jumped up by 21 ranks to 137 in the latest report for the preparation of which this was a key meeting of top officials.

On that afternoon, the meeting concluded with Jaitley telling the senior officials to submit an action-taken report on the points discussed by 31 January 2018.

Bhandari, the economist, said that allowing minor procedural changes to disproportionately influence the rankings in a significant way was not the government's fault, but a flaw in the way the rankings were designed.

This flaw, Bhandari said, could skew reform priorities away from comprehensive measures that could help the economy as a whole-like improving contract enforcement, skilling and employability or internal trade-towards quick fixes that result in an inordinate rise in the rankings but narrowly affect particular sectors like construction, for instance. Thus he cautioned against resorting to this approach repeatedly.

How the efforts began

Jaitley's 26 December 2017 meeting was one of the most recent instances of an approach adopted immediately in the aftermath of the 2014 general elections which installed a new bunch of decision makers on the Raisina Hill.

On 16 July 2014, two months after Modi swept to power on the promise of bringing jobs, investment and prosperity, his Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra held a meeting in the PMO to discuss a "concrete strategy for moving up India's rank" on the EODB index with the secretaries of the corporate affairs ministry, department of economic affairs, DIPP and the ministry of commerce, according to meeting minutes reviewed by HuffPost India. "The meeting focused on the more immediate and quickly doable process improvements." Dr KP Krishnan, an official representing the department of economic affairs in the PMO meeting, subsequently summed up in an internal noting.

Shahidul Alam: Bangladesh frees renowned photographer on bail

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh has released renowned photographer Shahidul Alam on bail following his arrest over 100 days ago for comments he made during mass student protests.

A well-known figure in the South Asian journalist community, Alam was arrested on August 5 following an interview with Al Jazeera about student protests over street safety, during which he accused the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of clinging to power by "brute force."

Alam, 63, was freed from Dhaka Central Jail on Tuesday night after being granted bail last week on charges of spreading rumors and false information via text messages and inciting violence against the state.

He told AFP he hoped his release would "signal freedom for many others" also detained during the demonstrations. "It is a fantastic feeling to be free in a free country, breathing free air. But I hope for freedom for everyone else," he said.

The protests kicked off in the crowded capital Dhaka in late July after a privately-operated bus ran over a group of students, killing two and injuring several others.

Hasina, whose government has ruled Bangladesh since 2009, suggested her political rivals had used the protests to whip up public anger against the government ahead of a general election due in December. The opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by former prime minister Khaleda Zia, denied involvement.

Political feuding between the two leaders has overshadowed Bangladesh for decades.

Online supporters had used the hashtag #FreeShahidulAlam to call for his release and that of other activists imprisoned during the crackdown. While being physically escorted to court in August, Alam claimed he was tortured by police, an allegation authorities denied.

A joint statement signed by 25 human rights organizations, including the Committee to Protect Journalists and Amnesty International, had called for Alam's "immediate and unconditional release," slamming the allegations against him as "a blatant violation of his right to freedom of expression." (AFP)

Nepal to join hands with China on Tibet- Kathmandu railway

KATHMANDU (TIP): -- Nepal will work with China to link its capital to Tibet by rail as the Himalayan nation strengthens ties with its giant northern neighbor to propel its development, Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali told Nikkei in a recent interview.

The plan is to extend the railway from Lhasa to Xigaze in Tibet, which opened in 2014, by 660 km to reach Nepal's capital of Kathmandu. This would be the first rail link that crosses the Nepal-China border, and is just one facet of China's drive to expand its influence through the Belt and Road infrastructure-building initiative.

"Nepal is a landlocked country. To be developed, we need more and more connectivity," Gyawali said. "We can import goods at lower cost. The main purpose of the train project is to link to the second-largest economy of the globe." A detailed feasibility study will be carried out over the next year and a half, and the construction will take about six years, the minister said. (PTI)

Sri Lanka political crisis: Two rival Prime Ministers and no government

Despite all the drama and two rival prime ministers, life hasn't collapsed – thanks to the efficient bureaucracy that keeps the wheels of administration turning.

COLOMBO (TIP): Two men each claim to be the prime minister. Lawmakers are exchanging blows in Parliament. A former finance minister says the country is on the brink of an "economic anarchy." Welcome to Sri Lanka, where the political crisis is getting worse by the week.

The trouble started when President Maithripala Sirisena, fed up with disagreements with his prime minister over money, an alleged conspiracy plot and unresolved issues of wartime crimes against civilians, fired Ranil Wickremesinghe and his Cabinet and replaced them with a government headed by a popular former strongman, Mahinda Rajapaksa. But lawmakers balked and twice passed a no-confidence motion.

Sirisena, however, refuses to accept that his choice of prime minister has been defeated. Jehan Perera, head of the local analyst group National Peace Council, said that the government appointed by the president can't be called legal because Sirisena had not sought a parliamentary vote when he dismissed Wickremesinghe.

"It can be called illegitimate because provisions for a confidence vote in Parliament are being blocked by the president's own party through their riotous behavior," Perera said, referring to a brawl last week that was followed by another pandemonium in the chamber when Rajapaksa loyalists refused to let the speaker conduct proceedings.

Wickremesinghe says his dismissal is invalid because he still holds a majority in the 225-member Parliament. The dismissal is also disputed because of the latest constitutional change, which lawyers say has taken away presidential powers to dismiss the prime minister. Despite all the drama and two rival prime ministers, life hasn't collapsed — thanks to the efficient bureaucracy that keeps the wheels of administration turning.

Even though there is no Cabinet recognised by Parliament, and despite warnings by Wickremesinghe supporters that state officials should not take orders from an



"illegal government" of Rajapaksa, bureaucrats continue to work with the president who is the chief executive and the ministers appointed by him, officials said on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media.

However, decisions regarding new projects or purchases involving large sums of money are on hold. The absence of a recognised government has delayed the budget for 2019. Mangala Samaraweera, who was finance minister in Wickremesinghe's Cabinet, said that there will be no legal way of spending money in the coming year without a parliament-approved budget.

Sri Lanka's Constitution says that control over public finances lies with Parliament and no funds can be released without a warrant signed by the finance minister and approved by the legislature. That means all government payments starting from January can be deemed illegal, Samaraweera says. Sri Lanka is on the brink of an "economic anarchy and

chaos as never experienced before."

"The cavalier and irresponsible actions of the president ... based on personal animosities and precipitating a series of illegal acts, places at risk Sri Lanka's ability to meet its immediate debt obligations," he said. Sri Lanka has to repay USD 1 billion of its foreign loans in early January, which is also in the prerogative of Parliament to approve. Wickremesinghe's lawmakers have presented a motion to the speaker seeking to block funding to the prime minister's office, which if passed, would curtail Rajapaksa's functions. "As far as the people are concerned, they are witnessing the normal functioning of the country," insisted government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella.

However, he conceded that Sri Lanka will have issues on accessing government money if the stalemate is not resolved by the end of the year. Sirisena called snap elections for January 5, but the opposition challenged the decision, and the dispute is in court. (AP)

Gunmen attack Chinese consulate in Karachi

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN (TIP): -- Armed gunmen have killed two policemen as they stormed the Chinese consulate in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi, security officials say, in a raid claimed by ethnic Baloch separatists.

Security forces killed all three attackers and secured the building shortly after the raid was launched on Friday morning, Pakistan's military said in a statement.

No Chinese citizens or Pakistani civilians were killed, security officials said.

"All of our Chinese friends and officials who work at the consulate, 21 in total, all of them are safe and they have been shifted to a secure location," said Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi at a press conference.

"The area is now clear."

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan denounced the attack as a "conspiracy" against China-Pakistan strategic cooperation, and has ordered an inquiry.

The military confirmed that three attackers had been killed and that the paramilitary Rangers and police had regained control of the area.

A military spokesperson told Al Jazeera that two policemen had been killed when the attackers initially fired on the gate of the consulate to gain entry.

The raid was claimed by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), an armed separatist group that has been fighting the Pakistani state for independence for Balochistan province for more than a decade.

"The BLA claims responsibility for this attack. Three of our fighters have raided the

consulate," BLA spokesperson Jihand Baloch told Al Jazeera via satellite phone from an undisclosed location while the raid was ongoing.

Baloch said the fighters were members of the Fidayeen Majeed Brigade, a new force raised by the group to carry out suicide attacks against Pakistani security forces and Chinese targets.

Pakistan will be raising several new wings of civil armed forces to secure CPEC, which the government and military have both highlighted as a strategic priority for the country. "Those forces who do not want there to be peace in Pakistan, who want to place obstacles in the way of Pakistan's progress, their designs have been foiled by our young soldiers," said Foreign Minister Qureshi. (Aljazeera)

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6 MILITANTS KILLED IN GUNFIGHT IN ANANTNAG



SRINAGAR (TIP): Six militants were killed in a gunfight in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Friday morning, police said.

The gunfight raged in Setkipora Bijbehara when security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the area after an input about the militants' presence around midnight. "As the CASO was under way the militants hiding inside the area fired indiscriminately at the forces triggering a gunfight. In the gunfight six militants were killed," a police officer said. The identity of the slain militants is being established. Authorities have suspended mobile internet in Anantnag district to maintain law and order.

J&K polls to be held before May, says CEC Rawat

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Election Commission on Thursday, November 22, said fresh elections in Jammu and Kashmir would be held within the next six months even as it did not rule out the possibility of holding polls there before the Lok Sabha polls due next year.

"The Jammu and Kashmir assembly polls must be held on the first occasion before May ... it could be held before parliament elections also," Chief Election Commissioner O P Rawat said.

He said as per the Supreme Court, the outer limit for holding fresh polls after dissolution of a house is six months, that is May 2019.

At the same time, he made it clear that the Commission will decide on poll dates after "considering all aspects."

He said, SC verdict, an outcome of



Chief Election Commissioner Om Prakash Rawat said, November 22, elections to J & K Assembly will be held within the next six months

Presidential reference, also said polls will have to be held on the first occasion

which means even before six months.

He said the same principle was applied in Telangana where the assembly was dissolved prematurely.

The state Governor Satya Pal Malik dissolved the assembly on Wednesday evening, after People's Democratic Party leader Mehbooba Mufti staked claim to form government along with her arch-rival Omar Abdullah's National Conference (NC) and the Congress. They claimed the support of 56 lawmakers in the 87-member state assembly.

Shortly after, People's Conference leader Sajad Lone also staked claims to form the government. Lone, who has two lawmakers, said he had the support of the BJP's 25 legislators and "more than 18" others.

Source: PTI

INDIAN OFFICIALS BARRED FROM ENTERING GURDWARAS IN PAKISTAN

LAHORE (TIP): Two officials of the Indian High Commission in Pakistan were stopped from entering two gurdwaras by their administration, which was upset over the screening of a film in India that they claim has hurt sentiments of the Sikh community.

The officials -- Aranjeet Singh and Sunil Kumar -- were barred from entering the Gurdwara Nankana Sahib on Wednesday night and Gurdwara Sachcha Sauda on Thursday. Both the gurdwaras are in Punjab province of Pakistan.

They were stopped from entering the gurdwaras by their administration, which said that the Indian government has hurt the sentiments of Sikhs by allowing the screening of the film 'Nanak Shah Fakir'.

The Union government, meanwhile, has lodged a strong protest with the Pakistani government that despite being granted prior travel permission by Pakistan's MFA, High Commission of India in Islamabad's consular officials were harassed and denied access on November 21 and 22 at Gurudwara Nankana Sahib & Gurudwara Sacha Sauda to Indian pilgrims.

The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB)



Aranjeet Singh and Sunil Kumar were not allowed to enter Gurdwara Nankana Sahib on Wednesday night and Gurdwara Sacha Sauda on Thursday, (ANI/Twitter)

said that the Pakistan Gurdwara Pharbndik Committee (PGPC) officials have stopped the Indian officials. The visiting officials were heard saying in a video that "No Sikh was stopped from entering the house of the Guru. We are wondering as why you are stopping us."

The PGPC officials however kept saying that they should better leave the premises.

"We had written to the Indian High Commission asking it not to send its officials to any of the gurdwara since the release of the film," ETPB Secretary Tariq Wazir told PTI. He said the Indian officials ignored their

advice.

The officials reported to have visited the Sachcha Sauda gurdwara to exchange greetings with the visiting Indian Sikhs, who are here to take part in festivities related to the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. "We request the officials of the Indian High Commission not to visit any gurdwara without permission of the board as we have to security measures for them," Wazir said.

INDIA LODGES PROTEST

India on Friday lodged a "strong protest" with Pakistan after two officials of the Indian high commission in Islamabad were reportedly humiliated and barred from entering gurdwaras in the neighbouring country. "India lodges strong protest with Pakistan government that despite being granted prior travel permission by Pakistan's MFA (ministry of foreign affairs), high commission of India in Islamabad's consular officials were harassed and denied access on 21 and 22 November at Gurudwara Nankana Sahib and Gurudwara Sacha Sauda to Indian pilgrims," the ministry of external affairs said, according to news agency ANI.

Brigadier Kuldip Singh Chandpuri, hero of 1971 Battle of Longewala, dies at 78

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Brigadier Kuldip Singh Chandpuri (ret'd), who is known as the hero of the historic 1971 Battle of Longewala, died on Saturday, November 17, in a private hospital in Mohali, his family said. He was 78.

Brig Chandpuri was suffering from cancer, his family said.

He is survived by his wife and three sons.

Kuldip Singh Chandpuri was a major in 23 Punjab when the Pakistan Army attacked the Longewala post in Rajasthan, India, early in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971. Chandpuri and his company of 120 soldiers defended the post, in spite of considerable odds, against the 2000-3000 strong assault force of the Pakistani 51st Infantry Brigade, backed by the 22nd Armored Regiment. Chandpuri and his company held the Pakistanis at bay for a full night until the Indian Air Force arrived to provide air support

in the morning.

Chandpuri inspired his men, moving from bunker to bunker, encouraging them to beat back the enemy until reinforcements arrived. Chandpuri and his men inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and forced them to retreat, leaving behind twelve tanks. For his conspicuous gallantry and leadership, Chandpuri was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) by the government of India.

A Bollywood film on the Battle of Longewala, made in 1997, with Sunny Deol playing Major Kuldip Singh Chandpuri, has immortalized the real hero in celluloid. **See page 21**

Maha Vir Chakra awardee and Hero of historic 1971 Battle of Longewala Brigadier Kuldip Singh Chandpuri died on Saturday, November 17. He was said to be suffering from Cancer

Photo: Facebook | Kuldip Singh Chandpuri



Why the Sentinelese, the Andaman tribe that killed US man, want to be left alone

PORT BLAIR (TIP): The death of an American missionary on a remote Indian island has cast a rare spotlight on the Sentinelese, one of the world's most reclusive hunter-gatherer tribes.

John Allen Chau, 27, was killed with arrows as he illegally set foot on North Sentinel Island in the Indian Ocean after paddling there in a kayak last week.

Here is a factbox on the tribe:

Extreme isolation

The sole inhabitants of North Sentinel Island, around the size of Manhattan, guard their territory fiercely. They rely on forest produce and sea resources for survival.

They are the most isolated among the native tribal groups that inhabit the Andaman islands and are protected by Indian laws which ban any contact with the indigenous people.

Their number was estimated to be some 8,000 when the British first made attempts to colonise these islands in the late 18th century.

The tribe's extreme isolation makes them very vulnerable to diseases to which they have no immunity.

Their current population is believed to be 150, although a national census based on photos taken from afar put their numbers as low as 15.

'Proud, strong and healthy'

Most of what is known about the Sentinelese has been gathered by viewing them from boats moored at a safe distance from the shore.

They are near-naked, with the women wearing fibre strings tied around their waists, necks and heads, and the men also wearing necklaces and headbands. Some have their faces painted.



Rare photos show them carrying spears, bows and arrows.

In his journal reportedly written hours before his death, Chau said the men were about 5 feet-5 inches tall (1.65 metres) with yellow paste on their faces.

Survival International, a tribal rights advocacy group, says the Sentinelese "look proud, strong and healthy" and that observers have noted "many children and pregnant women."

'Eyes on, hands off'

Brief visits have been paid to the island but the Sentinelese remain untouched by modern civilisation.

Starting in the 1960s, anthropologists succeeded in exchanging gifts and conducting field visits but abandoned their efforts some 25 years ago in the face of renewed hostility.

An Indian Coast Guard helicopter which flew over the island after the 2004 Asian Tsunami was attacked with arrows. The authorities then declared

that no further attempts would be made to contact the Sentinelese.

They do make periodic checks, albeit from a safe distance, to ensure the tribe's well-being, following a strict "eyes on, hands off" policy.

Veteran anthropologist T. N. Pandit who visited North Sentinel 50 years ago believes there should be no rush to make contact with the Sentinelese.

"Of the four Andaman tribal communities, we have seen that those in close contact with the outside world have suffered the most. They have declined demographically and culturally," he told Down To Earth magazine in a recent interview.

The Sentinelese "are a highly vulnerable population and would disappear in an epidemic," he added.

"The government's responsibility should be to keep a watch over them in the sense (that) no unauthorised people reach them and exploit them. Otherwise, just leave them alone." *Source: AFP*

India, Australia ink five pacts as Kovind meets PM Morrison

MELBOURNE (TIP): India and Australia signed five agreements on Thursday to boost investments and enhance cooperation in key sectors like disability, agricultural research and education as President Ram Nath Kovind met Australian Prime minister Scott Morrison in Sydney.

Kovind, the first-ever Indian head of state to visit Australia, arrived in Sydney on Wednesday on the second leg of his two nation trip. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said that during the state visit of President Kovind to Australia, five agreements were exchanged in the presence of Marise Payne, Foreign Minister of Australia and Anantkumar Hegde, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, by High Commissioners of both countries.

The first agreement was for cooperation in the area of disability and to deliver services to the differently-abled. The second one was between Invest India and Austrade to facilitate bilateral investment.

The third agreement was signed between the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute, Ranchi, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation, Canberra, to foster scientific collaboration and innovation.

The fourth one between the Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University, Guntur, and the University of Western Australia, Perth, for cooperation in agricultural



research and education while the last one was between the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, New Delhi, and the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane for a joint Ph.D agreement. Following the meeting with President Kovind, Prime Minister Morrison announced the release of Australia's response to the India Economic Strategy, a blueprint to transform the economic engagement.

"This report provides a roadmap for our economic future with India," Morrison said. India is the world's fastest growing major economy and offers more opportunity for Australian business over the next 20 years than any other single market, he said.

AFTER STATUE OF UNITY, 80-FOOT BUDDHA STATUE PLANNED IN GUJARAT

AHMEDABAD (TIP): After the 182-meter tall 'Statue of Unity' of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Gujarat may get a gigantic Buddha statue.

Sanghakaya Foundation, a non-profit Buddhist organisation, said Thursday that it has demanded land from the government for installing an 80-feet high statue of Lord Buddha in Gandhinagar district.

It has roped in Ram Sutar, the sculptor behind the Statue of Unity, for the project, it said.

"We are expecting to get land soon," president of the foundation Bhante Prashil Ratna told reporters here.

The Statue of Unity, inaugurated in Narmada district of the state on October 31, is the tallest statue in the world.

