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YOGA SPECIAL



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will bring out a special profusely illustrated edition on July 2 to mark the Independence Day of America on 4th of July



Articles and advertisements for the edition may please be e-mailed by June 25, 2021 to salujandra@gmail.com For any question, please call 646-247-9458.

Antonio Guterres re-elected as UN Secretary-General for a second five-year term

"INDIA VALUES SECRETARY GENERAL'S LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED NATIONS": INDIA'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JAISHANKAR

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): UN General Assembly on Friday, June 18, appointed Antonio Guterres as the UN Secretary-General for a second term beginning January 1, 2022, days after the powerful Security Council had unanimously recommended his name to the 193-member body for re-election.

President of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir announced that Mr. Guterres "has been appointed by acclamation Secretary-General of the United Nations for the second term of office beginning on January 1, 2022, and ending on December 31, 2026." Mr. Bozkir then administered the oath of office to 72-year-old Guterres at the podium of the UN General Assembly Hall.

On June 8, the 15-nation Council had held a closed meeting where it adopted by acclamation the resolution that recommended Mr. Guterres' name to the General Assembly for a second five-year term as Secretary General from January



Antonio Guterres will begin his second term on January 1, 2022 - Photo / courtesy United Nations / via Kyodo

1, 2022-December 31, 2026.

Estonia's Ambassador to the UN Sven Jurgenson, President of the Council for the month of June, had told reporters after the meeting: "We have all seen actually the Secretary General in action. I think he has been an excellent

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3 MILLION JOBS IN INDIAN IT FIRMS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK BY NEXT YEAR, SAYS REPORT



Around 3 million jobs in IT sector will be lost by 2022, principally driven by the impact of robot process.

NEW YORK (TIP): With automation taking place at a much faster pace across industries especially in the tech space, domestic software firms that employ over 16 million are set to slash headcounts by a massive 3 million by 2022, which will help them save a whopping USD 100 billion mostly in salaries annually, says a report.

The domestic IT sector employs around 16 million; of them around 9 million are employed in low-skilled services and BPO roles, according to NASSCOM. Of these 9 million low-skilled services and BPO roles, 30 per cent or around 3 million will be lost

CONTD ON PAGE 46

END OF AN ERA: LEGENDARY INDIAN SPRINTER MILKHA SINGH AKA FLYING SIKH DIES AFTER MONTH-LONG BATTLE WITH COVID-19

Tributes pour in. PM Modi describes him as a "colossal sportsperson"



Milkha Singh, the Padma Shri awardee was 91. Wife Nirmal Milkha Singh died of the same ailment 5 days before him on Sunday, June 13. They are survived by their golfer son Jeev Milkha Singh and three daughters.

I.S. SALUJA

CHANDIGARH/ NEW YORK (TIP): The Flying Sikh Milkha Singh died on Friday, June 18, after a month-long battle with COVID-19.

The Padma Shri awardee was 91 and is survived by his golfer son Jeev Milkha Singh and three daughters. "He breathed his last at 11.30 p.m.," a family spokesperson told PTI.

Milkha Singh's condition deteriorated as he developed complications, including fever and dipping oxygen saturation levels, after a bout with COVID-19, in the Intensive Care Unit of the PGIMER hospital. contd on page 2

JUNETEENTH IS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY: BIDEN SIGNS THE BILL INTO LAW

WASHINGTON (TIP): A day after President Biden arrived from Geneva after his summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin, he signed on June 17, into law a bill creating a federal holiday to commemorate Juneteenth, the day marking the end of slavery in Texas.

"Great nations don't ignore the most painful moments. They don't ignore those moments in the past. They embrace them," Biden said in remarks in the East Room before a crowd that included lawmakers and 94-year-old

CONTD ON PAGE 46



US President Joe Biden alongside Vice President Kamala Harris and members of congress signing the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law in the East Room of the White House on June 17, 2021. - Photo / Courtesy Washington Post

INDIAN DIPLOMACY ADJUSTING TO AN 'UNCERTAIN' WORLD ORDER: SHRINGLA

NEW DELHI (TIP): India has created capacities to take on future waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said on Friday, June 18. Delivering a lecture at the Public Affairs Forum of India on "India's Foreign Policy in the post-COVID World: New Vulnerabilities, New Opportunities," he said Indian diplomacy was adjusting to the "uncertain" world order. "We have created capacities in terms of hospitals and equipment so that we are better prepared

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Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla says the world is 'complex' and can no longer be defined in 'binaries' - File Photo / Courtesy PTI



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BY PRABHJOT SINGH

In 1958 when the then Prime Minister Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru asked Milkha Singh what he wanted for becoming the first Indian to win an individual gold medal in athletics in the Cardiff Commonwealth Games, the ace sprinter requested a "national holiday" in the country. And 63 years later, on Friday night, he himself embarked upon a long holiday leaving not only the entire nation but the whole sporting world sobbing and grieving.

He was christened "Flying Sikh" by the Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan, General Ayub Khan, after he set the stands of a Lahore stadium ablaze by defeating the local hero, Akhlaq, who was better known as "Ghorra" (horse), in a great sprint contest.

A victim of the 1947 partition, Milkha Singh, was successful in joining Indian Army at a recruitment rally in Srinagar. Running was his passion, and he would work hard to be the best. And true to himself, his training and his ambition, he remained the best to make sure that there could be no two "Milkhas".

After winning a gold at Cardiff, Milkha went on to win a double in the 1958 Asian Games before his memorable record-smashing run at the 1960 Rome Olympic Games where he missed a medal by a whisker. And that remained his greatest regret. Ahead of all his competitors, Milkha, close to the finish line, made a

-: TRIBUTE:-

AFTER NIRMAL, NOW FLYING SIKH MILKHA SINGH TAKES THE FINAL HOLIDAY



Milkha Singh, "the Flying Sikh", has flown away

mistake of looking back. And that cost him heavily. Instead of a podium finish, he was placed fourth.

When the then Punjab Chief Minister Partap Singh Kairon asked him to come out of Indian Army and join the State Government in its Sports Department, he reluctantly accepted the offer. Initially, he would travel between Delhi and Chandigarh every day before making the City Beautiful his permanent home. In between he had met Nirmal Saini, an outstanding volleyball player, who was working as a Physical Education teacher in a Punjab college. Ultimately, they married.

Milkha Singh, who by then had become world famous as "Flying Sikh" took control of school sports in the Education

Department of the State while Hockey Olympian Balbir Singh was in the State sports department.

It may be a mere coincidence that the three greats of Punjab Sports - Balbir Singh Sr, Flying Sikh Milkha Singh and Nirmal Milkha Singh - had worked together.

As luck would have it, Milkha Singh could not attend the cremation of his life partner as at that time he was fighting for his own life at the PGI. The end came five days after his wife had breathed her last at a private hospital in Mohali.

Known for their robust health and fitness, both great stalwarts were lost to Corona, sad indeed. While Milkha Singh was 91, Nirmal was 85.

Milkha Singh as Additional Director, Youth Services and Sports in the Education Department, used to take hundreds of schoolboys and girls to Srinagar every year for the summer (off season) coaching camps. That was the reason that Punjab remained at top in school sports.

A born runner, Milkha Singh was always a sportsman. After retiring from athletics, he took to golf and was an accomplished golfer. His son, Jeev, too, is a star golfer.

Besides Jeev, Milkha and Nirmal leave behind three daughters - Aleeza (she was with Air India), Dr Mona and Sonia - and their families.

(Prabhjot Singh is a senior journalist)

contd from page 1

End of an Era: Legendary Indian sprinter...

He had contracted COVID-19 last month and tested negative for the virus on Wednesday when he was shifted to general ICU in another block of the hospital. Milkha had been "stable" before Thursday evening. Milkha's 85-year-old wife Nirmal, who had also been infected by the virus, passed away at a private hospital in Mohali on Sunday, June 13. Milkha was admitted to PGIMER on June 3 after his oxygen levels dipped at home following treatment at the Fortis hospital in Mohali for a week.

The legendary athlete is a four-time Asian Games gold medalist and the 1958 Commonwealth Games champion but his greatest performance remains the fourth-place finish in the 400m final of the 1960 Rome Olympics. He also represented India in the 1956 and 1964 Olympics and was bestowed the Padma Shri in 1959.

The entire country paid glowing tribute to Indian sprint legend Milkha Singh, with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing him as a "colossal sportsperson who captured the nation's imagination". Prime Minister Narendra Modi, condoling his death described him as a "colossal sportsman".

"In the passing away of Shri Milkha Singh Ji, we have lost a colossal sportsperson, who captured the nation's imagination and had a special place in the hearts of countless Indians," Mr. Modi said in a tweet. "His inspiring personality endeared himself to millions. Anguished by his passing away," Olympic bound star javelin throwers Neeraj Copra tweeted "We lost a Gem. He will always remain as an inspiration for every Indian. May his soul Rest in peace."

Condoling the death, Home Minister Amit Shah said the country lost one of the brightest stars of Indian sports. "India mourns the sad demise of legendary sprinter Shri Milkha Singh Ji, The Flying Sikh. He has left an indelible mark on world athletics. Nation will always remember him as one of the brightest stars of Indian sports. My deepest condolences to his family and countless followers." Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said in Milkha's demise, the country has lost a star. "India has lost its star. Milkha Singh Ji has left us but he will continue to inspire every Indian to shine for India. My deepest condolences to the family. I pray for his soul to rest in peace," the Minister tweeted. Sports Authority of India (SAI) expressed "immense sadness at the demise of one of India's greatest ever sportspersons 'The Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh. "A gold medalist at the CWG & Asian Games, he held the 400m National record for 38 years. Condolences to his family & the millions whom he inspired," the SAI said in a tweet.

Athletics Federation of India said in a tweet: "Very sad news for all #Indians, legend Shri Milkha Singh Ji passed away." "A huge loss for the sport of athletics today. Rest well #MilkhaSingh ji," Olympica Anju Bobby George tweeted.

"Really shocked by the demise of the legend Milkha sir. You will forever have a very special place in my heart. The Flying Sikh will live forever. RIP" Indian sprinter Mohamad Anas Yahiya. Former India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh also expressed also expressed his condolences on the micro-blogging site.

"Very sad, heartbreaking to hear flying sikh Sardar Milkha Singh ji is no more... waheguru RIPMilkhaSinghji." Indian tennis star Sania Mirza said: "Had the honour of meeting you and you blessed me so many times .. the kindest and warmest Palms up together RIP Milkha Singh sir .. the world will miss a legend like you ..MilkhaSingh." "Really shocked and sad to learn about the passing away of the legend Milkha Singh ji. Om Shanti," Javelin thrower Devendra Jhaharia said.

Decorated doubles badminton player Jwala Gutta also joined in expressing his sadness. "What an inspiration you were to the millions like us.... There will be none like you sir Rest in peace legend MilkhaSingh Flag of India Woman bowing deeply," she posted. The official handle of the Indian football team also mourned Milkha's death. "We join the nation in mourning the loss of the iconic 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh. His incredible achievements will continue to inspire future generations. May his soul rest in peace RIP"

Assam Chief Minister Himanata Biswa Sarma said: "Saddened at the demise of 'Flying Sikh' Captain Milkha Singh. His laurels had not only made India swell with pride but also inspired generations of sports enthusiasts. My condolences to his family. Om Shanti!" The news of Milkha Singh's death shocked the Indian American community in the US.

Paul Sihota from California called the offices of The Indian Panorama to convey his condolences as did many Punjabi sports lovers who held him in great esteem. Milkha Singh has always been a role model and an inspiration to budding sportspersons in the Diaspora. To me, who had known him for years and sought his guidance in organizing two Punjab State level sports events, his going away is a painful personal loss. The void created by his passing away will not be filled. I pray for peace to his departed soul even as I mourn the loss a few days earlier of his beloved wife Nirmal Milkha Singh. I pray for strength enough to the bereaved son Jeev Milkha Singh and the three daughters to bear the irreparable loss. (With inputs from PTI)



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Indian-origin Healthcare Experts in Queen's Birthday Honors spotlight

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin healthcare experts involved in the field of Covid-19 vaccine trials and community support efforts are among those in the spotlight at the Queen's Birthday Honors List.

The Queen's Birthday Honors List, unveiled on Friday evening, is released every year to coincide with Queen Elizabeth II's official birthday celebrations held during the second weekend of June. This time, it has a special focus on the extraordinary efforts made by individuals across the country during the pandemic.

Kolkata-born Divya Chadha Manek has been honored with an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to the government during the Covid-19 response for her involvement in the research and development of vaccines and the resulting clinical trials.

Chadha Manek, now the director of business development and marketing at the British government's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network, was at the heart of ensuring that Covid-19 vaccines could be put through requisite trials for a timely deployment as the Clinical Trials Work stream lead at the UK's Vaccine Taskforce.

"To me, this honor is recognizing not just me, but everyone involved in the success of UK vaccine research—the half-a-million people who signed up to the vaccine research registry and the tens of thousands who took part in the vital Covid-19 vaccine trials here," said Chadha Manek, who moved to the UK as a teenager with a simple message from her

Punjabi father:

"When I left India for the UK at the age of 18, my father gave me a flight ticket, put 500 pounds in my pocket and told me: 'Be good, do good and do something amazing that you get to meet the Queen'. I lost my father last year, but this honor truly feels like I have done good on his behalf. So, thank you so much for this honor," she said.

Chadha Manek was instrumental in supporting companies to bring vaccine trials to the UK, generate the data required for marketing authorization and help with the development of the Vaccine Research Registry.

"The honor feels like a real recognition and nod to clinical research, which may not always get the spotlight it truly deserves. It's fantastic to receive this 'thank you' from the Queen," she added.

Chadha Manek represents one of many honors related to Covid-19 pandemic response that make up nearly 23 per cent of the list this year, including dame hoods for Sarah Gilbert, said Professor of Vaccinology at the Jenner Institute, University of Oxford, for her pivotal role in developing a vaccine, and Kate Bingham, Chair of the Vaccine Taskforce, for services to the procurement, manufacture and distribution of vaccines.

Andrew Pollard, professor of Pediatric Infection, University of Oxford, receives knighthood for services to public health, particularly during Covid-19, for his role in the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine development as the director of the Oxford Vaccine Group.

"The Queen's Birthday Honors allow us to pay tribute to all those who have gone

above and beyond in their service to this country," said UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

"Throughout the pandemic, we have seen countless examples of everyday heroes. From those using their expertise to help develop life-saving vaccines, which are now being rolled out successfully to all parts of the UK, to the people who have given time and energy to care for their communities," he said.

"We should take heart from the stories of those receiving honors today and be inspired by their courage and kindness. May they be a reminder of all that we can achieve when we come together as a society," he added.

Among the over 30 Indian-origin honors recipients for 2021 include OBEs for Jasvinder Singh Rai, founder and chairman of the Sikh Recovery Network for services to the Sikh community during the pandemic, and Jasjyot Singh of Lloyds Banking Group for services to financial services during the pandemic.

Those honored as Members of the British Empire (MBE) include Devina Banerjee, from Vaccine Taskforce, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for services to Covid-19 vaccine development; Anoop Jivan Chauhan, professor of respiratory medicine and executive director of Research, Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, for services to respiratory medicine; and Dr Ananthakrishnan Raghuram, consultant physician, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, for services to the NHS and Covid-19 response.

Others across different fields honored



Indian origin healthcare experts involved in the field of Covid-19 vaccine trials and community support efforts are among those in the spotlight at the Queen's Birthday Honors List. - Photo for representation only

with an OBE include Jagjit Singh Chadha, director of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, for services to economics and economic policy; actress and writer Lolita Chakrabarti for services to drama; and Sumita Singha for services to architecture.

Those receiving MBEs include Vimalkumar Choksi, Councilor, Ashton Waterloo, Tameside, for services to the community in Greater Manchester; Gurveer Dhami, senior private secretary to the Secretary of State For Education, and Amika Sara George, Founder of #FreePeriods Campaign, both for services to education; Sumit Goyal, consultant oncological surgeon, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, for services to breast cancer and Cardiff Breast Centre Charity; and Priya Guha, Venture Partner, Merian Ventures, and Member, Innovate UK Council, for services to international trade and women-led innovation.

Of the 1,129 recipient of an award this year, 567 are women which is 50 per cent of the total and 62 per cent of the recipients have undertaken outstanding work in their communities, either in a voluntary or paid capacity.

Indian-origin newly wed South African couple electrocuted in shower

JOHANNESBURG (TIP): A young South African Indian-origin couple who were married just two weeks ago were found electrocuted in their bathroom here, after the shower tap was allegedly electrified.

Zaheer Sarang and Nabeelah Khan had just returned from their honeymoon.

The bodies of the couple were found on Sunday afternoon. They were buried together on Monday.

It is believed that the wife was electrocuted when she touched the tap in the shower, while the husband who tried to come to her aid was also killed.

Police spokesman Capt Mavela Masondo confirmed the deaths but said that the results of postmortems were awaited to determine the exact cause of death.

The electricity authority in Johannesburg, City Power, has launched an urgent investigation into the incident as outraged resident blamed the daily power outages in the area and the alleged inability of City Power to



Zaheer Sarang and Nabeelah Khan who were married just two weeks ago were found electrocuted in their bathroom here, after the shower tap was allegedly electrified.

maintain infrastructure.

City Power in turn has blamed the spate of illegal connections to the many homes and businesses in the area, which were overloading the system, especially during the bitterly cold winter weather currently being experienced.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-Origin woman detained at US immigration for six hours despite NIE

PHOENIX, AZ (TIP): With President Joe Biden's April 30 proclamation restricting travel from India due to Covid-19, many Indians have wondered how to return to their homes, jobs and in many cases families in the US.

Off late, a lot of Indians with valid US visas who are stuck in India, are considering applying for NIE or National Interest Exception to beat the travel ban.

While many in recent times have reported success in obtaining an NIE or a waiver to return to the US, it hasn't been an easy passage for everyone.

A Phoenix, Arizona based Indian couple shared with the American Bazaar their recent ordeal while returning to the US with an NIE.

Karan K (name changed on request) is an H-1B holder who works in the IT industry. His wife is on a dependent or H-4 visa. She traveled to India in February to meet her family.

"Since the Covid-19 situation both in the US and India was getting better, she traveled to spend some time with her



family," he says.

"However, things took a sharp turn towards March-April in India and she found herself stuck there," Karan said. "Her ticket was scheduled for June and when a few people suggested applying for NIE we took that chance."

"We were lucky to get an approval within two days and she set off to travel. Her journey was smooth from Delhi to San Francisco. All her papers were checked at Delhi airport but once she reached the immigration desk at SFO airport, the official looked puzzled."

"She furnished the email document she had received from the US consulate showing an approved NIE. She was later asked to stay back in a room, where a few other officials investigated her case.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-Origin Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella appointed as company's chairman

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian-origin Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella has been named the company's Chairman, an additional role in which he will "lead the work to set the agenda for the board".

Microsoft Corp on Wednesday, June 16 announced that the board's independent directors unanimously elected Nadella to the role of board chair, and unanimously elected John W Thompson as the lead independent director, a role he held previously from 2012 to 2014.

"In this role, Nadella will lead the work to set the agenda for the board, leveraging his deep understanding of the business to elevate the right strategic opportunities and identify key risks and mitigation approaches for the board's review," the company said in a statement.

Nadella, 53, succeeds Thompson, who as the lead independent director, will retain significant authority, including providing input on behalf of the independent directors on board agendas, calling meetings of the independent directors, setting agendas for executive sessions, and leading



Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella has been named the company's Chairman, an additional role in which he will "lead the work to set the agenda for the board".

performance evaluations of the CEO, the technology giant said.

In addition to these role changes, the board declared a quarterly dividend of USD 0.56 per share. The dividend is

payable September 9, 2021, to shareholders of record on August 19, 2021.

Nadella had succeeded Steve Ballmer to become Microsoft's CEO in 2014.

INDIAN AMERICAN RADHIKA FOX TO LEAD EPA'S WATER OFFICE



Indian American water issues expert Radhika Fox has been confirmed by the US Senate as head of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water.

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US Senate has confirmed Indian American water issues expert Radhika Fox as head of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water.

The Senate, bitterly divided on party lines, confirmed Fox's nomination on Wednesday by 55 to 43 votes after seven Republican Senators supported her candidature. Two Democratic Senators did not cast their votes.

"Fox brings with her an impressive professional record of service and accomplishment, spanning over two decades, working on water issues at the local, state and federal level," Senator Tom Carper, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW), said.

"We have the opportunity today to confirm a truly gifted leader and put her to work serving our country right away," he added.

On April 14, President Joe Biden nominated Fox for the post of Assistant Administrator for Water, Environmental Protection Agency.

Fox currently serves as the Acting Assistant Administrator for Water. The EPA's Office of Water works to ensure that drinking water is safe, waste water is safely returned to the environment, and surface waters are properly managed and protected.

Prior to joining EPA, Fox served as the Chief Executive Officer for the US Water Alliance, where she established herself as a widely recognized national thought leader on complex water issues, from equitable water management to investing in the nation's water infrastructure.

Her work has helped address the most salient water issues facing the US -- including climate change, affordability, equity, governance, innovative finance and the evolution of the One Water movement.

Indian American civil rights attorney nominated as federal judge in Connecticut

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American civil rights attorney Sarala Vidya Nagala as a federal judge in the State of Connecticut.

If confirmed by the Senate, federal prosecutor Nagala would become the first judge of South Asian descent to serve on the District Court for the District of Connecticut.

Nagala is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of the Major Crimes Unit in the US Attorney's Office in the District of Connecticut, a role she has held since 2017.

She joined the US Attorney's Office in 2012 and has served in a number of leadership roles, including as Hate Crimes Coordinator.

Previously, Nagala was an associate at



US President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American civil rights attorney Sarala Vidya Nagala as a federal judge in the State of Connecticut.

Munger, Tolles, & Olson in San Francisco, California from 2009 to 2012.

Nagala began her legal career as a law clerk for Judge Susan Graber on the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit from 2008 to 2009. She received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of

California at Berkeley School of Law in 2008 and her Bachelor of Arts degree from Stanford University in 2005.

The nomination of Nagala came along with four other new candidates for the federal bench and two for District of Columbia courts.

All of them are "extraordinarily qualified, experienced, and devoted to the rule of law and US Constitution," the White House said in a statement on Tuesday.

The nomination of Nagala and others continue to fulfill President Biden's "promise to ensure that the nation's courts reflect the diversity that is one of the greatest assets as a country -- both in terms of personal and professional backgrounds," it said.

Indian-origin journalist along with two contributors wins Pulitzer Prize for exposing China's vast infrastructure for detaining Muslims

NEW YORK (TIP): Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors, has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for detaining hundreds of thousands of Muslims in its restive Xinjiang region.

Rajagopalan from BuzzFeed News is amongst the two Indian-origin journalists who won the US' top journalism award on Friday.

Tampa Bay Times' Neil Bedi won for local reporting. Bedi along with Kathleen McGrory has been awarded the prize for the series exposing a Sheriff's Office



Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors, has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports - Photo / Courtesy BuzzFeed News

initiative that used computer modeling to identify people believed to be future crime suspects. About 1,000 people were monitored under the program, including children.

Bedi is an investigative reporter for the Tampa Bay Times.

"What Kathleen and Neil unearthed in Pasco County has had a profound impact on the community," said Mark Katches, Times executive editor. "This is what the best investigative journalism can do and why it is so essential." Rajagopalan's Xinjiang series won the Pulitzer Prize in the International Reporting category.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Community organizations as reservoir of strength for candidates in election fray

BY INDRAJIT S SALUJA

The other day, a friend who is in the election fray for New York City Council complained that he was not getting adequate support from the temple he belongs to. He alleged that another candidate was getting the support. I asked him how much it mattered if he did not get the support from the temple. He wasn't sure. I asked him if the congregation voted on the advice and guidance of the temple management. To which, he said, in most cases, yes. So, now I could understand his worry.

The question of temples and social organizations wielding considerable influence has often been discussed. It has been found that these institutions hold a significant sway over their members. However, it is not always and in all matters that their members would oblige the officials.

With the New York City elections around, I decided to speak with a couple of community organization leaders to know how much they are involved in elections, and how they plan to go around helping candidates belonging to their community and group.



Mr. Gobind Munjal

Mr. Gobind Munjal is a senior community leader who has for long been

associated with a number of community organizations. He was president of AIA which organizes the iconic South Street Seaport Diwali Mela. He was President, at one time, of the largest association of Indian Americans in Long Island- Indian Association of Long Island, said that he believed the community organizations are basically training grounds for people in various fields, including politics. "Participating in political processes is important", he said. "If you have political clout, community is successful", he added.

When asked about what the organizations could do when a number of candidates from the community face each other in a constituency, Mr. Munjal said, "The individual clashes is a worrisome issue. You are cutting yourself, dividing your votes. Much can be achieved through consolidation of votes".

Mr. Munjal, referring to NY City Council District 23 where 4 Indian American are candidates among a total of 7, said, "I support enhanced participation of the Indian American community in the political process. However, I appeal to all contending candidates to evolve consensus on a single candidate and put up a united front to make an Indian American win, so that our community is well represented".

I took Mr. Munjal's suggestion to three of the four Indian American candidates. I have been requested not to quote them. So, I will not mention who said what. One said it was his right to be a candidate and try his luck. He also said he had put in quite a few years in community service, and that he was more qualified and had better claim than others.

Another candidate was willing to accept the consensus idea provided there was a formula which was fair. Now the question of a fair formula turned out to be ticklish. Someone suggested a lottery.

Another objected. The end result was there could not be a consensus candidate.



Master Mohinder Singh

Another question came to my mind. Whether or not the community organizations could come together and discuss a formula to have consensus candidates with a view to putting up a strong challenge to contenders from other communities. Here, Master Mohinder Singh, a Queens County Community Board 9 member said that the idea of supporting and electing a community guy is a narrow one, given the fact that we live in a multicultural society, and we look for the best to represent us. However, as far as possible, we should support people from our community provided they are able to deliver.

When questioned if community organizations, including temples can play a role in helping out the candidates, Mr. Singh said, "The community has always been supportive of the Indian American candidates. As for funding them, the community has been generous. But on the question of consensus, not much can be done. There are various community groups, various faith groups, with different regional affiliations which make it almost impossible to even think

of a consensus after the candidates have declared their candidacy.

Mr. Singh emphasized the need to vote. He asked The Indian Panorama to carry an appeal from him to the community that all eligible voters must vote. He said he feels ashamed that despite of being educated and well to do the Indian American community has a poor record of getting out to vote.

"In a democracy, not only it is the right of every eligible voter to vote, but a civil duty to vote", he said.



Renee Mehrra

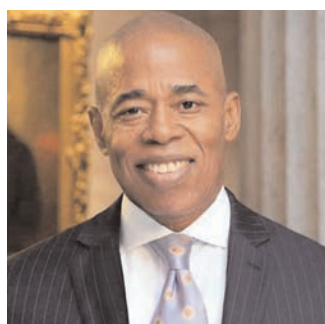
Renee Mehrra who was the first South Asian American to contest a city council election spoke about the great support she had received from the Indian American community when she first contested in 2001. She said the community organizations play a great role in the success of any candidate. They provide volunteers and funds -both so essential for any political adventure. She hoped of the more than half a dozen Indian Americans contesting New York City elections, some will get elected to represent the community in the City Council, which till now has none from the Indian American community.

(The author is chief Editor of The Indian Panorama)

The Indian Panorama announced endorsements for NY City Elections

The publication has endorsed Eric Adams for Mayor, David Weprin for Comptroller, and Jumaane Williams for Public Advocate

NEW YORK (TIP); The Indian Panorama publisher and chief editor



Eric Adams, David Weprin and Jumaane Williams have been endorsed by The Indian panorama for Mayor, Comptroller and Public Advocate respectively.

Prof. Indrajit S Saluja has written to Eric Adams, David Weprin and Jumaane Williams conveying to them the endorsement of the publication for Mayor, Comptroller and Public Advocate respectively.

Prof. Saluja has appealed to friends and the community to get out and vote for the endorsed candidates who are the best and will prove to be excellent elected officials committed to serving the great people of the City of New York.

The Sikh Community Itches to Empower Itself

BY PROF. I.S. SALUJA

Though a mere drop in the ocean, the Sikh community in the US, numbering around 280,000, according to The World Religion Database at Boston University, has made its presence felt in the country. The community which began trickling into the US at the beginning of the century started to pour after 70's, with trouble brewing in their home State of Punjab in India. In the 80's the Sikhs came in torrents in the US after the genocide of the community in the wake of the killing of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

They came, they saw, they conquered. Their immediate concern was having food at the table. In the last about 50 years, every Sikh who came to the US is in a position to claim that he enjoys a certain amount of financial security. Their next generation started getting education here. With a certain amount of financial security rose a desire to empower themselves through the political processes. They began to know and mix with the people of their community who were already involved in whatever way in the political processes.

However, the community organizations remained the first love. It was through the community organizations that many moved on to participate in the political process. The community has understood that real empowerment can come only when they have political power. They have also been reminded that back in 1955 one of them was elected the first Sikh Congressman. Dalip Singh Saund is remembered with reverence as a role model for the community.



Dalip Singh Saund was the first Sikh and first Indian American elected to Congress.

Since the time of Congressman Saund, a number of Sikhs have entered politics. But never before now, there ever was such an impressive gallery of the Sikhs taking part in electoral politics. I am not going to span the entire nation. I am inclined to confine myself to New York City where we are going to have the civic elections in November this year. The primaries a few days away will decide the fate of many aspiring candidates to

various offices.

I spoke with a number of people from different walks of life about this newfound love for politics. To the question "why so many Sikhs, particularly the young ones, now aspire for political positions, the answer invariably was that they want to empower themselves; they want to be heard; they want a pie of the political cake. Most said that the economic prosperity has no meaning until they are politically empowered.

For the November 2021 cycle New York City elections, we have quite a few Sikhs in the fray. They all are for City council.



Harpreet Singh Toor

For City Council District 23, we have two Sikhs. One is Harpreet Singh Toor, a senior community leader and a politician with a long standing. Having worked in City administration and with elected representatives, he has come to acquire a good understanding of various aspects of working on administration and political fronts.



Jaslin Kaur

Another candidate is Jaslin Kaur, a spirited young lady who is seeking to draw strength from the younger generation.



Amit Singh Bagga

Amit Singh Bagga is a Sikh candidate for Council District 26. He is pitted against 14 candidates, including Asians and South Asians.



Japneet Singh

Japneet Singh, a young Sikh is one of the 2 candidates in City Council District 28 where Adrienne Adams is a sitting council member.