Bhante Prashil Ratna also said that the foundation is planning to set up a Buddhist University in Gujarat.

"Contrary to the belief that ancient Buddhist sites exist only in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and further to the north, Gujarat too has been blessed with such sites," he said.

"Like Nalanda and Takshashila, records of Chinese traveller Xuanzang mention that there was a big Buddhist university called Vallabhi at Bhavnagar in Gujarat," he said.

"As (ancient) Nalanda university has been revived, we wish to revive Vallabhi university here," he said.

"The state government has given us land in Gandhinagar where we are planning to start a university on Buddhism," he said.

THAW AT LAC: FIRST DRILL WITH CHINA POST DOKLAM

NEW DELHI (TIP): India and China have finally firmed up dates for resumption of their bilateral military exercise 'Hand-in-hand', with the two-week drill set to kick off at Kunming in south-east China on December 10.

The Indian Army will be represented by the 11th battalion of the Sikh Light Infantry. The exercise was originally planned in October-November last year, but China backed out in May following the 73-day (June 16-August 28) Doklam standoff. China was to be the host, as per an arrangement to conduct it in each country by rotation. India had hosted it in 2016.

So far, there have been six editions of the exercise. It was suspended for five years (2010-14) after China refused visa to then Northern Army Commander Lt Gen BS Jaswal claiming Jammu and Kashmir was a "disputed" territory. In a turnaround to that stance, the two armies conducted their first-ever joint drill in eastern Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir) in October 2016.

The talk of resuming the exercise had started in March this year when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping had met at an informal summit in Wuhan and issued "strategic guidance" to their respective militaries. "Build trust and have a mechanism to prevent incidents in border regions," said a statement issued from Wuhan. *Source: The Tribune*

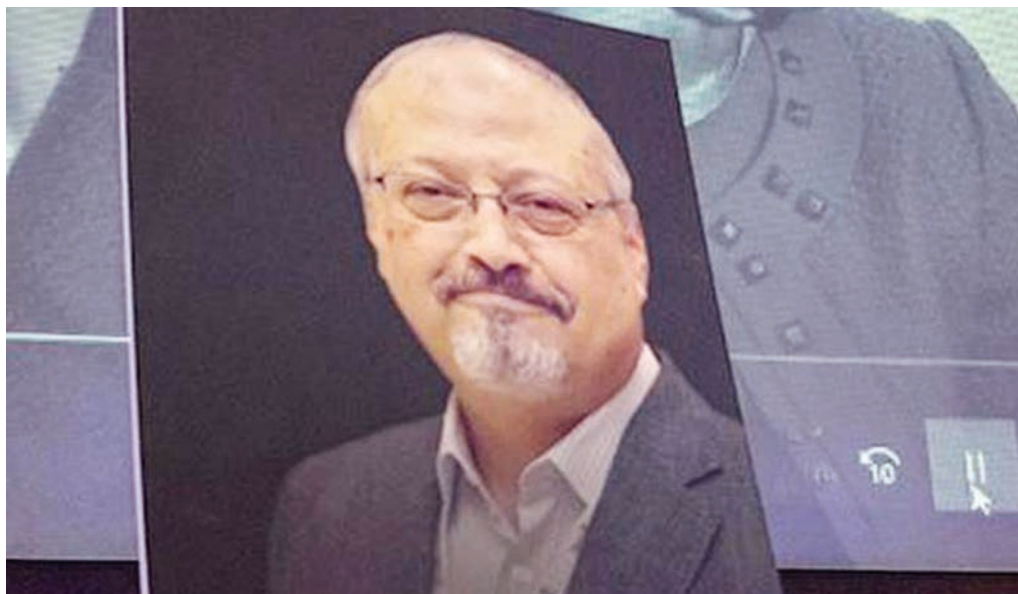
HC REJECTS MALLYA'S PLEA FOR STAY ON ED'S REQUEST TO DECLARE HIM FUGITIVE

MUMBAI (TIP): The Bombay High Court on Thursday dismissed a plea filed by beleaguered businessman Vijay Mallya seeking a stay on a request made by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to declare him a fugitive economic offender and confiscate his properties.



The ED had filed an application before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court seeking the 'fugitive' tag for Mallya under the Fugitive Economic Offenders' Act, 2018. Under the provisions of the Act, once a person is declared a fugitive economic offender, then the prosecuting agency has the powers to confiscate the accused persons' properties. Mallya had filed an application in the lower court seeking a stay on the hearing on the ED's plea till November 26 when the appellate tribunal functioning under the PMLA would hear matters filed by a consortium of banks seeking their dues back.

JAMAL KHASHOGGI MURDER



Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi dissident and journalist for *The Washington Post*, author, and former general manager and editor-in-chief of *Al-Arab News Channel* was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, on 2 October 2018 by agents of the Saudi Arabian government.

CIA did not blame Saudi crown prince, says Trump

WASHINGTON (TIP): "They didn't conclude," Mr. Trump said on Thursday, November 22, when asked about the CIA's evaluation by reporters at Mar-a-Lago in Florida, BBC reported.

U.S. President Donald Trump has said that the CIA did not blame Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for ordering the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Khashoggi was murdered on October 2 in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

Officials told U.S. media such an operation would have needed the prince's approval.

"They didn't conclude," Mr. Trump said on Thursday when asked about the CIA's evaluation by reporters at Mar-a-Lago in Florida, BBC reported.

"They have feelings certain ways. I have the report, they have not concluded, I don't know if anyone's going to be able to conclude the crown prince did it," he said.

The President has repeatedly stressed the importance of Saudi Arabia to the U.S. following the killing.

Earlier this week, Mr. Trump released a statement suggesting that the crown prince "could very well" have known about the incident. His statement said: "[It] could very well be that the crown prince had knowledge of this tragic event - maybe he did and maybe he didn't!" On November 17, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters that Mr. Trump had confidence in the CIA following conversations with Director Gina Haspel and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo about the Khashoggi murder.

Sources quoted in the U.S. media at the time stressed that there was no

single piece of evidence linking the crown prince directly to the murder, but officials believed the killing would have required his endorsement.

Saudi Arabia called the claim false and insisted that the crown prince knew nothing about plans for the killing.

The Gulf kingdom's public prosecutor says Khashoggi was killed as a result of a "rogue operation".

However, the *Hurriyet* newspaper reported on Thursday that Ms. Haspel told Turkish officials last month the CIA had a recording in which the crown prince gave instructions to "silence" the Saudi writer as soon as possible.

When asked about the claims by reporters, Mr. Trump said: "I don't want to talk about it. You'll have to ask them."

The Saudi crown prince left on a visit to "brotherly Arab states" on Thursday, Saudi state media reported, beginning a regional tour with the United Arab Emirates. It will be his first official trip abroad since Khashoggi was killed.

The crown prince is also expected to participate in a G20 meeting of world leaders in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at the end of the month that will be attended by leaders from the US, Turkey and a number of European countries.

Meanwhile, France has announced that it is imposing sanctions on 18 Saudi nationals -- the same individuals targeted with sanctions by the U.S., UK and Germany - allegedly linked to the Khashoggi murder.

Their list of individuals does not include the crown prince, a spokesperson for the French ministry of foreign affairs said.

(Source: IANS)

CIA has tape of Saudi prince saying 'silence Khashoggi'

ISTANBUL (TIP): A Turkish newspaper reported on Thursday, November 22, that CIA director Gina Haspel signaled to Turkish officials last month that the agency had a recording of a call in which Saudi Arabia's crown prince gave instructions to "silence" Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Asked about the report, a Turkish official said he had no information about such a recording. Saudi Arabia has said Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had no prior knowledge of Khashoggi's killing at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul six weeks ago.

"There is talk of another recording," *Hurriyet* newspaper journalist Abdulkadir Selvi wrote in a column, saying the purported call took place between Prince Mohammed and his brother, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to

Washington. "It is being said that CIA chief Gina Haspel indicated this during her visit to Turkey," he wrote, adding that they had discussed Khashoggi, a critic of the kingdom's de facto ruler. "It is being said the crown prince gave orders to 'silence Jamal Khashoggi as soon as possible'," in a call which was monitored by the US agency, he said.

Khashoggi was killed at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2 in an operation that Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan has said was ordered by the highest level of Saudi leadership. After offering numerous contradictory explanations, Riyadh said last week Khashoggi had been killed and his body dismembered when negotiations to persuade him to return to Saudi Arabia failed.

(Source: Agencies)

Manduka halts production of Lord Ganesh yoga towels after Hindu protest



NEVADA (TIP): Global yoga gear company Manduka, headquartered in El Segundo (California), has announced not to produce yoga towels carrying reimagined images of Hindu deity Lord Ganesh, which Hindus objected calling these "highly inappropriate".

Taylor of Manduka Customer Care, in an email today to Universal Society of Hinduism (USOH), which spearheaded the protest, wrote: "Out of respect for our global community, we will no longer produce new versions of the products in question."

Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, who is President of USOH, in a statement in Nevada, November 22, thanked Manduka for understanding the concerns of Hindu community which thought image of Lord Ganesh on such a product was highly insensitive.

Zed, however, pointed out that a formal apology from Manduka CEO to the upset Hindu community was still due, as it had sold Ganesh yoga towel in the past also. He also urged Manduka to withdraw its yoga towels depicting reimagined images of Lord Ganesh selling on its website or other online retailers or shops.

Rajan Zed suggested that Manduka and other companies should send their senior executives for training in religious and cultural sensitivity so that they had an understanding of the feelings of customers and communities when introducing new products or launching advertising campaigns.

Zed had said that Lord Ganesh was highly revered in Hinduism and was meant to be worshipped in temples or home shrines and not to sit/stand on or put feet/buttocks/legs/body on or to absorb/wipe one's sweat. Inappropriate usage of Hindu deities or concepts for commercial or other agenda was not okay as it hurts the devotees.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Spiritual Science: Get Permanent Bliss

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): Dada Bhagwan, known as AM Patel in his former life before renunciation, found and then shared a part for eternal bliss and peace through Akram Vignan, A spiritual science.

Each and every living being is in constant pursuit of happiness; no one likes suffering. This search only ends when the source of eternal happiness is found. Eternal happiness can only be attained through realizing your true Self. A path to eternal happiness was discovered by Dada Bhagwan who propounded Akram Vignan that is based on the foundation of Self Realization. This unique science provides practical day-to-day solutions that lead to harmony and happiness in life.

What is Akram Vignan?

- It is PROFOUND, POWERFUL and PRACTICAL
- Knowledge-based approach without rituals or strict routines
- Holistic science that integrates spirituality into daily life
- An accelerated path to Self-Realization & permanent happiness

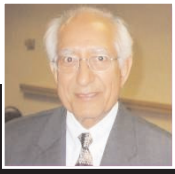
Akram Vignan moment is ran under Dada Bhagwan Vignan Institute (DBVI), spiritual non-profit organization in North America. The organization's primary objective is to spread peace, harmony and everlasting bliss to the people of this world through the teachings of a spiritual science.

This institute is committed to achieving its objectives through various volunteering programs, community outreach programs & focused workshops. Every year, an international spiritual convention is organized in North America, presided by our Spiritual Teacher, and consists of topic specific discourses and Q&A (open format).

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news



When Guru Nanak Appeared on the World Scene



By Harbans Lal,
PhD., D.Litt. (Hons)



Such was precisely the objective of Guru Nanak and his mission; to take his message across oceans and mountains to civil societies everywhere. Prevalence of similar culture, language, any particular religious belief, weather, landscapes, business opportunities, or political system was not a requirement to entice Guru Nanak. He had no plans to export or take with any ethnic people or language to the places he selected to visit. His whole object was to promote dialogues with religious people and promote interfaith engagement all over the globe towards the pathways to enlightenment and ethics of goodness. All is very clear when one examines the Guru's dialogues and his travels closely.



Guru Nanak is the Founder of Sikhism, the youngest and the fifth largest religion of the world, with a following of around 25 million worldwide. It is a monotheistic faith founded in the Punjab region of India more than 500 years ago. Most of the world's 25 million Sikhs live in India, but more than 500,000 have made the U.S. their home.



The Founder of Sikhism, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539)

mighty prevail.

The religious leaders routinely concocted religious practices to thrust on people to serve many unholy interests. These interests were mutually supportive and were successful in designing a variety of concealed tricks to fool people who were seeking peace and salvation.

The religious institutions had devised beauty shows with religious practices that were intended to attract innocent minds. For example, they invented deities with accompanying stories, idols with descriptions of their powers, recitations to invoke imaginary deities, and rituals that buttressed each other. They asked people to erect stunning buildings to house gods and promised accessibility to gods at precise times, and places opened only through the expense of wealth, time, and inner energy. Altruism was perverted so that it only benefited clerics and clergy.

Many other tricks were implemented to speed a religion's institutional agenda. For example, miracles were invented to convert people and to influence human behaviors. The religious myths were invented to answer real questions and then safeguarded those miracles and myths by un-testable threats and promises. Religious institutions built cults of external marks and body wrappings to encourage murders and wars against those who did not toe the line, or who were members of competing religions.

People were asked to invest a massive amount of money, time, and mind in ritualistic illusions and also in corrupted beliefs such as, either converting others or serving clergy with wealth or flesh that would guarantee heavens no one had ever seen. Above all, they used horrific fears to ensure compliance of all their tricks.



The Enlightened Guru Nanak on the bank of the river Veni (Vein).

Divine Benevolence, and ISHNAAN - Implement Ethics of Good Deeds that Cleanse Body and Mind

To accomplish his mission, Guru Nanak undertook four long journeys over a period of thirty-five years. He journeyed over 30,000 miles in over thirty years. Two faithful provided companionship; Bala, originally from a Hindu background and Mardana, coming from Muslim upbringing. The countries he covered included, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, south-west China, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Ceylon. Stories of his contacts are also being discovered from sources in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Rome.



Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was always accompanied by two followers, one a Muslim Mardana (Left) who played Rabab (a musical instrument) , and Bala, a Hindu (Right).

MISSION WAS OUTRIGHT UNIVERSAL: What is universal? Universal is that applies universally, that is, for "all similarly situated individuals," regardless of geography, culture, race, gender, religion, nationality, or any other distinguishing feature. When one looks at Guru Nanak's travels, teachings, and lifestyles, it becomes apparent right away that his visions, concerns, and approaches were all

GURU NANAK'S COMING : Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the Founder of Sikhism, came to this world on April 15, 1469. He declared his ministry in November 1496 when he took on his journey to teach. He found the paths to enlightenment devoid of divinity; they were completely distorted towards unholy goals of the exploiters of people.

The powerful who often pretended to protect and spread their faith led to struggles that could only be resolved through the subjugation of the other resulting in bloody conflicts. There were score of instances where the rulers chose to protect their own skin by staying aloof that amounted to let the

universal. Let me explain the universality of Nanak's mission a bit more as most of us as yet have not grasped the distinction.

One of our community leaders was visiting the USA sometimes ago. In our conversation over what he observed he stated his great satisfaction in this way. He said he was so pleased to observe that Sikhism was really becoming universal. No matter where he traveled, he always met Sikhs, and they were all flourishing. To him, it was not always like during his prior visits. I responded that his observation of meeting Punjabi ethnic Sikhs everywhere was heartening and was true, but Sikhi was not at all going universal no matter how many Punjabi Sikhs he found in how many unexpected places. This fact in itself did not bring universality to Sikhi.

Rather, Sikhi would be universal only when the teachings of our Guru would have practical appeal to civil societies in many countries within and beyond Northern Indian subcontinent, and many diverse cultures across the oceans practice it.

A universal is something -- maybe a concept, an idea, a feeling, etc. - that can be shared in practice across different cultures and languages. When the concepts or teachings can be readily exported beyond the domain in which it originated, independent of exporting people practicing that concept.

For example, Christian idea of "God", or 'religion' is practiced beyond its origins in the Middle-Eastern and Greco-Roman context. Native Americans, Black Africans and Caucasian alike have accepted Christianity. Western secularists have exported the idea of democracy beyond its European and American context. Buddhists and Hindus have exported the concepts of dharma, karma, meditation, yoga, transmigration, even Gandhi-ism, etc., beyond India. There are many



Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh emperor, introduced Nanakshahi currency. An 1804 coin has the picture of Guru Nanak. In another coin, Guru Nanak is seen with his constant companions, Mardana and Bala

more examples. Such was precisely the objective of Guru Nanak and his mission; to take his message across oceans and mountains to civil societies everywhere. Prevalence of similar culture, language, any particular religious belief, weather, landscapes, business opportunities, or political system was not a requirement to entice Guru Nanak. He had no plans to export or take with any ethnic people or language to the places he selected to visit. His whole object was to promote dialogues with religious people and promote interfaith engagement all over the globe towards the pathways to enlightenment and ethics of goodness. All is very clear when one examines the Guru's dialogues and his travels closely. First of all Guru Nanak saw serious problems with the civil societies the world over. His objective was clearly to stir the hearts and minds of people everywhere and all over the world. Bhai Gurdas witnessed this in the following verse.

ਬਾਬਾ ਦੇਖੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਜਲਤੀ ਸਭ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ ਦਿਸ ਆਈ॥ ਬਾਬਗੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਬਾਰ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਕਰਦੀ ਸੁਣੀ ਲੁਕਾਈ॥ ਬਾਬੇ ਭੇਖ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਉਦਾਂਸੀ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ ਚਲਾਈ॥ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਸੋਧਨ ਧਰਤ ਲੁਕਾਈ॥ Gurdas - Vaar 1, Pauri 24, Stanza 7.

Guru Nanak gave a great deal of thought concluding that civil societies all over the earth were burning in the false belief systems. They were deprived of the divine wisdom, and Nanak heard them horribly desperate. As a result, Guru Nanak changed into the traveling mode and set an example of similar undertakings. He set on enabling the populace of the earth to overcome the darkness of ignorance.

Regarding Nanak's religion, there is a famous quote. When, a Muslim scholar in Makkah asked Nanak about his religion, this was his answer. Qazi Ruknuddin asked Nanak:

"Fala Allah mazaboo"? (What is your religion?) To that Guru Nanak responded: "Abdulla Allah la mazaboo" (I am a man of God and belong to no religion.)

Guru Arjan then vouched that Guru Nanak's teachings could be universally practiced by all four distinctive cultures of Hindu Society, namely, the Kshatriyas who were the nobility and the protectors of society, the Brahmana's who provide education and spiritual leadership, The Vaishya who produced, and the shudras who served other sections of society through menial jobs.

ਖੜ੍ਹੀਬਾਹਮਣਸੁਦਵੈਸਉਪਦੇਸੁਚਗੁਵਰਨਾਕਉਸਾਝਾ- SGGS, p. 747.

(The author is Professor and Chairman, Department of Pharmacology and Neurosciences at the medical college of the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Author of over 400 research papers, 26 books, several research reviews and 56 chapters in technical books, Dr. Lal is an authority on Sikhism. He serves as the Founder President of the Academy of Guru Granth Studies established for the promotion of scholarly works on the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Based in Dallas, Texas, Dr. Lal can be reached at harbansl@gmail.com)

Is Guru Nanak's Parkash Day Different from Guru Nanak's Birth Day? Yes, It Is



By Harbans Lal,
PhD., D.Litt. (Hons)



Ek Ong Kaar Kaur
Khalsa Michaud



Guru Nanak

Through much of Sikh history and the Sikh world, Vaisakhi (April 1469) has been recognized as the Day of Celebration for Guru Nanak's birth. On this day, Nanak was born to his parents, his father Kalyan Chand Das Bedi, popularly shortened to Pita Kalu and his mother, Mata Tripta.