Felicia Singh

Another young Sikh lady Felicia Singh is pitted against 5 others in City council District 32.

However, I have also wondered why the Sikh Community has so far failed to get a strong footing in the mainstream politics in the Northeast U.S.



Raghbir Singh Subhanpur

I asked the question to Mr. Raghbir Singh Subhanpur, a prominent businessman of Queens and President of Shiromani Akali Dal, America. He said, "There may be manifold reasons for that predicament. The first generation that came ashore to this great country focused on their economic well-being. We have come from an environment where there were shortages, joblessness, and heightened competition for basic human needs. Therefore, upon arrival, we have dug in focusing on our self-improvement by attaining educational qualifications, professional jobs, Houses, providing top-notch education to our children, and the time left was used for religious services or cultural expressions. Our economic insecurity became an obstacle to any progress in the political arena."

"In addition, for the same reason as I stated above, we pushed our children to take up professions that have job security in fields such as Medicine, Engineering, or Information Technology. Political Science or International Relations were mostly shunned in favor of subjects that would reward a higher paycheck after graduation. Those who studied Law preferred to join a successful law firm or practice outside in a lucrative real estate business. Let us look at the composition of the forces at play at the higher echelons of power in the U.S. It consisted primarily of two groups: Lawyers and Businessmen (CEOs with MBAs from prestigious Institutions). Almost fifty percent of those running USA Inc. come from the top 15 Colleges or Universities in this country. In the final analysis, most of our young people ended up in professions that supported the Enterprise from behind rather than leading up in the front."

"At the end of the day, Sikhs must come together to succeed", said Mr. Raghbir Singh Subhanpur,

(The author is Chief Editor of The Indian Panorama)

AS I SEE IT

Revival of G7 and its impact

FROM US PERSPECTIVE, THE SUMMIT'S AIM IS TO ANNOUNCE THAT 'AMERICA IS BACK'



BY SHYAM SARAN

"From the US perspective, the objective of the summits is to announce that 'America is back' and ready to lead the world after the debilitating disruption of western alliances and partnerships and a retreat from global engagement during the Trump years. What Biden is signaling is that the revival of American leadership and diplomatic activism will be anchored in the web of its transatlantic relationships, even as the Indo-Pacific strategy will be its key preoccupation, given the acknowledged challenge posed by China. The emphasis on the transatlantic alliance and partnership is also important in countering the Russian threat."

The three-day G7 summit concluded on June 13 and released an unusually long and detailed joint statement of 70 paragraphs and a separate Open Societies Statement. The latter statement was on behalf of the G7 and the four invitees to the summit, namely Australia, India, South Korea and South Africa. The summit is only the first of three key meetings involving western countries. This week includes a meeting of the EU and the US and a meeting of the NATO military alliance, both in Brussels. Fortified by the display of solidarity at these three summits, President Biden will have his first summit with Russian President Putin in Geneva on June 16.

From the US perspective, the objective of the summits is to announce that 'America is back' and ready to lead the world after the debilitating disruption of western alliances and partnerships and a retreat from global engagement during the Trump years. What Biden is signaling is that the revival of American leadership and diplomatic activism will



G7 has the potential to emerge as a core of a broader coalition to achieve balance in the power equations that the emergence of China has upturned.

be anchored in the web of its transatlantic relationships, even as the Indo-Pacific strategy will be its key preoccupation, given the acknowledged challenge posed by China. The emphasis on the transatlantic alliance and partnership is also important in countering the Russian threat. While Biden has described China as a competitor, Russia is the 'enemy', even though the US is prepared to work together with both on areas where there are convergent interests on global issues, such as climate change, cyber security and nuclear non-proliferation. Has Biden succeeded in convincing his western allies and partners and his adversaries that the US is back? The answer to that, as judged from the joint statement, should be a yes. But then, the Trump years were a low base to compare to.

Has Biden achieved a degree of western consensus in presenting a united front against Russia and China? Perhaps more against Russia and less against China. For example, the launch of the Build Back a Better World (B3W) partnership was launched as a 'values driven, high standard and transparent infrastructure partnership led by major democracies' but stopped short of explicitly posing it as an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative. There are few details of how this partnership is going to be financed beyond saying that this will be private financed but with 'catalytic investment' from public and multilateral sources. We may conclude that there are simply not enough resources available to be deployed by the G7 which could match what China has been offering, despite concerns over lack of transparency and exacerbation of the debt overload on several developing countries.

There are several other references to

Chinese misdemeanors which taken together do represent a broad western consensus on the need to confront China. These include the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, 'a free and open Indo-Pacific', of avoiding 'unilateral attempts to change the status quo and increase tensions in the East and South China Seas.' In addition, there are references to human rights issues in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, both of which are regarded as 'core issues' by China. Overall, therefore, one could say that Biden has been able to fashion a consensus on acknowledging the Chinese security challenge and ideological challenge.

Will this impress China? Up to a point. The economic and commercial relationship between Europe and China is deep and broad ranging as is that between China and Japan. The EU and China have been working together, for example, for several years on developing benchmarks for climate finance, including green bonds, disclosure norms and the running of carbon markets. The area of climate finance will assume critical importance as climate change action gets into high gear after the Glasgow summit later this year. There is a limit to disengaging from the world's second largest economy and the central node in global supply chains.

China has reacted by dismissing the G7, pointing out that a small group of countries cannot rule the world. There is another important shift the summit represents. After the global financial and economic crisis of 2007-8, it is the G20 which was established as the premier forum for international economic coordination. It worked very well in dealing with the immediate crisis, but its role has steadily diminished since then.

With renewed tensions between the US and China and with Russia, the utility of the G20 is not so obvious currently. This adds to the significance of the revival of G7, even though its economic heft is much less than in its heyday. It constitutes only 30% of world GDP as against 60% at the end of the Cold War. However, the global trading system and its financial infrastructure continue to be dominated by the G7 so one should not underestimate its influence. It has the potential to emerge as a core of a broader coalition to achieve a degree of balance in the power equations that the emergence of China has upturned in the new millennium.

The adoption of the Statement on Open Societies reflects Biden's renewed emphasis on the importance of preserving and promoting 'open societies, democratic values and multilateralism as foundations for dignity, opportunity and prosperity for all.' For all the cynicism that attends the expression of such lofty statements, they have value in contesting China's confident belief in the efficacy of its authoritarian ideology and system of governance. Biden is taking head on the prevailing pessimism about democracy within democracies themselves. One should welcome PM Modi being honored as the lead speaker at the session on Open Societies. His remarks were unexceptionable and worthy of a leader of the world's largest democracy. One hopes that this is followed by a renewed commitment to democratic values which are enshrined in the Indian Constitution, but also constitute, as PM Modi said, the civilizational values of India.

(The author is a former Foreign Secretary of India and senior fellow, Centre for Policy Research)

A judicial pushback to a draconian legal regime



BY GAUTAM BHATIA

“The Delhi High Court's judgment indicates a pathway forward in the quest for finding a balance between citizens' civil rights and the imperatives of anti-terrorism legislation such as the UAPA. A position under which citizens can be jailed for years on end just on the basis of police reports and case diaries, with courts precluded from granting them bail, is completely inconsistent with democracy, and redolent of authoritarian or tyrannical states. However, the court's analysis shows how even within - and consistent with - the terms of the UAPA, there is an important role for a conscientious judiciary to play. By scrutinizing the police case on its own terms, and according a strict interpretation to draconian legislation such as the UAPA, courts can ensure that civil rights are not left entirely at the mercy of the state.”

The judgment of the Delhi High Court granting bail to activists Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal, and Asif Iqbal Tanha - they have been in jail for over a year (without trial) for their alleged role in the 2020 Delhi riots - is significant for many reasons. Most importantly, it brings to a close many months of jail time for three people who are yet to be proven guilty of any crime, something that should be anathema to any civilized justice system. What is also significant, however, is that the judgment represents an important judicial pushback to the authoritarian legal regime under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

The root of the issue

Ostensibly designed to check and address terrorism, the UAPA is perhaps one of the most abused laws in India today. The root of the problem lies in Section 43(D)(5) of this Act, which prevents the release of any accused person on bail if, on a perusal of the case diary, or the report made under Section

THE DELHI COURT RULING IS A WAY FORWARD IN FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE IMPERATIVES OF ANTI-TERROR LAWS

173 of the Code Of Criminal Procedure, the court is of the opinion that "there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against such person is prima facie true".

It is important to break this down. Broadly speaking, India follows the adversarial system of criminal justice, where two sides to a dispute attempt to persuade the court that their version of events is true. At the heart of the adversarial system of justice is the testing of evidence through cross-examination. Each side is afforded the opportunity to scrutinize, challenge, and question the evidence produced by its opponent; and the best way for a judge to unearth the truth - or the closest approximation of it - is to consider which side's evidence is left standing, and appears more persuasive, after the rigors of cross-examination.

Production of evidence, and cross-examination, involves witnesses, recoveries of incriminating objects, tests of handwriting or voice samples, and many other elements. It constitutes the bulk of a criminal trial. In India, with our overburdened courts and creaking justice system, criminal trials take years. In high-profile cases such as the Delhi riots case, where the record is bulky, and the witnesses number in their hundreds, trials can take many years - even a decade or more.

Importance of bail

For this reason, bail becomes of utmost importance. If an individual is not able to secure bail from the courts, they will languish as under-trials in prison, for the duration of the case, no matter how many years it takes (in recent memory, there are cases of people being found innocent in terrorism cases after 14 and even 23 years in prison). Bail, thus, becomes the only safeguard and guarantee of the constitutional right to liberty.

In ordinary circumstances, when considering the question of bail, a court is meant to take into account a range of factors. These include whether the accused is a flight risk, whether he or she might tamper with the evidence or attempt to influence witnesses, and the gravity of the offence. But it is here that Section 43(D)(5) of the UAPA plays such a damaging role. As we have just seen, under the classical vision of criminal justice, truth - about innocence or guilt - can only be determined after the evidence of both the prosecution and the defense has been subjected to the rigors of cross-examination. However, as lawyers and scholars such as Abhinav Sekhri and Anjana Prakash have also pointed out, Section 43(D)(5) short-circuits that core assumption. For the grant of bail, it only looks at the plausibility of one side's evidence - that is, the Prosecution's. It binds the court to look at only the case diary or the police report, which has not been challenged by



Natasha Narwal, Asif Iqbal Tanha and Devangana Kalita outside Tihar Jail in Delhi after their release on June 17, 2021.

cross-examination, and requires that bail be denied as long as the unchallenged prosecution case appears to be prima facie true.

One-sided

The perversity of Section 43(D)(5), thus, is that it forces the court to make an effective determination of guilt or innocence based on one side's unchallenged story, and on that basis to deprive individuals of their freedom for years on end. In a democratic polity, which is committed to the rule of law, this is a deeply troubling state of affairs.

The effect of Section 43(D)(5), as one can see, is that once the police elect to charge sheet an individual under the UAPA, it becomes extremely difficult for bail to be granted. Even outlandish or trumped-up cases can sound convincing until people have a chance to interrogate and challenge them. In short, unless the police prepare an extremely shoddy case - that is riddled with internal contradictions, for example - a case diary or a report will invariably make out a "prima facie" case against an individual.

Finer points of the judgment

It is here that the Delhi High Court's judgment becomes important. The Bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anup Jairam Bhambhani correctly note that even though Section 43(D)(5) departs from many basic principles of criminal justice, there are other fundamental principles that remain of cardinal significance. These include, for example, that the initial burden of demonstrating guilt must always lie upon the prosecution; and also, that criminal offences must be specific in their terms, and read narrowly, to avoid bringing the innocent within their net. On this basis, the court's judgment notes that as the UAPA is meant to deal with terrorist offences, its application must be limited to acts that can reasonably fall within a plausible understanding of "terrorism". "Terrorism" is a term of art, and not a word that can be thrown around loosely. Thus, to attract the provisions of the UAPA - the judgment holds - the charge

sheet must reveal factual, individualized, and particular allegations linking the accused to a terrorist act.

The judgment then finds that even if the police's claims are taken to be true, no such allegations exist. At the highest, the accusations against the activists involve calls for protests and chakka jams (road blockages). There is no act, overt or covert, attributed to the activists that could constitute a terrorist offence. And, importantly, inferences or hypotheticals drawn by the police do not count at the stage of granting bail. Coupled with the significance of the right to protest and to dissent under our constitutional scheme, the judgment therefore holds that even prima facie, a case under the UAPA has not been made out, and therefore, there is no question of the application of Section 43(D)(5).

The Delhi High Court's judgment indicates a pathway forward in the quest for finding a balance between citizens' civil rights and the imperatives of anti-terrorism legislation such as the UAPA. A position under which citizens can be jailed for years on end just on the basis of police reports and case diaries, with courts precluded from granting them bail, is completely inconsistent with democracy, and redolent of authoritarian or tyrannical states. However, the court's analysis shows how even within - and consistent with - the terms of the UAPA, there is an important role for a conscientious judiciary to play. By scrutinizing the police case on its own terms, and according a strict interpretation to draconian legislation such as the UAPA, courts can ensure that civil rights are not left entirely at the mercy of the state.

At the time of writing, the High Court's judgment has been appealed by the Delhi Police to the Supreme Court of India. It now remains to be seen whether the highest court will also endorse this crucial ruling, which restates the responsibility of an independent judiciary in checking executive impunity.

(Gautam Bhatia is a Delhi-based lawyer)

The Supreme Court confirms it: Time for the GOP to give up on destroying the Affordable Care Act



BY C PAUL WALDMAN

Once again, Republicans have failed in their seemingly endless quest to have the Affordable Care Act wiped from the pages of history, this time with their third defeat at the Supreme Court. If they have any sense, this should bring that shameful crusade to an end.

The court did what it often does on complicated cases where a sweeping ruling might be politically and practically disruptive: It ruled only on a narrow legal question, in this instance whether the plaintiffs in the suit had standing to bring it in the first place.

Those plaintiffs were 18 Republican-run states, later joined by two individuals, who claimed that if you cover one eye and hold the ACA up to the light while turning it counterclockwise, it will appear to be unconstitutional.

But in order to have standing to sue, a plaintiff must establish that they were injured in some way. Seven justices ruled, quite properly, that they had not.

"Neither the individual nor the state plaintiffs have shown that the injury they will suffer or have suffered is 'fairly traceable' to the 'allegedly unlawful conduct' of which they complain," wrote Justice Stephen G. Breyer for the 7-to-2 majority.

The question revolved around the ACA's individual mandate, which initially required most Americans to carry health insurance or pay a fine. Congress later reduced that fine to \$0; Republicans then claimed that since the mandate now

The incandescent loathing Republicans felt for Obama and everything he produced has lessened a bit, given that he left office more than four years ago (four years that seemed like 40). The law has grown steadily more popular, which raises the political risks to the GOP of striking it down. Most important, in all its complexity the ACA is woven inextricably into nearly every facet of our health-care system.

effectively existed only on paper, that meant almost the entire law had to be declared null and void.

Serious people on all sides found this argument to be preposterous (even if not quite the most preposterous of the legal arguments conservatives had pulled out of the air to destroy the ACA). And the fact that even some of the court's committed conservative ideologues (Clarence Thomas) and committed Republicans (Brett M. Kavanaugh) joined the majority in turning back this challenge says a lot about the state of the anti-Obamacare crusade.

This case is different from the prior ACA cases the court considered in an important way: You won't see too many Republicans tearing their hair out over the fact that they lost, or declaring the conservative justices who voted with the majority to be traitors to their cause.

The desire to drive a stake through the heart of Barack Obama's signature legislation simply does not feel as urgent as it did back when Republicans in the House were passing dozens of fruitless repeal bills. There are a number of reasons all of which have to do with the passage of time.

The incandescent loathing Republicans felt for Obama and everything he produced has lessened a bit, given that he left office more than four years ago (four

years that seemed like 40). The law has grown steadily more popular, which raises the political risks to the GOP of striking it down. Most important, in all its complexity the ACA is woven inextricably into nearly every facet of our health-care system.

It means that if Congress or the Supreme Court snatched it away, the result would be nothing short of a cataclysm, with tens of millions losing coverage and the entire system thrown into chaos. All but the most foolish Republicans know this, which is why every time they fall just short of killing the ACA - with these challenges, and with their slapdash 2017 repeal bill that almost passed - they know they're better off having failed, thereby avoiding the inevitable backlash.

So now they have to ask themselves a question: Can they finally just give up and accept the fact that the ACA is, and will remain, the law of the land?

That doesn't mean they have to stop advocating for their version of health-care reform (though the truth is that plenty of Republicans would be more than happy to do just that; health care just isn't a topic that interests most of them all that much). But it would do them, and the rest of us, a whole lot of good if they gave up on the dream of someone swooping in with a giant fist to crush Obama's health-care law.



We're not going to stop debating health care - not in the short term, and probably not ever. We have what is almost certainly the most complicated system in the world, an assemblage of private and public elements that don't quite fit together and produce staggering inefficiency and cost. Yet there may be almost nothing in American politics that would be more difficult to achieve than the kind of wholesale overhaul of the system that could fix most or all its problems all at once.

Which means that we'll keep trying to expand coverage, to restrain costs, to limit the miserable suffering the system allows, and to generally try to make a bad situation better with piecemeal additions and changes and reforms. Every one of them will probably be the subject of intense political debate.

But after more than a decade of battles in courts and Congress and state legislatures, the Affordable Care Act has won. It's long past time for Republicans to accept it.

(The author is a columnist with The Washington Post)

-: GUEST COMMENT:-

Terrorizing dissent: On bail for student activists

HC bail orders are an indictment of attempt to portray Delhi protests as terrorist acts

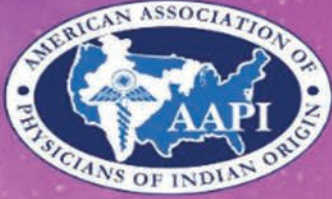
Caught between a statutory bar on grant of regular bail and a judicial embargo on any close examination of available evidence at the bail stage, those arrested under the country's main anti-terror law have been languishing in jails without trial for extended periods. The Delhi High Court orders granting bail to three student activists jailed for over a year for their alleged role in the February 2020 riots in Delhi represent a clear-headed effort to get around such impediments. Sound in legal reasoning and interpretation, the judgments of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani have made a salient distinction between those accused of

offences against the country's integrity and security on the one hand, and protesters or dissenters roped in unjustifiably under the rubric of 'terrorism' on the other. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act has been invoked by the Delhi Police against activists and others who were among those organizing the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, on the claim that they had also fomented the riots. Under Section 43D(5), there is a legal bar on granting bail if the court is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accusation against those held is prima facie true. Adding to this onerous burden on the accused to demonstrate to the court that the

accusation is untrue is a 2019 Supreme Court judgment that bars a detailed analysis of the evidence at the bail stage and rules that bail can be denied on "the broad probabilities" of the case.

The High Court has ruled that the bail court can look at the available evidence to satisfy itself about the prima facie truth of the case. In other words, there is no statutory invincibility to the prosecution case merely because the UAPA has been invoked. It has found that none of the three - Asif Iqbal Tanha, Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita - was specifically or particularly accused of any 'terrorist act', 'funding of a terrorist act' or an act amounting to a conspiracy to commit a

terrorist act or something preparatory to it. Once the UAPA charges were not seen to be true, it was open to the court to admit them to regular bail until conclusion of the trial. Further, with 740 witnesses cited, there is no scope for early conclusion of the trial. Riots are matters concerning public order, and not the security of the state. The court's observation that the state, in its anxiety to suppress dissent, has blurred the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and "terrorist activity", is a stern indictment of the establishment. The Delhi Police has gone to the Supreme Court on appeal against the verdict, possibly in the fear that the ruling may foil its design to paint protesters as 'terrorists'. If the High Court's approach to grant of bail is upheld, it would help secure the liberty of other dissenters held under the UAPA elsewhere without sufficient basis. *(The Hindu)*



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Happy Life Yoga Promoter Tirlok Malik to Host International Yoga Day 2021 Event June 19

MURTAZA ALI KHAN

NEW YORK (TIP): Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik is hosting a Happy Life Yoga event on the occasion of International Yoga Day 2021 on June 19th, 2021, at 10 AM, New York EST virtually on Zoom and social media such as Facebook Live (IndusTV and Facebook page of GOPIO (Manhattan)). The event will be joined by the audiences from many countries. Yoga is a gift from India to the world and its celebrated all over the world. The event is being presented by GOPIO (Manhattan), The Indian Panorama, Indian American Forum and Consulate General of India, New York. Ambassador Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India, is the Chief Guest.

The theme of the event is Happy Life Yoga. "Happy Life Yoga follows a basic underlying philosophy. If you feel you deserve and want to live a happier, healthier and more fulfilling life then Happy Life Yoga can show you how? It's a way of living inspired by the wisdom of Ayurveda, Yoga & Indian philosophy and no mats are needed to practice it," explains Malik who has lined up many experts and honored guest speakers to share their wisdom. The list includes the award-winning filmmaker, international entrepreneur, motivational speaker and author, Dr Bhuvan Lall (www.bhuvanlall.in), Sangeeta Agarwal, CEO & Founder,

Helpsy (<https://helpsyhealth.com>), Neil & Andrea Garvey, Publishers / Editors, Creations Magazine (www.creationsmagazine.com), Deborah Fishman Shelby, Founder & Executive Director, FED (www.fedsocial.co), Ranju Narang, Director, Educator (www.vivyogany.com), Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Chief Editor / Publisher, The Indian Panorama (www.theindianpanorama.news), Indu Jaiswal, Chairperson, Indian American Forum (<https://indianamericanforum.org>) Renee Mehra (Reenbow Media), and Anil Narang (<https://worldveganvision.org>). The event also has a guest singer Pallavi Verma Belwariar (<http://www.pallaviartmusic.com>).

Happy Life Yoga (happyliyoga.org), an educational platform, was launched on June 29th, 2019, in a packed auditorium at the Goddard Riverside's Bernie Wohl Center, New York. The curtain raiser event for this educational platform was inaugurated by Shatrughna Sinha, New York Deputy Consul General of India. Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, who was the Chief Guest, had participated in the workshop and spoken vociferously in support of the initiative. Many other VIPs were in attendance as well. The event was hosted by Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Chief Editor and Publisher of The Indian Panorama and Indu Jaiswal of Indian American Forum.

Happy Life Yoga is the creation of Tirlok Malik and the Ayurveda Cafe team. Tirlok Malik is a restaurateur, happy lifestyle speaker, New York Emmy Nominated Filmmaker. Indu Jaiswal of The Indian American Forum, one of the oldest organizations of Indian Americans on Long Island, and Prof. Indrajit Saluja publisher and editor of the Indian Panorama, an Indian American Newspaper in New York & Dallas, are proud to be spreading the message of Happy Life Yoga. Happy Life Yoga is the yoga of life. This educational platform offers a unique holistic approach to health and happiness using tools from Ayurveda, Indian Philosophy, and Yoga to help better manage modern-day challenges such as work, finances, relationships, family and other social pressures. It ultimately guides you towards a happier life. It teaches you about Happy Life Yoga management system. Happy life yoga platform endeavors to bring experts from all over the world to share their wisdom through virtually and live events in person as well.

The event has support from many media outlets of US including The Indian Panorama, Creations Magazine, Vijay Garg, IndusTV, Sunil Hali, Radio Zindagi, The Indian Eye, Indian Eye Television, TV Asia, PTC Punjabi Television, ITV GOLD, and Parikh Media Worldwide. "After COVID-19, the world has realized that it is very, very important to have a good health,



Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik is hosting a Happy Life Yoga event on the occasion of International Yoga Day 2021 on June 19th, 2021, at 10 AM, New York EST

physically and emotionally, and Happy Life Yoga platform can show how. A way of living inspired by the wisdom of Ayurveda, Yoga and Indian Philosophy, Happy Life Yoga can be very, very useful for everyone," says Malik. "The whole team of this event prays for the well being of the world and is happy to celebrate International Day of Yoga 2021," Malik adds solemnly.

For details of the event, please see the flyer on Page 25.

(Murtaza Ali Khan is an Indian Film & TV Critic / Journalist who has been covering the world of entertainment for over 10 years. He can be reached at: murtaza@apotpourriofvestiges.com. His video essays / commentaries can be watched on his YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/MurtazaAliKhan88>)

Indian American Sam Joshi wins Democratic primary for Edison Mayor



Sam Joshi has won the Democratic Primary to run for Mayor of Edison

EDISON, NJ (TIP): Sam Joshi, Indian American Vice President for city council of Edison, New Jersey has won the Democratic Primary to run for the township's mayor after a dogged political battle against a fellow Indian American.

Unofficial results showed Joshi secured 5,955 votes, running ahead by almost 2,800 votes over his nearest rival Edison Democratic Chairman Mahesh Bhagia (3,185 votes), MyCentralJersey.com reported. The third candidate Arthur Esposito secured only 564 votes.

Joshi will likely face Republican Keith Hahn in the November general election and possibly independent candidates Mayor Thomas Lankey, Councilman Richard Brescher and

Christo Makropoulos.

The independent filing petitions show Lankey is running with Township Council candidates Michael Lombardi, Alvaro Gomez and Lav Patel. Hahn previously announced he is running with Township Council candidates R. Tali Epstein, Joseph Luistro and Payal Mehta.

Before serving on the council, Joshi, 27, was on the zoning board of adjustment in 2016-2017 and on the fair rental housing authority from 2010 to 2014.

"The people of Edison have spoken, and now it's time for our Democratic Party and our community to come together and move forward into a new era of progress, and I could not be more excited to hopefully have the opportunity to lead Edison into that new day," Joshi wrote in a Facebook post.

"I look forward to the general election and hopefully to beginning a new administration in January that will deliver the bold, transformative leadership that Edison deserves."

Read the full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian American New Jersey based woman's unique Indian mathri baskets leave netizens drooling

JERSEY CITY (TIP): At a time when Indian chefs around the world are promoting Indian food with appealing presentations, some talented home cooks are creating a buzz about Indian food in America with their unique creations.

Sujata Ravikumar is one such self-taught home cook whose unique Indian snack preparations have been going viral on food forums across the East Coast. She is fast becoming a food forum sensation thanks to her unique creation - masala mathri baskets - intricate baskets with woven patterns that are entirely edible along with the treat inside. Everyone is quite intrigued by the patterns and shapes of Sujata's dishes in her food pictures posted online.

Talking about her cooking, she shares with the American Bazaar, "My creations are totally Indian cooking. The basket is called Masala Mathri Basket.

"Mathri is an Indian finger snack, closer to what Americans would call a savory biscuit. I fill my mathri baskets with sabudana khichdi or sago porridge



Self-taught Indian American cook Sujata Ravikumar's Indian snack baskets are totally edible and a feast for the eyes too!

and sabudana pops."

Sujata's cooking also busts a popular myth that Indian food is deep fried, spicy or heavy. All of her creations are baked and sabudana khichdi is one of the healthiest complete meals.

"All my baskets, tokris and handis are edible," she says. "The high point always remains the presentation of my food. It is this that draws people to it."

Like many other immigrants to the US, cooking for Sujata started as a hobby when she found herself in a new country with a lot of time on her hands.

Read the full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Mayor De Blasio Appoints Raquel Batista As Commissioner Of The Mayor's Office Of Immigrant Affairs

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor Bill de Blasio, on June 15, appointed Raquel Batista as Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA). Batista, who is succeeding Bitta Mostofi as Commissioner, is an attorney with over two decades of experience advocating on behalf of immigrant New Yorkers. As Commissioner, she will continue to center immigrants in New York City's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"New York is, and will always be, a city of immigrants," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "Raquel has the lived experience

and passion necessary to make this city a fairer and more equitable place for immigrant New Yorkers to call home. Our recovery depends on it."

"I am humbled and honored to have been named the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. My grandmother and parents came to New York City in the 1960's from the Dominican Republic seeking a better life for their family. My appointment is a testament to them and all immigrant communities that their hard-work, their struggle pays off. MOIA is an innovative and cutting-edge government institution

that provides a blueprint for the rest of the country on how to assure that immigrants have access to government services, are provided resources and support and signals that they are welcome. I am excited to work with the Mayor, MOIA's dynamic team and immigrant community leaders in New York City's recovery," said Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Raquel Batista.

Read the full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news



"I am humbled and honored to have been named the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs", said Batista.

Senate Budget Panel Approves Addiego, Gopal Bill to Increase School Aid to Make Up for Federal Funding Gap for Children of Military Personnel

Legislation would provide property tax relief to seven Burlington County towns, Tinton Falls, Rockaway Twp. and Cape May City

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): The Senate Budget Committee, on June 17, unanimously approved legislation sponsored by Senators Dawn Addiego and Vin Gopal to increase state aid to local school districts whose taxpayers have had to shoulder the burden caused by the failure of the federal government to fully fund the education of the children of active-duty military personnel.

"Our military personnel at Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and other New Jersey installations are protecting our nation, and their children richly deserve the quality education and services they are receiving in our local school districts. But the burden of making up for the federal government's failure to

adequately fund their education should not fall on local property taxpayers," said Senator Addiego (D-Burlington), prime sponsor of S-3948.

"This bill would fix the state funding formula to provide state aid to fill the gap between the lower per-pupil funding provided by the federal government and the higher amount paid by property taxpayers in ten municipalities, including five Burlington County towns in my legislative district that serve students from Joint Base McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst," said Senator Addiego.

The Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission projects that the Addiego-Gopal bill would provide a state aid increase of \$3,549,359 to Northern

Burlington Regional (Chesterfield, Mansfield, North Hanover, Springfield); \$1,507,615 to Pemberton Township (Pemberton Township, Pemberton Borough), and \$165,390 to Eastampton Township.

bill would also provide \$1,458,397 to Cape May City, which serves the Coast Guard Training Station; \$776,515 to Rockaway Township, which serves Picatinny Arsenal; and \$752,574 to Tinton Falls, which educates children from Naval Weapons Station Earle.

"This legislation will provide a long-overdue boost in state aid to Tinton Falls and other municipalities that have been unduly burdened by the failure of the federal government to provide the same support for the education of the children



"In Tinton Falls, local property taxpayers were paying \$15,248 per pupil, compared to just \$1,048 in assistance per military student for the federal government. That's a 14-to-1 disparity," Senator Gopal said.

of military personnel that local taxpayers provide," said Senator Gopal (D-Monmouth), chair of the Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee, the co-prime sponsor.

"In Tinton Falls, local property taxpayers were paying \$15,248 per pupil, compared to just \$1,048 in assistance per military student for the federal government. That's a 14-to-1 disparity," Senator Gopal noted.