There has been no eye-witness record of the date of Guru Nanak's birthday. However, Gyan Ratnavali (1712) of Bhai Mani Singh and

Mehma Parkash (1776) of Sarup Das Bhalla, recorded April as his date of birth. Further, recent historians have calculated Guru Nanak's birthday from his death records.

The date of Guru Nanak's passing is inscribed on the stone memorializing his death, and it was recorded in other historical documents. The number of days Guru Nanak lived on this earth is also known. Bhai Santokh Singh, a highly learned Sikh biographer, recorded the total age of Guru Nanak as 70 years, five months and 7 days. From this data, the distinguished contemporary Sikh historian, Karam Singh, calculated Guru Nanak's age from the date of his death and established mid-April as Guru Nanak's birthday.

Presently, prominent historians such as Giyani M.A. Macauliffe, Hew McLeod, Kahn Singh Nabha, Indu Bhushan Banerji, Khushwant Singh, Kirpal Singh, Ganda Singh, Harbans Singh, H.R. Gupta, Principal Satbir Singh, and others accept April as the date of the birth of Guru Nanak. Thus, April 2019 will be Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary. The global Sikh community is preparing in various ways to celebrate this auspicious day.

However, Guru Nanak's birth day is not the same as his Parkash day.

At his birth, Guru Nanak's destiny to spread Divine Wisdom was not recognized either by his parents or the community around him; with the possible exception of Rai Bullar who was the head administrator of the town where Guru Nanak was born.

The nine Gurus who followed Guru Nanak and the Guru Panth (Sikh community throughout the world) have traditionally celebrated Guru Nanak's birthday on Vaisakhi in a variety of ways. The celebrations included spiritual services as well as the holding of conferences, teaching retreats, and launching of new books or other initiatives.

The Gurus, themselves, designated Vaisakhi day to meet and greet Sikh congregations from distant places and to inaugurate a variety of programs throughout their ministry.



Guru Nanak is born (Representational pic)

Their ministry expanded for nearly two centuries. The Vaisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh remains the most memorable celebration today. Maharaja Ranjit Singh chose this day for his coronation which he celebrated at both Nanakana Sahib, Guru Nanak's birthplace, and in Lahore in 1801.

Katik - Guru Nanak's Parkash Day

Guru Nanak's birthday contrasts with Guru Nanak's Parkash Day that falls in the month of October-November (Katik or Kartik) on the full moon (pooranmashi) night.

The word Prakash is derived from the Sanskrit word "prak??a", literally meaning "Bright light" or "Sun light" or "Moonlight" or simply "Light."

Bhai Gurdas, the Sikh theologian of the highest recognition in Sikh history described Guru Nanak Parkash in var 1, Pauri 27 by the following verses.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਮਿਟੀ ਉਧ ਜਗ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਆ ॥
ਜਿਉਂ ਕਰ ਸੁਰਜ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਤਾਰੇ ਛਪੇ ਅੰਧੇਰ ਪਲੋਆ ॥
ਸਿੰਘ ਭੁਕੇ ਮਿਰਗਵਲੀ ਭੋਨੀ ਜਾਏ ਨ ਧੀਰ ਧਰੋਆ ॥
ਜਿਥੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਪੈਰ ਧਰੇ ਪੂਜਾ ਆਸਣ ਬਾਪਣ ਸੋਆ ॥
ਸਿਧ ਆਸਣ ਸਭ ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਦ ਮਤੇ ਜੇ ਕੋਆ ॥
ਘਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਹੋਵੈ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਸੋਆ ॥
ਬਾਬੋ ਤਾਰੇ ਚਾਰ ਚਕ ਨੌਂ ਖੰਡ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੀ ਸਚਾ ਢੋਆ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਕਲਿ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਆ ॥੨੭॥

Satguru Nanak pragatai miti dhundhu jagi chananu hoa.

Jiu kar suraju nikalia tare chhapi andheru paloa.

Singh buke miragavali bhanni jai na dhir dharao.

Jithe baba pair dhari puja asanu thapani soa.

Sidhasani sabhi jagati de Nanak adi mate je koa.

Ghari ghari andari dharamsal hovai kirtan sada visoa.

Babe tare chari chaki nau khandi prithavi sacha dhao.

Gurmukhi kali vichi paragatu hoa.

Pauri 27 (Rise of Guru Nanak)



Guru Nanak comes out of river Veni (Vein) after three days' disappearance (Representational Pic)

With the emergence of the Eternal Guru Nanak, the mist (metaphor for multiple factions toeing the religiosity by clergies) cleared and the light (true enlightening wisdom) sprinkled all around. As if at the sun rise the stars disappeared and the darkness dispelled. With the roar of the lion in the forest the flocks of escaping deer now cannot have endurance. Wherever Baba put his feet, a religious place was erected and established. All the worship places now have been renamed on the name of Nanak. Every home has become a place of dharma where singing to all four directions and nine divisions of earth. Gurmukh (Guru Nanak) has emerged in this kaliyug, the dark age.

In the case of Guru Nanak, the Parkash refers to the event when Guru Nanak's inner Light manifested in his form and identity, initiating a period in history when the Pure Light of Universal Wisdom spread to the communities Guru Nanak visited and touched.

The event is described as below.

The Reference to Parkash Day of Guru Rank

In 1496, after a lifetime of spiritual curiosity, exploration, study and devotion, Guru Nanak entered a deep meditative trance where he experienced the truth of Creation. He saw the Cosmos, the Creator, and the human being intimately linked in a dance of learning and of consciousness. He was 27 years old.

The vision he received went beyond the ideology of any particular religious faith, but rather recognized that all people undertake a common journey in life. It was this commonality that ignited Guru Nanak's heart. He developed a sovereign relationship with the Divine - directly hearing the Song of Universal Truth and sharing it in many different languages throughout his life.

At the time of his enlightenment experience, Guru Nanak was a 27-year old man, employed as a business manager of the store and the properties of one Daulat Khan, a Muslim, who was also the head of the town of Sultanpur Lodhi.

The Kali Vein River has been given a special historical significance in North India because it provided the venue where Guru Nanak experienced his enlightenment. The 160-kilometer long river springs from Dhanao village and merges in the confluence of the Beas and Ravi rivers. The base spring was considered holy by the local Dhanao

CONTD ON PAGE 17

There is no doubt that Guru Nanak was born in Vaishakh month. All the older Janamsakhis give that as Guru Nanak's natal month. As late as the Sambat 1872 it was in Baisakh that the anniversary fair of Guru Nanak's birth was always celebrated at Nankana. And finally, the Nanak Parkash gives the full moon in Kartik Sambat 1526, as the time of Guru Nanak's Enlightenment or Parkash; and the tenth of the dark half of Assu, Sambat 1596, as the date of his death. The Nanak Parkash states that he lived seventy years five months and seven days. This total is irreconcilable if one equates the Parkash date with Guru Nanak's physical birthday. But the total is very nearly reconcilable with the date of the Guru's birth given in the old Janamsakhi.

(Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, first edition 1909CE, reprinted by Low Price Publications. Delhi 1996 p.lxxxiv.).

CONTD FROM PAGE 16



Nanak on travels, accompanied by Mardana and Bala
(Representational pic)

people. Mogul Emperor Akbar (1542-1605) ordered it brick-lined for preservation and pilgrimage.

Halfway in the Kali Bein's journey toward the confluence lies the town of Sultanpur Lodhi, an old Muslim settlement on the riverbanks, now regarded as sacred by the Sikhs. There in the town stands a gurdwara commemorating Guru Nanak's spiritual awakening. Several other monuments in the town memorialize the Guru's dialogues with the community of scholars and religious leaders. They are the evidence that Guru Nanak was the first among the religious leaders to initiate and popularized the interfaith dialogues.

The Guru visited the river daily for his bath and meditation in the early hours of the morning. After that, while on his way to work in town, he often visited with a Muslim holy man for a chat. It is during one of these early morning meditations that his awareness expanded and he communicated with the Creator. The story goes as follows.

One morning, Guru Nanak disappeared into the river and spent, it is said, three days in meditation. He re-emerged in a divine trance, reportedly, and as soon as he came out of that trance, he said he had a vision, a revelation. The revelation inspired him to teach the world that a Divine Presence permeates the universe. That religions were only man-made and should not be employed to profile and divide people. This reference was about Hindus and Muslim, the two major religions in the area. It was the night of the full moon in November 1496 (some historians report the year to be 1499) that he emerged from his meditation.

The Day of Enlightenment as Parkash Day

The day of Guru Nanak's enlightenment known as Guru Nanak's Parkash Divas is celebrated every year. Thousands of devotee flock to the holy town of Sultanpur Lodi to pay their homage. In 2005, the President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited this memorial of enlightenment as it is called today, and in 2006 the Government of India, encouraging Indian tourists to visit this city, declared it a holy city to be preserved as part of the Sikh heritage.

On this day Guru Nanak began to claim in more than one way that the Creator had summoned him and assigned him the mission of sharing this divine message to all humanity. He claimed to have received the message directly from the ONE in a state of heightened consciousness, and he taught it to people by singing it in inspired hymns. There are many famous verses of his pronouncements including the commencing verse of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, popularly known as Mool Mantar. This hymn begins with a symbol to serve as Sikh insignia. The symbol of Ek Onkaar is popularly translated as the One Reality (Force) that is manifested in all creation.

The Guru said that he would transcribe the divine message for people of all times. The formal pronouncement of his mission startled the town's people, although they had known him as a spiritually enlightened person. Those vested in the old beliefs went to the authorities to complain that Nanak was claiming to be a new prophet.

When the town authorities heard complaints against Nanak, the town's head Daulat Khan summoned him for a high-level dialogue. Khan also invited his chief religious' advisor, a Muslim Imam, leading a group of imams and other Muslim scholars, to interrogate Nanak about his prophetic experience.

A public debate took place, taking almost a week to conclude. Many questions were asked, many issues were raised. Guru Nanak answered them all and made many

pronouncements during the dialogue.

At the end of the dialogue-meeting, much to the Imam's befuddlement, Khan declared that Nanak had indeed received a divine vision and had been given the responsibility and authority to share that vision with humanity.

The following excerpt taken from the oldest written record available describes Khan's judgment:

ਤਬ ਕਾਜੀ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋਇ ਰਹਿਆ - ਤਬ ਖਾਨੁ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਾਜੀ ਇਸ ਕਉ ਪੁਛਣਾ ਤਕਸੀਰ ਹੈ
ਏਹੁ ਖਦਾਇ ਕਾ ਕੋਈ ਉਲੀਯਾ ਹੈ

The Imam, the chief interrogator, was wonderstruck. Then, Khan, the head of the town, told the Imam that further questioning would be arrogant, and declared that this person is an aulia (saint- prophet) of Khudaa (Islamic term for God). (B 40 Janamsakhi)

This public acknowledgment of Nanak as God's messenger clearly earned him the title of the prophet or aulia in the Muslim tradition and the title of the Guru in the non-Muslim traditions of India.

Thus, the day Guru Nanak shared his divine vision and announced his mission to teach what he had learned became known and celebrated as Guru Nanak's Parkash Day.

The Mission of Parkash Day

The mission that Guru Nanak undertook that day was to engage the religious leaders of South East Asia and the Middle East in dialogue to define a truly Universal, human path of truthfulness. A path that would cultivate both a successful life and spiritual achievement. It is then that Guru Nanak advanced three core values to live by. These core values became the central theme in his wide-ranging missionary endeavors.

Guru Nanak designated three core values that, when blended, would transform life into something perfect. In doctrinal terms, Guru Nanak named them NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN. Translated into today's idiom, they are:

NAAM - Mindful Awareness of the Creator's Presence within oneself and within all of Creation.

DAAN - Receiving what the Creator gives (materials of livelihood and virtues of good human beings), and then sharing that with others.

ISNAAN - Self-cleansing - bathing to keep the body healthy and clean, and practicing good deeds to keep the mind healthy and clean, as well.



Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nanakana Sahib , Pakistan. Guru Nanak was born here.

Mixing of Guru Nanak's Birth Day and Parkash Day

There is no denying that over a period of time, the Sikh community has forgotten the distinction between the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday, and Guru Nanak's Parkash Day. How did this happen?

How Did Parkash Day Come to be Celebrated

Until the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780 -1839), only Guru Nanak's human birthday was celebrated both at Nankana Sahib and other towns with significant Sikh populations. It always occurred in the middle April at the time of harvest and other Hindu religious festivals. These events divided the Indian population and the attendance at the major gurdwaras was scanty. The Sikh clergy were always on the lookout to find an occasion when the community might be exclusively attracted to sacred Sikh places, particularly at Amritsar. The story goes as follows.

There lived in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Bhai Sant Singh Giyani, who was held in high estimation by the monarch and who lived in Amritsar. Bhai Sant Singh would search for ways to bring Hindus and Sikhs to Amritsar for a celebration after they sold their crops and had plenty of money in their pockets. That period was usually around Diwali which is Hindu new year.

Some five miles from Amritsar is an old lake called Ram Tirath. It is a pilgrimage place of Lord Ram for the Hindu community. At that place, a Hindu fair was and still is held at



Gurdwara Kartarpur in Narowal district of Punjab, Pakistan. It is built on the historic site where Guru Nanak settled and assembled a Sikh community after his missionary travels. The present gurdwara is built on the site where Guru Nanak left for heavenly abode on 22 September 1539.

the time of the full moon in the month of Kartik. All the monetary donations from the earnings of the people would go to that place. The pilgrimage place is essentially Hindu, and it had the further demerit in the eyes of Bhai Sant Singh of having been restored by Lakhpat, the prime minister of Zakaria Khan, the inhuman prosecutor of the Sikhs.

Bhai Sant Singh desired to establish a competitive fair in Amritsar on the same date, and to divert the Hindus and Sikhs from making the pilgrimage to Ram Tirath. To that end, he adopted the Handali date of Guru Nanak's Parkash and proclaimed that his new fair at Amritsar on the full moon in the month of Kartik was to honor the nativity of Guru Nanak. It is recorded that Bhai Sant Singh obtained both permission and patronage from Maharaja Ranjit Singh to do so.

CONCLUSION: In conclusion let us summarize Giyani Max Arthur Macauliffe at the Guru Nanak Parkash issue. There is no doubt that Guru Nanak was born in Vaishakh month. All the older Janamsakhis give that as Guru Nanak's natal month. As late as the Sambat 1872 it was in Baisakh that the anniversary fair of Guru Nanak's birth was always celebrated at Nankana. And finally, the Nanak Parkash gives the full moon in Kartik Sambat 1526, as the time of Guru Nanak's Enlightenment or Parkash; and the tenth of the dark half of Assu, Sambat 1596, as the date of his death. The Nanak Parkash states that he lived seventy years five months and seven days. This total is irreconcilable if one equates the Parkash date with Guru Nanak's physical birthday. But the total is very nearly reconcilable with the date of the Guru's birth given in the old Janamsakhi. " (Max Arthur Macauliffe, The Sikh Religion, first edition 1909CE, reprinted by Low Price Publications. Delhi 1996 p.lxxxiv.)

Thus, the month of April is Guru Nanak's birth month and the month of October-November is when Guru Nanak's Parkash or enlightenment recognized. The Parkash Day of Guru Nanak was the day when Guru Nanak began to share the Divine Vision he received during his enlightenment with others, and a new Light began to shine in the world. It is then that Guru Nanak began to impact humanity and the stories of that impact began to be told for posterity.

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(The author is Professor and Chairman, Department of Pharmacology and Neurosciences at the medical college of the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Author of over 400 research papers, 26 books, several research reviews and 56 chapters in technical books, Dr. Lal is an authority on Sikhism. He serves as the Founder President of the Academy of Guru Granth Studies established for the promotion of scholarly works on the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Based in Dallas, Texas, Dr. Lal can be reached at Japji2050@gmail.com)

For more information: Visit <https://seekingwisdomblog.wordpress.com>



KANGANASAYS SHE LEARNT TO VALUE FREEDOM BECAUSE OF RANI LAXMIBAI

Kangana Ranaut says she values freedom because of Rani Laxmibai. "I've grown up listening to Rani Laxmibai's legend and folklore like all of us but at the same time I did not know the intensity of her life. Her youth had gone in battling the enemy and preparing the regular people to become warriors," Kangana said in a statement to IANS.

"What was unknown about her life is that she fought for many things that are acceptable today like adoption and women empowerment. She was completely against untouchability and she neither believed in caste system. She was a Brahmin who fought like Kshatriyas. She fought against Bargad Pratha, Parda system, caste system and untouchability. She fought for all these things relentlessly and conquered all those.

"She was a visionary and I value the freedom that we have because of her a lot more," she added.

Directed by Radha Krishna Jagarlamudi, Manikarnika: The Queen Of Jhansi, which captures the life story of Rani Laxmibai, will release on January 25 next year. *Source: IANS*

FIRST PHOTOS OF DEEPIKA, RANVEER FROM BENGALURU WEDDING RECEPTION

Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh's first wedding reception in Bengaluru – they will be hosting two more in Mumbai – is a classy affair. What's classier is their choice of outfits for the evening.

The newlyweds went all out for the big night, dressed in royal attire. Ranveer and Deepika shared the first picture from the night on their social media and their fans can't stop fawning at their style.

Ranveer is seen in a black-golden sherwani while Deepika is seen in a shiny golden silk saree. She has gajra in her hair and stunning green jewellery. Ranveer's outfit is by Rohit Bal while Deepika's saree is a gift from her mother, Ujjala Padukone.

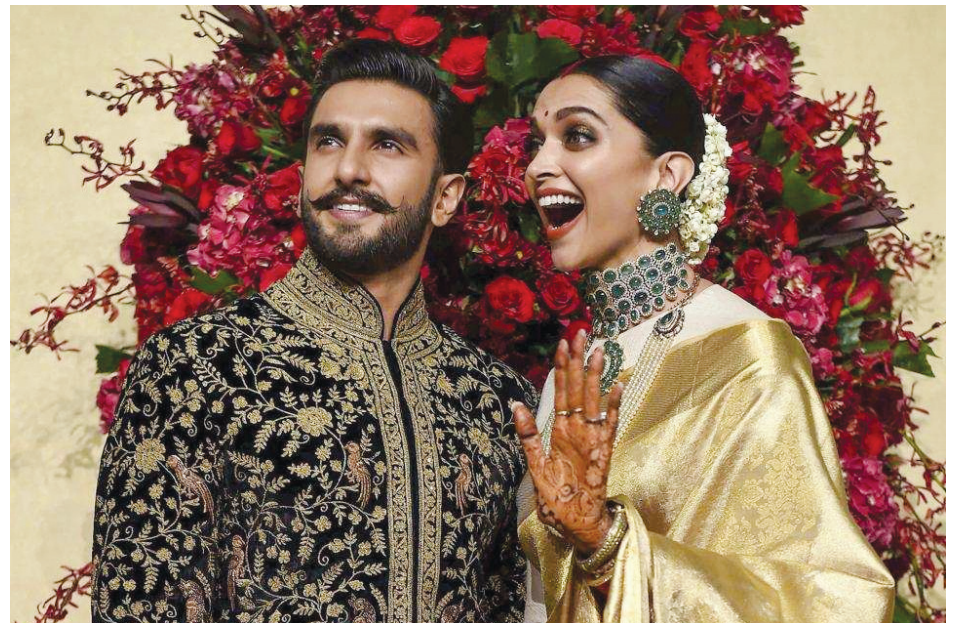
The wedding reception venue, Leela Palace Hotel, has been decorated with red flowers and there is a tight security in place.