Read the full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

New Political Organization Launched for South Asian and Indo-Caribbean Communities

NEW YORK (TIP): Well-known community organization DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving, which has organized working-class South Asians for immigrant, worker, racial, educational, and gender justice for over 21 years, has launched a sister organization called DRUM Beats. DRUM Beats is a political organization and will be active to engage in elections. Along with their launch, DRUM Beats announced 9 endorsements in 8 districts.

- District 25 - Jackson Heights & Elmhurst - Carolyn Tran
- District 18 - Parkchester - Amanda Farias
- District 23 - Glendale - Jaslin Kaur
- District 27 - Hollis - Harold Miller
- District 29 - Forest Hills - Aleda Gagarin
- District 32 - Ozone Park - Felicia Singh
- District 37 - Cityline - Sandy Nurse
- District 39 - Kensington - Shahana Hanif #1 & Brandon West #2

Kazi Fouzia, an organizer with DRUM Beats said "for too long, our community has either stayed out and not engaged in elections, or supported people who make themselves leaders, or blindly followed elected officials who do nothing for our



DRUM Beats launches with 9 endorsements in city council races

community. We want to engage in communities in real ways, and build our power, so that we have elected officials who listen to us and our needs." DRUM Beats is pushing for their endorsement in Jackson Heights and Elmhurst for Carolyn Tran. DRUM Beats Director, Fahd Ahmed said "we did deep research, and she got the highest marks in this district, and in the whole city. This is the kind of politicians we need, who want to work with communities, listen to people, and be willing to stand up for justice. Carolyn has done all of that and more for years."

Read the full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

NEW YORK STATE ECONOMY ADDED 17,500 PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS IN MAY 2021

New York's Private Sector Jobs grew by 13.2% over the Year, rising faster than Nation's

NEW YORK (TIP): According to preliminary figures released June 17 by the New York State Department of Labor, the number of private sector jobs in New York State increased over the month by 17,500, or 0.2%, to 7,459,100 in May 2021. By comparison, the number of private sector jobs in the U.S. increased by 0.4% in May 2021.



Read the full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

UP police send legal notice to Twitter India MD

The Uttar Pradesh Police have summoned Twitter India managing director Manish Maheshwari for questioning within seven days in connection with the posting and promotion on the microblogging site of an allegedly manipulated video of the assault of an elderly Muslim man in Ghaziabad.

The summon was issued two days after Twitter, news website wire.in, journalists and Congress leaders were booked for "promoting enmity between religions" for posting and promoting the video amid conflicting narratives of the attack. The video purportedly showed the man being beaten up and his attackers cutting his beard.

The 72-year-old man's family and friends have said the man's attackers forced him to chant "Jai Shri Ram" and chopped off his beard. The Uttar Pradesh Police have claimed there was no communal angle to the attack even as a Samajwadi Party leader said that the police deliberately left out the alleged communal slogan chanting from the First Information Report filed in the case.

Akhilesh Kumar Mishra, the investigating officer in the case, said the notice was issued to Maheshwari late on Thursday evening under the regular provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and he has been asked to appear within seven days and record his statement. "The notice is served so that he appears to record statements under the CrPC's Section 161."

The section empowers an investigating officer to seek the appearance of any person who appears to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances of a case.

Mehul Choksi remanded to state prison in Dominica, but to remain in hospital: His lawyer

NEW DELHI (TIP): A magistrate court in Dominica on Thursday, June 17, moved businessman Mehul Choksi from police custody to a state prison, his lawyer in India said, but added that he would continue to remain in hospital as his medical condition "deteriorated".

"Yes, (Choksi's) police custody has been changed to prison custody but he shall remain in hospital as his medical condition has deteriorated," lawyer Vijay Aggarwal said.

His legal team had submitted a medical certificate from doctors at the Dominica China Friendship Hospital, where Choksi is undergoing treatment, of "mental stress" and elevated blood pressure.

The change in custody is being seen as a ray of hope for India which has approached the Dominica High Court seeking to be impleaded as a party in the case filed by lawyers of Choksi whose bail plea was earlier rejected.

Choksi is wanted in India in a case of loan fraud worth about Rs 13,500 crore in the state-run Punjab National Bank.

The CBI and the Ministry of External Affairs have sought to be impleaded in the habeas corpus matter, which seeks return of Choksi to Antigua and Barbuda, by filing two affidavits in the Dominica High Court, officials said here.

The central agency is likely to focus on establishing criminal culpability of Choksi, fugitive status, pending warrants against him, Red Notice and charge sheets while the Ministry of External Affairs will argue that Choksi continues to be an Indian citizen, they said.

The affidavits, if admitted by the high court, will pave the way for noted lawyer



Mehul Choksi

Harish Salve pleading India's case in Dominica, they said.

The fresh development seems to indicate that India stands a chance to be heard and make a legal attempt to bring the fugitive diamantaire back to the country and face a trial.

The CBI had on Wednesday filed a supplementary charge sheet against him alleging him of having prior knowledge of the impending Enforcement Directorate (ED) enquiries against him in 2017 which triggered him to plan his escape from India and cover his tracks by concealing evidence.

The CBI in its supplementary charge sheet has invoked Section 201 of the IPC among other charges which pertain to the destruction of evidence by a suspect as part of criminal conspiracy.

Choksi has been admitted at the Dominica China Friendship Hospital since May 29 after being held by the authorities of the Caribbean island

country for "illegal entry" on May 24, a charge denied by him.

His lawyers in Dominica have contended that Choksi was removed from Antigua and Barbuda, where as a citizen he enjoys rights to approach the British Privy Council as the last resort in cases on his citizenship and extradition, to Dominica where these rights are not available to him.

"The aim was to remove him from Antigua to Dominica was to diminish his protection under the law. Choksi has ongoing proceedings in Antigua in regards to attempts by the Prime Minister to remove his citizenship, the only citizenship that he possesses, and to extradite him to India," his lawyer had said.

India trying for early deportation: MEA

The Indian government is actively engaged with Dominica to seek early deportation of fugitive diamond merchant Mehul Choksi and his handover to India, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

A Dominican magistrate court adjourned till June 25 the hearing into alleged illegal entry of Choksi into the Caribbean island nation, local media there had reported earlier this week.

Asked about Choksi at an online media briefing, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Choksi continues to be in the custody of authorities in the commonwealth of Dominica and legal proceedings are underway.

"Government of India is actively engaged with the Dominican government to seek the early deportation and handover to India of Mehul Choksi to face justice in our country," he said.

NIA takes over probe of Maoist ambush which killed 22 jawans in April

NEW DELHI (TIP): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the probe into the April 3 ambush on security forces by 350-400 Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, in which 22 personnel were killed and a jawan taken hostage.

Labelled one of the deadliest ambushes in recent times, the attack was led by commander of Battalion-I of Maoist's People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA), Hidma, who is wanted for major attacks in the state in the last 15-16 years.

Officials familiar with the development said NIA began investigating the attack after taking over case documents from Chhattisgarh police earlier this month.

NIA has named some top commanders of Maoists - including Hidma, Nabbala Keshav Rao alias Raju (general secretary of the outfit), Mupalla Ladksman Rao alias Ganpati (former general secretary), Venugopal alias Bhupati, Sujata, Nagesh, Prashant - apart from 350-400 cadres in its First Information Report (FIR).

Security forces had launched an operation on April 2-3 after receiving information that top commanders of Maoists including Hidma were gathered near village Tekulgudiyam, Jhiram, in the territory of Tarrem police station in Bijapur.

Close to 1,700 personnel from different camps in Bijapur and Sukma, began a combing operation on the



night of April 2, but the next day, around 10.30am, they were trapped by Maoists from three sides and fired upon.

Initial reports stated that Maoists had emptied the villages in the area before the attack, which suggested they had prior information of the movement of forces.

Following the firing, the Maoists also looted arms and ammunition, walkie-talkie sets, cell phones and other belongings from the deceased personnel. A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) commando, Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, was also taken hostage by Maoists but he was released after four days.

Source: HT

Indians' funds in Swiss banks rise to over Rs 20k crore

NEW DELHI (TIP): Funds parked by Indian individuals and firms in Swiss banks, including through India-based branches and other financial institutions, jumped to 2.55 billion Swiss francs (over Rs 20,700 crore) in 2020 on a sharp surge in holdings via securities and similar instruments, though customer deposits fell, annual data from Switzerland's central bank showed. The increase in aggregate funds of Indian clients with Swiss banks, from 899 million Swiss francs (Rs 6,625 crore) at the end of 2019, reverses a two-year declining trend and has taken the figure to the highest level in 13 years. It stood at a record high of nearly 6.5 billion Swiss francs in 2006, after which it has been mostly on a downward path, except for a few years including in 2011, 2013 and 2017, as per the Swiss National Bank (SNB) data. The total amount of CHF 2,554.7 million (Rs 20,706 crore), described by the SNB as 'total liabilities' of Swiss banks or 'amounts due to' their Indian clients at the end of 2020, included CHF 503.9 million (over Rs 4,000 crore) in customer deposits, CHF 383 million (over Rs 3,100 crore) held via other banks, CHF 2 million (Rs 16.5 crore) through fiduciaries or trusts and the highest component of CHF 1,664.8 million (nearly Rs 13,500 crore) as 'other amounts'.

India against Pakistan municipal courts deciding on Jadhav appeal

India has expressed dissatisfaction with the law passed by Pakistan providing the right to appeal to Kulbhushan Jadhav, and called upon it to correct the infirmities as they amount to municipal courts sitting in appeal over the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

"The Bill codifies into law the earlier Ordinance with all its shortcomings. It does not create a piece of machinery to facilitate effective review and reconsideration of Jadhav's case, as mandated by the judgment of the ICJ," said Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi at a media briefing on Thursday, June 17.

Reacting to reports relating to the Review and Reconsideration Bill 2020 passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on June 10, Bagchi noted that the Ordinance, now the Bill, invites the municipal courts in Pakistan to decide whether or not any prejudice has been caused to Jadhav on account of the failure to provide consular access.

"This is clearly a breach of the basic tenet that municipal courts cannot be the arbiter of whether a State has fulfilled its obligations in international law," he observed. The ICJ had ruled that Pakistan was in breach of its international obligations because of the failure to provide consular access to Jadhav. "We call upon Pakistan to take appropriate steps to address the shortcomings in the Bill and to comply with the judgment of the ICJ in letter and spirit," said the MEA spokesperson.

Source: TNS

Early completion of disengagement in eastern Ladakh could pave way for de-escalation: MEA

New Delhi (TIP): India on Thursday, June 17, said early completion of the disengagement process in the remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh could pave the way for both Indian and Chinese troops to consider de-escalation and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

At a media briefing, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said such a step could enable progress in bilateral relations between the two countries.

"Early completion of disengagement in the remaining areas could pave the way for both sides to consider de-escalation of forces and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity, and thereby enabling progress in bilateral relations," he said replying to a question.

The 11th round of Corps Commander-level talks between the two sides was held on April 9 while the last edition of diplomatic negotiations under the framework of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination



(WMCC) on border affairs took place on March 12.

It is learnt that another round of WMCC talks could take place soon.

India and China were locked in a military standoff at multiple friction points in eastern Ladakh since early May last year. However, the two sides completed the withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong lake in February following a series of

military and diplomatic talks.

The two sides are now engaged in talks to extend the disengagement process to the remaining friction points.

There was no visible forward movement in disengagement of troops in the remaining friction points as the Chinese side did not show flexibility in their approach on it at the 11th round of military talks.

Last month, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane said that there can be no de-escalation without complete disengagement at all friction points in eastern Ladakh and that the Indian Army is prepared for all contingencies in the region.

He also said that India is dealing with China in a "firm" and "non-escalatory" manner to ensure the sanctity of its claims in eastern Ladakh, and that it was even open to initiating confidence-building measures.

India has been insisting on complete disengagement in remaining friction points to de-escalate the situation in eastern Ladakh.

Source: PTI

SC okays Class 12 evaluation plan, Class 10, 11 pre-board marks to be counted

NEW DELHI (TIP): Ending uncertainty over the method of calculating marks or grades of Class XII students following cancellation of their examinations due to Covid, the Supreme Court on Thursday, June 17, accepted the CBSE and the CISCE formulae to evaluate pupils and publish their results next month.

"After perusing the scheme presented by the Boards, prima facie, we have no hesitation in accepting the same and permit them to proceed on that basis," a Bench led by Justice AM Khanwilkar said. According to the scheme presented to the court, Class X, XI and XII marks will be considered in 30:30:40 ratio to prepare the final CBSE Class XII results, which would be declared by July 31.

Presenting a set of "objective criteria" of evaluation of Class XII students, Attorney General KK Venugopal said marks in best of three subjects would be considered for the purpose for Class X, XI and XII. While 30 per cent weightage would be given for Class X and XII, it would be 40 per cent for Class XII, he said. For Class XII, the marks obtained in unit test or mid-term or pre-board examinations will be considered while 20 marks will be given for practical exams.

There will be a moderation committee to examine the difference in marking mechanism adopted by schools, Venugopal told the court. Schools are required to form a result committee to consider the marks of a student in the three examinations, and it would be vetted by the CBSE moderation committee, he explained.

The CBSE said the historical performance of the school, in terms of the best overall performance in the previous three years' board examination, would be taken as the reference for moderating the marks assessed by the schools for 2020-21. The CBSE said if a student wasn't able to meet the qualifying criterion, he/she would be placed in "essential repeat" or "compartment" category.

However, the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) proposed a different set of criteria to compute marks based on performance of students in the last six years and declare results by July 20. The CISCE evaluation formula takes into account marks percentage in Class X board examinations, the project and practical work in subjects, performance of candidates in the school examinations in the subjects in Class XI and XII, measured through their best marks obtained in the two years (referred to as raw marks) and the best performance of the school in the last six years.

Source: TNS

LJP crisis: Rebels elect Pashupati Paras as party chief, Chirag Paswan junks claim

PATNA (TIP): Days after rebelling against party chief Chirag Paswan, the LJP faction led by Pashupati Paras said they held a national executive in Patna on Thursday, June 17, and elected him unopposed as the party's national president. Chirag hit back at the dissidents led by his uncle, saying he was still the party president as the Patna meeting did not have the required quorum of the national executive.

Loyalists of Chirag, son of the late Ram Vilas Paswan, said he had called a national executive in Delhi on Sunday.

Earlier in the day, leaders of the group led by Hajipur MP Paras said that a national executive was held at the home of former MP Suraj Bhan Singh, who was made the party's working president after the rebels ousted Chirag as party chief on Tuesday. They said no other contender filed nomination papers till 3 pm, and Paras was therefore elected unopposed.

In Patna, Paras told reporters, "Under my leadership [Bihar unit chief], the Lok Sabha elections were fought, and we won 6 out of 6 MPs... Then what happened that Chirag removed me as party president. He had no authority to do that... That is the main reason for differences. The second reason is we wanted to fight in the NDA. He wanted to fight alone and because of that in Bihar the LJP has gone towards extinction."

In Delhi, Chirag rejected his uncle's claims of being elected president and said the meeting in Patna was not according to the "party constitution" and lacked quorum. LJP general secretary Abdul Khalique said a national executive will be held in Delhi on Sunday to reiterate Chirag's position as party national president.

'Chirag's advisor responsible for crisis'

LJP MP from Samastipur Prince Raj on



Chirag Paswan

Thursday accused the "personal assistant and advisor" of his cousin Chirag Paswan of engineering the family crisis, splitting the party and also instigating the sexual assault complaint against him.

Prince, who is one of the five LJP MPs who have rebelled against Chirag, told The Indian Express over the phone from Patna that his cousin has been under the influence of the advisor for the past few years.

He claimed the decision to remove Chirag as the LJP chief was taken only to save the party and the family. "Things were not going well within the party for long, from the time bade papa (Prince's uncle Ram Vilas Paswan) was not keeping well, and even till the (Bihar Assembly) elections took place (late last year). None of the party members — MPs, MLAs, and workers — were happy with the poll results. (The LJP won just one seat.)

"However, bhaiya (Chirag), acting on the advice of his personal assistant, kept taking decisions that were not going down well with other party members. This was the reason why many quit the party, while many others were unhappy," Prince said.

India logs lowest deaths in 2 months

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Friday, June 18, registered 62,480 cases and 1,587 deaths due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), taking the caseload and death toll to 29,762,793 and 383,490 respectively, according to the Union health ministry. Nearly 89,000 people recovered in the last 24 hours and the cumulative figures of recoveries have climbed to 28,580,647 while the active cases have come down to 798,656 and constitute 2.78 per cent of the caseload.

Friday's case count is 4,728 less than that of Thursday's when 67,208 people tested positive for the viral disease. Since Wednesday, the country had been witnessing a marginal increase in its daily tally when 62,224 cases were reported. While on Tuesday, 60,471 people were detected Covid-19 positive, the lowest single-day rise in more than 70 days.

Meanwhile, the toll on Friday has been the lowest since April 18 this year, when 1,501 people succumbed to Covid-19.

A total of 387,167,696 samples have been tested for Covid-19 so far of which 1,929,476 were tested in the last 24 hours, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said on Friday.

Even though India has managed to



India on Friday, June 18, registered 62,480 cases and 1,587 deaths due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), taking the caseload and death toll to 29,762,793 and 383,490 respectively

However, a seroprevalence study carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has stated that the possible third wave of the pandemic is unlikely to disproportionately affect children than adults. The SARS-CoV-2 seropositivity rate among children was high and was comparable to the adult population in the study, which was conducted in five selected sites including Delhi with a total sample size of 10,000.

In Delhi, 74.7 per cent of the population, comprising both children and adults, were exposed to Covid-19, the WHO-AIIMS study found out. This is much greater seroprevalence than the Delhi government's survey from January 1 where 56.1 per cent were found to have antibodies against the viral disease, Hindustan Times reported.

Source: HT

gain slight control over the second wave of the pandemic after it had witnessed its worst health crisis in April this year, the possibility of a third and more deadly wave is still lurking. It has been often pointed out

that children will be more prone to the viral disease in the third wave in India due to which states and Union Territories (UTs) have started ramping up their health infrastructure.

Serum could begin Covovax trial on children in India next month

NEW DELHI (TIP): Serum Institute of India (SII) is likely to begin clinical trials of Novavax's Covid-19 vaccine candidate on children in July, sources at the Pune-based vaccine manufacturer said.

The recombinant nanoparticle protein-based vaccine — NVX-CoV2373 — developed by the American biotechnology firm has been branded Covovax in India. SII, which is partnering with Novavax, expects to launch Covovax in India by September.

Earlier this week, Novavax announced excellent results from its PREVENT-19 phase 3 trials at 119 sites in the United States and Mexico, reporting an overall efficacy of 90.4 per cent — on a par with Pfizer-BioNTech's and Moderna's mRNA shots, and better than both Oxford-AstraZeneca (Covishield) and Johnson & Johnson's one-dose vaccine.

A day after Novavax announced its trial data, Dr V K Paul, head of India's Covid-19 Task Force, had urged SII to begin clinical trials in the paediatric population without delay, given the impressive safety profile demonstrated by the vaccine candidate.

"There is an important, interesting, and positive development with regard to the Novavax results which are very promising. What we are learning from the data that is available is that this vaccine is highly effective," Dr Paul said. "But what makes this vaccine relevant for today, is the fact that this vaccine will be produced in India. The preparatory work is already accomplished by Serum Institute... In fact, the bridging trial is an advanced stage of completion... and I am also hoping that they would start, in good time, trials in children; now because we have the safety data, it is time, without delay, for us now to start bridging trials in the paediatric population, which as you know is of special interest for us," he said.

As and when SII is allowed by the Indian drug regulator to conduct clinical trials on children, Covovax will become the third vaccine candidate to be tested in the country's paediatric population.

Source: Indian Express

Third Covid wave may not hit kids disproportionately: WHO-AIIMS sero survey

NEW DELHI (TIP): A serological surveillance (sero survey) under the World Health Organization (WHO), conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), has allayed apprehension regarding a potential third wave of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic in India disproportionately affecting children. The interim findings of the ongoing sero survey point out that the SARS-CoV-2 seropositivity rate in children aged two years and above is comparable to that in adults and thus there is no statistical evidence to suggest that the 2-17 age group is especially vulnerable to a potential third wave.

The findings of the ongoing sero survey have been published on medRxiv, a pre-print server, and are based on a mid-term analysis of the data of the 4,509 participants — 700 children in the 2-17 years age group and 3,809 aged 18 years and above. The five selected sites are as follows — Delhi Urban Resettlement Colony, Delhi Rural (villages in Faridabad district of Haryana under Delhi-NCR), Bhubaneswar Rural, Gorakhpur rural, and Agartala rural. Data was collected between March 15 and June 10 from these selected sites.

Here are the key interim findings from the ongoing sero survey conducted by WHO and AIIMS:

- The seroprevalence, presence of virus-fighting total serum antibodies against the Sars-CoV-2 virus, was assessed qualitatively by using a standard ELISA kit in five states with a proposed total sample size of 10,000. Among children aged 2-17 years, the seroprevalence was found to be 55.7% across the five selected study sites, in comparison to 63.5% among adults. The difference was judged to be statistically insignificant.
- Regardless of the age group, rural sites reported a lower seropositivity rate on average as compared to urban sites in Delhi. Even within rural sites, children reported a lower seropositivity rate as compared to adults. However, this difference was not observed in the urban sites.



- The interim findings show that female children show a slightly higher seropositivity rate than males, which is in contrast to the meta-analysis which initially showed a higher seroprevalence in men. The findings may continue to change as more data become available, the study said.
- Higher mobility and independence may be a reason behind the higher seropositivity rate in children aged 10-17 years, when compared to that in younger children.
- In Delhi, which was one of the five sites for the study, the researchers found that 74.7% of the population — both children and adults — had been exposed to the infection. This is a much higher seroprevalence than the state government's survey from January where 56.1% were found to have antibodies against the virus. The samples for the AIIMS study were collected between April and May, and would not have detected antibodies of those who got the infection during the second wave.



GOPIO INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION
(A DIVISION OF GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN (GOPIO), INC.)

237-50 Fairbury Avenue, New York 11426, U.S.A.
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Dear Friend,

As COVID-19 continues to spread, the future has never felt so unpredictable. These are challenging times for us all, and we hope you're in good spirits and health! Right now, we're doing everything possible to keep up our mission and provide services to our motherland. We need to realise that India needs our support more than ever and should extend our helping hand to the suffering people.

I am contacting you on behalf of **GOPIO INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION** and my fund raising team to request your support for the newly floated **COVID-19 HELP INDIA FUND** in order to help the dire needs of the Covid patients in India. We have tied up with a few trusted social organisations working at grass root level, so that every penny contributed by you will reach the most deserving people.



Thank you for reading about our latest mission, and please reach out if you'd like to learn more and get involved with our fundraising efforts. We would also appreciate if you can advocate for us by sharing our mission with a family member or friend would mean the world to us.

Please know that all contributions you make will positively impact our COVID affected fellow countrymen. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request.

In times like this, we're reminded of how interconnected we all are. Thank you for being part of our great Indian diaspora. Without you, none of it is possible.

Stay safe and well,
With gratitude,

Lal Motwani
Executive Trustee
GOPIO INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION



Please consider extending a generous gift towards COVID-19 HELP INDIA FUND by clicking on the link below:

http://www.gopio.net/India_Covid_2021_Donations.htm

Cheque should be issued in favour of:

GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN

For more information, you may contact :

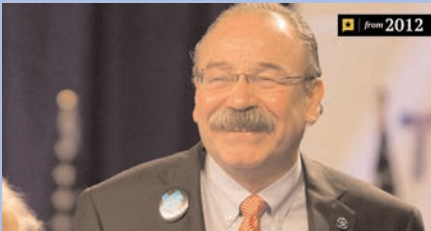
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**TEXAS DEMOCRATS
WELCOME SCOTUS
UPHOLDING THE ACA**



"Today is a great day for Texans and all Americans. Healthcare is a right, not a privilege, and we will make sure it stays that way", said Gilberto Hinojosa

AUSTIN, TX (TIP): Texas Democratic Party Chair Gilberto Hinojosa, welcoming the Supreme Court ruling on ACA said, "Today's Supreme Court ruling further shows that the ACA is here to stay. It is shameful that our disgraced Texas Attorney General led the charge to strip millions of Americans of their health coverage during the worst health crisis in recent history.

"Democrats have consistently fought to defend the health and safety of fellow Americans by making healthcare more accessible and more affordable regardless of pre-existing conditions or a person's ability to pay. President Biden's American Rescue Plan further builds on the ACA by extending the enrollment period and reducing health insurance premiums for millions of American families who could not afford it under the original law. "Today is a great day for Texans and all Americans. Healthcare is a right, not a privilege, and we will make sure it stays that way."

**TEXAS DEMOCRATS
CELEBRATE REP. ROSE'S
APPOINTMENT AS CHAIR
OF HDCC**



Rep. Toni Rose, D-Dallas, has been appointed Chair of the Texas House Democratic Campaign Committee

AUSTIN, TX (TIP): Texas Democratic Chair Gilberto Hinojosa, celebrating the appointment of Rep. Toni Rose, D-Dallas, as Chair of the Texas House Democratic Campaign Committee, said, "On behalf of the Texas Democratic Party, we congratulate a proven Texas leader, state Representative Toni Rose, D-Dallas, for breaking barriers as the first Black woman appointed as Chair of the Texas House Democratic Campaign Committee. Rep. Rose has for years fought tirelessly to improve the affordability and quality of health care in Texas, including mental health, as well as improving the quality of life for her constituents and those in underserved communities. Her experience and her leadership will be key in identifying key state House districts that will help us turn Texas blue."

Justice Dept. ends a Trump policy that limited asylum for survivors of gang violence and domestic abuse

WASHINGTON (TIP): Attorney General Merrick B. Garland reversed on Wednesday, June 16, Trump-era immigration rulings that had made it all but impossible for people to seek asylum in the United States over credible fears of domestic abuse or gang violence, marking one of the Justice Department's most significant breaks with the previous administration, says a New York Times report

His decisions came in closely watched cases where his predecessors, the former attorneys general Jeff Sessions and William P. Barr, broke with precedent to overturn decisions by immigration appeals judges that would have allowed such asylum claims.

The decisions - applicable to all cases in the system, including appeals - will affect tens of thousands of migrants. Hundreds of thousands of Central Americans fleeing gang extortion and recruitment and women fleeing domestic abuse have arrived in the United States since 2013, and many cases are still being adjudicated, given an enormous backlog in immigration courts.

In vacating the Trump administration's stance, Mr. Garland said that the Justice Department should follow the earlier precedent.

In a closely watched case known as A-



Attorney General Merrick B. Garland

B for the initials of the woman seeking asylum. The department's Board of Immigration Appeals found in 2016 that she was part of a particular social group, saying that the government of El Salvador does little to protect people in violent relationships. That assessment qualified the woman for asylum, but Mr. Sessions overruled the appeals board.

Attorneys general can overturn decisions made by immigration judges because immigration courts are housed

under the Justice Department, not the judicial branch.

The move is one of the Justice Department's most significant reversals of a Trump-era policy. Earlier it defended the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, a position that officials had abandoned during the previous administration. The department also sided with unions in a case that could affect restrictions on organizing workers.

Proponents of asylum seekers cheered Mr. Garland's latest reversal.

"We're really heartened by this decision," said Karen Musalo, a lawyer representing one of the asylum seekers and a professor at the University of California, Hastings College of Law. "It restores the possibility of protection to those whose very lives are in the balance."

Mr. Garland has also continued some Trump administration policies and case positions, prompting some Democrats to criticize him as overly cautious.

Mr. Garland has defended those moves, saying that it was important to uphold Trump-era positions on cases if they reflected an impartial reading of the law.

(Source: New York Times)

US CDC classifies Delta variant as 'variant of concern'

THE CDC SAID THE DELTA VARIANT SHOWS INCREASED TRANSMISSIBILITY

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has classified the Delta, a highly transmissible COVID-19 variant first identified in India, as a "variant of concern."

"The B.1.1.7 (Alpha), B.1.351 (Beta), P.1 (Gamma), B.1.427 (Epsilon), B.1.429 (Epsilon), and B.1.617.2 (Delta) variants circulating in the United States are classified as variants of concern. To date, no variants of high consequence have been identified in the United States," the CDC said in a statement on Tuesday.

The CDC said the Delta variant shows increased transmissibility, potential reduction in neutralization by some monoclonal antibody treatments under emergency authorization and potential reduction in neutralization from sera



after vaccination in lab tests.

The variant of concern designation is given to strains of the virus that scientists believe are more transmissible or can cause more severe disease. Vaccines, treatments and tests that detect the virus may also be less effective against a variant of concern.

Previously, the CDC had considered the Delta variant to be a variant of interest.

The World Health Organization classified the Delta variant as a variant of concern on May 10.

The CDC estimates it accounted for 9.9 per cent of cases in the US as of June 5.

By June 13, it accounted for 10.3 per cent of cases, according to the website outbreak.info, which tracks variants. The Delta variant could be the dominant strain in the US within a month, the CNN report warned.

US President Joe Biden and his Chief Advisor Dr Anthony Fauci last week have warned that the Delta variant of the novel coronavirus is highly infectious, which is now the dominant strain in the United Kingdom, spreading rapidly among young people between 12 and 20 years old.

COVID-19 cases have been declining over the past few months in the United States, but there's concern that could change as the pace of vaccinations slows and the Delta variant spreads.

The US, the worst hit country by COVID-19 pandemic, has so far reported 33,498,155 confirmed cases and 600,649 deaths.

(Source: PTI)

Houston to observe International Yoga Day, focused on well-being amid the pandemic

BY POOJA SALHOTRA

HOUSTON (TIP): Although India's second spike of COVID-19 has been dominating news headlines, it is the country's ancient mind-body practice of yoga that is top of mind for some.

Health and wellness experts around the world are gearing up to observe the seventh annual International Yoga Day (IYD), recognized by a United Nations resolution co-sponsored by a record 177 nations. The celebration comes at a time that anxiety and psychological suffering are soaring. In the U.S., more than 42 percent of people surveyed by the U.S. Census Bureau in December reported symptoms of anxiety or depression, an increase from 11 percent the previous year. Physical isolation and fear of the COVID-19 infection are thought to have contributed to these numbers, and yoga and meditation have emerged as possible panaceas.

"A lot of people misunderstand yoga as a physical exercise, but yoga is for peace, harmony, wellness and health," said Vipin Kumar, executive director of India House, one of the event sponsors. "That is what we are celebrating."

First proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a General Assembly address in 2014, IYD is now observed worldwide to recognize the many benefits of practicing yoga. The UN has appropriately chosen "Yoga for well-being" as this year's event theme, focusing on the role the practice can play in fighting social isolation and depression. In Houston, the city's Consulate General of India in partnership with a number of organizations is marking the occasion with outdoor events on Sunday, June 20 and on Monday, June 21, both free and open to the public.



Pictured here are Houston yoga teachers who participated in International Day of Yoga in 2019.

Sunday's IYD event takes place at Buffalo Bayou Park while Monday's, which will also be livestreamed, is outdoors at India House. Both events take place 6-8 p.m. and will include booths with food vendors and ayurvedic related organizations as well as a formal presentation with an address by the Consulate General of India, Houston. Top yoga teachers from Houston, including Shekhar Agarwal, Vishwarupa Nanjundappa, Nancy Martch, Robert Boustany, Mark Ram and Saumil Manek will both perform complicated poses and lead the public in a standard 55-minute yoga practice.

This year's event also includes a specific focus on galvanizing youth. Hindus of Greater Houston and Young Hindus of Greater Houston are encouraging youth to submit pictures of Yogasana along with a personalized message about what yoga means to them. Judges will then select certain submissions to be published in prominent local newspapers.

"We want a lot of involvement from youth so we can spread the word about

yoga as much as we can," said Anjali Madhusudan Aggarwal, an HGH intern who will start college at the University of Houston in the fall. Aggarwal has been practicing yoga with her family since she was 10 years old, and she said it has helped her find mental clarity and physical fitness. "I feel less burdened in my mind," she said.

Data shows that more people have been turning to yoga over the past decade. Nearly 37 million U.S. adults practice yoga, and that number has only gone up during the coronavirus pandemic. According to ResearchAndMarkets.com, yoga equipment sales grew 154 percent in 2020, as people began taking virtual yoga classes from home. And MindBody, a software company that provides business management tools for the wellness industry, reported that yoga is the most popular virtual class booked on their platform, with an average of nearly 22,000 yoga bookings per day.

"Yoga has helped me stay mentally positive during the pandemic," said Saumil Manek, a registered yoga

teacher and one of the lead organizers for Houston's IYD events. "When you're happy, you're not living in dis-ease."

Hiba Haroon, a yoga teacher and practitioner who plans to attend IYD this year, said her yoga practice deepened significantly during the pandemic. "My practice caught me in all that I was feeling and experiencing during the pandemic," she said. "In my teaching, I prioritized breathwork and restorative shapes, especially because cortisol levels were at an all-time high and it was wreaking havoc on people's immunity, sleep, and overall well-being."

Manek, who is also emcee for Sunday's event, said that while there is no way to know how many people will show up to the events, he hopes to see at least 500. Two years ago, the event took place at Midtown Park and drew about 1,200 people. Last year's event took place virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic and, according to organizers, more than 50,000 people watched online.

In addition to the events taking place in Houston, the Woodlands is hosting its own virtual event on Saturday, June 19. That event will focus on how yoga can help boost immunity. Dr. Neeta Shukla, an anesthesiologist and a yoga teacher who has helped spearhead the IYD events in the Woodlands for the past five years, said yoga works at the cellular level to assist with immunity.

"Yoga has the master key to unlock your inner potential and your inner energy," said Dr. Shukla.

"It is the best preventive medicine for individual health, happiness and to lead a disease-free life."

For more information about upcoming IYD events in Texas, visit yogadayoftexas.org

(Pooja Salhotra, 27, is a freelance writer from Houston. She has been practicing yoga for almost a decade and is a 200-hour registered yoga teacher with the Yoga Alliance. She teaches online powerful flow yoga classes through her own platform, Pooja's Yoga, as well as for BIG Power Yoga)

Indian-Origin fashion designer connects North American retailers with Indian artisans

NEW YORK (TIP): Keen to connect Indian artisans with top American retailers, noted Indian-origin fashion designer and entrepreneur, Akshay Wadhwa once went knocking on their doors, but soon realized he was not being taken seriously.

Named one of the top ten designers of Vancouver Fashion Week in 2016 and covered in British Vogue, Wadhwa, then, created BlueRickshaw.com (BR), a highly curated, digital, B2B, wholesale export platform.

To make his dream a reality, Wadhwa joined hands with co-founder Krishan Chandak, whose 23 years of experience in technology and leadership resulted in the formation of the B2B platform.

Launched in March, it connects verified small businesses, weavers and artisans across India to small and mid-size retailers, mom-and-pop shops and boutique stores in North America, according to a media

release.

Banking on the untapped potential of the Indian artisan market in a highly dysfunctional infrastructure, BR aims to provide international opportunities to undiscovered and unexposed talent.

The new platform helps everyone from small weavers to artisans to manufacturers, to make their products available across the world through a transparent ecosystem, it said.

Currently, small businesses in the US and Canada are unable to source products directly from India, due to high minimum order quantities (MOQs), trust and reliability issues and, now, strict travel restrictions in place post-Covid, the release said.

BR will serve as the only tech platform on which smaller retailers can personally select products from verified suppliers across various categories with minimum MOQs, in most cases, just one product per

style.

Since most sellers and buyers are unable to produce or procure volumes during these uncertain times, BR serves as the perfect matchmaking service for these small-to-mid-size businesses looking for alternative avenues, the release said.

The platform has been built from the ground-up with a focus on artificial intelligence, machine learning and predictive filtering of products, so that buyers can ultimately purchase an item in less than 30 seconds, it said.

The long-term vision of BR is to help the small manufacturers, weavers and artisans of India expand in the international market without having to make investments in promotion or travel, while enabling retailers across North America create an inventory-free model to sell directly to their customers without having to invest in purchasing minimum orders.

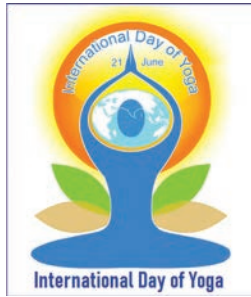
Other platforms like Etsy or Amazon are



"We just want to help small businesses get back on their feet, post-pandemic," says Wadhwa.

either seller-centric or buyer-centric, whereas Blue Rickshaw caters to both segments equally by espousing the values of trust, transparency and timeliness as part of its core philosophy, making it the new leader in tech-based, B2B wholesale export.

"We just want to help small businesses get back on their feet, post-pandemic," says Wadhwa.



Yoga: Its origin, history and development

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', meaning 'to join' or 'to yoke' or 'to unite'.

As per Yogic scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body, Man & Nature. According to modern scientists, everything in the universe is just a manifestation of the same quantum firmament. One who experiences this oneness of existence is said to be in yoga, and is termed as a yogi, having attained to a state of freedom referred to as mukti, nirvana or moksha.

Thus the aim of Yoga is Self-realization, to overcome all kinds of sufferings leading to 'the state of liberation' (Moksha) or 'freedom' (Kaivalya). Living with freedom in all walks of life, health and harmony shall be the main objectives of Yoga practice. "Yoga" also refers to an inner science comprising of a variety of methods through which human beings can realize this union and achieve mastery over their destiny. Yoga, being widely considered as an 'immortal cultural outcome' of Indus Saraswati Valley civilization – dating back to 2700 B.C., has proved itself catering to both material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Basic humane values are the very identity of Yoga Sadhana.

A Brief History

The practice of Yoga is believed to have started with the very dawn of civilization. The science of yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religions or belief systems were born. In the yogic lore, Shiva is seen as the first yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru.

Several Thousand years ago, on the banks of the lake Kantisarovar in the Himalayas, Adiyogi poured his profound knowledge into the legendary Saptarishis or "seven sages". The sages carried this powerful yogic science to different parts of the world, including Asia, the Middle East, Northern Africa and South America. Interestingly, modern scholars have noted and marvelled at the close parallels found between ancient cultures across the globe. However, it was in India that the yogic system found its fullest expression. Agastya, the Saptarishi who travelled across the Indian subcontinent, crafted this culture around a core yogic way of life.

The Number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati valley civilization with Yogic motives and figures performing Yoga Sadhana suggest the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The phallic symbols, seals of idols of mother Goddess are suggestive of Tantra Yoga. Presence of Yoga is available in folk traditions, Indus valley civilization, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, Darshanas, epics of Mahabharat and Ramayana, theistic traditions of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Tantric traditions. In addition, there was a



primordial or pure Yoga which has been manifested in mystical traditions of South Asia. This was the time when Yoga was being practised under the direct guidance of Guru and its spritual value was given special importance. It was a part of Upasana and yoga sadhana was inbuilt in their rituals. Sun was given highest importance during the vedic period. The practice of 'Surya namaskara' may have been invented later due to this influence. Pranayama was a part of daily ritual and to offer the oblation. Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-Vedic period, the great Sage Maharshi Patanjali systematized and codified the then existing practices of Yoga, its meaning and its related knowledge through his Yoga Sutras. After Patanjali, many Sages and Yoga Masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through their well documented practices and literature.

Historical evidences of the existence of Yoga were seen in the pre-Vedic period (2700 B.C.), and thereafter till Patanjali's period. The main sources, from which we get the information about Yoga practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Vedas (4), Upanishads(108), Smritis, teachings of Buddhism, Jainism, Panini, Epics (2), Puranas (18) etc.

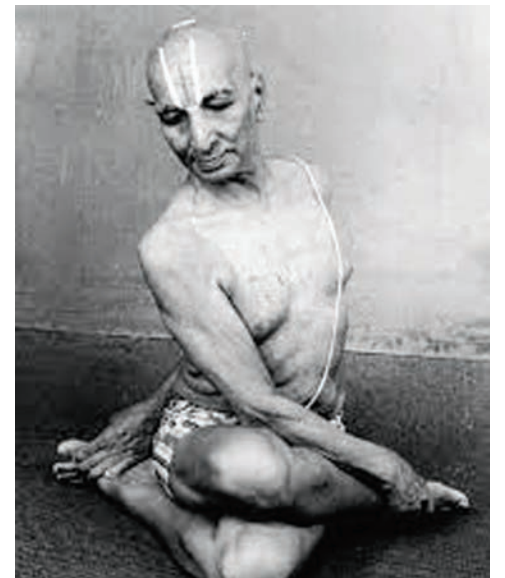
Tentatively, the period between 500 BC - 800 A.D. is considered as the Classical period which is also considered as the most fertile and prominent period in the history and development of Yoga. During this period, commentaries of Vyasa on Yoga Sutras and Bhagawadgita etc. came into existence. This period can be mainly dedicated to two great religious teachers of India – Mahavir and Buddha. The concept of Five great vows – Pancha mahavrata- by

Mahavir and Ashta Magga or eightfold path by Buddha - can be well considered as early nature of Yoga sadhana.

We find its more explicit explanation in Bhagawadgita which has elaborately presented the concept of Gyan yoga, Bhakti yoga and Karma Yoga. These three types of yoga are still the highest example of human wisdom and and even to day people find peace by following the methods as shown in Gita. Patanjali's yoga sutra besides containing various aspects of yoga, is mainly identified with eight fold path of Yoga.

The very important commentary on Yoga sutra by Vyasa was also written. During this very period the aspect of mind was given importance and it was clearly brought out through Yoga sadhana, Mind and body both can be brought under control to experience equanimity. The period between 800 A.D. - 1700 A.D. has been recognized as the Post Classical period wherein the teachings of great Acharyatrayas-Adi Shankracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhavacharya-were prominent during this period. The teachings of Suradasa, Tulasidasa, Purandardasa, Mirabai were the great contributors during this period. The Natha Yogis of Hathayoga Tradition like Matsyendaranatha, Gorkshanatha, Cauranginatha, Swatmaram Suri, Gheranda, Shrinivasa Bhatt are some of the great personalities who popularized the Hatha Yoga practices during this period.

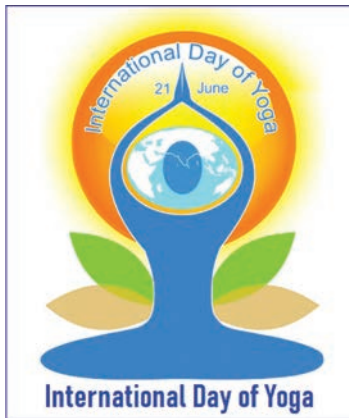
The period between 1700 - 1900 A.D. is considered as Modern period in which the great Yogacharyas- Ramana Maharshi, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Paramhansa Yogananda, Vivekananda etc. have contributed for the development of Raja Yoga. This was the



period when Vedanta, Bhakti yoga, Nathayoga or Hatha-yoga flourished. The Shadanga-yoga of Gorakshashatakam, Chaturanga-yoga of Hathayogapradipika, Saptanga-yoga of Gheranda Samhita, were the main tenents of Hatha-yoga.

Now in the contemporary times, everybody has conviction about yoga practices towards the preservation, maintenance and promotion of health. Yoga has spread all over the world by the teachings of great personalities like Swami Shivananda, Shri T.Krishnamacharya, Swami Kavalayananda, Shri Yogendara, Swami Rama, Sri Aurobindo, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Acharya Rajanish, Pattabhijois, BKS. Iyengar, Swami Satyananda Sarasvati and the like.

The author, Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, is the Director of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga



ASHTANGA YOGA

In Sanskrit "Ashta + anga" is ashtanga. "Ashta" means Eight and "Anga" is limbs so it means Eight Limb path, Ashtanga yoga is based on Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali. The asanas, Pranayamas or the dharana which we have studied earlier or the yam and niyam are based on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Hence, we will acquaint ourselves with the fundamentals as stated by Patanjali first.

Yoga has its roots about 5000 years BC as described in Vedic Philosophy and Tantras. Patanjali, great sage composed this path into a Darshan (Philosophy) in his Book Patanjali Yoga Sutra. In which he has formulated Yoga as a Eight Limbs or Eight Fold path.

HATHA YOGA

The term Hatha Yoga has been commonly used to describe the practice of asana (postures). The syllable 'ha' denotes the pranic (vital) force governing the physical body and 'tha' denotes the chitta (mental) force thus making Hatha Yoga a catalyst to an awakening of the two energies that govern our lives. More correctly the techniques described in Hatha Yoga harmonise and purify the body systems and focus the mind in preparation for more advanced chakra and kundalini practices.

The Hatha Yoga system includes asana along with the six shatkarmas (physical and mental detox techniques), mudras and bandhas (psycho-physiological energy release techniques) and Pranayama (pranic awakening practices). Fine tuning of the human personality at increasingly subtle levels leads to higher states of awareness and meditation.

JNANA YOGA

Jnana Yoga is the process of converting intellectual knowledge into practical wisdom. It is a discovery of human dharma in relation to nature and the universe. Jnana Yoga is described by tradition as a means to obtain the highest meditative state and inner knowledge.

Jnana literally means 'knowledge', but in the context of yoga it means the process of meditative awareness which leads to illuminative wisdom. It is not a method by which we try to find rational answers to eternal questions, rather it is a part of meditation leading to self-enquiry and self-realisation.

MANTRA YOGA

Japa Yoga, Requirements, State of Consciousness in Matra Yoga, Methods of Chanting, Effects of Mantra, How to Practice & Rules of Mantra Chanting)

Mantra Yoga has its origin in Vedic Sciences and also in Tantra, in fact all the verses in Vedas are called mantras, it is said that any person who can chant or sing Vedas can achieve the ultimate salvation or union with supreme consciousness only by chanting the mantras, which is the aim Mantra Yoga.

Yoga styles and types



BHAKTI YOGA

Bhakti is a Yoga of devotion or complete faith. This faith is generally in the God or supreme consciousness in any of the forms. It may be Lord Rama, Krishna, Christ, Mohammed, Buddha etc. It may be a Guru for his disciples. Important thing is the person interested in following this path should have very strong emotional bond with the object of faith. The flow of emotional energy is directed to this object. Mostly people suppress their emotions and that often reflects in the form of physical and mental disorders. This Bhakti Yoga releases those suppressed emotions and brings the purification of inner self.

Continuous meditation of God or object of faith gradually decrease the ego of the practitioner, which further prevents new distractions, fickleness or even pain and induces strong bonds of love. Slowly the practitioner loses the self identity and becomes one with the object of faith, this is a state of self realization.

KUNDALINI YOGA

Japa Yoga, Requirements, State of Consciousness in Matra Yoga, Methods of Chanting, Effects of Mantra, How to Practice & Rules of Mantra Chanting)

This system of Yoga is concerned with awakening of the psychic centers or chakras, which exists in every individual. (Please refer to the figure) There are six main chakras in the human beings.

The mind is made up of different subtle layers. Each of these layers progressively are associated with the higher levels of consciousness. Each of these levels are related to the different chakra or psychic center located throughout the psychic body. There are no of other chakras apart from



the six main, which are associated with planes below the human level. In all we have chakras that connect us to animal levels of mind, to the instinctive realms of being or to the sublime heights of consciousness.

In Kundalini Yoga, higher-level chakras are awakened and also the activities associated with these higher psychic centers. The basic method of awakening involves deep concentration on these chakras and forcing their arousal. Asanas, pranayama, mudra and bandha and other forms of Yoga such as Mantra Yoga are also used to stimulate the awakening.

KARMA YOGA

Karma Yoga is a path of devotion to the work. One loses his identity while working, only selfless work remains. This state is very difficult to achieve. Generally some rewards or incentives or outcome follows the work and one is attached to this reward or incentive. This is not the Karma Yoga. Non-attachment with the work and becoming the perfect instrument of the super consciousness in this manifested universe is the ultimate aim of Karma Yoga.

In the initial stages of Karma Yoga, individual possesses strong sense of ego and consciously or unconsciously he is attached to the fruits of his efforts or at least praise or recognition but by continuous involvement in the work and change in mental attitude, one can surely disassociate himself from the ego and his own personality. In this state the work becomes worship to the God, it becomes spiritual, also the individual becomes expert, skilled and Yogi. He achieves stability of mind in all conditions, he is not disturbed or excited or happy in any of the situations. He becomes divine & his actions represent God's will.

The essence of Karma Yoga as extracted from 'Bhagvad Gita' says: The world confined in its own activity except when actions are performed as worship of God. Therefore one must perform every action sacramentally and be free of your attachments to the results.

KRIYA YOGA

The word kriya means 'activity' or 'movement' and refers to the activity or movement of consciousness. Kriya also refers to a type of practical or preliminary practice leading to total union, the final result of practice. Kriya Yoga does not curb mental fluctuations but purposely creates activity and awakening in consciousness. In this way all faculties are harmonised and flower into their fullest potential.

Kriya Yoga originated in antiquity and evolved over time through practice and experience. The full form of Kriya Yoga consists of over 70 kriyas out of which only 20 or so are commonly known.

The kriya practices are inscribed in numerous tantric texts written in Sanskrit. To date only a few of these have been translated into other languages. The most authoritative magna opus on the subject of Kriya.

The practices of Kriya Yoga were propagated by Swami Satyananda Saraswati from secret teachings described in the Yoga and Tantra Shastras. The kriyas, as taught by Satyananda Yoga, are one of only two systems of Kriya Yoga recognized the world over, the other being that of Paramahansa Yogananda.

SWARA YOGA

Swara is Sanskrit word, meaning sound or note. It is also a continuous flow of air through one nostril. Yoga means union, so Swara yoga is a science which is realization of cosmic consciousness through control and manipulation of breath.

Swara Yoga is science which is a complete study, observations, control and manipulation of breath or Swara. Pranayama is only related to control of breath in various ways. In swara yoga, you will find association of breath in relation to activities of sun, moon, various seasons, physical and mental conditions of individuals etc. So Swara Yoga is more comprehensive in theory and practices related to breath.

RAJA YOGA

Raja Yoga usually refers to the system of yoga that is described in the Yoga Sutras of Sage Patanjali. In this ancient text Sage Patanjali describes eight stages of yoga which are known collectively as Raja Yoga.

Raja Yoga is a comprehensive yoga system which deals with the refinement of human behaviour and personality through the practice of the yamas (restraint) and niyamas (disciplines); attainment of physical health and vitality through asanas (postures) and pranayamas (pranic breathing techniques); management of mental and emotional conflicts and development of awareness and concentration through pratyahara (sensory withdrawal) and dharana (concentration); and developing the creative aspect of consciousness for transcendental awareness through dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (absorption in the universal identity).



Yoga is an ancient practice is has been known for thousands of years for healing people. India is a country where this ancient

practice was born 5,000 years ago and a place where lord Adiyogi shiva has started this practice and later on our great Indian masters has kept the lineages of traditional yoga alive and passed to their students and the rest of the world. Those were the yoga teacher who has kept the tradition of yoga alive and spread the light of this ancient art and transformed the whole dimension of yoga teacher training courses in India with their teachings.

All of these yoga gurus has followed the path of yoga but it all lead to one goal that was to spread the light of traditional yoga and connect them with their inner consciousness through the practice of yoga. Here are most insiring yoga gurus who has changed the whole dimension of yoga all over the globe:

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya

Infamous as father of modern yoga T. Krishnamacharya was a prominent ayurvedic scholar, a yoga teacher and healer who revived the traditional art of hatha yoga. He was born on 18 November 1888 in Karnataka he developed the form of vinyasa yoga by combining breath and movement into the traditional hatha yoga. His teaching styles were based on patanjali yoga sutra and his disciples later on went on become some really influential yoga teachers.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Born in tamil Nadu sivananda saraswati is prominently known for combining karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga and raja yoga. At the age of 40 sivananda saraswati came to rishikesh in the search of self realization with the rigorous practice of yoga and meditation. Later on he established siavananda ashram that follows the path of swami sivananda saraswati. He went on to spread the teaching of yoga all over the world and dedicated his life towards the learning scriptures, teaching yoga and spirituality.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Maharshi Mahesh yogi was born in 12 January 1918 is famous to develop a deeper form of meditation that is known as transcendental meditation technique. It is a type of mantra meditation that produces deeper state of relaxation and promote a sense of sprirituality . He was later on become a spiritual guru of Beatles, beach boys and various celebrities. He encourages the studies to prove the benefits of yoga and meditation on the brain.

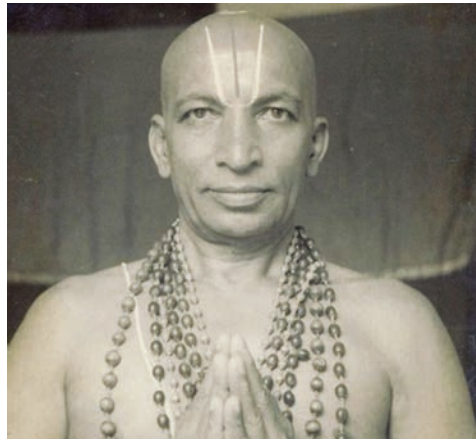
Swami Rama

Born in 1925 was the first Indian born yogi that was studied by the group of western scientist. He was born in Garhwal Himalaya and brought under the guidance of various sages. He later on established Himalayan International institute of yogic science and philosophy and become the yogi who claims to control his body process and become a holder of sakhya yoga tradition.

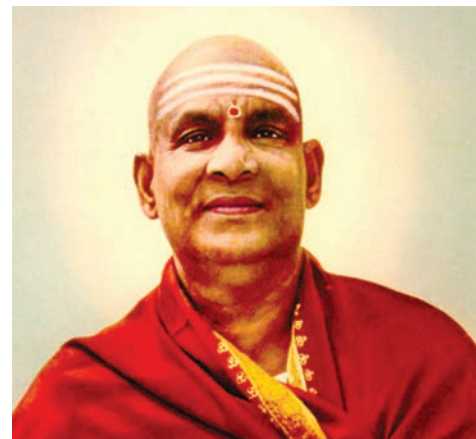
B.K.S Iyengar

BKS Iyengar or Bellur Krishnamacharya Sundararaja Iyengar was the founder of the

Eminent Yoga gurus



Tirumalai Krishnamacharya



Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Maharishi Mahesh Yogi



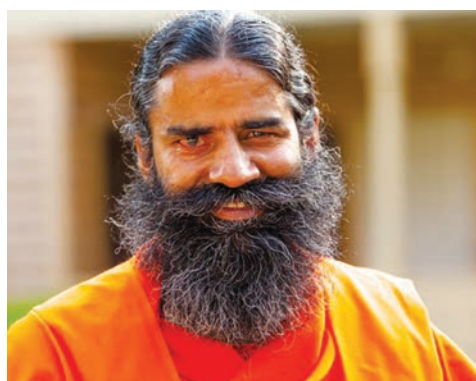
Jaggi Vasudev



Paramahansa Yogananda



Dhirendra Brahmachari



Baba Ramdev



Rodney Yee



Alan Finger

famous Iyengar Yoga. He started on the path of yoga after suffering from various diseases throughout the childhood that made him very weak. He started his yogic journey under his brother in law T Krishnamacharya and played a pivotal role in spreading the teaching of hatha yoga in the west. Later on, he started experimenting with this ancient art and develop a new form that is what we have known today as Iyengar Yoga and turned into a popular international yoga teacher.

Swami Kavalayananda

Swami Kavalayananda was born on 30 August 1883 was a prominent researcher and a yoga teacher, known for his research work in the yoga and its practices. He started working on yoga Mimansa that was his first scientific journal.

Krishna Pattabhi Jois

A Sanskrit scholar and a great Indian yoga master K Pattabhi Jois is one of the prominent names in the niche of yoga. Born in the Brahmin family he learned Sanskrit, Vedas and the art of yoga from childhood. A prominent disciple of T Krishnamacharya that later on developed Ashtanga yoga or ashtanga vinyasa yoga that was based on the teachings of ancient scripture yoga

korunta.

Jaggi Vasudev

A mystic personality and popularly known as Sadhguru is a founder of Isha yoga; a foundation that provides various yoga programs all over the globe. He is well versed yogi and philanthropist that has spent his whole life in delivering the knowledge of yoga to the people and helps people through his foundation.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Yogananda was a first Indian yogi who is famous for introducing the teaching of kriya yoga to the west. He was the first yogi to teach yoga in the west and the author of the Autobiography of a yogi. A first yogi to settle in the west he travelled to spread the teaching of yoga and spirituality to the west.

Dhirendra Brahmachari

Also known as a controversial yoga guru; he was the yoga teacher of Indira Gandhi. He was a published author and the first one to use television to popularize yoga in India.

Baba Ramdev

Last but not the least, our very own Baba Ramdev a revolutionary who reached the

masses and popularised "Kapalbhati" and "Anulom Vilom" amongst the commoners. His impeccable contribution in taking the ayurveda and yoga to the masses away from the realms of traditional set of beliefs through extensive campaigning and popularizing it worldwide cannot be left unnoticed. He is a dynamic personality in all aspects who has worked in spheres other than yoga and actively participated in business, politics and agriculture with the objective of social welfare and betterment of the masses including the poor and underprivileged. He is the founder of Patanjali Ayurveda Ltd.

Rodney Yee

Rodney Yee an American by nationality and the co-owner of a famous Yoga studio named Yoga Shanti. He is a prominent yoga instructor whose inclination towards the utilization of mind, body and soul all together led him to the land of yoga in early 1990's which satiated his desires and the impact that his teachings and yoga practices have on the masses is remarkable.

Alan Finger

Alan Finger the son of Mani finger who hails from South Africa was very well acquainted with the yoga practices

International Day of Yoga

As the land of yoga, it is no brainer that India is leading global efforts to popularize its universal appeal and demonstrated health benefits. When the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the draft resolution to establish the International Day of Yoga in 2014 at the 69th session of the General Assembly, he stated that "yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action ... a holistic approach that is valuable to our health and our well-being. Yoga is not just about exercise; it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and nature."

No wonder, the resolution sailed through the United Nations (UN) with the support of a whopping 177 member states, including Indonesia. Consequently the UN unanimously adopted Resolution No 69/13 on Dec. 11, 2014 to proclaim June 21 as the International Day of Yoga (IDY).

The first IDY was inaugurated on June 21, 2015 by the Prime Minister of India. Not only did the event create two Guinness World Records for the most number of people practicing yoga in a single sitting (35,985), but also for the most number of nationalities (84) participating across the globe. The event was recognized and celebrated across 170 countries including the USA, China and Canada. Since then, this day has been observed across the world by an ever increasing group of people who have embraced yoga and have acquired the character of a mass movement.

This day serves as a reminder to the people of the world to make healthier choices in life by following yoga to foster good health and also a spirit of harmony. The observance of IDY has created opportunities for people across the globe not only to highlight the obvious health benefits that yoga brings and the well being it generates, but also spreading goodwill and a spirit of brotherhood.

Recognizing the obvious health benefits of yoga, the World Health Organization made a clarion call to all member states to encourage their citizens to follow yoga in their daily lives so that physical inactivity is reduced.

The UN resolution on IDY calls upon all countries, international and regional organizations, as well as civil society and individuals, to observe the International Day of Yoga to raise awareness of the benefits of practising yoga. The observation of IDY has been structured to be in alignment with the UN resolution.

Considering that yoga provides a holistic approach to health and well-being, the activities of IDY are designed in such a way that the interest of the participants in pursuing yoga does not end with the IDY, but sustains even beyond. It has been observed that a sizable number of people who start learning CYP in the spirit of participation in IDY continue to pursue yoga even beyond IDY. The IDY also presents an occasion for all the universities and schools to engage in yoga as part of their daily academic life.

In India, the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and



Homoeopathy) is the premier agency that is tasked with the development of education, research and propagation of indigenous alternative medicine systems in India. Yoga being part of this effort, AYUSH has introduced a 45 minutes Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) as a standard template to be used across the globe during IDY celebrations.

The CYP has been uniquely designed to suit both yoga professionals and amateurs. It comprises an ideal assemblage of asanas (yogic postures) for inducting beginners to yoga. Designed meticulously for people from various age groups and all walks of life to participate and reap the health benefits of yoga, the CYP protocol has emerged as a popular introductory yoga programme.

IDY during Pandemic

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic across the world, a new approach was adopted in 2020 IDY celebrations which was a hybrid of digital and limited ground activity.

The theme for 2020 IDY was aptly named 'Yoga at Home, Yoga with Family'. This year's (2021) IDY theme is "Be with Yoga, Be at Home". Since the pandemic continues to loom large, the approach to IDY 2021 would be one of caution and care, but significant focus continues to be made on awareness and mobilization through digital media platforms. Depending on local conditions, the CYP, which is available on public domain, could be easily performed by everyone at their homes and at their convenience.

International Yoga Day: 2021 theme

2021 International Day of Yoga, to be observed on Monday (June 21), carries the theme "Yoga for well-being", much relevant for our times in a society still recovering from the impact of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19)



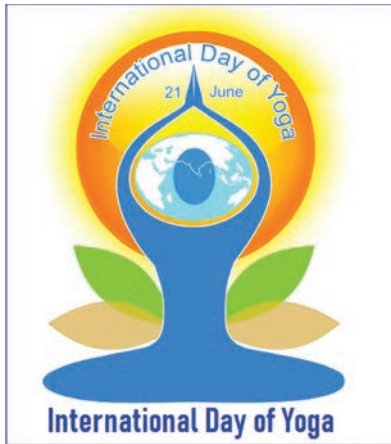
pandemic.

The Covid-19 plight was not just a physical crisis, it also left lasting impacts on mental health, with many left in psychological suffering, depression, and anxiety dealing with the pandemic-necessitated restrictions and loss. Yoga can come to the help of people dealing with such crises, the United Nations explained on its website since the message of the practice is to promote both physical and mental health.

"A growing trend of people around the world embracing Yoga to stay healthy and rejuvenated and to fight social isolation and depression has been

witnessed during the pandemic. Yoga is also playing a significant role in the psycho-social care and rehabilitation of Covid-19 patients in quarantine and isolation. It is particularly helpful in allaying their fears and anxiety," read the United Nations statement.

The United Nations has been offering Yoga to its personnel as a means to deal with physical and mental health crises during the Covid-19 pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has also recommended Yoga as means to improve health. Its various benefits include increased flexibility, fitness, mindfulness, and relaxation.



Yoga as industry



The yoga industry has really come into its own in recent years. It's benefited from numerous headwinds and complimentary trends, like the growth of boutique fitness and rise of athleisure. So, what's next for the global yoga market and how can you tap into the (spoiler alert) rising tide?

The yoga industry is worth over \$88bn worldwide and expected to reach \$215bn by 2025. That's a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.7%! And that's just studios, once you account for retreats, clothing, mats, blocks, and other accessories, the global yoga market is worth well over \$130bn.

There are 41,079 yoga studios in the USA, 4930 in the UK, and 3912 in Australia. But, as with other areas of the fitness industry, it's the Asia Pacific region that's expected to see the highest growth over the coming years.

Let's look at some of the yoga market sectors beyond traditional studios:

- Apparel – the yoga clothing market is worth \$31.3bn globally and expected to grow at around 6% CAGR.
- Equipment – the yoga mat industry generates \$13bn worldwide and continues to grow.
- Tourism – the wellness tourism market, which includes yoga retreats, is projected to reach \$919 billion by 2022.

Trends

Yoga has a long and rich history but it's not been left behind like other fitness trends. It continues to adapt and evolve, keeping pace with current times. According to Google data, new yoga trends include goat yoga, yin yoga, aerial yoga, and YouTube yoga.

Yoga features consistently in the top 20 fitness trends compiled by the ACSM annually. However, it dropped to number 15 in 2021, down from 7 just two years previously.

So, although the market research predicts that it's a growth area, other exercise trends are currently proving more popular.

The yoga pants trend and mainstreaming of athleisure looks set to continue, although at a slower pace than previously. Sportswear hit the height of fashion a few years back and is no longer as trendy as it once was. But the trend towards owning yoga pants in statement colours or bold patterns continues to drive sales.

We're also seeing the same yoga fashion trends impact the mat industry. This sector has exploded in recent years as these products increasingly become a style accessory and not just equipment. Mats are available in a huge range of colors, patterns, and even custom designs.

It may seem like yoga is a wellness growth industry as it's everywhere these days. But we'd argue that this growth is

actually being driven by other trends – the rise of boutique fitness studios, athleisure, home workouts, and meditation are just a few.

This Google trends graph shows that in the US, interest in yoga has actually decreased over the last five years. However, it's been stable over the last 12 months which indicates that this decline is now plateauing. In case you're wondering, those annual peaks are in January and driven by new years resolutions.

However, when we look at the global interest, we can see that it looks pretty consistent. There are the same January peaks along with ones in June, most likely related to International Yoga Day.

It's also worth noting another peak in March 2020 indicating that coronavirus has spiked interest in doing yoga. This may be people looking at ways to stay healthy and active during the lockdown or deal with the generally stressful situation.

One thing remains true no matter which month of the year it is – yogis spend a lot of money on their hobby. According to research by the Yoga Alliance, a typical yogi will spend \$62,640 on classes, workshops, and accessories over their lifetime. This equates to about \$90 per month, almost half of which is just on classes. There's clearly a huge opportunity to serve this dedicated audience and generate a strong income in the process.

How Will Coronavirus Affect The Industry?

We don't have a crystal ball, but here are our five predictions for how coronavirus may impact the yoga industry...

- Immediate effect – we're already seeing increased interest in home



yoga workouts driven by lockdowns around the world. This is likely to continue after restrictions are lifted, although with reduced demand compared to current conditions.

- Short-term – unfortunately, some studios will go out of business. This will be influenced by their financial situation, the amount of government support available to them, and whether they can secure agreements with their landlord, creditors, etc.
- Medium-term – customers will be hesitant to return to studios initially, due to concerns over catching the virus. People will be less willing to be in enclosed spaces or have physical contact than they previously were. They may also have less money to spend on memberships, clothing, and accessories, and so on due to the economic recession, loss of jobs, and

reduction in disposable income.

- Long-term – yoga studios will bounce back. People visit them for an experience – like a spa on a budget. They enjoy the serene atmosphere, sandalwood scents, and minimalist decor. This isn't something that can be replicated at home so studios shouldn't fear that YouTube workouts will cannibalise their sales.
- Longer-term – domestic yoga tourism will also recover as travel restrictions and underlying concerns mean more people seek to holiday in their home country. However, it's unclear whether international yoga tourism will return to its previous growth trajectory, given predictions for the travel industry as a whole are looking downbeat.

Source: www.wellnesscreatives.com

APNA BAZAR Inaugurates its 5th location in Richmond Hill, New York

Singh & Singh Law Offices inaugurated simultaneously



The head priest of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center offering prayers for the success of the venture



The head priest of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the Store



The new Store is conveniently located at 134th Street on Liberty Avenue



Fresh Vegetables in the Store



Partner of APNA BAZAR Deepak Bharadwaj is speaking with a TV channel. Seen in the picture, from L to R: Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, Jaswinder Johl, Deepak Bharadwaj and Mohammed Farouqi (extreme right)



Singh & Singh Law offices owners flanked by Japnit Singh (right), a candidate for New York City Council, and a lady (left)

Photos / BJ Video /646-403-7334

I.S. SALUJA

RICHMOND HILL, NY (TIP): The famous grocery chain APNA BAZAR opened its 5th location in Richmond Hill June 17th. The Store is conveniently located at 134th Street on Liberty Avenue.

The chain which started with a store in Jackson Heights has close to a dozen locations in New York area. Besides, there are more than half a dozen locations in the adjoining New Jersey

State. Apna Bazar has spread wings beyond the East Coast and has a couple of locations in Midwest, California. The Indian Panorama has learnt that there are plans to open a few stores in Texas in the near future.

A prayer was offered before the inauguration of the new store at 134th Street on Libert Avenue. The head priest of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center offered prayers for the success of the venture and cut the ribbon

to inaugurate the store.

The APNA BAZAR partners Deepak Bharadwaj and Jaswinder Johl, long time buddies were profusely congratulated by visitors and guests.

Speaking with the media, Deepak Bharadwaj said that APNA BAZAR takes pride in supplying the very best grocery and the freshest fruit and vegetables at the most competitive prices. He expressed the hope that like with other neighborhoods where APNA BAZAR is

serving people, the neighborhood around the new location would patronize the store.

Jaswinder Johl expressed his gratitude to the head priest, guests, visitors and the media for their presence and support.

Also inaugurated was the Law Offices of Singh & Singh.

A large number of community members and media were present at the ceremonies.



Veteran actor Chandrashekar dies at 97

Veteran Bollywood actor Chandrashekar has died at the age of 97. He was ailing for some time and passed away at his residence on Wednesday morning. His son, professor Ashok Chandra Shekhar, said that the funeral will take place at Mumbai's Vile Parle crematorium later in the day. "He was in the hospital for a day, last Thursday. We brought him back home and had kept all facilities including oxygen at our disposal if the need would arise. He was okay last night. The end was peaceful," Ashok said.

The veteran actor has done over 250 films and numerous TV shows in his long career. Starting his career as a junior artist, he went on to emerge as a prominent character actor. He acted in 'Surang' as a lead actor (1953) and went on to do 'Mastana' (1954), 'Basant Bahaar' (1956), 'Kaali Topi Laal Rumaal' (1959), 'Barsaat Ki Raat' (1960), 'Rustom-e-Baghdad' (1963) and 'Kanyadaan' (1968), among numerous other films. His performance as Arya Sumanta in Ramanand Sagar's iconic TV show Ramayan is also memorable. His last film was 'Khauff' (2000).

Neena Gupta reveals 'childish' reason she married her first husband

Veteran actor Neena Gupta, who was a student when she met her first husband Amlan Kusum Ghose, revealed the 'childish' reason she got married to him -- she wanted to travel. The marriage lasted for less than a year.

In her autobiography, Sach Kahun Toh, Neena Gupta wrote about her short-lived first marriage and the reason why it failed. She said that while Amlan Kusum Ghose expected her to 'eventually settle down' and focus on family, she was 'a bit too ambitious' and did not want to be tied down with domestic duties.

Speaking to Brut India, Neena said that she married Amlan only to travel. "My mother was so strict that it was such a big thing to go out with boys for a trip. That was a very childish thing to do but I was childish," she said.

Though Neena admitted her decision was 'childish', she has no regrets. "I don't regret. It was part of growing up. That was me and it was okay. It was a very stupid thing to do but at that time, everybody is stupid," she said. At the launch of Sach Kahun Toh, Neena opened up about being dumped by a man she was set to marry. She told Kareena Kapoor Khan in an Instagram live that she was shopping for her wedding trousseau when she was broken up with, and added that she does not know why 'till today'.

"That happened. But what can I do? I moved on. I would have loved to get married to him. I had a lot of respect for his father, mother. I was living in their house. He's going to read, he's alive, he's happily married. He has children," she said.

Neena is now married to Vivek Mehra, a chartered accountant by profession. They first met on a flight from London to Mumbai and have been together for over two decades. They got married in 2008 and spent the recent lockdown at their holiday home in Mukteshwar. *Source: HT*



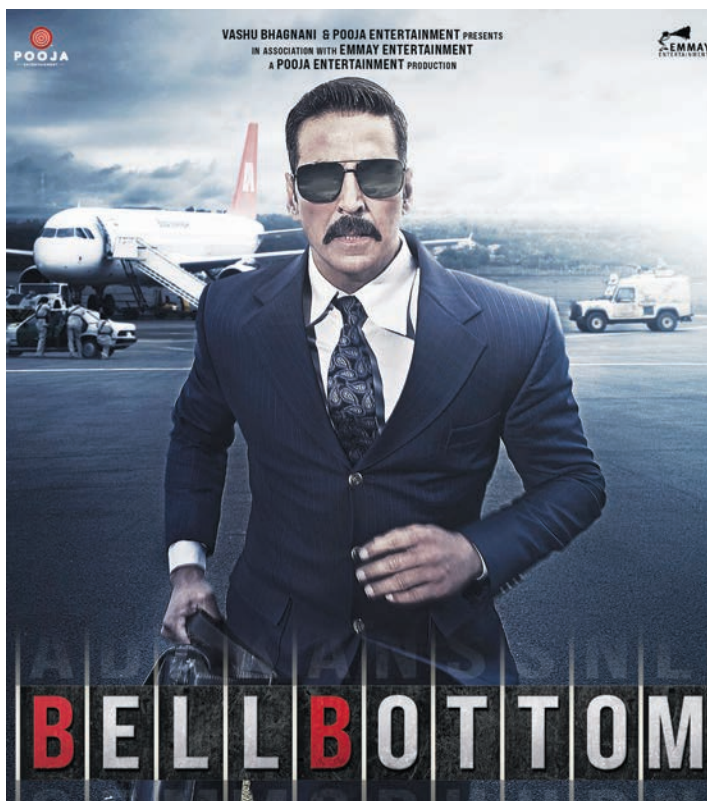
Akshay Kumar confirms Bell Bottom's theatrical release on July 27

In a post on social media, Akshay Kumar finally announced the release of Bell Bottom in theatres on July 27, 2021. The film has been in the news recently amid rumours of it heading for a direct OTT release.

Sharing the post, Akshay wrote, "I know you have patiently waited for the release of #Bellbottom. Couldn't be happier to finally announce the release of our film. Arriving on the big screens worldwide #BellBottomOn27July."

As soon as Akshay announced the theatrical release of the film, fans were left excited to see the actor back on the big screen. His last film, Laxmii with Kiara Advani, was released on an OTT platform. Bell Bottom was one of the first films to head for an international shooting schedule in 2020 right after the COVID 19 travel restrictions were lifted in India. Now, it will become one of the first films to be released in theatres after the second wave of COVID 19.

The film stars Akshay, Vaani Kapoor, Lara Dutta, Huma Qureshi in important roles and happens to be a spy thriller. The film is directed by Ranjit M Tewari and produced by Pooja Entertainment and Emmay Entertainment.



Shah Rukh Khan hints at resuming 'Pathan' shoot

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan on Friday treated fans with his charming selfie and also informed them that he'd soon be resuming work. The actor wished "safe and healthy days" to those returning to their jobs. "They say time is measured in days, months and beards... Time now for a trim and get back to work I guess... Wishing everyone who is getting back to a bit of normalcy... safe and healthy days and months of work ahead... love u all," he wrote.

Responding to the clip, SRK said Hiddleston was too "kind" to shower him with so much love. "You are kind, God of Mischief... hope there's no mischief behind this claim though," Khan wrote referring to Hiddleston's MCU character of Loki aka God of Mischief.

The 55-year-old actor said he is looking forward to binge-watch the English actor's latest series "Loki", which started streaming in India on Disney + Hotstar Premium on Wednesday, June 16.





Ned Beatty, Network and Superman actor, dies at 83

Ned Beatty, the Oscar-nominated character actor who in half a century of American movies, including *Deliverance*, *Network* and *Superman*, was a booming, indelible presence in even the smallest parts, has died. He was 83.

Beatty's manager, Deborah Miller, said Beatty died Sunday of natural causes at his home in Los Angeles surrounded by friends and loved ones.

After years in regional theater, Beatty was cast in 1972's *Deliverance* as Bobby Trippe, the happy-go-lucky member of a male river-boating party terrorized by backwoods thugs in *Deliverance*. The scene in which Trippe is brutalized and forced to "squeal like a pig" became the most memorable in the movie and established Beatty as an actor whose name moviegoers may not have known but whose face they always recognized.

"For people like me, there's a lot of 'I know you! I know you! What have I seen you in?'" Beatty remarked without rancor in 1992.

Britney Spears gets nostalgic about childhood

Pop icon Britney Spears recently looked back at her childhood and compared it with kids growing up today. The 39-year-old singer took to Instagram today and reflected her hopes that "children realize there is way more to life than technology." "Nowadays I feel like kids are very protected ... there are crazy people out there ... but there is a sense of loss and curiosity in children's eyes cause everything is technology-driven," she explained.

Spears commenced her lengthy post by recalling visits to her cousins' ranch as a young girl, where she and her cousins would play outside and let their imaginations run wild. "If you lived on a ranch in the south growing up ... which I never did ... most kids play outside !!!! My cousins lived on a ranch and we would usually play outside but of course we always found our way back inside to build playhouses or playhouse for hours with our dolls !!!!" the Toxic singer wrote.

Although she was born in Mississippi, Britney was raised in her hometown of Kentwood, Louisiana with her older brother Bryan and little sister Jamie and their parents, Lynne and Jamie. She continued: "I feel like our parents let us roam more freely when we played outside because we all knew each other and it was such a safe area. The whole neighbourhood would hang out at my house ... sit on the bar stools lined up playing video games ... and most of them were in high school when I was a little and I was always begging for their attention because I didn't know how to play video games!!!!"



Angelina Jolie reignites reunion rumours with ex-husband Jonny Lee Miller

After the *Bennifer* reunion, seems like a new reunion couple is going to make headlines soon. Oscar-winning actor Angelina Jolie was spotted leaving her ex-husband Jonny Lee Miller's apartment on Friday night.

Page Six reported that on the night of Friday, June 11, Angelina Jolie was clicked entering and exiting an apartment complex in Brooklyn, New York, where her first ex-husband Jonny Lee Miller resides.

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The 46-year-old star was clad in a long tan trench coat and face mask. In the pictures, she is seen entering the entrance of the building carrying a Louis Vuitton purse and a bottle of Peter Michael wine, which typically cost a couple of hundred dollars.

Page Six reported that Angelina left the USD 3 million home of her ex after three hours, around 10:30 p.m.

The stars who headlined the 1995 movie *Hackers*, have not commented on the report or the photos yet.



Steven Spielberg casts child actor Julia Butters in film on his childhood



Remember child actress Julia Butters from 'Once Upon A Time In Hollywood'? Well, she seems to have caught the eye of ace filmmaker Steven Spielberg as he has roped her for his next film which is loosely based on the director's childhood growing up in Arizona. Julia Butters would play the sister to the young filmmaker (Gabriel LaBelle) at the center of the story.

Among those already on the call list are Michelle Williams who is set to play the role inspired by Spielberg's mom in the film. Seth Rogen will play Spielberg's favourite uncle and Paul Dano will essay the character inspired by Spielberg's father.

This is a film with which Steven Spielberg will return to a lot of roles -- first time since 2001's *A.I.* that he will take up screenwriting duties, co-writing the script with Tony Kushner, who has penned several Spielberg movies.

The film will start shooting this summer. It is expected to hit theatres in 2022.

JUNE TEENTH HONORED

BY MABEL PAIS

TRIBECA: CELEBRATES MUSIC, ART, STORIES

PAYS TRIBUTE TO CREATORS FROM THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

The Juneteenth celebration is here!



Performers from "Ailey" and "Buddy Guy."

Photo / Courtesy tribecafilm.com/juneteenth

This year, the Tribeca Film Festival (TFF) celebrates the diverse artistry and richness of Black stories and storytellers. In partnership with Indeed and Emmy Award-winning writer, creator and actor Lena Waithe, TFF has put together a program that amplifies Black voices through exciting new shorts. There is also a specially curated collection of feature and short films, Tribeca Talks, Immersive, podcasts, music and other special events.



Stacey Abrams: author, lawyer & politician

Photo / Courtesy tribecafilm.com/juneteenth

and commitment to fighting social injustice.

Some of the highlights of our Juneteenth-inspired lineup include:

The Black Filmmaker Foundation Panel: Is The Past Really Past? featuring a discussion with writer and educator Jelani Cobb, actor and director Ruben Santiago-Hudson, director Melina Matsoukas, director Kasi Lemmons and moderated by the founder of the Black Filmmaker Foundation Warrington Hudlin.

Feature Film Selections will touch upon a wide range of issues, while also celebrating some of our most dynamic personalities. Some of the more highly-anticipated documentaries chronicle the lives of three influential Black creators: outlandishly-stylish 70's singer Rick James, photographer and renaissance man Gordon Parks and comedian/activist Dick Gregory.

The Juneteenth Immersive Program opens a window to the future of storytelling and illustrates how creators can use technology to make us think about societal issues through an entirely different lens. A stand-out piece within Immersive will be "Breonna's Garden," an AR experience created in collaboration with Ju'Niyah Palmer to honor the life of her sister, Breonna Taylor.

The full lineup will include over 30 full-length and short films, 2 TV world-premieres, 12 Tribeca Talks and discussion throughout the festival, 8 immersive projects, and 6 podcasts. To learn more, visit www.tribecafilm.com/festival

LINCOLN CENTER CELEBRATES WITH MUSIC, DANCE, POETRY & FILM



Black Voices - Photo / Courtesy lincolncenter.org.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts championing the emerging arts revival in New York City has its newly launched outdoor performing arts center, Restart Stages. Juneteenth events will take place at Restart Stages.

I DREAM A DREAM THAT DREAMS BACK AT ME - CONCERT

On June 19, Restart Stages at Lincoln Center presents special programming in honor of the Juneteenth emancipation holiday, including "I Dream a Dream That Dreams Back at Me: A Juneteenth Celebration," conceived and curated by the award-winning poet and artist Carl Hancock Rux. This site-specific experience will unfold in four parts across the Lincoln Center campus and features vocalists Nona Hendryx, Marcelle Lashley, and Kimberly Nichole performing original music by Vernon Reid and Hendryx, with lyrics by Lynn Nottage in addition to a vocal performance by Helga Davis. The evening culminates with a full-length concert by the acclaimed rock and roots musician Toshi Reagon with her band BIGLovely at Damrosch Park. The size, scope, and talent in this musical celebration of Black excellence emphasizes America's ongoing struggle for greater equity. To learn more about ticketing and pre-arrival Covid requirements, visit lincolncenter.org/lincoln-center-at-home/show/i-dream-a-dream-that-dreams-back-at-meandnbspa-juneteenth-celebration-901

SUMMER OF SOUL - FILM

Lincoln Center, in collaboration with Film at Lincoln Center, presents the "Summer of Soul" film screening, Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson's (debut as filmmaker) powerful and transporting documentary-part music film, part historical record, created around an epic event that celebrated Black history, culture, and fashion.

Over the course of six weeks in the summer of 1969, just one hundred miles south of Woodstock, The Harlem Cultural Festival was filmed in Mount Morris Park. The footage was never seen and largely forgotten until now. "Summer of Soul" shines a light on the importance of history to our spiritual well-being and stands as a testament to the healing power of music during times of unrest. It includes concert performances by Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, Sly & the Family Stone, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Mahalia Jackson, B.B. King, The 5th Dimension and more. To learn more about ticketing and pre-arrival Covid requirements, visit lincolncenter.org/lincoln-center-at-home/show/summer-of-soulandnbspfilm-screening

COMING TOGETHER - CONCERT FOR KIDS

Last but certainly not least, Lincoln Center brings families a Juneteenth Concerts for Kids, called "Coming Together," a joyous exploration of Black culture through music, dance, and poetry.

Justin Johnson, DJ
Fanta Ballo, Poet
Ayodele Casel, Tap Artist
Tomoe Carr, Freestyle Dancer

Brian Harlan Brooks, Dancer/Choreographer
Torya Beard, Director

Since the beginning of time, communities have relied on one another to flourish and prosper. To honor the Juneteenth emancipation holiday, Concerts For Kids presents "Coming Together," a joyous celebration of Black culture through music, dance, and poetry. "Coming Together" explores the importance of family - in all its forms - and how vital connection is to resilience and transformation. To learn more about ticketing and pre-arrival Covid requirements, visit lincolncenter.org/lincoln-center-at-home/show/coming-together-a-juneteenth-celebration-852

NJPAC HONORS DATE: FILM, TALK FIRST TIME STATE HOLIDAY IN NJ

BANISHED: FILM, TALK

FILM: BANISHED - Watch on YouTube

TALK: Free on Zoom, Monday, Jun 21 @ 7PM, RSVP REQUIRED

In honor of Juneteenth - the holiday that celebrates the emancipation of those enslaved in the United States, which will be observed as a state holiday in New Jersey for the first time this year - NJPAC invites for the screening and virtual panel discussion, which examines the need for reparations, and discuss the forms those reparations might take.

How can we calculate the cost of centuries of oppression? How can Black citizens be made whole after the injustices of slavery, Jim Crow laws, redlining, and the myriad physical and economic forms of prejudice that they and their families have faced? What reparative systems can be created to heal the harm caused by the subjugation of Black communities?

Before the virtual panel discussion, viewers are encouraged to watch on their own schedule, the 2006 documentary film "Banished: How Whites Drove Blacks Out of Town in America," at youtu.be/FayMoKwyoO4 which focuses on the expulsion of Black families from neighborhoods across the South during the post-Reconstruction era. RSVP at njpac.tfaforms.net/145?id=a2F4o00000dpyiEAA

This season, the films NJPAC presents, focus on social and racial justice. To continue these presentations safely during the pandemic, this series now follows a book club model: Watch the selected film in your home, on your own time, then come together online to watch the panelists who can offer context and discuss them.

PROGRAM

VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION: MONDAY, JUNE 21, 2021 @ 7 PM

PANELISTS:

- The Reverend Dr. Charles Franklin Boyer, pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church in Woodbury, and the co-founder of Salvation and Social Justice.
- Ryan P. Haygood, a nationally respected civil rights lawyer and the President and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
- Professor Ndjuoh MehChu, an interdisciplinary scholar at Seton Hall Law School, who writes primarily in the areas of human and civil rights, criminal justice reform and critical race theory.
- Liz Šev?enko, Moderator, founding director of the Humanities Action Lab at Rutgers University-Newark.

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

BIDEN PROCLAIMS JUNE 2021 AS PRIDE MONTH

BY MABEL PAIS

"NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2021 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the achievements of the LGBTQ+ community, to celebrate the great diversity of the American people, and to wave their flags of pride high."

"This Pride Month, we recognize the valuable contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals across America, and we reaffirm our commitment to standing in solidarity with LGBTQ+ Americans in their ongoing struggle against discrimination and injustice." - US President, Joseph Biden

In his speech on June 1, President Biden stated, "Nearly 14 percent of my 1,500 agency appointees identify as LGBTQ+," Biden said, "and I am particularly honored by the service of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, the first openly LGBTQ+ person to serve in the Cabinet, and Assistant Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine, the first openly transgender person to be confirmed by the Senate."

Biden also signed an Executive Order on his first day in office that directed all federal agencies to implement fully all federal laws that prevent discrimination on the basis of sex, to include sexual orientation and gender identity. To read his entire June 1 speech, visit whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/01

TRIBECA AND NYC PRIDE



Gays with kids. - Credit: Courtesy, pridenyc.org

"Tribeca's collaboration with NYC Pride began in 2019 with an unforgettable day-long celebration of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall," said Tribeca Festival Senior Programmer Lucy Jane Mukerjee. "I'm thrilled to see the relationship continue this year, extending beyond the LGBTQ+ cinema within the festival lineup, to meaningful conversations and community screenings that center the queer identity and will be accessible for folks across the country."

On Friday, June 18th, in partnership with NYC Pride, Tribeca presents 'Pride Presents' (formerly known as OUTCINEMA), NYC Pride's annual LGBTQIA+ Film Festival. The dynamic program will feature groundbreaking shorts, docs and a feature film, culminating with a live discussion.

Stories that illustrate the struggles, the strength and the successes of the LGBTQIA+ community are some of the most critical ones to tell, and Tribeca is more than proud to play an integral part.

The curated selections for Pride Presents fit the bill perfectly:

"Kapaemahu" is an animated short that chronicles the plight of the Mahu, extraordinary two-spirit beings, known for their unique powers of healing.

"P.S. Burn This Letter Please" is a documentary film where former 1950s drag queens, now in their 80s and 90s, discuss how they survived in a time when being yourself meant breaking the law and inviting unforeseen conflict.

These are just two of the handful of vibrant and

thought-provoking films that will be featured within the 'Pride Presents' slate of cinematic works.

For more information, visit nycpride.org.

MORE NYC PRIDE EVENTS

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT - JUNE 17, FREE

Family Movie Night is back with family-filled fun!

Family Movie Night will make its debut in the digital space on Thursday June 17, 2021, featuring a 40-minute pre-feature film segment with LGBTQIA+ families discussing surrogacy, adoption, foster care and tapping into other resources both Queer families and individuals seeking these resources can benefit from. Key speakers include Vernon Leftwich and Ricardo Cooper, parents of two-year-old twins Harper and Knox Leftwich-Cooper who appear in this year's NYC Pride 2021 visual campaign. Other key appearances include Gays With Kids, Family Equality Council, XChange for Change, and Miss Richfield 1981.

Hosted by the charming Miss Richfield 1981 (missrichfield.com), the event culminates in a family movie screening for all to enjoy! To learn more, visit nycpride.org/event/family-movie-night

"I feel honored to be a part of an event that serves as an opportunity to unite a community that may at times feel so isolated," said Leftwich. "My family in particular looks different, even within this community, yet events like this show that we still have a place and I'm sure can find others much like ours. Additionally, it is a beacon of hope for all LGBTQIA+ persons who desire to have a family of their own."

NYC PRIDE'S ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM:

Transformative changemakers

JUNE 21, 22 & 23

This virtual conference, focuses on activism and issues impacting the community, streaming 3 days of riveting and important content June 21st, 22nd & 23rd.

3 DAY HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

NYC Pride presents the Human Rights Conference in its fourth consecutive year from June 21 through June 23, and the Rally on Friday, June 25. The Human Rights Conference, NYC Pride's annual symposium of transformative changemakers in the queer community, focuses on developing new ideas and approaches to activism and community. Over the course of the three days, guests will experience a virtual gathering of creators, changemakers, historians, influencers, artists, and storytellers to explore the many intersections of the LGBTQIA+ community's continued fight for equity and justice.

This year's Human Rights Conference introduces a series of exclusive interactive Masterclasses, where guests join experts and tastemakers in the field of activism, fashion, culture, queer history, and more to share insight and expertise through live seminars. Powered by NYC Pride's sponsors and community partners, these classes offer viewers a chance to learn and interact with presenters representing LGBTQIA+ excellence in their fields. To learn more, visit nycpride.org/event/humans-right-conference

JCC NYC PRIDE

Thank You For Coming Out: Dr. François Clemmons, Officer Clemmons | Thurs, June 24 at 7:00pm

The second installment of the JCC Pride series follows François Clemmons. When he created the role of Officer Clemmons on the award-winning television series "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," Clemmons made history as the first African American actor to have a recurring role on a children's program. In his memoir "Officer Clemmons," he details his incredible life story, beginning with his early years, through his studies as a music major at Oberlin College where Clemmons began to investigate and embrace his homosexuality, to a

chance encounter with Fred Rogers that changed the course of both men's lives—leading to a deep, spiritual friendship and mentorship spanning nearly forty years.

Pride Shabbat and Rooftop Open Bar | Fri, June 25 at 7:00pm

Join the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan 20s + 30s, Tribe NY, and Aviv at B'nai Jeshurun for monthly in-person Shabbat experiences.

On Friday evening, celebrate Pride with the LGBTQIA+ community with an open bar happy hour, followed by Shabbat on the B'nai Jeshurun roof.