The wedding reception has been hosted by Deepika's parents, Prakash and Ujjala Padukone. Ranveer's parents Jugjeet and Anju Bhavnani reached Bengaluru on Wednesday for the event.

Deepika herself surveyed the venue on Wednesday afternoon and was seen taking a round of the hotel. On Tuesday, the two actors waved to fans gathered outside her home.

Deepika and Ranveer tied the knot in Italy's Lake Como on November 14 and 15 with their close family and friends in attendance. While the first wedding was as per Konkani rituals, the second was as per Sindhi traditions.

The event was accorded the kind of security reserved for world leaders and the first photos were shared by the bride and groom themselves on their social media accounts on Thursday evening. Deepika and Ranveer shared more photos on Tuesday from their two wedding ceremonies, haldi and sangeet. *Source: HT*



Ayushmann's Badhaai Ho crosses Rs 200 cr mark

Ayushmann Khurrana's *Badhaai Ho* has touched the Rs 200 crore mark at the box office. The Amit Sharma directorial is currently in its fifth week and is still raking in decent numbers both nationally and internationally. With a five-week gross of Rs 158.25 cr and an international haul of Rs 43.72 cr, its combined total now stands at Rs 201.97 cr.

Trade analysts also claim that the lifetime business of *Thugs of Hindostan* in Australia, Canada and USA will be lower than *Badhaai Ho*'s. The numbers bode well for content-driven cinema in India. The film raked in Rs 80 lakh on Tuesday, which goosed up its nett collections in India to Rs 126.60 crore.

Audiences and critics alike have appreciated it for its simplicity, and endearing narrative. Featuring Khurrana, Sanya Malhotra, Gajraj Rao and Neena Gupta, *Badhaai Ho* charts the journey of the Kaushik family after a sudden pregnancy hilariously disrupts the delicate balance in the middle-class household.

"This is a SHOCKER... #ThugsOfHindostan may be the most expensive Hindi film, with

Badhaai Ho has crossed the Rs 200 crore mark at the worldwide box office, a total that trade analyst Taran Adarsh says is out of reach of Thugs of Hindostan

Aamir Khan enjoying an enviable following in international markets, but its *lifetime biz* in #USA + #Canada and #Australia will be lower than #BadhaaiHo... Content wins and how!" trade analyst Taran Adarsh tweeted on Wednesday.

"My acting career has been quite a ride. After *Vicky Donor*, I gave two-three unsuccessful films and that was a great learning curve. But *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* onwards it was cool. I learnt so much from all my films, successful or unsuccessful," Ayushmann said in a recent interview to PTI.

He continued, "I know I have become a star but I don't want to believe it. I want to be that simple, no fuss guy who approaches a film as if it is my first movie."





MARY POPPINS RETURNS TO RELEASE IN INDIA ON JANUARY 4

Disney is set to release *Mary Poppins Returns* in India on January 4. The new sequel to Disney's 1964 film *Mary Poppins* has Emily Blunt stepping into the shoes of veteran actor Julie Andrews as the prim and proper nanny with magical skills.

The film, directed by Rob Marshall, is based in 1930s Depression-era London.

When the family suffers a personal loss, Mary Poppins magically re-enters their lives and with Jack's (Lin-Manuel Miranda) help, brings joy and wonder back into their home.

The director said he feels honoured to be approached by Disney to direct the sequel.

"This is a brand new original film musical from top to bottom, which is very rare, and it is a wonderful opportunity to create something specifically for the screen.

"*Mary Poppins* was the first film I saw as a child and it opened my mind up to movies and to the love of musicals and adventure and fantasy in film. But this film isn't just for children... It's for the child in all of us," Rob Marshall said in a statement.

Ben Whishaw stars as Michael Banks and Emily Mortimer as Jane Banks – the eldest children of the Banks family.

The film, which introduces three new Banks children, played by Pixie Davies, Nathanael Saleh and newcomer Joel Dawson, also features Dick Van Dyke and Angela Lansbury. Van Dyke is the only actor from the original film to return.

MANDY MOORE GETS MARRIED IN A PINK WEDDING DRESS



Actress Mandy Moore ditched the classic white wedding dress and chose the colour blush pink for her wedding.

The 34-year-old star, exchanged vows with musician Taylor Goldsmith, 33, on Sunday at an intimate backyard ceremony here, reports [etonline.com](#). Moore, in an interview to [people.com](#) in August said she won't be choosing "a stereotypical white wedding dress".

She sported a stunning blush pink gown featuring a tiered tulle skirt, floral-embellished waist and high ruffled neckline, designed by Rodarte.

The romantic gown was complemented by a matching veil, swept-back tousled hair and

glittery pink eye-shadow. Moore's makeup artist, Jenn Streicher, posted photographs of the bride's breathtaking look, which were soon deleted, but reposted to a fan account.

Moore and Goldsmith got engaged last September after dating for two years. Moore was previously married to musician Ryan Adams, though they split in 2015 after almost six years of marriage. This is Goldsmith's first marriage.

"Bachelor Nation" author Amy Kaufman shared a clip of Goldsmith playing guitar and Moore crooning into a microphone toward the end of their tune. The newlyweds hopped onstage during their reception at Fig House in Los Angeles.

After gazing into each other's eyes as they

harmonized, the newlyweds finished the song with a smooch. Their guests responded with a round of applause. And the heartfelt duet was far from the only highlight of their "I dos."

Moore wore two show-stopping dresses on her big day — and neither one was white. As you can see from the clip, she chose a non-traditional bridal look for her reception, wearing a chic black cut-out gown that featured a bow on the back.

For her walk down the aisle, Moore wore a pastel pink tiered Rodarte gown. She accessorized with a pale pink veil, crystal-embellished pumps and small drop earrings. On Instagram, Moore shared a few snaps that show all the gorgeous pink details.

Margot Robbie reveals official title of 'Birds of Prey' film

Margot Robbie-starrer "Suicide Squad" spin-off has been titled "Birds of Prey (And The Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)", the actor announced on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old actor shared the news on Instagram where she posted the title page of Christina Hodson's script for "Birds of Prey", which includes a handwritten addition, revealing the full name of the feature.

Warner Bros Picture confirmed the spin-off's title and release date on Twitter.

"@MargotRobbie #BirdsofPrey (And The Fantabulous Emancipation of one Harley Quinn) hits theatres 2.7.20," read a tweet from the studio.

Robbie is reprising her "Suicide Squad" role of Harley Quinn, while actor Ewan McGregor recently joined the cast as the villain, Black Mask.

The film, to be directed by Cathy Yan, will also feature Mary Elizabeth Winstead as Huntress, Jurnee Smollett-Bell as Black Canary, Ella Jay Basco as Cassandra Cain and Rosie Perez as Renee Montoya.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the film will follow Harley Quinn as she "assembles



a girl gang of friends to take on a bad guy".

The actress is gearing up to shoot a major action movie in a little over a month, so the idea that she's in the early stages of pregnancy simply doesn't make sense. Meanwhile, it was reported last month that Robbie is attached to star in the Barbie movie, which is slated for a May 2020 release. That film is expected to begin production shortly after *Birds of Prey* wraps, and it's safe to say the actress isn't playing a pregnant Barbie. The actress also has several other projects lined up, including a direct sequel to *Suicide Squad* and an action movie focused on Robin Hood's love interest Maid Marian.

The *Birds of Prey* movie already has Margot Robbie attached to star (Robbie reportedly helped push for a female director for the film), with Warner Bros. looking to surround Robbie with a diverse cast.

Ella Jay Basco will play Cassandra Cain, familiar to DC Comics fans as Spoiler. Basco's Cain will be a central figure in the movie, with Harley Quinn, Huntress, and Black Canary protecting her from Black Mask, after the young Cain stumbles across a diamond that belongs to him.

NJSO presents *Star Wars: A New Hope* in Concert on Thanksgiving weekend

By Mabel Pais

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) presents screenings of the complete film *Star Wars: A New Hope* with Oscar-winning composer John Williams' musical scores performed live on Thanksgiving weekend, November 23-25.

In the first film of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, Luke Skywalker begins a journey that will change the galaxy, as he leaves his home planet, battles the evil Empire and learns the ways of the Force. Fans will be able to experience the scope and grandeur of this beloved film *Star Wars: A New Hope* in a live symphonic concert experience at three New Jersey venues (program details below).

Since the release of the first *Star Wars* movie over 40 years ago, the *Star Wars* saga has had a seismic impact on both cinema and culture, inspiring audiences around the world with its mythic storytelling, captivating characters, groundbreaking special effects and iconic musical scores composed by Williams.

For more information on the *Star Wars* series or to purchase tickets, visit njsymphony.org/starwars.

TICKETS

Tickets are available from the NJSO online at njsymphony.org, by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or in person at Patron Services.

Tickets for the November 23 performance are available from the Count Basie Center for the Arts online at thebasie.org, by



Composite of NJSO with movie-screen

American film score of all time. The soundtrack to *Star Wars* also was preserved by the Library of Congress in the National Recording Registry for being "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant." Williams was inducted into the Hollywood Bowl's Hall of Fame in 2000, and he received the Kennedy Center Honors in 2004, the National Medal of Arts in 2009 and the AFI Life Achievement Award in 2016. Williams

musicians.

Music Director Xian Zhang - a "dynamic podium presence," as praised by *The New York Times* for her "technical abilities, musicianship and maturity" - continues her acclaimed leadership of the NJSO. The Orchestra presents classical, pops and family programs, as well as outdoor summer concerts and special events. Embracing its legacy as a statewide orchestra, the NJSO is the resident orchestra of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark and regularly performs at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick, Count Basie Center for the Arts in Red Bank, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown and bergenPAC in Englewood. Partnerships with New Jersey arts organizations, universities and civic organizations remain a key element of the Orchestra's statewide identity.

In addition to its lauded artistic programming, the NJSO presents a suite of education and community engagement programs that promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music. Programs include school-time Concerts for Young

People; NJSO Youth Orchestras family of student ensembles, led by José Luis Domínguez; and El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project). NJSO musicians annually perform original chamber music programs at community events in a variety of settings statewide through the NJSO Community Partners Program.

For more information, visit njsymphony.org or email



Scenes from *Star Wars: A New Hope*.



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phone at 732.842.9000 or in person at the box office.

Tickets for the November 24 performance are available for purchase from NJPAC online at njpac.org, by phone at 1.888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722) or in person at the box office.

Tickets for the November 25 performance are available from State Theatre New Jersey online at stnj.org, by phone at 732.246.SHOW (7469) or in person at the box office.

PROGRAMS

STAR WARS: A NEW HOPE IN CONCERT

Fri, Nov 23, at 3 pm and 8 pm | Count Basie Center for the Arts in Red Bank

Sat, Nov 24, at 3 pm and 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Sun, Nov 25, at 3 pm and 8 pm | State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick

CONSTANTINE KITSOPOULOS conductor

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN WILLIAMS

Legendary composer Williams is well known for scoring all eight of the *Star Wars* saga films, beginning with 1977's *Star Wars: A New Hope*, for which he earned an Academy Award for Best Original Score. His scores for *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi* and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* were each nominated for Oscars for Best Original Score.

Williams has won five Academy Awards, four Golden Globe Awards, seven British Academy Film Awards five Emmy Awards and 23 Grammy Awards. With 51 Academy Award nominations, Williams is the Academy's most nominated living person and the second most-nominated individual in history, after Walt Disney. In 2005, the American Film Institute selected Williams' score to 1977's *Star Wars* as the greatest

has composed the scores for eight of the top 20 highest-grossing films at the US box office (adjusted for inflation).

DISNEY CONCERTS

Disney Concerts, the music arm of The Walt Disney Company, produces concerts and tours and licenses Disney music and visual content to symphony orchestras and presenters on a worldwide basis.

Disney Concerts' concert packages include a variety of formats, such as "live to picture" film concerts and themed instrumental and vocal compilation concerts, and range from instrumental-only symphonic performances to multimedia productions featuring live vocalists and choir.

Current titles include the *Star Wars Film Concert Series (Episodes IV-VII)*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Fantasia*, *Pixar In Concert*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Alice In Wonderland*, *Frozen*, *Ratatouille*, *The Pirates of the Caribbean series (Episodes I-IV)* and *Silly Symphonies*, which last year collectively accounted for more than 400 performances in many of the world's top concert venues, including Lincoln Center, Royal Albert Hall, Sydney Opera House, Tokyo Forum and the Hollywood Bowl.

Numerous new concert packages and touring productions from Disney's portfolio of studios, including Disney's feature animation and live-action studios, Pixar, Lucasfilm and Marvel, are currently in development.

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Named "a vital, artistically significant musical organization" by *The Wall Street Journal*, the NJSO embodies that vitality through its statewide presence and critically acclaimed performances, education partnerships and unparalleled access to music and the Orchestra's superb

information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

COUNT BASIE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Count Basie Center for the Arts is New Jersey's premier center for the cultural arts, dedicated to fostering powerful, inclusive artistic experiences and creative exchange of ideas. The Basie mission is to inspire, educate and entertain through its distinct and engaging cultural and artistic offerings that reflect the diversity of the region.

As a nonprofit organization, the Basie is committed to enriching the community's quality of life by generating opportunities for participation in the arts, partnering with schools, collaborating with other mission-based organizations and driving regional economic prosperity. The Basie Center has hosted an array of world-class artists, including Bruce Springsteen & the E-Street Band, Jon Bon Jovi, John Legend, Crosby Stills & Nash, Tony Bennett, Sophia Loren and Ringo Starr.

For more information, visit thebasie.org.

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY

State Theatre New Jersey: creating extraordinary experiences through the power of live performance. The theater exists to enrich people's lives, contribute to a vital urban environment and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through education.

For more information, visit stnj.org.

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

BRIG KULDIP SINGH CHANDPURI: THE HEROIC BORDER MAN WHO DEFIED PAKISTANI TANKS

Famously known for the heroics and valour that he and his men displayed on the night of December 5, 1971 during the battle of Longewala (Laungewala) to stop the onslaught by tanks of a determined Pakistani Army, Brigadier Kuldeep Singh Chandpuri was always a fighter - be it for Chandigarh's civic issues or his last battle against cancer. When he passed away on the morning of November 17, just five days before he would have celebrated his 78th birthday, Brig. Chandpuri did not let go his fighting spirit even in hospital.

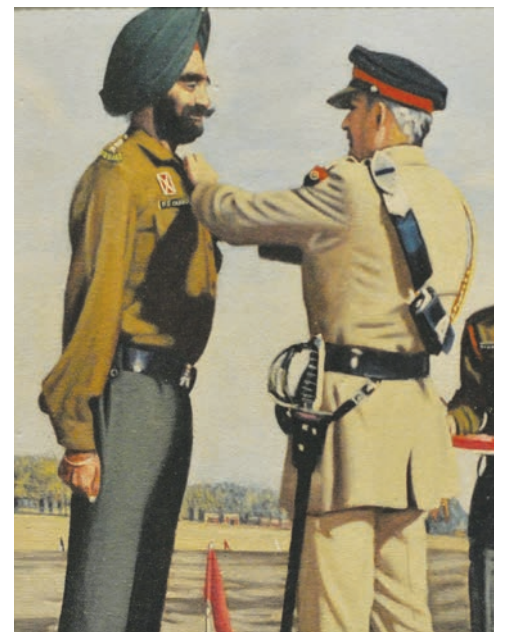
A Major during the 1971 India-Pakistan war, he had held his post through the night in the famous battle of Longewala in Rajasthan with just 120 men against a full-fledged attack by advancing Pakistani Patton tanks and over 2,000 soldiers. He was decorated with the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) for the heroic stand-off against the tanks and forcing the enemy to retreat.

The MVC citation read: "Major Kuldeep Singh Chandpuri was commanding a company of the Punjab Regiment occupying a defended locality in the Rajasthan Sector. On the 5th December 1971, in the early hours of the morning the enemy launched a massive attack on this locality with infantry and tanks. Major Chandpuri exhibited dynamic leadership in holding his command intact and steadfast."

"Showing exceptional courage and determination, he inspired his men moving from bunker to bunker, encouraging them in beating back the enemy till reinforcements arrived. In this heroic defence, he inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and forced them to retreat leaving behind twelve tanks. "In this action, Major Kuldeep Singh Chandpuri displayed conspicuous gallantry, inspiring leadership and exceptional devotion to duty in keeping with the highest traditions of the Indian Army." A soft-spoken but firm man, Brig. Chandpuri settled in his corner house in Chandigarh's Sector 33 after retiring from the Army, remaining active socially.

The famous photograph of his soldiers dancing atop vanquished Pakistani tanks after the battle of Longewala was won, adorned the wall in a big frame in the living room of his house.

The feat of Brig. Chandpuri and his men later



became celluloid history through the J.P. Dutta-directed Bollywood blockbuster movie "Border" which was released in 1997. His action-packed role was played by actor Sunny Deol.

The decorated war veteran, who took the Chandpuri surname from his native village Chandpur in Balachaur sub-division of Punjab, was born on November 22, 1940 in Montgomery (now in Pakistan) of undivided India. Commissioned into the Indian Army in 1963 after completing his training course at the Officers' Training Academy-Madras (now Chennai), Brig. Chandpuri was assigned to the 23rd battalion of the Punjab Regiment.

Brig. Chandpuri lived up to the reputation of the Regiment when he led his men to hold back the advancing Pakistanis and finally decimate them with support from the Indian Air Force (IAF). Twenty-two Pakistani tanks were destroyed in the Battle of Longewala.

He took part in the 1965 India-Pakistan war in the Western sector, served in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) at Gaza (Egypt) and twice became an instructor at the prestigious Infantry School, Mhow (Madhya Pradesh), imparting combat training.



Eight Indian-American women honored

WASHINGTON (TIP): Eight Indian-American women have been honored in recognition of their achievements in diverse fields ranging from politics and business to civil rights activism and astrophysics.

Immigration lawyer Sheela Murthy, vice chairwoman of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) Jagruti Panwala and NASA astrophysicist Madhulika Guhathakurta were among the awardees.

Other honorees were Maryland Delegate Aruna Miller, Manisha Gaekwad from Florida; Ann Ramakumaran, founder and CEO of a tech company Ampcus, Inc; and Suman Raghunathan, executive director of the racial justice and civil rights group South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT).

They were honored at the inaugural American Bazaar Women Entrepreneurs and Leaders Gala.

Tak, a trailblazer for Indian-American women in many fields, was honored for her contributions in the areas of politics, art and culture. One of the first Indian American women to serve in the United States military, she is also among the first Indian-American women fundraisers to make a mark nationally.

Astrophysicist Guhathakurta, who was born in Kolkata, is one of the most prominent Indian-Americans in NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration).