Virtual Jew York Pride | Sun, June 27

Jew York Pride, a collaboration between major Jewish LGBTQ+ organizations, including Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, is going virtual this year on Sunday, June 27, making it even more inclusive and accessible to Queer Jews across the United States and around the world. For 15+ years, Jew York Pride has been the focal point for LGBTQ+ Jewish teens and young adults during Pride Sunday in New York City. For more information, visit mmjccm.org

LINCOLN CENTER SPOTLIGHT

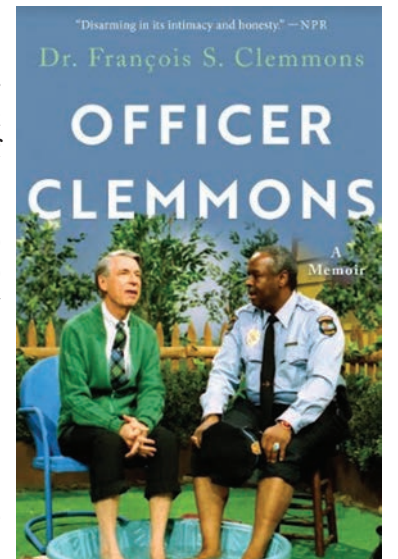


LGBTQ+ celebrities (l to r and top to bottom): Victor I. Cazares; Taylor Mac by Little Fang; Treya Lam by Justin Wee; Dima Mikhayel Matta; MigguelAnggelo; The Illustrious Blacks by Dave Jeffers - Credit: Courtesy, lincolncenter.org

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts is proud to express its wholehearted commitment to the visibility, equality, and support of LGBTQIA+ communities 365 days of the year. For the month of June, it celebrates LGBTQIA+ stories, talents, and contributions by spotlighting artistic programming and vibrant campus activations. Stop by and experience the unwavering Pride flag colors light up a glowing Revson Fountain, shine bright across The GREEN, adorn the main stairs to Josie Robertson Plaza, and fly high in the sky.

From June 21-26, Restart Stages at Lincoln Center presents an array of gender-bending and genre-busting events, including the return of the sensational Taylor Mac and two new theater projects as part of National Queer Theater's Criminal Queerness Festival, which supports the development and production of new works by international and immigrant theater-makers experiencing censorship and criminalization around the world. On June 25, be sure to come out and dance when DJ duo The Illustrious Blacks kicks off NYC Pride weekend with a silent disco on The GREEN! Formore, visit lincolncenter.org/lincoln-center-at-home/series/spotlight-on-lgbtqia-pride

Mabel Pais writes on Social Issues, The Arts and Entertainment, Spirituality, and Health & Wellness.



Francois Clemmons' book cover [Clemmons (right) with Fred Rogers].

Credit: Courtesy, mmjccm.org



RAMPAGING BEAR IN JAPAN INJURES 4 BEFORE BEING SHOT DEAD

TOKYO (TIP): A wild brown bear on the loose all night in a city in northern Japan wounded four people, entered a military camp and disrupted flights at an airport on June 17 before being shot and killed by authorities.

The bear was seen wandering through the streets of Sapporo in the early hours of Friday, triggering a number of calls to police. Over the next eight hours, Hokkaido prefectural police said the bear injured a woman in her 80s, a man in his 70s and a man in his 40s before attacking a soldier.

Police said the condition of those injured was not known, but the Asahi newspaper reported that the man in his 40s suffered serious injuries to his chest, back and limbs after he was mauled by the bear while walking on the street.

Footage on local television showed the bear wandering a street in Sapporo. Chased by a car, it crossed a busy road and forced its way into the Ground Self-Defence Force's Camp Okadama. The bear knocked down a uniformed soldier on duty at the gate.

The soldier suffered cuts to his chest and stomach, but his injuries were not life threatening, according to the Defence Ministry.

Next the bear ran through the camp and intruded onto the runway at a nearby airport, causing several flights to be grounded.

The bear then ran into a forest, where it was shot by local hunters.

Toshihiro Hamada, an official at Sapporo city environmental department, said the bear's presence in town was a surprise and officials were investigating how the animal ended up in town.

"We are sorry that four people were injured," Hamada said.

Brown bears roam mainly in Hokkaido forests, but experts say they have been increasingly spotted in inhabited areas looking for food, especially during the summer. (AP)

North Korea's Kim vows to be ready for confrontation with US

SEOUL (TIP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered his government to be prepared for both dialogue and confrontation with the Biden administration—but more for confrontation, state media reported on June 17, days after the United States and others urged the North to abandon its nuclear programme and return to talks.

Kim's statement indicates he'll likely push to strength his nuclear arsenal and increase pressure on Washington to give up what North Korea considers a hostile US policy, though he'll also prepare for talks to resume, some experts say.

During an ongoing ruling party meeting on Thursday, Kim analysed in detail the policy tendencies of the US under President Joe Biden and clarified unspecified steps to be taken in relations with Washington, the Korean Central News Agency said.

Kim "stressed the need to get prepared for both dialogue and confrontation, especially to get fully prepared for confrontation in order to protect the dignity of our state and its interests for independent development and to reliably guarantee the peaceful environment and the security of our state."

In 2018-19, Kim held a series of summits with then-President Donald Trump to discuss his advancing nuclear arsenal. But their negotiations fell apart after Trump rejected Kim's calls for extensive sanctions relief in return for a



partial surrender of his nuclear capability.

Biden's administration has worked to formulate a new approach on North Korea's nuclear program that it describes as "calibrated and practical".

Details of his North Korea policy haven't been publicized, but US officials have suggested Biden would seek a middle ground between Trump's direct meetings with Kim and former President Barack Obama's "strategic patience" to curb Kim's nuclear program.

Earlier this week, leaders of the Group

of Seven wealthy nations issued a statement calling for the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and "the verifiable and irreversible abandonment" of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

They called on North Korea to engage and resume dialogue and respect human rights conditions.

Kim has recently threatened to enlarge his nuclear arsenal and build high-tech weapons targeting the US mainland if Washington refused to abandon its hostile policy on North Korea. (AP)

Iran votes in presidential poll tipped in hardliner's favour

DUBAI (TIP): Iran began voting June 17 in a presidential election tipped in the favour of a hard-line protege of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, fuelling public apathy and sparking calls for a boycott in the Islamic Republic. State-linked opinion polling and analysts put hard-line judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi as the dominant front-runner in a field of just four candidates.

Former Central Bank chief, Abdolnasser Hemmati, is running as the race's moderate candidate but hasn't inspired the same support as outgoing President Hassan Rouhani, who is term limited from seeking the office again.

If elected, Raisi would be the first serving Iranian president sanctioned by the US government even before entering office over his involvement in the mass execution of political prisoners in 1988, as well as his time as the head of Iran's internationally criticised judiciary—one of the world's top executioners.

It also would firmly put hardliners in control across the Iranian government as negotiations in Vienna continue over trying to save Tehran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers as it enriches uranium to the closest point yet to weapons-grade levels.

Tensions remain high with both the



US and Israel, which is believed to have carried out a series of attacks targeting Iranian nuclear sites and assassinating the scientist who created its military atomic programme decades earlier.

Polls opened at 7 am local time for the vote, which has seen widespread public apathy after a panel under Khamenei barred hundreds of candidates, including reformists and those aligned with Rouhani. Khamenei cast the ceremonial vote from Tehran.

There are more than 59 million eligible voters in Iran, a nation home to over 80 million people. However, the state-linked Iranian Student Polling Agency has estimated a turnout of just 42 per cent, which would be the lowest ever since the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution. (AP)

GERMANY SHOOTING LEAVES TWO DEAD

BERLIN (TIP): Two persons were killed in a shooting in western Germany on June 17, the police said. The circumstances were unclear but the authorities said there appeared to be no danger to the general public. The incident took place in Espelkamp, a town of about 26,000 near the city of Bielefeld. The victims were a man and a woman, police spokeswoman Hella Christoph told n-tv television. There was no immediate information on who the perpetrator was, whether they had been caught, or a possible motive. -- AP

CHINESE ASTRONAUTS BOARD SPACE STATION MODULE

CHINA (TIP): Three Chinese astronauts on June 17 flew to an unfinished space station in China's first crewed mission since 2016, expanding the country's already growing near-Earth presence and challenging US leadership in orbital space. (Reuters)

Israel strikes Gaza after Hamas fires incendiary balloons

JERUSALEM (TIP): Israel has launched airstrikes on the Gaza Strip for a second time since a shaky cease-fire ended last month's 11-day war.

The strikes came late June 17 after activists mobilized by Gaza's militant Hamas rulers launched incendiary balloons into Israel for a third straight day.

There were no immediate reports of casualties from the strikes, which could be heard from Gaza City. Israel also carried out airstrikes early Wednesday, targeting what it is said were Hamas facilities, without killing or wounding anyone.

The military said fighter jets struck Hamas "military compounds and a rocket launch site" late Thursday in response to the balloons. It said its forces were preparing for a "variety of scenarios including a resumption of hostilities." Tensions have remained high since the cease-fire, even as Egyptian mediators have met with both Israeli and Hamas officials to try and shore up the informal truce.

Israel and Hamas have fought four wars and countless smaller skirmishes since the Islamic militant group seized power from rival Palestinians forces in 2007. Israel and Egypt have imposed a crippling blockade on Gaza, which is home to more than 2 million Palestinians, since Hamas took over.

Earlier, Israeli police used stun grenades and a water cannon spraying skunk water to disperse Palestinian



protesters from Damascus Gate in east Jerusalem, the epicenter of weeks of protests and clashes in the run-up to the Gaza war.

After the crowds were dispersed, Palestinians could be seen throwing rocks and water bottles at ultra-Orthodox Jews walking in the area.

Calls had circulated for protesters to gather at Damascus Gate in response to a rally held there by Jewish ultranationalists on Tuesday in which dozens of Israelis had chanted "Death to Arabs" and "May your village burn." The police had forcibly cleared the square and provided security for that rally, part of a parade to celebrate Israel's conquest

of east Jerusalem.

In a separate incident, a Palestinian teenager died Thursday after being shot by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank during a protest against a settlement outpost, the fourth demonstrator to be killed since the outpost was established last month.

The Israeli military said Wednesday that a soldier stationed near the wildcat outpost in the West Bank saw a group of Palestinians approaching, and that one "hurled a suspicious object at him, which exploded adjacent to the soldier." The army said that the soldier fired in the air, then shot the Palestinian who threw the object. (AP)

FRANCE'S MACRON BRINGS BACK CUSTOMARY KISSES

PARIS (TIP): French President Emmanuel Macron has kissed two World War II veterans on the cheeks, returning to a tradition that was abandoned at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

French authorities have recommended people to avoid "la bise," the custom of giving kisses of greeting, to avoid spreading the virus. Macron kissed the veterans on June 18 while wearing a mask.

The president, who had Covid-19 in December and since been vaccinated against the disease, awarded the Legion of Honour to Leon Gautier, 98, a member of a French elite unit that took part in Normandy D-Day landings in 1944 and fellow World War II veteran Rene Crignola, 99, during a ceremony marking Gen. Charles De Gaulle's June 18, 1940 appeal for the people of France to resist the Nazis.

The French government this week announced a relaxation of virus restrictions, including allowing people to forego masks outdoors. A night time curfew is set to end on Sunday. (AP)

UK ROYAL KATE SETS UP NEW CENTRE TO FOCUS ON IMPORTANCE OF EARLY YEARS

LONDON (TIP): Kate, Britain's Duchess of Cambridge, launches a new centre for early childhood on June 18 with the aim of raising the importance of the first five years of children's lives and seeking to "transform society for generations to come", her office said.

The centre, set up as part of Kate and husband Prince William's Royal Foundation charity arm, will focus on three main areas: promoting high-quality research; working with experts from all sectors to find solutions; and developing campaigns to raise awareness and inspire action.

"I've spoken to psychiatrists and neuroscientists, to practitioners and academics and parents alike, and what has become clear is that the best investment for our future health and happiness is in the first five years of life," Kate said.

"By working together, my hope is that we can change the way we think about early childhood, and transform lives for generations to come."

Kensington Palace said Kate, who has three young children with William aged from three to seven, had seen first-hand since becoming a royal over a decade ago how issues from addiction and violence to family breakdown and homelessness all had their roots in the earliest years of life.

To coincide with the launch, the centre has published a report 'Big Change Starts Small', written with help from the London School of Economics and The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (Reuters)

Canada's first judge of colour in Supreme Court has roots in Gujarat

OTTAWA (TIP): Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on June 17 made history by nominating the first judge of colour to sit on the country's Supreme Court, which has only ever had white justices in its 146-year existence.

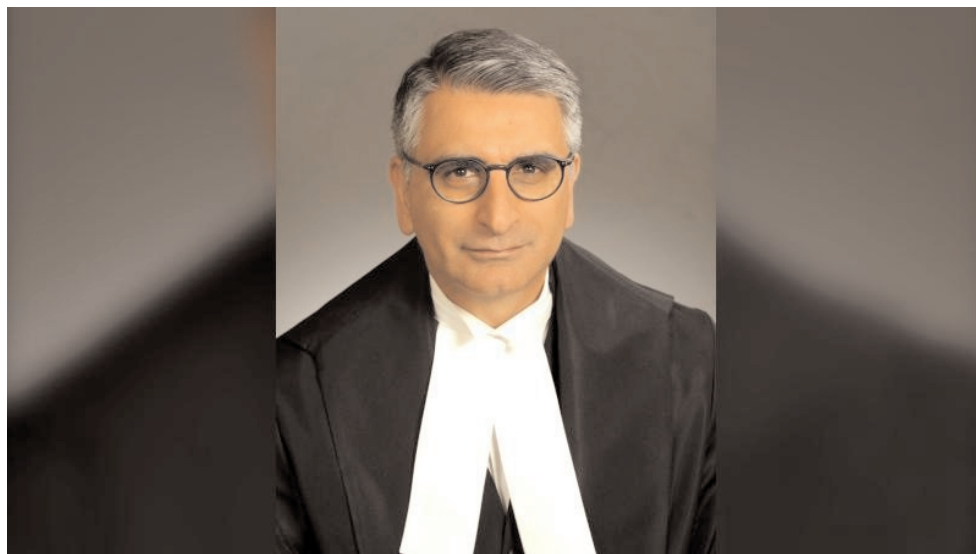
Mahmud Jamal, who has been a judge on Ontario's court of appeal since 2019, trained as a lawyer and appeared before the Supreme Court in 35 appeals addressing a range of civil, constitutional, criminal and regulatory issues.

"He'll be a valuable asset to the Supreme Court - and that's why, today, I'm announcing his historic nomination to our country's highest court," Trudeau said on Twitter.

Trudeau has frequently said there is a need to address systemic racism in Canada.

Jamal's parents originally immigrated from Gujarat. He was born in Nairobi in 1967, emigrated with his family to Britain in 1969 where he said he was "taunted and harassed because of my name, religion, or the colour of my skin."

In 1981, the family moved to Canada,



Indian origin Mahmud Jamal made history by becoming the first judge of color to sit on Canada's Supreme Court, which has only had white justices in its 146-year existence

where his "experiences exposed me to some of the challenges and aspirations of immigrants, religious minorities, and racialized persons," he said in a document submitted to support his candidacy.

Canada is a multicultural country, with more than 22 per cent of the population comprised of minorities and

another 5 per cent aboriginal, according to the latest census.

"We know people are facing systemic discrimination, unconscious bias and anti-black racism every single day," Trudeau said last year.

Jamal will replace Justice Rosalie Abella, who is due to retire from the nine-person court on July 1. (Reuters)

1 billion vaccine doses only a start: IMF chief

The International Monetary Fund managing director says there's a moral imperative for the world's richest countries to back programmes to end the Covid-19 pandemic but the donation of excess vaccines is only the first step.

Kristalina Georgieva's comments in a virtual press conference at the Group of Seven summit on Sunday came after UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he hoped G-7 leaders would agree to provide at least 1 billion vaccine doses for poorer countries.

Humanitarian groups have welcomed the donations, but are calling for money, increased production and logistical support to help developing countries where the virus is still raging.

Georgieva said the donations are a good step but more needs to be done to overcome the hurdles needed to deliver shots into arms.

"This is a moral imperative, but it is a necessity for the economic recovery to stick, because we can't have the world split into two tracks without negative consequences," Georgieva said.

While almost half of the combined population of the G-7 nations has received at least one dose of vaccine, the worldwide figure is less than 13%. In Africa, it's just 2.2%.

Global Covid caseload crosses 177-mn mark

WASHINGTON (TIP): The overall global Covid-19 caseload has topped 177.3 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 3.84 million, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

In its latest update on Friday, June 18, morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload and death toll stood at 177,355,602 and 3,840,181, respectively.

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 33,508,384 and 600,933, respectively, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 29,700,313 cases.

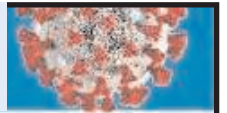
The other worst countries with over 3 million cases are Brazil (17,702,630), France (5,811,456), Turkey (5,354,153), Russia (5,203,117), the UK (4,616,616), Italy (4,249,755), Argentina (4,222,400), Colombia (3,859,824), Spain (3,753,228), Germany (3,727,668) and Iran (3,070,426), the CSSE figures showed.

In terms of deaths, Brazil comes second with 496,004 fatalities.

Nations with a death toll of over 100,000 are India (381,903), Mexico (230,624), the UK (128,209), Italy (127,190), Russia (125,853) and France (110,796).

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 33,508,384 and 600,933, respectively.

TRACKING THE VIRUS



GLOBAL

Cases | Deaths
177,355,602 | **3,840,181**

INDIA

Cases | Deaths
29,762,793 | **383,490**



UK trial finds Regeneron anti-viral therapy saves lives from Covid-19

LONDON (TIP): A new, experimental anti-viral treatment used for some worst-affected Covid-19 patients has been found to save lives, according to the results of a UK trial on Wednesday, June 16.

In the ongoing Randomised Evaluation of Covid-19 Therapy (RECOVERY) trial, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals' combination of drugs was found to benefit patients with severe symptoms of the virus who had not mounted a natural antibody response of their own.

It not only cut down the numbers requiring a ventilator, among the 9,875 people who took part in the trial between September 2020 and May this year, but also reduced the duration of their hospital stay. Sir Peter Horby, Professor of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford, and Joint Chief Investigator for the RECOVERY trial, declared the results as "very exciting".

"The hope was that by giving a combination of antibodies targeting the SARS-CoV-2 virus we would be able to reduce the worst manifestations of Covid-19. There was, however, great uncertainty about the value of antiviral therapies in late-stage Covid-19 disease," said Horby.

"It is wonderful to learn that even in



advanced Covid-19 disease, targeting the virus can reduce mortality in patients who have failed to mount an antibody response of their own," he said.

The treatment uses a combination of two monoclonal antibodies – casirivimab and imdevimab, known as REGEN-COV in the US – that bind specifically to two different sites on the coronavirus spike protein, neutralising the ability of the virus to infect cells. "We now know that this antibody combination is not only bad for the virus but it is also good for the sickest patients who have failed to mount a natural immune response of their own," said Sir Martin Landray, Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at the Nuffield Department of Population Health, University of Oxford.

Delta variant fuelled 50% rise in English COVID prevalence

LONDON (TIP): The rapid spread of the Delta coronavirus variant has driven a 50% rise in infections in England since May, a large prevalence study led by Imperial College London found on Thursday, June 17, after Prime Minister Boris Johnson delayed the end of restrictions.

The government said the data supported Johnson's decision to push back the end of COVID restrictions in England to July 19, citing the threat of the Delta variant first identified in India, and the need to vaccinate more people.

The latest round of the REACT-1 prevalence survey, conducted between May 20 and June 7, found prevalence was 0.15%, compared to 0.10% in the last set of data from late April to early May.

"Prevalence is increasing exponentially, driven by younger ages... and it appears to be doubling every 11 days. Clearly, that is bad news," Steven Riley, professor of infectious disease dynamics, Imperial College London, told reporters.

The study is one of the largest prevalence surveys in Britain, with 109,000 volunteers tested in its latest round.

Riley added that Britain's high vaccination levels made it hard to predict how long that exponential growth would last, saying the rapid rollout of vaccine doses to younger age groups should slow it down.

Over half the adult population of Britain have received two vaccine doses, and more than three-quarters of adults have received at least one vaccine dose.

Although the Delta variant is shown to substantially reduce the effectiveness of one dose of vaccine against mild infection, two doses still provide good protection against severe disease, early evidence has shown.

Source: Reuters



Pakistan says at times it feels India's presence in Afghanistan perhaps 'larger than it ought to be'

ISLAMABAD (TIP): With India stepping up its diplomatic activities in Afghanistan's peace process as the US prepares for the troops withdrawal, a jittery Pakistan has said that at times it feels that New Delhi's presence in the war-torn country is perhaps "larger than it ought to be".

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's remarks to Afghanistan's Tolo news channel comes days after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad in Qatar's capital Doha on June 12 and exchanged perspectives on the war-ravaged nation and the region.

"Obviously, you have sovereign relations and you have bilateral relations and you have every right to have sovereign and bilateral relations with India. You have trade with India. They come and carry out development work there, that's completely fine with us," Qureshi said during the interview which will be telecast on Saturday.

"But at times we feel that their presence is perhaps larger than it ought to be because they...don't share a border with you," he said, according to the excerpts of the interview posted by the news channel on its Twitter handle.

When asked whether India's presence in Afghanistan bothers Pakistan, Qureshi said, "Yes, If they use your (Afghan) soil against us, it bothers me." Asked how India is using Afghan soil for anti-Pakistan activities, he alleged: "Yes, they are...By carrying out terrorist activities." During the interview, Qureshi also sought to absolve the Taliban for the spike in violence in Afghanistan, saying it would be an "exaggeration" to blame the insurgent group for the bloodshed.

"Again, if you try and create this impression that the violence is high



because of the Taliban...again, that would be an exaggeration. Why do I say that? Aren't there other elements over there who are playing the role of a spoiler?" On a question on the forces responsible for the violence, Qureshi said: "Daesh (the Islamic State), like forces within Afghanistan...who gain from the war economy, who want to perpetuate their power, who are not seeing beyond their nose and just want to hang on to power." The Taliban and the Afghan government are holding direct talks to end 19 years of war that has killed tens of thousands of people and ravaged various parts of the country.

The intra-Afghan began as the US and the Taliban signed a landmark deal in Doha on February 29, 2020 following multiple rounds of negotiations to bring lasting peace in war-torn Afghanistan and allow US troops to return home.

India has been keenly following the evolving political situation after the US signed the peace deal with the Taliban. The deal provided for the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, effectively drawing curtains on America's longest war.

India has been a major stakeholder in the peace and stability of Afghanistan. It has already invested close to USD three

billion in aid and reconstruction activities in the country.

India has been supporting a national peace and reconciliation process which is Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled.

During his visit to Qatar, Jaishankar on Tuesday met US special envoy Khalilzad in Doha and exchanged perspectives on the war-torn nation and the region. Khalilzad briefed him on the recent developments in Afghanistan.

The minister also met senior members of the Qatari leadership and discussed the issue of Afghanistan among other matters as Doha is involved in the Afghan peace process.

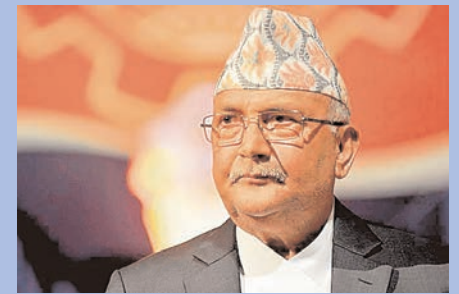
In March, Afghan foreign minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar visited India during which Jaishankar conveyed to him India's long-term commitment towards a peaceful, sovereign and stable Afghanistan.

India on Thursday said its vision for Afghanistan is driven by an approach of pro-development and pro-democracy and that it is for the Afghan people to judge each of their partners on the basis of past actions.

In early March, Jaishankar and Khalilzad spoke over the phone and discussed the developments pertaining to the Afghan peace talks.

In the same month, Jaishankar attended the 9th Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference in Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, where he voiced 'grave concern' over violence and bloodshed in Afghanistan and said that there is a need for a genuine 'double peace' in and around the war-torn country.

Jaishankar also said that India has been supportive of all the efforts being made to accelerate the dialogue between the Afghan government and the Taliban, including intra-Afghan negotiations. — (PTI)



COURTS CAN'T APPOINT PM, SAYS OLI AS HE DEFENDS HOUSE DISSOLUTION

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's embattled Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli on June 17 defended his government's controversial decision to dissolve the House of Representatives and told the Supreme Court that it was not up to the judiciary to appoint a premier as it cannot undertake the legislative and the executive functions of the state. President Bidya Devi Bhandari, at the recommendation of Prime Minister Oli, dissolved the lower house for the second time in five months on May 22 and announced snap elections on November 12 and November 19. Prime Minister Oli is heading a minority government after losing a trust vote in the House.

On June 9, the apex court issued a show-cause notice to the Office of Prime Minister and the President's Office to furnish a written response within 15 days. Furnishing a written reply to the Supreme Court on Thursday as demanded by the Constitutional Bench, Oli said the court could not appoint a Prime Minister as it could not undertake the legislative and the executive functions of the state. The apex court received Oli's response via the Office of the Attorney General. "The court's duty is to interpret the Constitution and the existing laws, it cannot play the role of legislative or executive bodies," 69-year-old Oli said in his response. "Forming governments on the basis of parties is the fundamental characteristic of the parliamentary system and the Constitution does not imagine party-less practices," he added. (PTI)

1 INDIAN, 2 CHINESE WORKERS KILLED IN FLOOD IN NEPAL

KATHMANDU (TIP): An Indian and two Chinese workers were killed after being swept away by the flood in central Nepal's Sindhupalchok district, an official said on June 17.

The body of the Indian worker was found in Sunkoshi river in Sindhuli on Thursday, whereas two Chinese were found dead in Sindhupalchok, Chief District Officer Arun Pokharel said.

The victims used to work for the Melamchi Water Supply Project.

Meanwhile, two Indian and one Chinese worker were still missing, another official said. (PTI)

Fire-ravaged ship sinks, prompting Sri Lankan pollution fear

COLOMBO (TIP): A container ship carrying chemicals sank off Sri Lanka's capital on June 17 nearly a month after catching fire, raising concerns about a possible environmental disaster, officials said.

The ship's operator said the wreck of the Singapore-flagged X-Press Pearl "is now wholly sitting on the seabed at a depth of 21 meters (70 feet)."

A salvage crew was at the site to deal with any debris and report any spill, X-Press Feeders said.

The head of Sri Lanka's Marine Environment Protection Authority, Darshini Lahandapura, also confirmed that the ship had sunk.

The fire broke out on the vessel on May 20 when it was anchored about 9.5



nautical miles (18 kilometres) northwest of Colombo and waiting to enter the port.

The Sri Lankan navy believes the blaze was caused by its chemical cargo, which included 25 tons of nitric acid and other chemicals, most of which were destroyed in the fire. But debris including burned

fibreglass and tons of plastic pellets have already polluted nearby beaches. There are concerns that a spill of remaining chemicals and oil from the ship could devastate marine life.

Authorities extinguished the fire last week, but the ship then began sinking and attempts to tow it into deeper waters failed when its stern rested on the seabed. The ship had remained partly submerged until Thursday.

The government has asked the United Nations and some other countries for help in assessing the damage to the marine environment and coastal areas.

The country has submitted an interim claim of USD 40 million to X-Press Feeders to cover part of the cost of fighting the fire. (AP)

Summer Solstice: The year's longest day

The Summer Solstice is traditionally a festive day associated with the beginning of warmer months, longer days, early dawns, late sunsets and shorter nights in the Northern Hemisphere. In the southern half of the globe, it's the beginning of the winter season. Summer Solstice is on June 21. This year Summer Solstice is just a day after Father's Day on June 20. Celebrations and feasts on June Solstice are different in every country. The midsummer celebrations have a long history as well.

Meaning of Solstice

"Solstice" (Latin: "solstitium") means sun-stopping. The point on the horizon where the sun appears to rise and set, stops and reverses direction after this day. On the solstice, the sun does not rise precisely in the east, but rises to the north of east and sets to the north of west, meaning it's visible in the sky for a longer period of time.

Although the June solstice marks the first day of astronomical summer, it's more common to use meteorological definitions of seasons, making the solstice midsummer or midwinter.

What is Summer Solstice?

The Solstice is the beginning of the astronomical summer in the Northern Hemisphere. It ends with the autumn equinox on September 22. Solstice marks almost equal duration of day and night as the Sun crosses the Line of Equator and moves over the Northern Hemisphere. On June solstice, the Earth is positioned in a way that the North Pole tilts towards the Sun.

Summer Solstice celebrations

A number of ancient celebrations are associated with the June Solstice. People used the day to organize calendars and farmers marked the day with sowing or harvesting of crops. Many historians say, Stonehenge, a prehistoric monument in England, is an evidence of humans using June Solstice as a way of setting the time of the year. Even now, tourists and locals visit Stonehenge to watch the sunrise on Summer Solstice.