Dozens of prominent women entrepreneurs from across the country, executives of Fortune 500 companies, political and thought leaders, and leaders from the nonprofit world attended the Women Entrepreneurs Forum and Leaders Gala. (Source: PTI)

Indian-Origin Professor at University of Kansas City Accused of Using Students as Servants



Ashim Mitra, a pharmacy professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, made his students tend his lawn, look after his dog and water the house plants

WASHINGTON (TIP): An Indian-origin professor in the US has been accused of exploiting his students and compelling them to do his personal work, media reported. Ashim Mitra, a pharmacy professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, made his students tend his lawn, look after his dog and water the house plants, sometimes for weeks at a time when he and his wife were away, the local media reported. They hauled equipment and bused tables at his social events, the newspaper said quoting nearly 12 of Professor Mitra's former students.

Kamesh Kuchimanchi, a former student, told the daily that he considered his life at UMKC "nothing more than modern slavery."

He alleged that Professor Mitra exploited cultural kinship with students from India. When Mr Kuchimanchi once told him that wouldn't be a servant, "he threatened to kick me out of the university and force me to lose my visa and lose everything."

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-Origin Woman Appointed Head of Sustainability Team for European Bank

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin Nandita Parshad senior executive, has been announced as the head of consolidated new sustainable infrastructure group of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Ms.Parshad, currently Managing Director for Energy and Natural Resources at the EBRD, in her new role will lead the bank's engagement in environmental, transport and energy sectors in 38 countries across three continents with a particular focus on decarbonization and sustainable financing, a statement said.

"Green investments increasingly require a complex approach combining energy, emissions, water and waste," said Ms Parshad, who was born in Kolkata and holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

"This integration is shown in the emergence of a number of important cross-cutting themes such as electrification of trains, buses and electric vehicles, water-energy nexus, including the growing role of desalination, as well as green, sustainable cities. By joining efforts of bankers structuring energy and infrastructure projects, we will capitalize on a common ethos and working model," she said.

Nandita Parshad is a member of the Energy Transition Commission and of the World Economic Forum Council on Future Energy, where she represents the EBRD and shapes policy-making and thinking in global challenges of decarbonization.

The Bank's new Sustainable infrastructure group has a portfolio of over euro 22 billion and invests yearly over euro 4.5 billion in new investments, or about half of the EBRD's annual business.

Of her new team, effective from January 1 next year, Ms Parshad added: "Our consolidated team - with its extensive experience of structuring projects with public companies and private investors - will continue working with authorities to build confidence and promote enabling policies in both energy and infrastructure sectors, reinforcing the close integration of investment and support for reform which is at the heart of the EBRD's mandate."

The EBRD said Nandita Parshad has 30 years' experience in investing in the energy sector in diverse emerging economies. She



Nandita Parshad, has been announced as the head of consolidated new sustainable infrastructure group of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

joined the EBRD's Power and Energy Utilities team in 1993 and took over as Director of the team in 2007. She was appointed as Managing Director, Energy and Natural Resources in January 2017 and continued driving the Bank's increasing presence in renewables and strategic regional energy, in line with the EBRD's Green Economy Transition initiative. The London-headquartered EBRD is a multilateral development bank set up in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall to promote private and entrepreneurial initiative in emerging Europe.

It invests in 38 emerging economies across three continents, according to a set of criteria that aim to make its countries more competitive, better governed, greener, more inclusive, more resilient and more integrated. India joined as the EBRD's 69th shareholder earlier this year, with the membership opening up joint investment prospects for Indian companies in markets such as Central Asia, Egypt and Jordan.

Indian American Elected Harvard Student Body President



Sruthi Palaniappan has been elected president of the powerful student's body of the prestigious Harvard University.

Her running mate Julia Huesa, 20, was elected as vice president, according to an announcement by the Undergraduate Council Election Commission.

Ms Palaniappan said that Ms Huesa and her planned to work on improving the Council's communication with the student body in their initial days in office.

"I think from the onset, better structuring the way we communicate with students is something that we need to already set the tone and plan for," she said.

"I think we're going to work on it before we even leave for break and just get off the ground running," she said.

Ms Palaniappan was the youngest delegate at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in July 2016.

According to the report, Ms Palaniappan and Ms Huesa garnered nearly 41.5 per cent of the votes as against their nearest opponent Nadine M Khoury and Arnav Agrawal, who received 26.6 per cent of the votes.

They ran their campaign under the slogan "Make Harvard Home".

The duo, a long-time member of the Undergraduate Council, are scheduled to take over from the outgoing president Catherine L Zhang '19 and vice president Nicholas D Boucher '19. Ms Palaniappan is currently the council's education committee chair.

Indian-Origin Scotland Yard Cop Fired after Homeless Man Kicked Out of Station Dies

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin Scotland Yard police constable (PC) has been fired from her job without notice for failing to exercise reasonable care in her treatment and monitoring of a homeless man after ejecting him from a police station in west London. PC Bhupinder Kalsi was fired following a Metropolitan Police Unsatisfactory Police Performance meeting which found that her performance was grossly incompetent, and she was guilty of unsatisfactory performance.

Pericles Malagardis, a Greek national who was sleeping at Heathrow Airport, had gone to Uxbridge police station to collect his dog on a cold day in March 2016. The 63-year-old died of hypothermia after he was made to leave the police station for smoking inside the station.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), the independent police watchdog, had referred the case to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to consider charges of gross negligence manslaughter.

"We found there was not enough evidence to prosecute for any offences and took no further action," the CPS said. However, an internal disciplinary panel found that Kalsi "did not provide information requested by the London Ambulance Service regarding actions taken to support Mr. Malagardis and failed to follow instruction and training when dealing with unresponsive casualties", after he was found unconscious on the pavement. The panel also concluded that Kalsi was viewing a DVD whilst on duty, following Malagardis' ejection from the front office area of the police station.

Another police station staff member is facing a separate disciplinary hearing over the same incident. Once the internal Metropolitan Police reviews are completed, an inquest into the death of Malagardis is expected to take place.

Indian-origin man arrested in US for sexual enticement of 11 year old girl

NEW YORK (TIP): A 22-year-old Indian-origin man in the US has been arrested and charged with sexual enticement of a minor girl through social media, authorities have said.

Sachin Aji Bhaskar, a resident of New York's Buffalo city, faces a minimum penalty of 10 years in prison, maximum of life in prison and a USD 250,000 fine.

Assistant US Attorney Wei Xiang said on Tuesday that Bhaskar, using a social media application in August, contacted the 11-year-old girl in Buffalo claiming to be 15. He picked her up by car and returned her home approximately three hours later after having sex with her.

He made an initial appearance before US Magistrate Judge Kenneth Schroder and is being held pending a detention hearing.

The criminal complaint is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Child Exploitation Task Force. (Source: PTI)

China steps up prosecutions for pollution offences: authority

China has struggled to enforce its environmental laws as growth-obsessed local governments turn a blind eye to polluting local enterprises, and it has been trying to ensure violations are properly punished.

BEIJING (TIP): China prosecuted more than 3,500 people for pollution-related crimes in the first 10 months of the year, up nearly 40 percent on a year ago, law enforcement authorities said, as Beijing looks to courts and police to curb violations.

China has struggled to enforce its environmental laws as growth-obsessed local governments turn a blind eye to polluting local enterprises, and it has been trying to ensure violations are properly punished.

China's procuratorate said at a Thursday briefing that it would show "zero tolerance" to environmental crimes, adding that it also prosecuted nearly 8,500 people for the wider offence of "damaging resources" in the first 10 months, up 44 percent.

The number of criminal prosecutions is still small compared to the nearly 130,000 environmental violations reported in the first nine months of the year, leading to fines of 10.63 billion yuan (\$1.53 billion), according to environment ministry data.

Beijing has encouraged courts and police departments to establish dedicated environmental divisions, while financial regulators and other government departments are under pressure to play a bigger role in punishing polluters.

In a speech earlier this year, Chinese President Xi Jinping promised to deploy the full weight of the state to reverse decades of environmental damage, forcing several ministries and regulators to draw up their own plans to fight pollution.



However, the central government still regards grass-roots enforcement as a weak link, and has launched a series of reviews into the way local officials rectify violations, focusing on what they describe as "fraudulent", "superficial" or "perfunctory" efforts to meet pollution standards.

China is also making use of its feared graft-busting body to crack down on local government violations, documents published by the corruption watchdog showed this week.

Anti-corruption teams throughout China have been investigating officials for failing to rectify environmental problems, according to

notices published on the website of the Central Commission of Discipline Inspection (CCDI), which normally handles corruption and other acts of misconduct.

At a meeting of the disciplinary body in Xian in northwest China, officials were reprimanded for oversight failures during the construction of a wastewater pipeline, CCDI said in a notice on Thursday.

In another case, the local party discipline committee of Sichuan punished local Communist Party cadres for failing to respond to public complaints about an unregulated dog slaughterhouse in the city of Jianyang, the CCDI said. (AP)

Leaning Tower of Pisa tilts a little less (but you'll hardly notice)

PISA, ITALY (TIP): Italy's famously Leaning Tower of Pisa is a little less off-kilter.

Nearly two decades after engineers completed consolidation work to keep the tower from toppling over, officials monitoring the monument said recently that its famed tilt had been further reduced by 4 centimeters, or 1.5 inches.

The tower "is continuing to straighten," said Nunziante Squeglia, an engineering professor at the University of Pisa and a consultant to the committee that monitors the tower.

The correction is the result of measures carried out just before the turn of this century to ensure that the tower would not collapse.

"We knew those measures would have protracted consequences," Squeglia added, but engineers could not foresee that the tower would reverse its tilt, he said.

The tower, one of Italy's most famous monuments, is also one of its most fragile.

Built as a bell tower for Pisa's cathedral and baptistry, it began sinking into the ground five years after construction began in 1173. The pillar took almost 200 years to build, and included various unsuccessful attempts to correct the tilt. (AP)

EU, U.K. reach draft deal on post-Brexit relationship

LONDON (TIP): The British government's Brexit process reached another milestone as the European Commission said that the U.K. and the EU had agreed at a negotiator level and in principle the draft political declaration on the future relationship between the two sides.

While observers continue to pick apart the statement — which has been leaked to U.K. media — to assess whether the government's ambitions set out by the U.K. have been enmeshed in it, the development marks a symbolic victory for Prime Minister Theresa May ahead of a summit on Sunday. In the summit EU leaders are set to finalise and formalise details of both the exit process and outline of future relations. The development also follows last week's news that Britain and the EU had agreed to the draft terms of the withdrawal.

Speaking in the House of Commons on Thursday, Prime Minister May insisted the declaration was the "right deal for the U.K." and honoured the public vote. "The British people want this to be settled... that deal is within our grasp and I am determined to deliver it." Unlike the withdrawal agreement, which would be binding, the political declaration is more of a statement of future ambitions of what a new relationship — including when it comes to the movement of people and goods and services — would entail.

Controversy over the terms of the withdrawal agreement led to several ministerial resignations and letters of no confidence in the Prime Minister, though an initiative to oust her through formal party processes appears to have been abandoned for now, for want of support from backbench MPs. The 26-page document has not been officially published though the Guardian newspaper published a leaked draft on its website. (The Hindu)

IAEA calls on North Korea to re-admit nuclear inspectors

VIENNA (TIP): The head of the UN's atomic watchdog has called on North Korea to allow inspectors back into the country to monitor its nuclear program.

Speaking at a board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Director General Yukiya Amano noted that Pyongyang had in September talked about denuclearization measures including the "permanent dismantlement of the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon" — a reactor where it produces plutonium.

Amano said there has been activity observed at Yongbyon, but "without access the agency cannot confirm the nature and purpose of these activities." At a news conference later Thursday, he said he couldn't elaborate on when exactly the activity was observed.

IAEA inspectors were expelled from North Korea in 2009 but Amano said the agency continues to prepare for their possible re-admittance.

"The agency continues to enhance its readiness to play an essential role in verifying (North Korea's) nuclear program if a political agreement is reached among countries concerned," he said. "I again call upon (North Korea) to comply fully with its obligations under relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and of the IAEA board, to cooperate promptly with the agency and to resolve all outstanding issues."

On the other hand, Amano told board members that Iran continues to abide by the deal reached in 2015 with major world powers that aimed at preventing Tehran from building atomic weapons in exchange for economic incentives.

He reiterated the agency's findings in a report distributed to member states earlier this month that "Iran is implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action."

The issue has grown more complicated since the US withdrew unilaterally in May from the deal and then re-imposed sanctions. Iran's



economy has been struggling ever since and its currency has plummeted in value.

The other signatories to the deal — Germany, Britain, France, Russia and China — are continuing to try to make it work.

Amano stressed that "it is essential that Iran continues to fully implement" its commitments.

In its full report, the IAEA said its inspectors continue to have access to all sites in Iran that it needs to visit and that inspectors confirmed Iran has kept within limits of heavy water and low-enriched uranium stockpiles.

"The agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its safeguards agreement," Amano said. "Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran continue." (Reuters)

PLAY UP WITH YOUR HAIR FOR PARTIES

Go for two top knots or a French braid instead of tying your hair in a boring bun for a fun party, say experts.

French braid

- Begin with using a dry shampoo on your lengths and ends to help create texture.
- Take a centre parting and braid your hair on both sides using the French braid technique.
- Continue braiding till you reach the nape area and secure it with rubber bands.
- Open up the braids a little bit and spray finishing spray for hold.

Centre-parted wavy hair

- Spray a prepping product on the roots, lengths and ends to give thickness and volume.
- Blast dry the hair so that the product is worked into the hair.
- Use a tong and curl the ends using big vertical sections.
- Open up the curls and use a hairspray for hold and shine.

Low side bun

- Use volumising spray on the lengths and ends for body and texture.
- Work the product into the hair with a brush and dryer.
- Take a side parting and tie your hair into a low ponytail at the nape area and secure it with a rubber band.
- Use a curling tong and tong the hair that is in the ponytail to create some movement.
- Twist the hair into a low bun and pin it up with bobby pins, pull out a few strands and finish by applying a hairspray for added shine.

Two top knots

- Apply a smoothing cream on your lengths and ends for a soft and smooth texture.
- Take a centre parting and divide the hair into two equal parts.



- Tie two high ponytails of both sides of the parting and secure them with rubber bands.
- Twist the hair in the ponytail and wrap it around to look like a top knot. Secure it with pins.
- Repeat the same on both sides.

Messy ponytail

- To achieve the messy ponytail, apply a texturising spray to the lengths and end.
- Tie a high pony and secure it with a rubber band.
- Some loose pieces for a messy effect and finish by spraying a shine hairspray.

Usage of Mustard Oil

- Imparts a natural Skin Glow: Since centuries Indians have been applying Mustard Oil as body oil for massage before their baths. One can use it to massage dry areas prior to a bath. For removing tan, mustard oil can be mixed with besan, yogurt and lemon juice and used as a body pack.
- Prepping your skin: Dry patchy skin is a common problem that we

all face during harsh winters and this can be a major hindrance while getting ready for a party. One can apply a few drops of mustard oil and rub it along the face, let it remain for few minutes before washing it in water. The skin becomes smooth and ready for applying foundation and make up.

Perfect Hair Care: Who doesn't want a glossy healthy mane to go with that perfect dress and makeup? Applying mustard oil regularly on the scalp takes care of winter hair woes like dandruff, itchy scalps, hair fall etc. One can do a hot oil treatment at home with mustard oil and wash off hair with a mild shampoo to experience healthier, shiny locks this season.

Protects your lips: Chapped dry lips can play havoc on the overall appearance. Applying a few drops of mustard oil can heal chapped lips and is safer than packaged lip balms. Ironically, one of grandmothers' old remedies say that sleeping with a drop or two of mustard oil on your naval will give you baby soft lips in the morning.

FOOD CORNER

RAJASTHANI JUNGLI MAAS

Jungli Maas is a delicious spicy mutton recipe from Rajasthan usually cooked in the jungle while on hunting. As Jungli Maas recipe required very few ingredients so it is perfect non vegetarian recipe to cook in outdoors or while hunting birds or animals. Jungli Maas got its flavour with dried red chillies, salt and ghee. You can also add garlic to enhance the flavour of the dish. The hero of the recipe is Meat so let it shine without adding any fancy ingredients or spices.

Ingredients

- Mutton or Goat meat (with bone)- 1 kilograms, Garlic cloves- 8 to 10, Dried red chillies- 15 to 20 or to taste, Ghee or Clarified Butter- ½ cup, Salt- to taste

Method

- Marinate mutton with the ingredients mentioned under marination ingredients section. Ensure that you mix them properly. Keep it aside for 30 minutes for oil, spice and juices to penetrate.
- Heat water in a pan. Add dried red chillies, coriander seeds, green cardamom, peppercorn to the pan. Allow the mixture to boil nicely. It should not take more than 10 to 12 minutes. Once done you will see that the dried chillies has gone soft and tender.
- Separate all the wet ingredients from Water through a sieve. Do not throw the water. We will use it later.
- Place all wet ingredients and garlic cloves in a grinder and grind it to a fine paste. At this point all your prep work is done. Time to get to the curry going.
- Heat mustard oil in a non stick pan. Add black peppercorns, cinnamon sticks, bay leaves, cumin seeds and Star Anise to the pan. This is done to slightly flavour the oil.
- Now add onions and saute till they are golden brown.
- Add garlic paste and saute for 5 minutes on low flame.
- Add the marinated mutton to the onions and sauté on low heat for 10 minutes.
- Add 1/2 cup of strained spiced water(that we had retained) to the pan and let the mutton cook in it on medium heat for 15 minutes.
- Add the rest of grinded magic spice mixture and 4 cups of strained spiced water to the mutton. Cover and cook for about 60 to 75 minutes on low flame or until the mutton is cooked properly. Once done, garnish it with fresh chopped coriander and serve hot



Things women should do just for themselves

A woman wears several hats — of a mother, wife, sister, daughter and many more. She has a number of responsibilities, which over time tend to take a toll eventually.

With the hustle and bustle of daily stress and dealing with fluctuating hormones, it is little surprise then that most women feel tired and exhausted most of the time. Here's what will help...

- Gift yourself a spa or salon appointment at least once every two months — everyone deserves a break now and then, and you're no different! Even an hour of unwinding at the spa will rejuvenate all your senses and renew your vigour for life.
- Sign up for a hobby class. No matter how busy you are, make some time for a weekend hobby class where you learn something new or simply pursue a long-cherished hobby. This is a great way to de-stress and will help distract your mind from the daily stress of life.
- Heard about subscription boxes? They're all the rage



currently. From beauty and lifestyle boxes to jewellery and gourmet food boxes, there is even a 'period box'! A

subscription box is a sweet way to gift and surprise yourself every month. Go for a box that you know will excite you — there are a number of options to choose from.

- Do you have a pet at home? Spend some quality time with it! Pets have an uncanny ability to sense your moods, so instead of pushing your canine away, bond with it and see how your mood perks up.
- Several women also suffer from a vitamin D deficiency — caused due to lack of sunlight. Get yourself tested immediately to know whether you're deficient. And even if you aren't, spare some time and go for a walk in the early morning sunshine. Dusk is also a great time for a leisurely walk. Sunshine is known to boost the health in more ways than one.
- Take A Long, Hot Bath: This might sound completely obvious, but taking a bath definitely works to get you in relaxation mode. In fact, according to a study highlighted in the The Telegraph, taking a bath improves general psychological wellness.