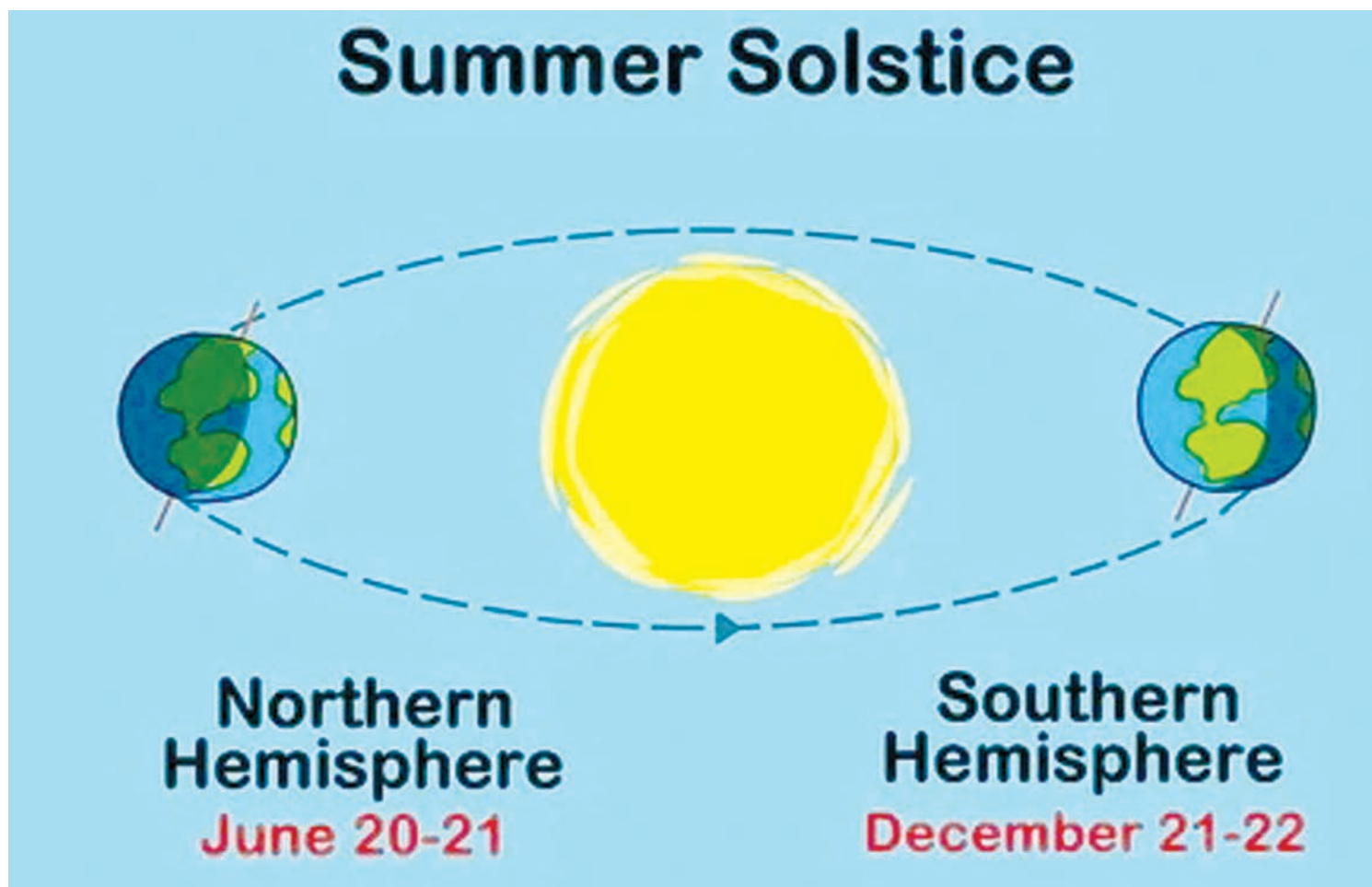
According to the timeanddate.com, "In ancient China, the Summer Solstice was observed by a ceremony to celebrate the Earth, femininity, and the 'yin' forces. It complemented the Winter Solstice that celebrated the heavens, masculinity and 'yang' forces."

In Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, Summer Solstice is a time of midsummer night festivities. This is the time when countries near the Arctic enjoy the Midnight Sun. People dance around the Maypoles and bonfires. Homes are lit up and decorated with violets and vanilla flowers.

Signifying Changes

A significant turning point during the year—the days start getting shorter and the nights longer—the June Solstice is often associated with change, nature and new beginnings.

People around the world celebrate the day, which is also known as the Summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the Winter solstice in the Southern Hemisphere, with feasts, bonfires, picnics, and traditional songs and



dances.

An Ancient Celebration

Celebrations surrounding the June Solstice have a time-honored history. In ancient times, the date of the June Solstice was used to organize calendars and as a marker to figure out when to plant and harvest crops. Traditionally, this time of year was also popular for weddings.

Stonehenge: An Ancient Calendar Organizing System?

Some historians point to the Stonehenge, a prehistoric monument in Wiltshire, England as evidence of the fact that ancient humans used the June Solstice as a way to organize their calendars. Some believe that Stonehenge's unique stone circle was erected around 2500 BCE in order to establish the date of the Summer Solstice. Viewed from its center, the Sun rises at a particular point on the horizon on day of the June Solstice. Some theories suggest that the builders of Stonehenge may have used the solstice as a starting-point to count the days of the year.

Celebrating Femininity in China

In ancient China, the summer solstice was observed by a ceremony to celebrate the Earth, femininity, and the "yin" forces. It complemented the Winter Solstice that celebrated the heavens, masculinity and "yang" forces. According to Chinese tradition, the shortest shadow is found on the day of the Summer Solstice.

Midsummer Feasts

In ancient Gaul, which encompasses modern-day France and some parts of its neighboring countries, the Midsummer celebration was called Feast of Epona.



The celebration was named after a mare goddess who personified fertility and protected horses. In ancient Germanic, Slav and Celtic tribes, pagans celebrated Midsummer with bonfires. After Christianity spread in Europe and other parts of the world, many pagan customs were incorporated into the Christian religion. In parts of Scandinavia, the Midsummer celebration continued but was observed around the time of St John's Day, on June 24, to honor St John the Baptist instead of the pagan gods.

Modern Day Celebrations

In northern European countries like Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, Midsummer is a festive celebration. When the summer days are at their longest, and in the north it is the time of the Midnight Sun, festivals generally celebrate the summer and the fertility of the Earth. In Sweden and

many parts of Finland people dance around Maypoles. Bonfires are lit and homes are decorated with flower garlands, greenery, and tree branches.

In the Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, Midsummer is an occasion to travel to the countryside and connect with nature. Many people light bonfires and stay up all night drinking, singing, and dancing. There are many solstice observances held by New Age and Neopagan groups throughout the world. Thousands of people, including modern-day druids and pagans, usually gather at Stonehenge for this occasion.

In some parts of the United States, events that focus on the theme of the Summer Solstice are held. These events include: local festivals featuring art or music; environmental awareness activities that focus on using natural sunlight as a source of energy; and family gatherings.

Father's Day: The special day for dads

Father's Day is coming up. Though one does not need a specific date to celebrate the special man who is a parent, friend and guide, both children and dads look forward to Father's Day on June 20. With covid-linked restrictions being gradually eased, may be, you can go and spend the day with your dad if he is living in a different place. If you're not able to share a meal or watch a film together, still you can celebrate. You can send him a surprise Father's Day gift or his favourite food. Do you know how and when the tradition of celebrating Father's Day started?

The third Sunday of June is celebrated as Father's Day in most parts of the world. Father's Day is a celebration of fathers, honouring fatherhood, paternal bonds and the role fathers play in society. This day was first proposed in 1909 to complement Mother's Day celebrations.

On this day children acknowledge and appreciate their fathers and father figures, who play an important role in their lives, be it emotionally, mentally or even financially. On this day children understand the importance of the role of a father in one's life. This day acknowledges the contribution of fathers to their own families and society at large. Children buy or make presents for their father or father-like figure, write and draw cards, spend the day engaging in activities that can be enjoyed with one's father, be it hiking, fishing or just sitting around watching some television. In India especially, most kids have a closer bond with their mothers, so this day definitely helps forge a closer relation with one's dad.

While India follows the US, and celebrates Father's Day on the third Sunday of June every year, in other countries including Portugal, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Father's Day is celebrated on March 19. And even though this is a Western tradition started in the United States of America, it has gained a lot of prominence in India in the past many years.

Traditions of Father's Day

The date for Father's Day changes from year-to-year. In most countries, Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday in June. The celebrations recognize the unique role a father or a father figure plays in our lives. Traditionally, countries such as Spain and Portugal, celebrate Father's Day on March 19, the Feast of St. Joseph. In Taiwan, Father's Day is on August 8. In Thailand, December 5, the birthday of former King Bhumibol Adulyadej, is marked as Father's Day.

How did Father's Day start?

According to the almanac.com, the history of Father's Day isn't a happy one. It was first marked after a horrible mining accident in the United States. On July 5, 1908, hundreds of men died in a mining mishap at Fairmont in West



Virginia. Grace Golden Clayton, the daughter of a dedicated reverend, suggested a Sunday service in memory of all the men who died in the accident.

A few years later another woman, Sonora Smart Dodd, again started observing Father's Day in honour of her father, a Civil War veteran who brought up six children as a single parent.

Observing Father's Day did not gain popularity in the US until several decades later when President Richard Nixon signed a declaration in 1972, making it an annual celebration on the third Sunday of June.

Father's Day started in the United States (US), however, it has gained a lot of prominence in India in the last few years.

Father's Day was first proposed by Sonora Smart Dodd in the USA. She and her five siblings were raised by her dad, who was a civil war veteran William Jackson Smart.

Looking at her dad's dedication and support towards the family, she wanted to establish an official equivalent to Mother's Day for male parents. Sonora wanted Father's Day celebrations to be held on 5 June, which was her dad's birthday, but due to the time constraints of the Church, the day was finally celebrated on the third Sunday of June.

The first Father's Day was celebrated on 19 June, 1910. Later, on 1 May, 1972, the then-President of the US Richard Nixon declared Father's Day as a national holiday. Therefore, the first official Father's Day celebration in the US was on 18 June, 1972.

Facts about Father's Day

- The idea of Father's Day was first proposed by Sonora Smart Dodd of the United States whose father, William Jackson Smart, was an American Civil War veteran.
- He raised her and her five siblings after her mother died. Thus, Sonora Dodd became an admirer and the idea of Fathers' Day was proposed.
- The first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910, in America.
- Later in 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first presidential proclamation honouring fathers and declared the third Sunday of June as Father's Day.
- Six years later in 1972, the day was made a permanent national holiday when President Richard Nixon signed it into law.
- In some countries, Father's day is celebrated on June 19 but in most of the countries like the United States, Greece, India, France, Japan, Canada and China, this day is celebrated on the third Sunday of June.
- Just like mothers, fathers also play a very important part. Hence, this Father's Day, thank your father for being your dad and helping you achieve the best in life.

Does every country observe Father's Day on same day?

No, not all countries observe the day on the same date. While Father's Day is celebrated in India, US and few other countries on the third Sunday of June (20 June) other countries including Portugal, Spain, Croatia and Italy observed Father's Day on 19 March.

In Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, Father's Day is celebrated in the month of September.

This special day signifies the pivotal role that fathers play in their children's lives; be it emotionally, mentally or even financially. So, to make their fathers feel special, children on this day shower them with gifts, heart-warming cards and special dinners.

Many try to spend more time than usual with their fathers. Others who are away from home call their father or visit him.

Benefits of hyaluronic acid on the skin

Hyaluronic acid is turning out to be one of the most talked-about and researched ingredients in skincare science, but what comes along with it are the most frequently asked questions revolving around the same. Hyaluronic acid is a sugar that occurs naturally in the body, including the skin, eyes, and joints. The primary function of hyaluronic acid is to provide moisture to these areas of the body.

The reason that it is loved and recommended so much to everyone, lies in its seemingly magical ability to retain moisture. Hyaluronic acid is amazingly good at bonding with moisture, thereby making it a good treatment for someone with dehydrated skin which is the root cause of a huge amount of skin concerns and damages.

- Retains moisture: Hyaluronic acid helps replenish and hold cell moisture, leading to hydrated, plump skin.
- Reduces the appearance of wrinkles: Since dehydrated skin is one of the main causes of wrinkles, hyaluronic acid replenishes lost moisture and helps reduce the appearance of any fine lines.
- Fast absorbing: Unlike some skincare products, hyaluronic acid quickly absorbs into the skin, meaning you lose less product.



- Non-irritating: For the most part, hyaluronic acid is non-irritating and safe for use with all skin types.

There is, however, a word of caution while using this treatment. You should avoid using it on completely dry patted skin, the skin needs to be slightly damp for it to work with full potency. If used on dry skin it can pull the moisture from deep within your skin, making it duller and more

dehydrated. Additionally, if you are living in a dry/ less humid place because this ingredient is a humectant, it derives moisture from the environment to hydrate the surface of your skin, but if there isn't sufficient moisture available in the environment, it will pull the moisture from deep within your skin, thereby making the problem worse. So just keep these two things in mind and you will be good to go. *Source: India.com*

Give up on these habits to deal with hair thinning effectively

If no hair oil or mask can solve hair thinning for you, then it's time to dig a little deeper. Did you know your scalp sheds around 100 strands of hair daily? FYI, it's completely normal. But if this number increases by the day, you might face premature balding.

Too much sun exposure

When we go out, the sun's UV rays start to impact the elasticity and strength of the hair. Prolonged heat and sunlight exposure can dry out the hair and scalp and damage the cuticle and the hair fibre, resulting in brittle hair that can lead to hair loss.

Washing the hair with warm water

Washing the hair with hot water can leave the cuticles open. Rinse your hair with cool water to close the cuticles and protect the hair from damage and breakage.

Not washing your hair often enough

Not washing your hair often can build up dirt, product leftovers, and oil on the scalp that can clog hair follicles, making it difficult for hair to grow.

Using too many hair styling tools

Hair products and styling tools can make the hair brittle and dry. These tools have a high temperature that can strip away the oils and protein from the hair and its protective cuticle. This can disrupt moisture balance and cause breakage and thinning.



Mishandling wet hair

Hair is more fragile and prone to breakage, when it's wet. Brushing or combing your locks in the shower and towel-drying it can wreak havoc on it!

Scratching your head

Itching on the scalp can be the result of a fungal infection, allergies, or inflammation that is very harmful for your hair. Scratching the scalp can damage the hair follicles, which can cause hair loss.



By Tript Arora

CONNOISSEUR'S CHOICE



Bread pakora

The sky was covered with black clouds since morning. It was a solace after 43 degrees of temperature in the past week. I was in my kitchen thinking what to cook for breakfast. Suddenly it started raining heavily. Guess What we always think of in the rainy season? Fried you said.

Absolutely correct. I checked my provisions and found everything I needed for stuffed bread Pakora. First of all I washed



potatoes and put them in the pressure cooker to boil. Meanwhile, I thought of sharing this recipe with you. The stuffed bread Pakoras with green coriander and mint chutney are my dear hubby's favorite. Do you know why fried food is eaten in Monsoon, because food cooked at high temperatures is free from bacteria and is free from contamination. So there is a scientific reason behind the relationship between fried food and the rainy season. Without further delay let us start our today's recipe of Bread Pakoda. For this we need bread, potatoes and gram flour. We make a stuffing with boiled potatoes and paste it between two slices of bread. Coat this sandwich with a batter of gram flour and then deep fry it. These are served hot with tomato sauce or green chutney. Do try them today with a hot cup of tea. These are absolutely amazing.

We Need

8 Slices of Bread, 4 Tsp Tomato Sauce, 4 Tsp Green Chutney, Oil for Frying.

FOR STUFFING: 500 gm boiled potatoes, 2 green chillies finely chopped, 1 Tsp. Salt, 1 Tsp Red Chilli Powder, 2 Tsp Coriander Powder, 1 Tsp Amchoor Powder(Dried Mango Powder),

FOR GRAM FLOUR BATTER: 1 Cup Gram flour, ½ Cup Water, 1 Tbsp Carom Seeds(Ajwain), 1 Tsp Turmeric Powder, 1 Tbsp Red Chilli Powder, 1 Tablespoon Whole Coriander Seeds. 1 Tsp. Salt

Here We Go:

- Wash potatoes and put them in a pressure cooker. Cover them with water and close the lid. Cook them till three whistles. Let the pressure release on its own.
- Drain the water and when the potatoes cool down, peel them.
- Mash or grate the potatoes in a bowl. Add salt, coriander powder, red chilli powder , Amchoor powder and finely chopped green chillies. Mix well. This will be the filling between two slices. Keep aside
- Take a bowl and add gram flour to it. Add water to it and beat it smooth and fluffy. Add salt, turmeric powder, red chilli powder and carom seeds. Pound whole coriander seeds in a mortar and pestle and add to the batter. This will give a crunch to the bread pakoda.
- Take two bread slices. Spread Tomato sauce on one slice. Take 2 tbsp of stuffing and spread evenly on it. Now spread green chutney on another slice. Put one on top of the other. Thus making a sandwich .
- Heat oil in a pan for deep frying. Dip this Sandwich in gram flour batter . Cover the sandwich on all sides with batter. Deep Fry this sandwich in medium hot oil. Fry until golden brown on both sides.
- Cut it into half with a knife and serve hot with green chutney and sauce. Enjoy Bread Pakoras with a hot cup of tea.

Preparation Time : 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes.

TIPS: Boil potatoes with skin. Don't keep them long in water otherwise they will become mushy.

You can also cut the sandwich into half and fry it .

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Instagram: [@triptasfoodtunnel](https://www.instagram.com/triptasfoodtunnel)

Acidity or bloating? Do not Ignore these stomach signals

Digestive issues after COVID-19 recovery are now a common problem among patients. Problems such as bloating, gaseousness, acidity, acid reflux, constipation, and exacerbation of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) are being commonly seen in the second wave of the pandemic. The number of patients with these complaints is increasing at an alarming rate.

We all know that the digestive system involves the gastrointestinal tract (GI) along with the Liver, Pancreas, and Gall Bladder. During COVID-19, it is significant to take care as the virus disrupts the functioning of the GI and renders it unable to perform its duties of absorbing electrolytes and fluids from the body. Patients can even end up with bleeding in the gastrointestinal tract or have blood clots in the blood vessels leading to Ischemia (restricted/ reduced blood flow) and Gangrene. The disease may also destroy bowel tissues and reduce intestinal movement. These issues can become more serious if left untreated.

Symptoms

If you experience any of these following symptoms, it is important that a complete evaluation, monitoring is done to ensure timely treatment for healing and recovery.

Acid reflux, Loss of appetite or increased appetite, Abdominal bloating, Upper abdominal pain,



Constipation, Diarrhea, Vomiting, GI bleeding, Intestinal inflammation,

Dietary Factors

Include prebiotics and probiotics in your daily meals to keep the gut healthy. Probiotics are good bacteria that improve gut health by promoting good immunity and enhancing nutrient absorption. Curd or yogurt is the best known probiotic. Prebiotics are the complex carbohydrates which are not digested by our body and it promotes the growth of good bacteria inside the gut. This again promotes the digestion of the food that we eat.

Prebiotics are present in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains like Oats, Jowar etc. Eating an adequate amount of pre and probiotics keeps acidity at bay and improves digestion.

Drinking a minimum of 2-3 liters of water a day helps in the absorption of nutrients and thereby is important in maintaining good gut health. Diet rich in Omega 3 Fatty acids not only helps to improve the immune health but also has an anti-inflammatory property that aids in post COVID recovery. Flax seeds, Almonds, Walnuts, Chia seeds, seafood are good sources of Omega-3 Fatty Acids. *Source: India.com*



Exposure to common cold virus may protect from Covid-19: Study

Exposure to the virus that causes common cold can protect against infection by the SARS-CoV-2 virus behind Covid-19, according to a study.

The research, published on Tuesday, June 5, in the Journal of Experimental Medicine, found that rhinovirus, the common respiratory virus, jump-starts the activity of interferon-stimulated genes.

These genes trigger early-response molecules in the immune system which can stop reproduction of the SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, within airway tissues infected with the cold, the researchers said.

Triggering these defences early in the course of Covid-19 infection holds promise to prevent or treat the infection, said senior study author, Ellen Foxman, assistant professor at the Yale School of Medicine in the US.

One way to do this, Foxman said, is by treating patients with interferons, an immune system protein that is also available as a drug.

"But it all depends upon the timing," she said.

Previous work showed that at the later stages of Covid-19, high interferon levels are associated with worse disease outcomes, and may fuel overactive immune responses.

However, recent genetic studies show that interferon-stimulated genes can also be protective in cases of Covid-19 infection.

The researchers wanted to study this defence system early in the course of Covid-19 infection.

They decided to study whether rhinoviruses would have a beneficial impact against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The team infected lab-grown human airway tissue with the virus and found that for the first three days, viral load in the tissue doubled about every six hours.

However, the researchers found that reproduction of the Covid-19 virus was completely stopped in tissue that had been exposed to rhinovirus.

If antiviral defences were blocked, the SARS-CoV-2 could reproduce in airway tissue previously exposed to rhinovirus.

The same defences slowed down SARS-CoV-2 infection even without rhinovirus, but only if the infectious dose was low. *Source: PTI*

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine more than 90 per cent effective in U.S. trial

Novavax Inc on Monday reported late-stage data from its U.S.-based clinical trial showing its vaccine is more than 90% effective against COVID-19 across a variety of variants of the virus.

The study of nearly 30,000 volunteers in the United States and Mexico puts Novavax on track to file for emergency authorization in the United States and elsewhere in the third quarter of 2021, the company said.

Novavax's protein-based COVID-19 vaccine candidate was more than 93% effective against the predominant variants of COVID-19 that have been of concern among scientists and public health officials, Novavax said.

Protein-based vaccines are a conventional approach that use purified pieces of the virus to spur an immune response and vaccines against whooping cough and shingles employ this approach.

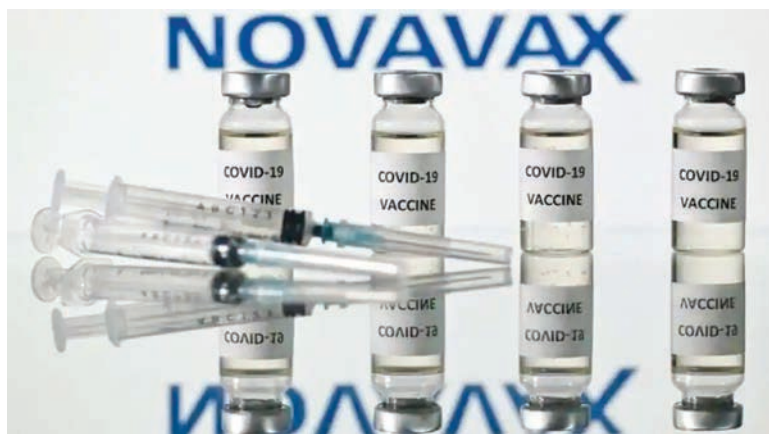
During the trial, the B.1.1.7 variant first discovered in the United Kingdom became the most common variant in the United States, it said.

Novavax also detected variants of COVID-19 first found in Brazil, South Africa and India among its trial participants, Novavax's head of research and development, Dr. Gregory Glenn, told Reuters.

The vaccine was 91% effective among volunteers at high risk of severe infection and 100% effective in preventing moderate and severe cases of COVID-19. It was roughly 70% effective against COVID-19 variants that Novavax was unable to identify, Glenn said.

"Practically speaking, it's very important that the vaccine can protect against a virus that is wildly swinging around" in terms of new variants, Glenn said.

Novavax said the vaccine was generally well-tolerated among participants. Side effects included headache, fatigue and muscle pain and were generally mild. A small number of participants experienced side effects described as severe. *Source: Reuters*



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Truecaller adds Group Calling, Smart SMS features

Swedish caller identification app Truecaller announced on Wednesday, June 16, that it is rolling out new features to further augment the user experience, which include Group Voice Calling, Smart SMS and Inbox Cleaner.

All of them are based on user feedback and are designed to cater to the evolving needs of the consumers, Truecaller said.

"With Group Voice Calling, Smart SMS and Inbox Cleaner, I am hopeful that the consumers will be able to operate more effectively given the benefits of staying connected, using messaging service smartly to stay on top of important information," Rishit Jhunjunwala, MD India, Truecaller, said in a statement.

Smart SMS offers a host of new features designed to make day-to-day communication more convenient, while Inbox Cleaner lets consumers free up space on their phones by removing unused messages. Inbox Cleaner also helps the user clear out all old and unwanted messages in just a few seconds.

Group Voice Calling allows users to add up to eight participants to a call while retaining high voice clarity.

Truecaller will also help identify spam users in the group if they are added without the user's knowledge.

Additionally, the feature offers a smooth dial back option from call logs, making it easy to manage the group—including adding or removing participants—when dialing them back.

"We continue to remain focused on the evolving needs of our users and meet those needs with innovative solutions. These features get us closer to our mission to make communication safer and more efficient for everyone," Jhunjunwala said. *Source: IANS*

WhatsApp: A look at 5 features that could launch soon

WhatsApp is working on a number of features for both Android and iOS. The company recently confirmed that it will be expanding the Disappearing messages feature and will also add a 'View Once' option. It is also expected to add the calling feature to the Web version of WhatsApp. The company's head Will Cathcart just recently revealed that the multi-device support will be arriving on the platform soon. Read on to know more about the upcoming WhatsApp features.

Disappearing mode

WhatsApp already offers a Disappearing Messages feature, and it is now planning to expand this ability. In an interview with WaBetaInfo, Facebook's CEO Mark Zuckerberg confirmed that WhatsApp will introduce a disappearing mode, which will let you enable disappearing messages across all chat threads.

Currently, you need to turn on the disappearing feature manually (for each chat). Once you enable it, it allows messages to be deleted after a set period of time. The company hasn't provided details on whether users will get the timer option with the new disappearing mode.

View Once feature

Zuckerberg also confirmed that WhatsApp has plans to add a 'view once' feature, which will allow users to share media such as photos and videos that can be seen just once. This is similar to Instagram's disappearing photo or video feature. So, when you send a photo to anyone and it will disappear from the chat when the recipient has seen it. This feature will not be turned on by default.

Multiple device support

WhatsApp has been testing multiple



device support for months, and it finally confirmed it will be arriving soon. As per a report by WaBetaInfo, the support will be entering public beta "in the next month or two." Facebook's CEO also confirmed that the multi-device feature will not compromise the end-to-end encryption that the messaging app is offering all for personal chats.

Once you receive this feature, it will let you log in to your WhatsApp account on more than one device at the same time. Once the same account is logged into another device, it automatically logs out of the first device, as per previous reports. Currently, users can log in to their WhatsApp account on a single device.

Missed group calls

WhatsApp is also said to be working on a feature that will let you join group calls that you might have missed. In simpler terms, if someone invites you to join a group call and you aren't able to join in at

that moment, then you will get the option to join later if the call hasn't ended. The same feature was previously spotted on the beta version of Android in October 2020 and now, WhatsApp is testing it for iOS users.

WhatsApp Read Later

Lastly, the Facebook-owned company is also working on a 'Read Later' feature, as per a recent report by WaBetaInfo. The feature will replace the existing Archived Chats feature and will not bring back the archived chats on the top of the messaging app.

Currently, when you archive any chat in WhatsApp, the app hides it in the archive section, and you don't see it on the top of all the chats. However, when a new message arrives, the archived chat automatically pops up on the top of the screen. With the new Read Later feature, WhatsApp wants to eliminate these interruptions.

Source: Indian Express

Google Insights tool now available for web creators

Google is rolling out a new Search Console Insights tool that provides creators with an overview of how their content is performing. The new feature makes it easier to understand how content resonates with readers. It is aimed at all levels of technical expertise with a user-friendly interface for understanding performance.

The tool features high-level charts and cards showing stats for "Your new content" and "Google Search". Google says it will help answer questions like what is your best performing content and which pieces of content are trending, how are your new pieces of content performing, how do people discover your content across the web, etc.

The best Search Console Insights experience requires linking your Google Analytics account to a relevant property, the report said. Only Google Analytics



Universal Analytics properties are currently supported, but Google Analytics 4 is coming soon, it added.

This Insights tool -- currently in beta -- can be launched directly here or from the top of the Search Console's Overview page. It is also coming to mobile directly in the Google app for iOS and Android from the menu that appears when you tap your profile picture.

Source: IANS

NASA captures a stunning image of the spiral galaxy NGC 4680

NASA has shared a stunning image of the spiral galaxy NGC 4680 in all its glory. The image is said to have been taken by the Hubble's Wide Field Camera 3. The NGC 4680 galaxy had earlier made news in 1997, as it played host to a supernova explosion known as SN 1997bp according to NASA. The supernova had been identified by Australian amateur astronomer Robert Evans who is said to have identified 42 supernova explosions.

NASA states that the NGC 4680 is a tricky galaxy to classify. The space agency further states that this is because the galaxy is sometimes referred to as a spiral galaxy, but it is also sometimes classified as a lenticular galaxy.

Lenticular galaxies are said to fall somewhere in between spiral galaxies and elliptical galaxies. The NGC 4680 galaxy is said to have distinguishable spiral arms that are not clearly defined, and the tip of one arm appears very diffuse.



NASA says that Galaxies are not static, and their morphologies vary throughout their lifetimes. Over time, Spiral galaxies are believed to evolve into elliptical galaxies. NASA states that this is most likely due to the galaxies merging with one another, causing them to lose their distinctive spiral structures.

Source: Indian Express

Air India to raise up to Rs 300 crore by selling real estate assets

Disinvestment-bound Air India is looking to raise Rs 200 to 300 crore by selling commercial and residential real estate assets in different parts of the country.

Air India on Friday, July 18, sought bids for a slew of properties, including flats and plots.

"Air India through MSTC invites e-auction bids for sale of the properties located across India," according to a public notice.

A residential plot and a flat in Mumbai, five flats in New Delhi, a residential plot in Bangalore, and four flats in Kolkata, are among the properties that have been put on sale.

Besides, a booking office and staff quarter in Aurangabad, a residential plot along with Airline House in Bhuj, six flats in Nashik, booking office in Nagpur and a residential plot in Thiruvananthapuram and two flats in Mangaluru are for sale, as per the notice.

"We are expecting the auction of these properties should fetch around ₹200-300 crore for AIAHL," a senior official told PTI.

The bids would be open on July 8 and close on July 9.

The government is in the process of deciding on the final contours for the disinvestment of loss-making Air India.

A special purpose vehicle -- Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) -- has been set up to hold the non-core assets of Air India group.

AIAHL was set up for warehousing accumulated working capital loan not backed by any asset along with four subsidiaries -- Air India Air Transport Services Ltd, Airline Allied Services Ltd, Air India Engineering Services Ltd (AIESL) and Hotel Corporation of India Ltd (HCI) -- and various non-core assets.

Adevinta, eBay clear final hurdle in \$13 billion advertising tie-up

US e-commerce group eBay and Norway's Adevinta have secured final regulatory approval for a tie-up of their global classified ads businesses, the Norwegian firm said on Friday.

Under a deal struck last year, Adevinta will acquire eBay's Classifieds Group in return for \$2.5 billion in cash and 540 million shares, valuing the transaction at around \$13 billion at current stock market prices. The final regulatory approval came from the Austrian competition watchdog after eBay agreed to reduce its ownership stake in Adevinta during the next 18 months, the Norwegian firm said. The compromise removes the sole outstanding obstacle to the deal following a go-ahead from Britain's Competition and Markets Authority earlier this month.

SpaceX collaborates with GEC to sell space art through cryptocurrency

The announcement of the DOGE-1 mission — a collaboration between Elon Musk's SpaceX and the futurist Geometric Energy Corporation (GEC) — was hailed as the start of the cryptocurrency space race.

Dogecoin, the popular meme cryptocurrency, was chosen as the unit of account between SpaceX and GEC, giving Doge a claim on the first unit of space commerce.