WOMEN MORE RESILIENT TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY THAN THOUGHT

Women can be just as resilient as men in undertaking arduous physical activity with appropriate training and preparation, a study has found.

Researchers showed that women who underwent extreme physical training and completed a transantarctic expedition did not show any more negative health effects than would be expected in men.

It has been reported that the female reproductive system and stress responses are more sensitive to the negative effects of extreme physical activity.

There is some evidence that arduous physical activity can suppress normal female reproductive hormone activity, impair bone strength and elevate stress hormone levels to a greater extent than in men.

However, the reasons underlying these reported gender differences in response to extreme endurance exercise remain poorly understood.

Robert Gifford and colleagues from the University of Edinburgh in the UK examined the effects of extreme exercise on hormone levels and the health of six women participating in the first all-female transantarctic expedition.

The researchers monitored several markers of their health before and after the successful expedition. These included indicators of stress, reproductive and metabolic hormone levels, body weight and bone strength.

The findings indicated not only that markers of reproductive function and bone strength were preserved, but that some markers showed evidence of delayed, exercise-related benefit to their physical fitness two weeks after the expedition.

"Our findings contain some



potentially myth-busting data on the impact of extreme physical activity on women. We have shown that with appropriate training and preparation, many of the previously reported negative health effects can be avoided," said Gifford.

Although the team consisted of just six women and it was not possible to account for confounding factors such as age or ethnicity, these findings do suggest adherence to a comprehensive training schedule may have mitigated any negative health effects, researchers said.

The team now plan to further investigate how different types of activities can contribute to negative effects on stress and energy balance caused by physical exertion, which may help in the generation of transferrable strategies that prevent them in future.

"These findings could have important relevance for men and women in arduous or stressful employment, where there is concern that they are damaging their health. If an appropriate training and nutritional regime is followed, their health may be protected," said Gifford.

Source: PTI

New treatment shows promise against peanut allergy

In a first, an oral immunotherapy drug derived from peanut protein could help build tolerance and eliminate potentially deadly reactions in children and adolescents with severe peanut allergies.

The study showed that controlled ingestion of the medication, called AR101, derived from peanut protein, could build tolerance as well as reduce severe allergy symptoms.

"Almost 6 million American children are currently living with a life-threatening food allergy," said Christina Ciaccio, Associate Professor from the University of Chicago in the US. "Every three minutes a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room, contributing to the total annual cost of caring for children with food allergy to nearly \$25 billion. Despite this, not a single treatment for food allergy has been approved by the FDA," she said.

However, the drug "is not a quick fix, and it doesn't mean people with peanut allergy will be able to eat peanuts whenever they want", the researchers stressed, in the paper published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

But it is definitely a breakthrough and "results of this landmark trial are likely to lead to the first FDA-approved treatment for food allergy in 2019", Ciaccio said.

As a result, people who receive and are able to tolerate this treatment should be protected from accidental exposures, the researchers noted, adding that once someone stops the treatment, there is no longer a protective effect.

For the study, the researchers at the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) in the US included 496 participants aged from four to 55 years, most were four to 17 year olds, and all had peanut allergy.

One third of the participants were given a placebo, while the remaining two-thirds were given peanut protein powder as part of an oral food challenge (OFC) in increasing amounts until reaching the "maintenance dose" — equivalent of one peanut daily.

Compared to the placebo group, participants who took AR101 had less severe allergy symptoms.

Furthermore, two-thirds of the people were able to tolerate the equivalent of two peanuts per day after nine to 12 months of treatment, and half the patients tolerated the equivalent of four peanuts.

Source: IANS



NEW DRUG DISCOVERY MAY HALT SPREAD OF BRAIN CANCER

Scientists have identified a novel drug that could block glioblastoma — the deadliest form of brain cancer — from spreading.

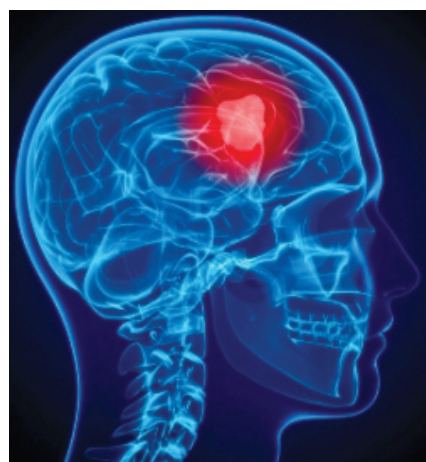
The tissues in our bodies largely are made of fluid. It moves around cells and is essential to normal body function, said researchers from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the US.

However, in some cases, this fluid may be doing more harm than good, they said.

In glioblastoma, this fluid has a much higher pressure, causing it to move fast and forcing cancer cells to spread.

A common cancer therapy, which inserts a drug directly into the tumour with a catheter, can make this fluid move even faster, researchers said.

The study, published in the journal Scientific Reports, may have found a



solution to stopping this inevitable cancer cell spread. The researchers used the drug which they found can block the way cancer cells respond to fluid flow.

They examined the role of interstitial

fluid flow in the spread of glioma cells. Interstitial fluid is the fluid that surrounds cells in the body.

In labs, the team used mice with glioblastoma to test how a particular approach to delivering cancer treatment, called convection enhanced delivery, caused glioma cells to invade the rest of the brain.

To block the fluid's rapid movement and the spread of cancer cells, they tested a drug called AMD3100.

The drug, which already has been used in clinics, appeared to be a game changer, said Chase Cornelison, a postdoctoral researcher at Virginia Tech.

This finding could lead to stopping glioblastoma from spreading, said Cornelison, who was earlier with the University of Virginia, where the majority of the research took place.

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INSTAGRAM TESTING RE-ARRANGEMENT OF ICONS, BUTTONS ON ITS APP

Facebook-owned photo-messaging app Instagram is testing re-arrangement of features, icons, buttons and the way users navigate between tabs on its platform.

"We're testing ways you can better express yourself and easily connect with the people — so over the next several weeks, you may see features re-arranged or changed at the top of your profiles," the company wrote in a blog-post on Wednesday.

The company however assures that the photos and videos users have shared on their profile grids will not go through any changes.

"We've been working on these changes and will test them in phases and different combinations with our community over the next several weeks," the post added.

The company plans to continue to experiment and update the app according to user-feedback.

Earlier last week, Instagram rolled out the "Your Activity" feature that tracks how much time users spend on the app — inside the "hamburger" icon on the upper right corner of a profile page — aiming to give users more control over how they interact with social media that may be harmful to the mental health and well-being of the users if used excessively.

Source: IANS



MICROSOFT'S BETA ANDROID LAUNCHER HAS DIGITAL HEALTH FEATURE

Microsoft has added a "Digital Health" feature with Cortana support on the beta version of its Android launcher that will enable users to track app usages.

The Microsoft launcher "Version 5.1" is an attempt to give users more control over how they interact with social media, Windows Central reported on Wednesday.

Along with the "Digital Health" feature, the new update integrates the "To-Do" list and "Sticky Notes" to enable users to sync their tasks and notes.

"The launcher's 'To-Do' card now shows tasks from apps Outlook and Skype along with the 'Notes' card showing your listings from 'Sticky Notes' on Windows, Outlook and OneNote mobile," the report added.

The new beta version is available for testers on Google Play Store and should be rolling out to all users in the coming weeks, the report added.

Major tech companies like Apple, Facebook and Instagram have recently added features like "Screen Time", "Your Activity" and "Your Time on Facebook" respectively to alert users about their use of apps. In October, Microsoft announced that Windows 10 would soon fully embrace Android to mirror mobile apps on computers so the company has been aggressively updating its Android launcher over the past year. Earlier this year, the tech-giant added family-focused location-tracking feature to the Android launcher app along with an activity report feature that maintains record of what apps are being used on a device and for how long.

Source: IANS

ELECTRONIC GLOVE TO GIVE ROBOTS SENSE OF TOUCH

Stanford scientists have developed an electronic glove containing sensors that could one day give robotic hands the human-like sense of touch and dexterity.

In a study published in the journal *Science Robotics*, researchers showed that the sensors work well enough to allow a robotic hand to touch a delicate berry and handle a pingpong ball without squashing them.

"This technology puts us on a path to one day giving robots the sort of sensing capabilities found in human skin," said Zhenan Bao, from Stanford University in the US.

The sensors in the glove's fingertips simultaneously measure the intensity and direction of pressure, two qualities essential to achieving manual dexterity, researchers said.

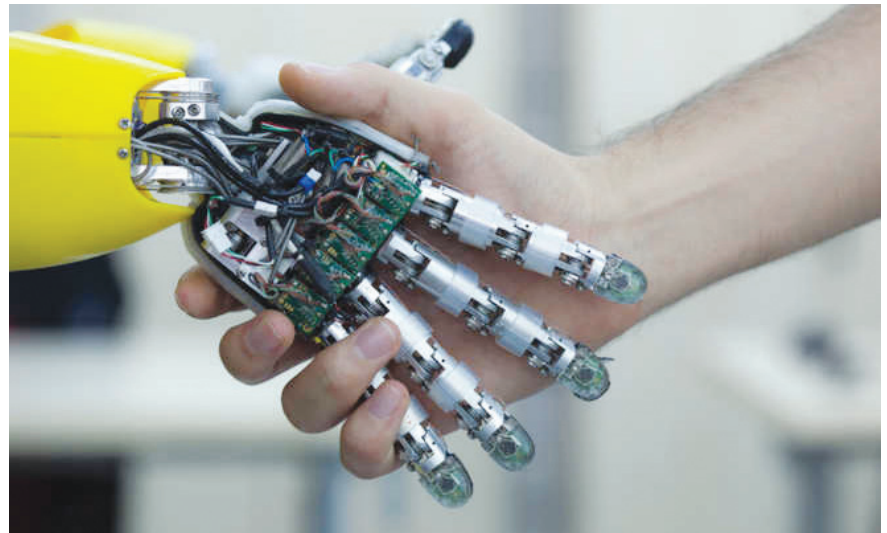
They must still perfect the technology to automatically control these sensors but when they do, a robot wearing the glove could have the dexterity to hold an egg between thumb and forefinger without smashing it or letting it slip.

The electronic glove imitates the way layers of human skin work together to give our hands their extraordinary sensitivity.

Our outer layer of skin is imbued with sensors to detect pressure, heat and other stimuli, researchers said. Our fingers and palms are particularly rich in touch sensors.

Postdoctoral scholar Clementine Boutry and master's student Marc Negre led development of the electronic sensors that mimic this human mechanism.

Each sensor on the fingertip of the robotic glove is made of three flexible



layers that work in concert.

The top and bottom layers are electrically active. The researchers laid a grid of electrical lines on each of the two facing surfaces, like rows in a field, and turned these rows perpendicular to each other to create a dense array of small sensing pixels.

They also made the bottom layer bumpy like the spinosum.

To test their technology the researchers placed their three-layered sensors on the fingers of a rubber glove, and put the glove on a robotic hand.

Eventually the goal is to embed sensors directly into a skin-like covering for robotic hands.

In one experiment, they programmed the glove-wearing robotic hand to gently touch a berry without damaging it. They also programmed the gloved hand to lift and move a pingpong ball without

crushing it, by using the sensor to detect the appropriate shear force to grasp the ball without dropping it.

With proper programming a robotic hand wearing the current touch-sensing glove could perform a repetitive task such as lifting eggs off a conveyor belt and placing them into cartons.

The technology could also have applications in robot-assisted surgery, where precise touch control is essential.

However, the ultimate goal is to develop an advanced version of the glove that automatically applies just the right amount of force to handle an object safely without prior programming.

"We can programme a robotic hand to touch a raspberry without crushing it, but we're a long way from being able to touch and detect that it is raspberry and enable the robot to pick it up," Bao said.

Source: PTI

Facebook to now track your time spent on its platform

Just days after photo-messaging app Instagram rolled out the feature to track users' time spent on the app, Facebook has now released "Your Time on Facebook" tool that counts how many minutes' people spend on the app.



The feature is designed to help users manage social networking by maintaining time spent per day on Facebook on a particular device for the past week and on an average, TechCrunch reported on Tuesday.

"Your Time on Facebook" tool will allow users to set a daily limit of app usage and receive a reminder to stop after that many minutes each day. The tool also comes with shortcuts to notification, news feed and friend request settings.

"You can access it by going to Facebook's 'More' tab, choose the 'Settings and Privacy' option and set 'Your Time on Facebook'," the report added.

Last week, Facebook-owned Instagram released its own "Your Activity" feature to track how much time users spent on the app. The feature gives users more control over how they interact with social media that may be harmful to the mental health and well-being of the users if used excessively.

Source: IANS

Apple backs Google Assistant app on iOS with Siri shortcut

The Google Assistant app on iOS is now backed with Siri shortcut to make the use of Assistant more convenient for iOS users. "We added support for Siri Shortcuts to make it even easier to access your Assistant," read the app description on Apple's App Store.



You can also set up Siri shortcuts for phrases you frequently use with Assistant, come up with a custom voice command for a single smart home action, trigger Google Assistant smart home routines inside of Siri, The Verge reported on Tuesday. "Like saying 'Goodnight Google' to Siri could open Assistant and run a routine like turning off all your lights and locking the door," added the report.

Users can already add an Assistant widget on the iPhone screens and with the new feature, users could cross stream and use Siri to connect to Google Assistant.

The new shortcuts integration is available as part of the updated version of Assistant for iOS.

Earlier in May, Microsoft Cortana and Amazon Alexa performed the first ever integration of two intelligent assistants at the "Build 2018" developers' conference held in Seattle. Their integration worked with the command: "Alexa, open Cortana" and while Alexa accepted personal requests, Cortana helped with business needs.

Source: IANS

Amazon website glitch exposes customer names and email addresses

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Amazon on Wednesday said that a website glitch accidentally exposed names and email addresses of some of the e-commerce giant's customers.

Amazon declined to disclose the extent of the software slip-up.

"We have fixed the issue and informed customers who may have been impacted," an Amazon spokesman said in response to an AFP inquiry.

There was no breach of Amazon systems or its website, and passwords were kept safe, according to the company.

As a precaution, messages were sent to customers affected by the website mishap letting them know their names and email addresses may have been disclosed by the Amazon website.

Amazon customers in the US and Europe have reported receiving messages from the company, according to tech news website TechCrunch.

The disclosure came on the cusp of the year-end holiday shopping season, with retailers online and in real-world



shops offering "Black Friday" bargains pegged to the day after the Thanksgiving holiday in the US.

Amazon is the "undisputed e-commerce leader" in the US, with a 48 percent share of online sales here this year expected to equate to some \$252

billion, according to analysts at eMarketer. The market tracker forecast that total e-commerce sales in the US would jump 16.6 percent to \$123.73 billion this holiday season as compared with the same period last year.

Source: AFP



ASUS EYES 30% SHARE OF INDIA'S GAMING MARKET

Taiwanese tech major Asus on Thursday said it is confident of increasing its share in the growing Indian gaming PC market to 30 percent by next year as it expands its product portfolio and brings in more affordable devices.

The company, which competes against the likes of Dell and HP in the gaming category, has about 20 percent share currently. Globally, it is the leader in the gaming category with about 32-33 percent share.

"We have seen strong growth in our business here. India is a key market for us. We will continue to ramp up our efforts and we expect to increase our market share to 30 percent by mid next year from over 20 percent now," ASUS India Head of Consumer Notebooks and ROG Business Arnold Su told PTI.

The company's currently portfolio includes gaming devices starting at about Rs 60,000. ASUS is also said to be working on bringing in new devices that could be available at lower price points also.

"We continue to focus on consumer needs and demands. They give us feedback on our products and we take these into account when designing new products. We understand that pricing is important and that is why we have products priced Rs 60,000 onwards and goes into lakhs," he said.

According to research firm IDC, the consumer PC market recorded an overall shipment of 1.08 million units in January-March 2018 quarter. While shipments declined 10.9 percent sequentially, it was up 3.2 percent on a year-on-year basis.

Source: PTI

Nissan ousts Carlos Ghosn as chairman after arrest over financial misconduct: Report

Nissan Motor Co.'s board voted unanimously to remove Carlos Ghosn as chairman, the NHK reported, as the directors moved to contain the damage from the iconic executive's shock arrest.

The national Japanese broadcaster reported the outcome after the board met Thursday to vote on the dismissal. Ghosn, who has been detained by Japanese authorities since Monday, is set to officially remain a director, since a shareholder vote is needed to remove him from the board completely. A Nissan spokesman declined to comment.

"It's a coup," said Tatsuo Yoshida, an analyst at Sawakami Asset Management, who used to work at Nissan. "Ghosn's era is over."

The removal follows probes by Nissan and Japanese authorities into alleged financial misconduct by long-time leader Ghosn, with Chief Executive Officer Hiroto Saikawa emerging as a driving force behind the investigation.

Prior to his surprise arrest in Tokyo on Monday, Ghosn had been preparing to push for a full merger of Nissan with French partner Renault SA, which he also heads as CEO and chairman. That combination plan has faced resistance from Saikawa, who Ghosn in the past presented as his protege.

Without Ghosn at the head of Nissan's board, a merger looks very unlikely. The charismatic French-Brazilian executive was architect and linchpin of the two-decade-old alliance, created as an attempt to add heft against global rivals. Ghosn's arrest has now laid bare resentments that have built as the Japanese and French sides alternated successes and struggles over the years.



Apple cuts production orders for iPhone XS series and iPhone XR

Apple Inc has cut production orders in recent weeks for all three iPhone models launched in September, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday, citing sources.

A lower-than-expected demand for the new iPhones and Apple's decision to offer more models has made it more difficult to anticipate the number of components and handsets the company needs, according to the paper.

Apple shocked investors a few weeks ago with a lower-than-expected sales forecast for the Christmas quarter, prompting certain suppliers to issue warnings that pointed to weakness in new iPhone sales.

Forecasts have been particularly problematic for iPhone XR with Apple cutting its production plan by up to a third of the nearly 70 million units some suppliers had been asked to produce between September and February, the paper said.

As recently as last week, Apple informed several suppliers that it lowered its production plan again for iPhone XR, the Journal reported.

The company started selling its latest phone generation, the iPhone XS and XS Max, in September and the XR model in October.

Apple did not respond to a request for comment outside regular business hours.

Amazon, Apple deal win-win game for both

Aiming to boost sales in the wake of weaker-than-expected demand for new iPhone models, Apple has sealed a deal



with retail giant Amazon to sell its range of products which is a win-win game for both the tech titans, market research firm Counterpoint Research has said.

According to Counterpoint, the move would allow the Cupertino-based giant to better manage pricing, warranties and the overall customer experience.

Third party vendors who are selling on Amazon's platform will be phased out by January 2019, Maurice Klaehne, Research Analyst, Counterpoint Research, wrote in a post on Sunday.

"Apple is attempting to regain control over its iPhone sales on one of the biggest online channels. Third party vendors were selling on Amazon and it was near impossible for Apple to control the supply chain, assure quality control, price," Klaehne added.

Hero, Yamaha, Mitsui in pact for electric bicycles

NEW DELHI (TIP): Hero Cycles said it has entered into a strategic alliance with Japan's Yamaha Motor Co Ltd and Mitsui & Co for technology, manufacturing and marketing of electric bicycles.

The first product for India to roll out from this alliance would be a high-end electric-mountain bike (E-MTB) under the Hero brand, the company said.

"The partnership has been formed with a forward looking plan which includes development of new e-mobility products jointly by Hero and Yamaha, with go-to-market sales, distribution and marketing support by Mitsui & Co.Ltd," Hero Motors Company chairman Pankaj M Munjal said.

Hero Cycles had recently announced its 'Cycle Valley' project proposed to be set up in Ludhiana and serve as a hub for end-to-end supply chain of the bicycle industry.

The project is to be led by Hero Cycles as an anchor investor with an aim to create an ecosystem of suppliers in joint ventures with global bicycle component makers.

Source: PTI

Hero Cycles had recently announced its 'Cycle Valley' project proposed to be set up in Ludhiana



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 NOVEMBER 26 - DECEMBER 2, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says you are prone to bouts of introspection and continued spirituality (from last period, I mean), pondering on what you'd like to make of your life. At the same time both travel (therefore places, destinations) and closer ties with the people you love will keep you busy. Not only that, it leads to the free exchange of ideas, information, innovation techniques / practices. Some exciting contacts, too, adds Ganesha.

Taurus:

Your relationships, which are your major thrust, will crystallize into a trend that is totally focused on your interactions with people. Love, marriage, professional relationships, to your equation with society and the world, the works is fact. You will concern yourself with charity, social welfare, community welfare. Pleasure comes to you from the intimacy of shared love and at work, from the shared execution of some really inspired plans, so that progress and prosperity are certain.

Gemini:

You are moving into a phase of success now and the focus of all the P's of last period will be twofold - the home, and your finances. You will improve your assets as well as your earning capacity. Further means of earning, even a parallel income or moonlighting prospects could happen. You will direct this flow of cash into investing in home and property - acquiring, improving, enhancing or even just beautifying, whatever is needed.

Cancer:

The trend of the last period expands now, in financial matters. You may think serious of a change of job or of a new profession altogether, of cutting down expenses and also attempts at creating funds and capital, or loans to finance new projects which may yield greater profits. Thus financial security in the future is your main concern. You are ably supported by colleagues and sincere friends; in fact, you even win over rivals and competitors to cooperate with your plans, so promising will they be.

Leo:

You rely heavily on your own gut feelings, your own perceptions. The focus will still be on finances mainly but now you are watching over your own interests, gains, future. Also, you're working hard to ensure that you succeed in your venture. Greater power and enhanced position come to you, along with the linked perks, privileges, benefits. Your rivals don't stand a chance against your determination, which in turn is powered by insights, analysis, knowledge.

Virgo:

Success, achievement, gains are all there now. In this period, in your own sign, there are tangible gains like assets, income, acquisitions, valuable objects for you, your home, your family, and also some equally valuable intangible ones. Self - esteem, confidence, your image in the eyes of others, your total outlook, your attitude / mindset and the environment you create around yourself - all these slow glorious improvement.

Libra:

Gains of a totally different nature now, but even more precious than before. You are full of optimism, strength and determination. Also, great kindness, tolerance, love for your fellowmen (humans, to be politically correct). This is not as easy as it sounds, as there is a degree of animosity and rivalry to reckon with, loss and disappointments to bear. You set solace, strength, joy from your leisure pursuits, creativity, hobbies, new skills. The good part is that they could all lead to fresh methods / means of earning well.

Scorpio:

Your home will once again be focused on, in terms of buying, renovation, improvement. In fact, you're on a total self - improvement exercise, in terms of higher study, knowledge, research in addition to physical fitness, health regimes. Even your personal assets, funds, cash in the bank will be dealt with, improved, enhanced now. All this for greater efficiency and definitely more power, more recognition.

Sagittarius:

Financial gains are almost definite this period, too. Also, your communication is spectacular, so that there are shared hopes, ideas and the strong support of people who wish you well. It is in the angle of people, in fact, that you have truly tremendous success. Social gatherings, hospitality, entertainments are all energized but more than that, it is in the give-and-take of true and sincere love, of being genuinely wanted and cared for that you attain a joy that is bliss.

Capricorn:

Both your personal life and / or personal equations as well as your financial position show a marked improvement now. So, it's money and honey (love, romance, affection) for you now - and this may well continue next period. Your socializing will be at an all - time high. Entertaining and parties, house guests, casual visits and new contacts, wonderful closeness with family, kin, neighbors - Ganesha gives it all. Remember, it's a long - term trend - that's the best part of it.

Aquarius:

Travel, ties and trips are highlighted now, but also promotions, perks, prestige, power. The catch is that they don't happen easily; you have to strive hard to achieve them. There could be some personal hassles, tensions over inflamed emotions and passions, some recalcitrant attitudes. Family conflicts and disagreements, too. You have the vision, optimism and clever ideas to deal successfully with them. A negative, disillusioned attitude could easily develop in you, the feeling of being played for a sucker - but you surmount it with your faith in yourself and in your ideas / vision.

Pisces:

New collaborations and deals could click into place now. There could also be gains in terms of grants, funds, endorsements, particularly for study, upgradation of skills. So, the gains can be in terms of higher study and research, too. You might feel that your greatest gains come from the shared, wondrous time with family, loved ones, parents. Equally wondrous will be the growth of your higher self, of the spiritual side of your character. You are laying some very solid foundations now, Ganesha adds.

KARTIK PURNIMA

Hindus across the country will celebrate Kartik Purnima on 23rd November, 2018. Kartik is the eighth lunar month as per the Hindu calendar and is considered the holiest month among all lunar months. This auspicious month holds immense importance as it is dedicated to the worship of both Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva. The ritual of taking a holy dip during Kartik month begins on the day of Sharad Purnima and ends on Kartik Purnima, which is also known and celebrated as Deva Diwali, Tripurari Purnima or Tripuri Poornima in different parts of the country.

A lot of rituals and festivals culminate on the day of Kartik Purnima, which makes it all the more significant. The purnimatithi begins at 12:53 pm on 22nd November, 2018 and ends at 11:09 am on 23/Nov/2018. (Source: Drikpanchang.com)

Kartik Purnima festivities last for five days. The festivities of Kartik Purnima begin on the day of Prabodhini Ekadashi, which is the eleventh day and goes on till Purnima, which is the fifteenth day of Kartik month during Shukla Paksh. A great legend associated with Kartik Purnima is the episode where Lord Shiva killed the demon king Tripurasura (hence the name Tripura Purnima or Tipurari Purnima). As per legends of Tripuri Purnima, Tripurasura defeated Gods and started ruling their kingdom. Once Tripurasura was killed, the day also came to be known as the 'Deva Deepawali' or Diwali of Gods.

As part of the rituals, devotees go to the rivers to take the ritualistic bath or 'Ganga Snan'. On the day of Kartik Purnima, they also observe a day long fast and perform Rudra Abhishekam of Lord Shiva, by bathing him in honey and milk. During the month associated with Kartika Purnima, Hindus



refrain from eating any non-vegetarian food. During the five-day celebration, devotees consume food only once in the afternoon, which is known as 'Habisha'. On the auspicious occasion of Kartik Purnima, annakoot- a type of prasad is

offered to Lord in temples. In a lot of household, wheat flour halwa is prepared for puja and prasad, and is then distributed among devotees. The prasad is made using wheat flour, ghee and sugar, cardamom powder and raisins. Source: ndtv.com

TULSI VIVAH



Tulsi Puja, also known as Tulsi Shaligram Puja, is observed during the waxing phase of the moon in Kartik month as per traditional lunar calendar. Tulsi, Holy Basil, is associated with Lord Krishna and is found in the majority of Hindu homes and is worshiped daily. Tulsi Puja 2018 date – the date of Tulsi Puja is November 19 for those observing it on Utthana Ekadasi. November 20 for those communities observing it on Karthika Shuddha Dwadashi or the day after Ekadasi. Some communities observe it on Kartik Purnima, which is on November 23.

Please note that the ritual can be observed on any date between November 19 and November 23.

Tulsi Puja is usually performed between Karthik Shuddh Ekadasi and Kartik Purnima.

The main ritual involves the wedding of Tulsi Plant to Lord Vishnu in the form of Shaligram.

Tulsi Pooja also marks the end of Diwali fortnight for many communities.

Greatness of Tulsi Puja

It is believed in Hinduism that Lord Vishnu goes to sleep on Ashada Shukla Paksha Ekadasi (June - July). He then wakes up on Kartik Shukla Paksha Ekadasi (October - November).

There is a popular belief after waking up, he first listens to Tulsi.

This is the reason why Tulsi Puja is performed on the next day of Kartik Shukla Paksha Ekadasi.

Benefits of Performing Tulsi Puja Vivah
A person performing Tulsi Vivah puja gets the same punya as performing Kanya Daan

or marriage of a daughter.

It is believed that all problems in marriage will be solved by performing Tulsi Vivah. Couples who are finding difficulties in marriage should perform Tulsi Puja.

Tulsi Vivah is an age-old tradition and is mentioned in the Padma Purana and other ancient scriptures. Tulsi, or the Holy Basil, is the sacred plant of the Hindus and symbolizes purity and is famous for its medicinal properties.

Legend has it that a king named Jalandhar got a boon that he will remain immortal as long as his wife Vrinda is chaste (Pati Vrat). This made King Jalandhar arrogant and he declared war on other kings, demi gods and started tormenting innocent people.

Finally, the task of annihilating King Jalandhar fell on Lord Vishnu.

Lord Vishnu in the guise of Jalandhar approached Vrinda and she mistook him for her husband. They lived like husband and wife. Soon Jalandhar was killed in a battle. This made Vrinda furious and she cursed Vishnu and made him turn to Shaligram.

Lord Vishnu did not let Vrinda suffer for no fault of her. She was turned into a Tulsi plant and gave her the boon that she will find a place in all houses and she will be worshiped. Tulsi Vivah is performed to

establish this divine relationship between Lord Vishnu and Vrinda.

The festival of Tulsi Vivah is also the precursor to the annual marriage season in North India. Performing it is considered highly auspicious and good for couples. Popular belief is that performing the wedding ceremony of marrying Tulsi to Vishnu considering her as their daughter is equal to performing Kanyadan.

Shaligram and Tulsi Plant

Two vital things needed for the Tulsi Vivah is a Tulsi plant and Shaligram or Saligram – Stone representing Lord Vishnu. If Shaligram is not available an image or idol of Lord Krishna or Lord Vishnu is used.

Which direction to face while doing Tulsi puja?

East. This is the desired direction to perform the ritual.

Usually, a Tulsi plant which is three or more years is chosen for the puja.

Tulsi pot or Tulsi Mandap in front of the house is colored. Tulsi and the pot or the base in which Tulsi plant is standing is decorated like a bride – by applying Turmeric and Vermilion powder. Sugarcane sticks and tamarind and Amla branches are placed alongside the Tulsi pot.

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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."

How Modi and Jaitley Gamed World Bank's Doing Business Rankings

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Interestingly, one of the tasks discussed at this meeting involved the streamlining and digitization of customs documents within one month, a "reform" measure that was also discussed in the December 2017 meeting with Jaitley.

In what would become a familiar pattern for the Modi government, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry was tasked with "Preparation of literature and preparatory activities for global campaign to be taken up on to priority".

Crucially, all attendees were told to keep the World Bank abreast of all the good work they were doing.

"It was emphasized that all these measures should be brought to the notice of the World Bank. All concerned should engage with the World Bank in this regard," the minutes read.

Two weeks later, on 29 July 2014, though they were not discussed in the meeting, the government announced changes to three central labor laws. The Indian press immediately hailed the changes as transformative; yet the government was sorely disappointed to learn that the World Bank was only planning to consider reforms made before 1 June 2014.

Mayaram, the then Finance Secretary and Kant, the then DIPP secretary, were tasked with writing to the World Bank to plead for the deadline to be extended, and the new reforms to be taken into account, so the government could show an immediate improvement in India's business environment in the Doing Business Report 2015, which was scheduled to be released a few months later. The PMO kept a close track of this.

"It is learnt that the DBR, 2015 is at the stage of drafting and consolidation," Mayaram, the then Finance secretary wrote to MN Prasad, Executive Director of the World Bank for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka, on 21 August 2014. "In this regard, it is important that the reference period for documenting reforms in the report is extended to the middle of August, 2014 (instead of 1st June, 2014) to cover the recent reform measures also." Kant, for his part, lobbied Kaushik Basu, then senior vice president and Chief Economist at the World Bank.

"The new Indian government is deeply concerned about India's low ranking on the ease of doing business as reflected in the "Doing Business 2014" report published by the World Bank Group," Kant wrote in a letter dated September 10, 2014 and reviewed by HuffPost India. "I would like to emphasize that the methodology adopted to arrive at the rankings needs to be further refined so as to paint the correct picture. Drawing conclusions based on the studies conducted in only two cities, namely, Mumbai and Delhi, overdependence on the regulations in place for small and medium enterprises and responses received from a narrow set of services users such as lawyers, accountants and brokers, inadequate appreciation of factors impinging on general business climate such as conservation of environment & ecology may lead to skewed conclusions, especially for a country like India with a huge geographical canvas dotted by varying shades of regulatory mechanisms."

Incidentally, this is one of the most persistent critiques made by independent experts about the ranking to this day.

Despite these letters, the World Bank refused to extend the deadline or change its methodology as per India's demands and in October 2014, when the Doing Business Report 2015 came out, India's EODB ranking actually fell from 134 to 142.

Methodology issues

The Modi government, in its initial years, also sought to lobby the Bank into changing its methodology while seeking to rise up the ranking at the same time. In its official communications, it also compared the World Bank methodology with the World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index and was favorably inclined towards the latter as it showed a better rank for India.

In his 21 August 2014 letter to the Bank's Executive Director, Mayaram requested for a meeting with the "senior management" of the Bank with a delegation of Indian bureaucrats led by Kant to impress upon them India's urgent concerns.

"We must effectively engage with the World Bank to convince them about the need to change the methodology so that the DBR reflects India's position more correctly," Mayaram wrote, referring to the Doing Business Report by its initials. Official correspondence, released under the RTI, shows while Kant did not go for a meeting with the Bank's Chief Economist Basu, he wrote the above quoted letter lobbying for a change in the methodology.

When India's rank improved marginally from 142 to 131 in October 2015 but still remained far from the ambitious target of top 50 countries set by Modi, senior government officials took to writing petulant letters to World Bank officials and to each other, questioning the basis of the rankings.

On 1 April 2016, for instance, Revenue Secretary Adhia wrote to the then World Bank Executive Director for India and other South Asian countries, Subhash Chandra Garg, saying, "Whether we look at the Doing Business Report in relative terms or absolute terms, the findings seem seriously skewed."

(In July 2017, Garg would be repatriated from the Bank to the Indian government, where he was appointed as economic affairs secretary in the Finance Ministry.)

In September 2016, anticipating a lackluster ranking for India on the index, DIPP Secretary Abhishek wrote to then economic affairs secretary Shaktikanta Das, expressing his disappointment with the World Bank team for relying on the opinions of chosen respondents on the reforms process, rather than on government data.

"It was evident from the discussion that the Doing Business team is giving more credence to unsubstantiated averments of a few dozen respondents over the actual system log and individual case-wise database running in thousands of sheets" Abhishek wrote to Das following a video conference with the World Bank team to discuss the points of contention about reform claims made by the government for the then upcoming 2017 report, according to his letter dated 26 September 2016, reviewed by HuffPost India.

So, on 25 October 2016, when much to the government's embarrassment, India's rank improved by one spot from 131 to 130 despite hectic lobbying, Modi went on the warpath.

An official statement released by the PMO on 26 October 2016 about Modi's sixteenth interaction through PRAGATI, a platform for the PM's direct review meetings with officials, said, "Mentioning the World Bank's latest Report on Ease of Doing Business, the Prime Minister asked all Chief Secretaries and all Secretaries of the Government of India to study the report, and analyze the potential areas where there is scope for improvement in their respective departments and states. He asked for a report from all concerned in this regard, within a month, and asked the Cabinet Secretary to review the same thereafter."

In November 2016, Modi would announce demonetization now almost universally acknowledged as a terrible idea. Meanwhile, the government lobbied relentlessly with the Bank, according to a senior government official with knowledge of the matter.

"Fact is, this government pleaded with the World Bank quite vehemently and initially, Amitabh Kant was at the vanguard of it. Indian government's persuasion has worked," this official said. He explained why he felt that Indian government's "persuasion" (he chuckled at the word "lobbying" while saying this) worked with the Bank, "We are one of the largest

borrowers which means that the interest we pay to the bank greases its salaries. So obviously there is a lot of clout that India also has over the bank."

"If the Prime Minister also tells the President that look, this is not right, India should be better than what you are showing," the official continued. "They also oblige."

Whether we look at the Doing Business Report in relative terms or absolute terms, the findings seem seriously skewed: Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia

Over the next two years, the government's efforts bore fruit. From 2014 to the most recent report that came out early this month, as India's rank jumped from 142 to 77, the government changed its views on the Bank's methodology.

In late 2014, Jaitley told Parliament in a written reply to a question from a parliamentarian that the "government has indicated its concerns about the indicators used, methodology, sample size, use of ranking, neglect of qualitative and country specific business environment, etc. to the World Bank."

This November, as the government's five-year effort at lobbying the bank paid off, Jaitley hailed the ranking as the product of "independent research" based on "objective criteria".

"Only a focused and a purpose oriented Government could have achieved this," Jaitley concluded.

Small and medium sized businesses feel demonetization and GST have adversely affected their prospects.

An undesirable dream?

As the Modi government continues to invest efforts into improving India's Doing Business rankings keeping in mind the target of joining the top 50, some question if the government should really care so much about what is ultimately an arbitrary index produced by a multilateral lending agency.

"They should be able to tell the investors which is a good country to invest in, right?" the former finance secretary Mayaram said about the ranking. "But if your methodology is flawed then it has no value. That's what I said then and I still hold it today that there is not much value because the methodology is flawed."

The 2019 ranking for instance, put China-arguably the one place where the world has done the most business in the past decade-at 46, while Rwanda is ranked 29th.

"If you consider yourself as the six largest economy or, by PPP, third largest economy in the world, then for you to get very upset or excited about what ranking the World Bank or World Economic Forum, or anyone else does, it only shows a little lack of confidence," Mayaram concluded.

Mumbai-based independent analyst Hemindra Hazari said he was struck by India's improved rankings in context of a difficult time for small and medium size Indian companies.

"If it is in terms of the large corporates, then it is perhaps possible that they have seen an improvement in the business," Hazari said. "But when you talk about MSMEs, in the last two years, our dear government has given two mortal wounds in the form of demonetization and implementation of the GST."

The elaborate filing requirements of the Goods and Services Tax had hurt medium and small enterprises while demonetization had hamstrung their cash flows, Hazari said and added, "I would think it is surprising if the MSMEs have said that their ease of doing business has improved."

Yet, Modi and his government have been quick to market this improvement in India's rank on an index prepared for mid-size firms operating in two of the most prosperous cities of India as evidence of an actual improvement of economic conditions across the country.

On 3 November, for instance, Modi said, the rankings are an "indicator of India's strengthening economy and quick progress". He said this while answering a question posed by a BJP volunteer from Korba, Chhattisgarh, who wanted to know the relevance of the rankings in the life of the 'common man'. Modi further said that the improvement in rankings over four years by almost half -going from 142 in 2014 to 77 in 2018-shows the Indian economy had improved twice over ever since his government was sworn in, and this marked a definitive change from the previous government. He also told party volunteers from election-bound Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan during the online interaction that he wants the BJP volunteers to keep track of good news about the country and ensure that they repeatedly speak about it among people, presumably voters.

(Source: Huffington Post 11/20/ 2018)

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India, Pak to develop Kartarpur corridor on respective sides

Addressing the long-standing sentiments of Sikh community, a Union Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, Nov 22, approved building and development of the Kartarpur corridor from Dera Nanak in Gurdaspur district in Punjab to the International Border with Pakistan.

The cabinet resolution includes a detailed plan to celebrate across India and globally the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev, who spent 18 years at Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib on the banks of Ravi river, across Dera Baba Nanak, in Pakistan.

"The Kartarpur Sahib corridor will be implemented as an integrated development project with Government of India's funding, to provide smooth and easy passage, with all modern amenities," Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said. A note verbale communicating the same has been sent to Pakistan High Commission from MEA (Ministry of External Affairs) whose spokesperson Raveesh Kumar added that India has "approached and urged the Pakistan government to recognize the sentiments of Sikh community and build a corridor with suitable facilities in their territory to facilitate easy and smooth visits of pilgrims from India".

The Cabinet announcement came a day after Pakistan media reported that Islamabad has decided to lay foundation for the corridor. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi wrote in a tweet, "Pakistan has already conveyed to India its decision to open Kartarpur Corridor for Baba Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary. PM Imran Khan will do break the ground (ground breaking ceremony) at Kartarpur facilities on 28th November. We welcome the Sikh community to Pakistan for this auspicious occasion."

However, Indian sources claimed that Cabinet passed its resolution after many weeks of internal consultations and preparation within the government. "Any suggestion that the corridor or the celebrations are being planned as a response to

a Pakistani proposal is not only preposterous, but hurtful to the sentiments of the Sikh community", said an official.

India's intention is that the corridor must be a full-fledged one with no restriction on pilgrims and should be open not just on special occasions but 365 days and 24 hours, said sources. "There must be free and readily available consular access for Indian citizens on the Pakistani side," added an Indian official.

However, what remains unclear is bilateral consensus to operationalize the corridor with immigration check points at the International Border aside of development of the road by both countries on their respective sides. The matter was to be discussed if External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had met with her counterpart SM Qureshi along sidelines of UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) in New York. But India called off the meeting within 24 hours of accepting the Pakistani offer of talks.

"The modalities will need to be worked out to finalize logistical and procedural aspects, which will require some kind of a meeting," said a Pakistani official.

Meanwhile, political leaders welcomed the move and also rushed to claim credit for movement forward after stalemate on the issue. Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh welcomed the resolution "in response to the various letters and submissions he had made to the Prime Minister on this issue".

Shiromani Akali Dal(SAD) president and former Punjab deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal hailed the Modi government for its decision and announced that SAD and SGPC will take a delegation to Kartarpur Sahib in near future. Asked if Punjab minister and Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu's visit to Pakistan and controversial hugging of the country's Army chief catalyzed the Government of India's decision on the corridor, he quipped: "I do not know," adding, "May be the recent grenade attack at religious place in Amritsar was because of it."

Sidhu had claimed that the Pakistan government has decided to open the corridor following his Islamabad visit for oath-taking ceremony of Prime Minister Imran Khan. 'It will act like a soothing balm for two neighboring countries' wrote Sidhu in a tweet.

"Heartily welcome Kartarpur initiative, it will ease the situation between the two neighbors. J&K has been waiting for

similar large heartedness since last 70 years. Need to carry forward Vajpayee ji initiative and open all the routes across LOC and IB in J&K," PDP president and former J&K CM Mehbooba Mufti tweeted.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh will lay the foundation stone of the Kartarpur corridor at Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur on November 26, Punjab Government announced. Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba has asked the state government to make preparations for the ceremony. (Source: TNS)

Guru Nanak's message of inter-faith dialogue is the best solution to contain terrorism, radicalism: Dr. Manmohan Singh

"Guru Nanak's message that all religions have merit and it is necessary to learn from each other is as relevant today as it was when He lived in our midst," the former PM said in an exclusive interview to The Tribune on the eve of the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of the founder of Sikh religion.

He stressed the urgency of mobilizing all institutions - political, religious and social - to end the scourge of terrorism. In reference to the recent terror act on the Nirankari congregation in Amritsar, he said that Punjab had suffered enough, and it would be sad if terrorism were to again take root in the state.

The Congress veteran called upon all segments of the Sikh society, the Hindus and Muslims and all others, to unite on the occasion of Parkash Utsav to promote the cult of good and honest living preached and practiced by Guru Nanak.

A practicing Sikh and India's first Sikh PM, Dr Singh quoted poet Allama Iqbal, who best described the "Master's" advent: "Phir uthi aakhir sada tauheed hi Punjab se...Hind ko ek mard-e-kaamil ne jagaaya khwaab se..."

(With Inputs from The Tribune, India)

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KALPA: THE LAND OF GODS

Kalpa, the main village of Kinnaur, in the Sutlej River Valley is a place to remember and cherish. Known for its many beautiful temples and monasteries, this town is also famed for its apple orchards. The majestic Kinnaur-Kailash range peeking from across the Sutlej River makes for a blissful break.

An early morning walk through this paradise will give you a chance to experience magic and mystery with the sunrise. The pinkish hue on the peaks that slowly gets tinted with the golden glow is a sight to behold. Adorned with rich flora and fauna, this small hamlet is a must visit destination.

Kinnaur Kailash

Kinnaur is perceived to be a magical land aka the land of fairy tales and fantasies which has a spectacular terrain of lush green valley, orchards, vineyards, snow clad peaks and cold desert mountains. It is a border district of Himachal Pradesh. Kinnaur is also rich in flora & fauna. The culture and language is different from other parts of the state. Kinnaur, the tribal district of Himachal Pradesh, lies 250 kms away from Shimla, the capital of Himachal Pradesh and is located on the Hindustan Tibet Road. The landscape of the area varies from lush green orchards of the scenic Sangla Valley to the magnificence of the Hangrang Valley. The massive snow laden ranges which provide a regal dignity to the scene are dominated by the peak of Kinner Kailash. Kalpa is one of the biggest and the most beautiful villages of Kinnaur. One can enter Kinnaur district at Village Chshora and go down the road built in vertical rock and it is a rare treat to travel on this road which is a great engineering feat.

Camping/Shelter

Guest houses are available at all destinations. Camping can also be adopted by trekkers on the trek because of the natural beauty that it boasts of.

General tips and tricks

1) Make sure you carry warm clothes along with you no matter during whichever season you are travelling in. 2) Be always prepared with your trekking gear and equipment. 3) Carrying your own medication and a good pair of shoes is a must. 4) Make sure you obtain all the permits well in advance required for trekking in the region. aingear along as weather at higher altitude changes at every moment. 6) Choose a well-qualified and professional guide and fix the rates in order to avoid any misunderstanding. 7) Carry spare batteries and film roll for camera as there maybe no electricity supply.

Trekking to Chakka

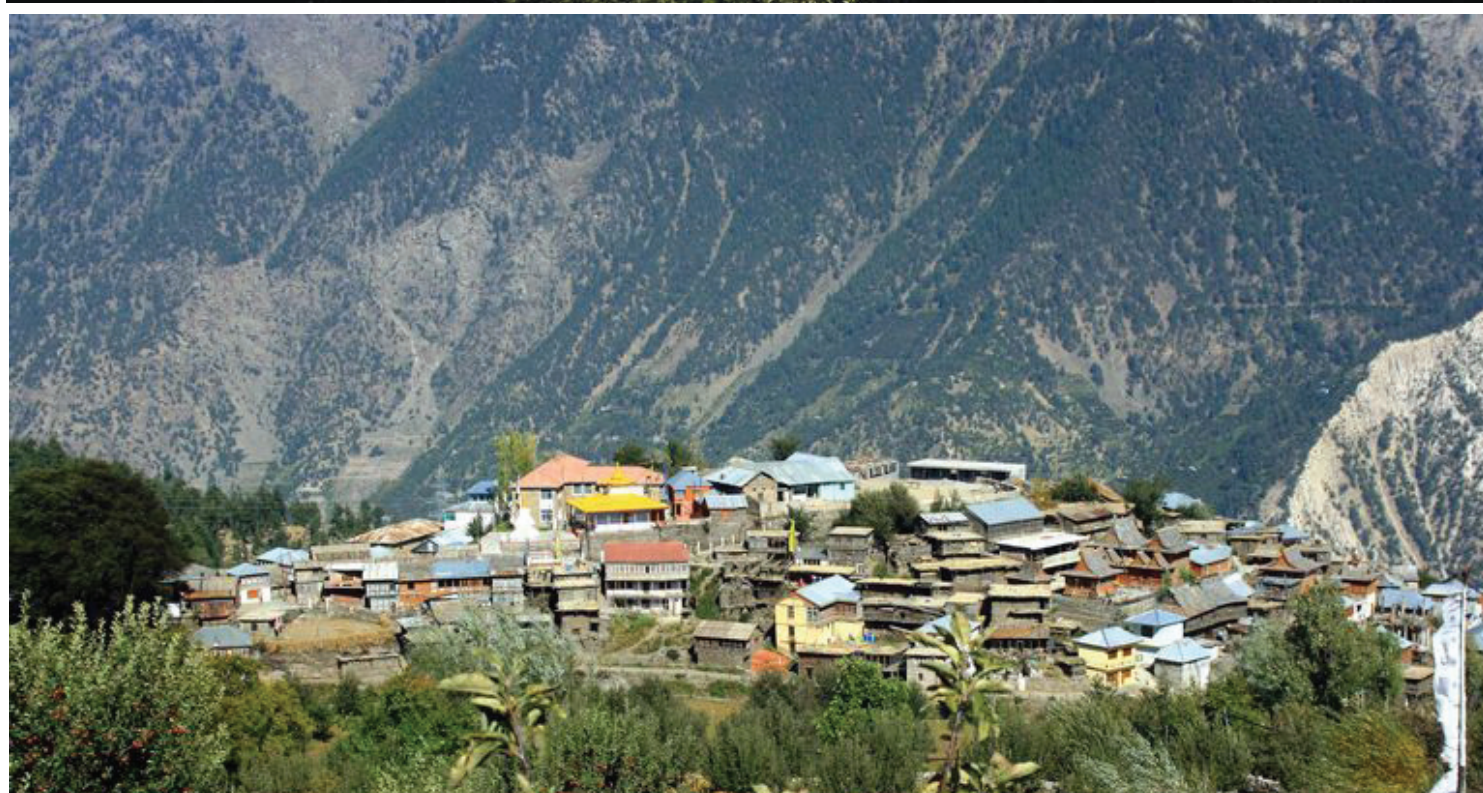
Adrenaline rushing adventure awaits you at Chaka! The Chaka peak with an altitude of 15000 ft above the sea level is an amazing trek up the hill along the gurgling water channel.

The uphill journey is almost 2-3 hour long while it will take about 1.5 hours going downhill. Hire a local guide to explore the place to its best and if possible begin your trip to the place in the morning say around 9:00AM to 9:30AM.

Suicide Point

As the name suggest, Suicide Point is a place with dangerous trench and vertical slopes. Situated near Kalpa, a walk to this point will take you through delicious sight of apple orchards.

Roghi Village



This is a place where you can witness and enjoy the ethnicity and traditions of people of Kalpa. A small village located at a distance of 6-7 km. from Kalpa, it is famous for its simple lifestyle and customs of Himachal.

Dotted with apple orchards, the area is a sight to behold enriched with flora and fauna. A small walk in the village will transport you to a place where the word tension is unknown.

Narayan-Nagini temple

A perfect example of Kinnauri craftsmanship, this temple is constructed in traditional Tibetan Pagoda style of architecture. Situated on the top of a hill at Chini Village, this temple is one of the major attractions of the village and a must visit.

Hu-Bu-Lan-Kar monastery

It is a perfect place for history buffs! This extremely old monastery was founded by Rinchensang-po (950-1055 AD) and is very ancient.



WORLD T20

Indian women crash out in semis losing to England by 8 wickets

NORTH SOUND (TIP): India's dreams of winning a maiden global title lay in tatters after a questionable omission and an inexplicable batting collapse saw them crash to an eight-wicket defeat against England in the semi-finals of the ICC Women's World T20.

Reigning ODI World Champions England will now meet Australia in the summit clash after the Southern Stars beat defending champions West Indies by 72 runs.

India decided to leave their seniormost player Mithali Raj, a move that will certainly be questioned, after India lost their last eight wickets for 24 runs to end up scoring a below-par 112 in 19.3 overs.

It was a walk in the park for England as seasoned campaigners Amy Jones (53 no, 47 balls) and Natalie Sciver (52 off 40 balls) added 92 runs for the unbroken third-wicket stand to finish the match in only 17.1 overs.

It was yet another story of Indian women not showing enough temperament during big match days, having lost the 50-over World Cup final to England at Lord's last year and the Asia Cup T20 final to Bangladesh earlier this year.

As many as seven players failed to get double digit scores and the spin attack was unable to adapt to a different surface at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium after playing all their matches at Providence in Guyana.

The bold decision to drop Mithali, the highest run-getter in shortest format, may haunt the Indian team for the longest time to come as coach Ramesh Powar and captain Harmanpreet Kaur will have a lot of answering to do in the coming days.

On a track where the ball wasn't coming on to the bat, it was the Englishwomen who came up trumps with left-arm spinners Kirstie Gordon (2/20 in 4 overs) and Sophie Ecclestone (2/22 in 3.2 overs) varying the pace of their deliveries, something their Indian counterparts completely failed.

Skipper Heather Knight's off-breaks also came in handy as she had the best figures of 3 for 9 in two overs as none of India's middle- and lower-order batters could force the pace.

Once Smriti Mandhana (33, 24 balls), Jemimah Rodriguez (26



India players congratulate Amy Jones (C) and Nat Sciver (R) of England for winning the ICC Women's World T20 2nd semi-final match between England and India. Pic courtesy: AFP/Getty Images

off 26 balls) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (16, 20 balls) were dismissed, there wasn't any Plan B with Veda Krishnamurthy completely out of form and Deepti Sharma (7, 10 balls) incapable of hitting big shots.

Poor game sense of not reading the pitch also played its part as most of the Indian batswomen charged at the deliveries rather than playing deep inside the crease.

That was the ploy that Jones and Sciver deployed while facing the Indian spin quartet, who were below average on the day.

At Guyana, it was a slow track where the ploy of taking pace off the deliveries worked for the likes of Poonam Yadav (0/29 in 4 overs), Deepti (1/24 in 4 overs) and Anuja Patil (0/27 in 3.1 overs).

However, the Antigua track was even slower where they needed to change the pace and bowl a little faster. The deliveries being slow through the air gave both Englishwomen enough time to rock on the back foot and hit shots all round the wicket as a much-hyped clash turned into a lopsided contest.

Source: PTI

India lose 1st T20 despite Shikhar Dhawan heroics

BRISBANE (TIP): A sloppy India failed to get an ideal start to the Australia tour, losing the rain-hit opening T20 International by four runs at the Gabba in Brisbane on Wednesday. India first faltered in the field, letting Australia score 158 for four after rain shortened the contest to 17 overs a side. Glenn Maxwell was the star batsman for Australia, hammering 46 runs off 24 balls. The 45 minute rain stoppage meant India were set a revised target of 174 runs in 17 overs. Opener Shikhar Dhawan smashed a sublime 76 off 42 balls in the run chase before Dinesh Karthik came up with a pulsating 30 off 13 balls towards the end but India still finished agonisingly short on 169 for seven.

It was a morale boosting win for Australia, who have endured a dismal run of late in limited overs cricket.

The second match of the three-match series will be played in Melbourne on Friday.

Dhawan got India off to a quick start, putting on 35 off 25 balls for the opening stand with Rohit Sharma (7).

The latter was caught at long on off Jason Behrendorff (1-43) in a bid to accelerate his strike-rate.

In keeping with the strategy used during the T20I series in England, KL Rahul (13) came out to bat at number three.

Dhawan and Rahul put on 46 runs for the second wicket, but it was mostly down to the left-hander's belligerence. He hit ten fours and two sixes overall, and reached his ninth T20I half-century off only 28 balls.

Rahul though was patchy at best and struggled for timing. He was stumped off Adam Zampa (2-22) in the ninth over, with the leg spinner also accounting for skipper Virat Kohli (4) who never really got going coming down at number four.

Zampa should have had a third wicket but he dropped a return chance from Dhawan (on 65). The batsman enjoyed



another life at 74, when substitute Nathan Coulter-Nile put him down at square leg off Billy Stanlake (1-27).

The asking rate was climbing up and it took a toll on Dhawan, who finally holed out of Stanlake, leaving Rishabh Pant (20 off 15 balls) and Karthik with a mountain to climb.

They nearly achieved the impossible, putting on 51 off a mere 24 balls, toying around with the Australian bowling. But what is becoming increasingly frustrating with Pant, he played yet another loose and unnecessary stroke, throwing his wicket away.

It left Karthik to finish off things, but he found the going tough without enough support from the other end. With 13 needed off 6 balls, Krunal Pandya (2) and Karthik holed out off

consecutive deliveries off Marcus Stoinis (2-27).

This was after Maxwell hit four sixes in a whirlwind knock before rain came, after Chris Lynn scored 37 runs off 20 balls to help Australia recover from a slow start.

India had won the toss and opted to bowl on a surprisingly green wicket.

Kuldeep Yadav was picked ahead of Yuzvendra Chahal as expected, while the hosts also included a spinner in Adam Zampa and left out medium pacer Coulter-Nile.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (0-15) and Jasprit Bumrah (1-21) got India off to a good start but Aaron Finch (27) pulled things back a bit.

Khaleel Ahmed (1-42) got the initial breakthrough as D'Arcy Short (7) was caught at long on. The left-arm pacer proved expensive thereafter.

Kuldeep took a sensational catch running back to dismiss Short, and from there onwards, he had a marked influence on the game. Later he also picked up 2-24 in his four-over spell. He dismissed Finch and then sent back Lynn as well, thus reducing Australia to 75-3 in the 11th over.

Apart from Yadav's stunning effort, India were rather poor in the field. Skipper Kohli had dropped Finch in the fourth over, a straight chance spilled at cover, and then miss fielded later on as well.

Ahmed too dropped Stoinis (33 not out off 19 balls) late in the Australian innings, while Maxwell should have been run-out.

Finch took advantage of the reprieve and put on 40 runs off 26 balls with Lynn for the second wicket. But it was Maxwell who stole the show with his belligerent hitting as Australia crossed 150 in the 16th over. He put on 78 runs off 37 balls with Stoinis as Indian bowlers proved expensive even before the death overs began.

Source: PTI

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