However, it is not the only space currency. The initial press release mentioned a number of organisations involved with GEC, several of which are cryptocurrency projects. So, how do these fit in? The answer is space art.

With the astronomic rise in projects tying art to cryptocurrency, it seems that the GEC is looking to test what happens to the value of art — or advertising — when it is strapped to the side of a CubeSat and fired towards the moon.

The article mentioned additional payload space to be dedicated to art in the form of space plaques provided by Geometric Labs and Geometric



Gamin Corporation, and since then, four new cryptocurrency projects underwent a low-key release, and rumours began to circulate that the tokens were related to the Doge-1 mission. Their names are Rho, Beta, Kappa and Gamma. Later a fifth project, Xi, was launched.

They have yet to be officially associated with GEC, but a set of websites for the tokens appeared unannounced. Are these tokens part of the space art, and can they be directly tied to GEC? A little digging into the websites and the code for the tokens themselves appear to confirm it.

The websites of the tokens claim they are indeed part of

the mission, and that each token will be involved in how the art is displayed on the side of the CubeSat, opening up the possibility that the art could be programmable, changeable or even streamed back to Earth.

Pointblank is collaborating with GEC to build the CubeSats for the mission, and have recently tweeted the hashtags for some tokens. The Pointblank website contains in its source files a picture of one of the tokens.

The man behind GEC is Sam Reid. He launched a new TG group centred around the tokens. This is effectively the missing piece: GEC have now laid claim to the tokens.

Mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery kicks in

Marking a major change in India's favourite investment option, "mandatory" hallmarking of gold jewellery kicked off on June 17 in a "phased" manner from 256 districts of the country.

However, watches, fountain pens and popular style of jewellery such as 'kundan', 'polki' and 'jadau' are exempted from hallmarking. Small jewellers with less than Rs 40 lakh annual turnover are also exempted, BIS Director-General Pramod Kumar Tiwari said.

Women having traditional and old jewellery can also sell without going through the process. Old jewellery can be hallmarked as it is, if feasible by the jeweller or after melting and making new jewellery, he said. Jewellery for international exhibitions and for government-approved B2B domestic exhibitions will also be exempted from mandatory hallmarking.

Cristiano Ronaldo's act wipes off \$4 billion from Coca-Cola's market value

A small gesture by star footballer Cristiano Ronaldo at a pre-match press conference — ahead of the Euro 2020 clash between Portugal and Hungary — has left a big dent in Coca-Cola's market value.

At the pre-match press conference, Ronaldo pushed aside a couple of Coke bottles that were kept in front of him. The 36-year-old moved the bottles out of the frame and then went on to display a water bottle in front of the press gathered for the conference.

Ronaldo also said "agua" — which means water in Portuguese — after holding up the bottle of water as a sign of endorsement. His gesture soon went viral on various social media platforms and was shared widely across the globe.

Hours later, Coca-Cola, which is one of the official sponsors of Euro 2020, saw its market value dip by a whopping \$4 billion.

Coca-Cola's stock price dropped 1.6 per cent, down from \$56.10 to \$55.22 after the footballing star's gesture. The market value of the popular beverage brand dipped \$4 billion from \$242 to \$238 billion.

Issuing a statement on the matter, Coca-Cola said, "Players are offered water, alongside Coca-Cola and Coca-Cola Zero Sugar, on arrival at our press conferences."

Coca-Cola further said "everyone is entitled to their drink preferences" and that everyone has different "tastes and needs".

It is no secret that Ronaldo, one of the greatest footballers in the world, follows a strict diet and avoids sugary drinks. Even at 36, the Portuguese captain can give younger players a run for their money on any given day.



Google's adtech business set to face formal EU probe by year-end

BRUSSELS (TIP): Alphabet unit Google could face its biggest regulatory threat, with EU antitrust regulators set to open a formal investigation into its lucrative digital advertising business before the end of the year, said people familiar with the matter.

It would mark a new front by the EU competition enforcer against Google. It has in the last decade fined the company more than 8 billion euros (\$9.8 billion) for blocking rivals in online shopping, Android smartphones and online advertising.

An EU probe would focus on Google's position vis-a-vis advertisers, publishers, intermediaries and rivals, one of the people said, indicating deeper scrutiny than the French antitrust agency's case concluded last week.

Google made \$147 billion in revenue from online ads last year, more than any other company in the world. Ads on its properties, including search, YouTube and Gmail, accounted for the bulk of sales and profits.

About 16% of revenue came from its display or network business, in which other media companies use Google technology to sell ads on their website and apps.

Both units are under fire. The U.S. Justice Department, joined by some states, sued Google last year for abusing its dominance in search ads. A group of states led by Texas in a later lawsuit focused on anti-competitive behavior on the network side of the house.

France last week settled with Google for \$268 million and various commitments over similar allegations related to the network business, and the unit also must work closely with Britain's competition regulator on upcoming software changes as part of a settlement reached days later.

Source: Reuters

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Neermahal: The Lake Palace of Tripura



The Lake Palace of Tripura or the Neermahal is the largest palace of its kind in the entire Indian Subcontinent. This architectural beauty rightly derives its name from its location, i.e. the middle of Rudrasagar Lake. It is one of the two water palaces that our country has. The former royal palace is an outcome of King Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur's great perspective. It was the summer palace for king and his family. Even today, its highly ornated structure showcases the glorious past. The surrounding lawns and flower beds add seven stars to the beauty of this place.

The evenings at Neermahal are spent watching the light and sound show. It makes people familiar with the cultural heritage of the place and its owners. The historicity comes with a tint of adventure too. Yes, the palace premises also include some water sports activities. This makes it a perfect combination of antiquity and thrill. Moreover, the palace has even gained fame for its 'Neermahal Water Festival.' A huge flock of people visit the mahal only to take part in the boat races organised by the board. This architectural marvel has a lot to give to its visitors. Therefore, whenever in Agartala make sure to turn your ways towards this gem of North-East.

History

Neermahal is the realisation of Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Bahadur's idea of constructing a summer residence in the middle of Rudrasagar Lake. It was in 1921 when he appointed the British company Martin and

Burns to build the massive palace for him. The palace took 9 years of hardwork and dedication for its formation. The king of Manikya Dynasty, Maharaja Bir Bikram was a progressive ruler who worked for blending the tribal community with modernity by building great infrastructure. Neermahal stands to be his most wonderful creation. The baffling beauty of this palace even today leaves each of its visitor spellbound.

Architecture

The majestic palace is a beautiful amalgamation of Hindu and Muslim architecture. Built on the lake; the palace looks more enchanting during the night time when the lights are switched on, and its reflection is made in the water. Sandstone and Marble have been extensively used in its construction. The profusion of balconies, pillars, rooms, ornated walls, bridge, and pavilions make Neermahal an architectural splendor. It is divided into two parts, the Andar Mahal and an open-air theatre. Where the former lies in the west, the latter occupies the eastern part of the palace. Andar Mahal was formed for royal family's private times. Drama, dance, music, and other cultural events took place in the open area. It has 24 rooms and 2 stairways. These staircases are built in such a way that they land onto the Rudrasagar Lake. Back then boats were used as a mode of transportation between the mahal and other parts of the land.

Neermahal Water Festival

Based on the palace's location, every year in the months of August and December, the Government organizes a three-day long 'Neermahal Water Festival.' The celebrations are so massive that people from nearby states visit the palace to witness each and every event. Boat Race and Swimming competition observe the highest footfall. Alongside these small cultural programmes also take place. It lets you enjoy the festivities in both the summer and the winter season. Amazing food, enthusiastic surrounding, and the beauty of palace assure you moments to cherish for life.

Things to Do

Besides praising the elegance of Neermahal, you can watch the light and sound show or indulge yourself in some motorboat riding. Costing 1.20 crore; the light and sound show was installed in 2003 by a Finnish Company. Furthermore, coming to boating, you are charged INR 30 per person if you take a sharing boat and INR 450 if you reserve the whole boat for yourself. Not only this but you can also catch glimpses of migratory birds in the Rudrasagar Lake.

How To Reach

Situated almost 50 km from Agartala in Rudijala, Neermahal is well connected by road. You can hire a taxi or take a bus to reach the palace. Bus services are quite active in Agartala hence travelling here is easy. It takes an hour and a half to arrive at the palace.



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WEEKLY HOROSCOPE
June 21 to June 27, 2021

Aries

Ganesha says this week you will have to work on being more resilient and self sufficient. You have always been relaxed and dealt with matters in a calm and composed way but this week is the week for you to go out full force after what you want to be at work or making things happen for your family. You have a huge responsibility hanging over your shoulders this week. Make it count.

Taurus

You need to work out a plan for your future this week, as this week is not much lucrative for implementations but making goals and aims to reach that goal should be your agenda this week. You have been a very sweet person in the past but you will have to make decisions that upset some people this week hence make sure you're on your best behavior this week.

Gemini

New opportunities will make its way towards you this week, be diligent about them, they can really work in your favor if you put in the work. Try to worship lord Shiva and express your gratitude for all that you have and where you are in life, it will be beneficial for your personal as well as professional life.

Cancer

Your business is doing great this week. Your passion about your business speaks volumes to you. You are always fearless and inspiring. All those calculated risks that you took turned out to be in your favor and are paying off this week. You will feel sick and fatigued throughout the week. You need to consult a doctor and leave your work to take care of your own health this week. Even though other aspects of your life are going well you well. You will feel fine in a few days if you completely focus on your health and do not let it mentally affect you.

Leo

You will have a lot of confidence this week that will guide you towards achieving everything that you want which will lead you to receive

appreciation from your colleagues as well as the higher authority. A great week for you professionally this week. Your partner will be very supportive with your troubles this week and will provide you with all the help you need including in your work and business. You need to express your gratitude towards your partner this week.

Virgo

Your business will be a big challenge for you this week. You will not focus on it a lot due to personal reasons and towards the end of the week; you'll realize the consequences of that. Being self employed you lack a lot of discipline. Delay in the work of a particular client will cause you to lose your reputation in the industry. Positive energies are great for you this week. You will have a happy day, relaxing and taking care of your health. Focus on taking care of your health. Consulting a nutritionist will work very well in your favor this week as new positive changes are in the cards for you.

Libra

This week you will feel unimpressed by the ongoing atmosphere. Meeting up with old friends will lift up your spirits. New equations are forged at work. Be wary of enemies who might try to defame you. You will come across many people who are only looking for a way to hurt you. You will have to adopt a practical and sensible approach to handle them this week or rather avoid them as you have better things to do. Make sure you muster up the courage to speak your mind this week.

Scorpio

You will have a challenging day in your business this week but in a fun way because you're the one that's winning without making many efforts. Make sure that you're the one that is focusing on the end goal and not on other competitors this week. You will learn to be open-minded and be open to different behaviors and personalities instead of preferring that everyone behaves like you do which make you less upset and hurt and happier as you will have lesser expectations from now on.

Sagittarius

Your health is not as good as you would like it to

be this week. Taking time out to be physically active will make it great. Do not rely on unnatural ways to look better this week as they might because you more harm than good. It is easy for your significant other to fall in love with you this week. Expect some surprises. With time things will improve, you need to be more patient. You might make some tough decisions this week and you will be more susceptible to moodiness.

Capricorn

Things will come relatively harder to you this week; you will have a very strenuous week. Even though it won't majorly affect your business or finances try to be as optimistic as you can as being happy and relaxed will affect your productivity and health positively. You will be much focused and mostly achieve whatever you want you want this week. You will be helpful, generous and spend your money smartly and you are extremely careful in spending on the right things only. This might help your partner as they might be facing a financial crisis this week.

Aquarius

You will face struggling situations this week but will acquire great learning lessons as well. The need for money will make you understand the difference between your real well-wishers and simply those people who pretend to care for you. You will need to continue to put in efforts into your health which include having a regular routine, exercising and not being sleep deprived which might be tough and tedious for you.

Pisces

You will feel extremely loved and appreciated this week, which will boost your confidence. This week your partner will make you feel like you're worth a lot more than you have been given till date. Hence you will walk through every place this week as you own it. Your love life will flourish to a new level this week. You will feel loved and you will in-turn love and care for your partner. This is a very good week for you to take the next step in your life. Work on taking out more time from your work to focus on your relationship and getting to know each other's triggers and what makes each other happy.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE (JUNE 21 TO 27, 2021)

By Astro Friend Chirag - Blessed Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

CONTD FROM PAGE 30

June 21

Ganesha says someone might hoodwink you into believing that they care for you and want to be there for you today but they might be there for their own personal agenda and benefits, even though you will be having an amazing day with all the people you love who will celebrate with you, you must lookout that no one takes your benefit today.

June 22

You will thoroughly enjoy the ornate surprise your family members will throw you today. Your life will feel amazing but you might be missing a specific someone who won't be able to make it today and you won't be able to take your mind of it which might mean that it is the correct time to make some major decisions for yourself today.

June 23

Your partner may have a good attitude towards you today which will lead to solutions of misunderstandings even though your love life is simply perfect and you would love to spend the entire day with your partner enjoying and not having a care in the world, you will have to make some quiet tough decisions regarding your work today.

June 24

Although today is not the day for you to be looking at work or thinking about it, it is exactly what you would love to do today. Someone influential people will give you the right guidance in your business today so keep your ears and mind wide open. Be extremely open-minded, with the new opportunities you receive today. Push the judgmental thoughts aside and work on learning about new things.

June 25

You will have a fun day today. You will learn how to deal with different personalities and how to easily

get any problem be it at work or in your personal life to a resolution. You will realize today that your relationships will only get better from this point. You will feel amazing and very confident.

June 26

If you're single today you will meet prospective suitors through common friends or family. Be sure to choose someone compatible with you even when things don't go as planned. You will recover from past disappointments in matters of love and relationships and have a positive outlook regarding the same. It's best to state your desires and expectations openly today.

June 27

Your partner has spent a great deal of time, energy, and effort in making this day special for you. But their behavior during some unexpected events today will make you feel low and bad which might reduce the fun and joy that today is supposed to bring.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Nirjala Ekadashi is the most important and significant Ekadashis out of all twenty four Ekadashis in a year. Nirjala means without water and Nirjala Ekadashi fasting is observed without water and any type of food. Nirjala Ekadashi Vratam is the toughest among all Ekadashi fasting due to strict fasting rules. Devotees abstain not only from food but also from water while observing Nirjala Ekadashi Vrat.

This year, Nirjala Ekadashi falls on Monday, June 21, 2021.

Devotees who are unable to observe all twenty four Ekadashi fasting in a year should observe single Nirjala Ekadashi fasting as fasting on Nirjala Ekadashi brings all benefits of twenty four Ekadashi fasting in a year.

Nirjala Ekadashi is also known as Pandava Ekadashi or Bhimseni Ekadashi or Bhima Ekadashi due to one legend associated with Nirjala Ekadashi. Bhimsen, the second Pandava brother and voracious eater, was not able to control his desire of having food and was not able to observe Ekadashi fasting. Except Bhima, all Pandava brothers and Draupadi used to observe all Ekadashi fasting. Bhima, being upset due to his weak determination and doing a dishonor to Lord Vishnu, met Maharishi Vyasa to find some solution. Sage Vyasa advised Bhima to observe single Nirjala Ekadashi fasting to compensate for not observing all Ekadashi fasting in a year. Due to this legend Nirjala Ekadashi is also known as Bhimseni Ekadashi or Pandava Ekadashi.

Parana means breaking the fast. Ekadashi Parana is done after sunrise on next day of Ekadashi fast. It is necessary to do Parana within Dwadashi Tithi unless Dwadashi is over before sunrise. Not doing Parana within Dwadashi is similar to an offence.

Parana should not be done during Hari Vasara. One should wait for Hari Vasara to get over before breaking the fast. Hari Vasara is first one fourth duration of Dwadashi Tithi. The most preferred time to break the fast is Pratahkal. One should avoid breaking the fast during Madhyahna. If due to some reasons one is not able to break the fast during Pratahkal then one should do it after Madhyahna.

At times Ekadashi fasting is suggested on two consecutive days. It is advised that Smartha with family should observe fasting on first day only. The alternate Ekadashi fasting, which is the second one, is suggested for Sanyasis, widows and for those who want Moksha. When alternate Ekadashi fasting is suggested for Smartha it coincides with Vaishnava Ekadashi fasting day.

Ekadashi fasting on both days is suggested for staunch devotees who seek for love and affection of Lord Vishnu.

NIRJALA EKADASHI STORY

The Nirjala Ekadashi vrat Katha or Nirjala Ekadashi story is from the Brahma-Vaivarta Purana. Nirjala Ekadashi vrat ki Katha comes through in a conversation between Bhimasena, better known as Bhima, one of the Pandava brothers of Mahabharata, and the grandson of great Sage Vyasadeva or Sage Veda Vyasa (grandfather of the Pandavas).

Bimasena asks Vyasadeva whether it is possible for His soul to transcend to the spiritual realm even if all the rules of the Ekadashi vrat/fast are not followed strictly. Bhimasena or Bhima was extremely fond of eating and it is said he could eat huge quantities of food. So, in the Nirjala Ekadashi ki Kahani, Bhima tells Vyasadeva that his mother Kunti, his wife Draupadi and his other brothers, i.e. King Yudhistira, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva observe the Ekadashi fasts meticulously and have many times suggested to him to observe the Ekadashi vrats.

But it was impossible for him to think of fasting for 24hrs; Bhima says that the mere thought of abstaining from eating food is scary and makes him shiver, as he was not able to control his hunger. Bhima says that he can easily do any amount of charity and worship Lord Vishnu with lavish offerings but fasting (vrat) was unthinkable for him.

Bhimasena pleads to his grandfather to tell him of another way to earn the merits of Ekadashi in the easiest way without fasting. On hearing his grandson's request, Sage Vyasasena tells Bhima about the many merits one can earn on observing Ekadashi fasts strictly and above all get abundantly blessed by Lord Vasudeva. But understanding the plight of his grandson, Sage Vyasasena said that observing only the Nirjala Ekadashi vrat/fast by maintaining a nirjala

Nirjala Ekadashi

This year, Nirjala Ekadashi falls on Monday, June 21



vrat (dry fast), along with not eating any food would make it possible to earn all the merits equivalent to that earned by observing fast on all the other Ekadashis. He further specifies in the Nirjala Ekadashi Katha that if anyone observes the Nirjala Ekadashi by following all the specified rules and by being completely immersed in chanting the name of Lord Vishnu/Krishna and sings praises of the Lord on the day and throughout the night of Nirjala Ekadashi, that devotee is sure to be liberated and secures a place at the Lotus feet of Lord Vishnu at his eternal abode Vaikuntha. Hearing the Nirjala Ekadashi kahani (story) and benefits of nirjala fasting from the great Sage Vyasasena, the Pandava Prince Bhima was satisfied and agreed to observe at least the Nirjala Ekadashi vrat on the auspicious Nirjala Ekadashi.

NIRJALA EKADASHI VRAT VIDHI

The Nirjala Ekadashi ki vidhi is specified in the ancient Hindu texts and have been specified by Lord Sri Krishna while answering King Yudhishtira's (the eldest Pandava brothers from Mahabharata) query. The Nirjala Ekadashi benefits are actually innumerable if the nirjala fast/upvas is observed sincerely and with pure intention.

- Observe a waterless fast or Upavas. The fast begins on Ekadashi sunrise and ends on the next day (Dwadashi) Sunrise. However, fasting for two days is not possible for everyone. One may fast on the 1st. June, Tuesday, beginning at Sunrise and ending it between 6:00 AM and 12:04 PM on 2nd June (Wednesday). For advanced devotees, they may fast from 2nd June (Tuesday) onwards until the morning of 3rd. June and the Nirjala Ekadashi fast breaking time is during Nirjala Ekadashi Parana time between 6:03 AM and 8:39 AM.
- Early morning of Nirjala Ekadashi, the devotee should have a bath and should intend on keeping the fast meticulously.
- Perform Achamana but be careful not to put more than just one drop of water to sprinkle in the mouth during Achamana as then the purpose of observing Nirjala Ekadashi is not going to be served.
- You should visit Lord Vishnu/Krishna temple and offer prayers. If a temple is not around, you can worship him at your home in the early morning. The idols of Lord Vishnu should be worshipped with sandalwood, flowers, fruits, lighting pure

Cow's ghee Lamp, and light a dhoop as well. You can worship Lord Vishnu by using energized Vishnu Yantras. Offering delicious Bhog to the Supreme Lord Vishnu is a part of the Nirjala Gyaras/Ekadashi vrat vidhi.

- You can simply meditate on Lord Vishnu and chant His mantra: "Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudevaya". Sage Narada gave this powerful mantra to Dhruva Maharaja as described in the Bhagavata Purana (4.8.54). You can also chant the Hare Krishna Maha-Mantra on the Tulsi bead.
- You should offer flowers and chant Vishnu Sahasranamam (Thousands name of Lord Vishnu). Chanting a thousand names of Vishnu or Vishnu Stotram has a purifying effect on the mind and the body. You can also play it in the morning while you engage in daily work.
- You should also perform a Vishnu Sahasranama Puja under qualified Brahmins. It is highly recommended on this day. The puja includes Vishnu- Lakshmi Abhishek and Puja, Vishnu mantra Japa- 1100 times, Vishnu Sahasranama Stotra followed by Homa and Aarti.

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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."

contd from page 1

Antonio Guterres re-elected as UN...

Secretary General. He's a bridge builder, his views on the conflict zones in the world and he's able to speak to everybody. And I think this is something that is expected from the Secretary General, and he has proven worthy of the post already with the five years that he has been in office," Mr. Jurgenson said.

India had expressed its support for re-election of Mr. Guterres as UN Chief and welcomed the adoption of the resolution recommending his name.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T.S. Tirumurti tweeted "India welcomes the adoption of @UN #SecurityCouncil resolution recommending a second term to #UnitedNations Secretary-General @antonioguterres." Last month, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met Mr. Guterres at the United Nations headquarters and expressed New Delhi's support to him for his second term as the world's top diplomat.

"India values UNSG's leadership of the UN, especially in these challenging times. Conveyed our support for his candidature for a second term," Mr. Jaishankar had said in a tweet after the meeting.

Later a press release issued by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN also stated that Mr. Jaishankar "conveyed that India values Secretary General's leadership of the United Nations, especially in these challenging times. He conveyed India's support for his candidature for re-election for a second term." Under the UN Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. Each Secretary-General has the option of a second term if they can garner enough support from Member States. Mr. Guterres, the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations, took over on January 1, 2017, and his first term ends on December 31 this year. Former Prime Minister of Portugal, Mr. Guterres served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a decade from June 2005 to December 2015.

Mr. Guterres, nominated by the Government of Portugal, has been the only official candidate for the position of Secretary General and his re-election was a given. There has been no woman Secretary General in the UN's 75-year history and Mr. Guterres' re-election will mean that any possibility of having a female lead the world organization can come only after 2026.

In March, Mr. Guterres had circulated his vision statement and earlier in May, laid out his case for a second term to UN Member States during an informal interactive dialogue convened in the General Assembly Hall. Mr. Guterres was elected after a reformed selection process that included a public informal dialogue session in the General Assembly, involving civil society representatives, aimed at ensuring transparency and inclusivity. In his vision statement 'Restoring trust and inspiring hope', Mr. Guterres said that the imperatives for the next five years include mounting a massive and enduring response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences in the short-term, leaving no stone unturned in the search for peace and security, making peace with nature and climate action, turbocharging the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and advocating for a more equitable world, ensuring the centrality of human rights, taking gender equality to the next level, focusing on people, rising to the challenge of digital transformation, advancing multilateralism and the common agenda, embarking on a 'United Nations 2.0' and rekindling shared commitment to enduring values. "As we emerge from the pandemic, the UN is more relevant than ever... We must act as a catalyst and a platform for more inclusive, networked and effective forms of multilateralism. Our direction of travel is clear on peace and security, climate action, sustainable development, human rights and the humanitarian imperative. Our power to transform the current situation into a better world and future for all depends on everyone everywhere and can only be done successfully if we are resolute and resolved to combine our efforts towards our common agenda for the benefit of humanity and the planet," Mr. Guterres said in his vision

statement. (Agencies)

3 million jobs in Indian IT firms on the...

by 2022, principally driven by the impact of robot process automation or RPA. Roughly 0.7 million roles are expected to be replaced by RPA alone and the rest due to other technological upgrades and upskilling by the domestic IT players, while it the RPA will have the worst impact in the US with a loss of almost 1 million jobs, according to a Bank of America report on Wednesday, June 16.

Based on average fully loaded employee costs of USD 25,000 per annum for India-based resources and USD 50,000 for US resources, this will release around USD 100 billion in annual salaries and associated expenses for corporates, the report says.

TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCL, Tech Mahindra and Cognizant and others appear to be planning for a 3 million reduction in low-skilled roles by 2022 because of RPA upskilling. This is a USD 100 billion in reduced salary and other costs, but on the flipside, it offers a likely a USD 10 billion boon for IT companies that successfully implement RPA, and another a USD5 billion opportunity from a vibrant new software niche by 2022. Given that robots can function for 24 hrs a day, this represents a significant saving of up to 10:1 versus the human labor," says the report.

Robot process automation (RPA) is application of software, not physical robots, to perform routine, high-volume tasks, allowing employees to focus on more differentiated work. It differs from ordinary software applications as it mimics how the employee has worked instead of building a workflow into technology from ground up and thus minimizing time to market and greatly reducing cost over the more traditional software-led approaches.

Offshoring helped domestic IT sector to grow from around 1 per cent of GDP in 1998 to 7 per cent today, a highly strategic sector for its economy and has also significantly outgrown their Western peers (mainly Accenture, Capgemini and Atos) with an annual revenue growth of 18 per cent between 2005 and 2019. Another key reason for the RPA-driven job losses is that many countries that had offshored their work in the past are likely to bring the jobs back to their own home markets. (Source: PTI)

Indian diplomacy adjusting to an...

for future waves that may come. We have provided essential support in this national effort through our diplomatic efforts," said Mr. Shringla. He revisited the overall effort to deal with the second wave of COVID-19 that intensified in India beginning with March and drew a multi-agency response from the Government of India that included ramping up medicines and oxygen capacities. Mr. Shringla pointed at the role played by Indian embassies in Washington DC and Moscow which "facilitated discussion" on India's vaccine diplomacy with leading vaccine manufacturers in the United States and Russia. The Foreign Secretary said the current phase had also brought new opportunities in the digital world.

"Opportunity has been created by transition to knowledge economy. Transition to a virtual world points towards transformation, but rapid one. India is well placed to take the advantage of this transition," said Mr. Shringla. He also pointed at the changing nature of diplomacy in the world and said the world is "complex" and can no longer be defined in "binaries". "Indian diplomacy is adjusting to this complex and uncertain environment. The challenge before us is to create capacities in the face of unexpected and catastrophic events of the kind that we are currently faced with. We have to be able to repurpose organizations at very short notice to deal with unexpected challenges. Existing hierarchies and structures are often unable to cope with such challenges and may require re-engineering," said Mr. Shringla. He pointed out that diplomacy earlier was conducted along principles of "balance of power" but the rules of diplomacy have changed after the arrival of COVID-19 and added, "Today's environment is multilayered, multi-dimensional. Binaries and simple equations have been replaced by complicated algorithms."

"We must engage simultaneously with multiple centers of gravity and capacities in an extremely complex and fast-moving global scenario," said Mr. Shringla, summing up the post-COVID diplomatic challenges emerging before India. (Source: PTI)

Juneteenth is a National Holiday...

Opal Lee, who campaigned to make the day a national holiday. The president, who spoke of efforts in some states to restrict voting rights, said the date doesn't just celebrate the past but is a call for action.

The Juneteenth story : The celebration started with the freed slaves of Galveston, Texas. Although the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in the South in 1863, it could not be enforced in many places until after the end of the Civil War in 1865.

Laura Smalley, freed from a plantation near Bellville, Texas, remembered in a 1941 interview that the man she referred to as "old master" had gone to fight in the Civil War and came home without telling the people he enslaved what had happened.

"Old master didn't tell, you know, they was free," Smalley said at the time. "I think now they say they worked them, six months after that. Six months. And turn them loose on the 19th of June. That's why, you know, we celebrate that day."

Union Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger and his troops arrived at Galveston on June 19, 1865, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. That was more than two months after Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in Virginia. Granger delivered General Order No. 3, which said: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor."

The next year, the now-free people started celebrating Juneteenth in Galveston. Its observance has continued around the nation and the world since. Events include concerts, parades and readings of the Emancipation Proclamation.

WHAT DOES 'JUNETEENTH' MEAN? The term Juneteenth is a blend of the words June and nineteenth. The holiday has also been called Juneteenth Independence Day or Freedom Day.

Often celebrated at first with church picnics and speeches, the holiday spread across the nation and internationally as Black Texans moved elsewhere.

The vast majority of states recognize Juneteenth as a holiday or a day of recognition, like Flag Day, and most states hold celebrations. Juneteenth is a paid holiday for state employees in Texas, New York, Virginia and Washington, and hundreds of companies give workers a day off for Juneteenth.

WHY NOW? The national reckoning over race helped set the stage for Juneteenth to become the first new federal holiday since 1983, when Martin Luther King Jr. Day was created.

The bill was sponsored by Sen. Edward Markey, D-Mass., and had 60 co-sponsors. Bipartisan support emerged as lawmakers struggle to overcome divisions that are still simmering following the police killing last year of George Floyd in Minnesota.

Supporters of the holiday have worked to make sure Juneteenth celebrators don't forget why the day exists.

"In 1776 the country was freed from the British, but the people were not all free," Dee Evans, national director of communications of the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation, said in 2019. "June 19, 1865, was actually when the people and the entire country was actually free." There's also sentiment to use the day to remember the sacrifices that were made for freedom in the United States - especially in these racially and politically charged days. Said Para LaNell Agboga, museum site coordinator at the George Washington Carver Museum, Cultural and Genealogy Center in Austin, Texas: "Our freedoms are fragile, and it doesn't take much for things to go backward." (With inputs from agencies)

Teenager Shafali notches highest score by an Indian woman cricketer on Test debut

Teenager Shafali Verma etched her name in the record books by notching up the highest score by an Indian woman cricketer on Test debut. Shafali achieved the feat on Day 2 of the one-off Test match against England at the County Ground in Bristol on Thursday, June 17. Shafali broke the record of Chanderkanta Kaul who had scored 75 on her Test debut.

Shafali missed a well-deserved century when she was holed out in the deep for 96 off Kate Cross.

The right-hander, rode her luck in the final session of the second day and hit 13 fours to put India in a strong position in the Test match.

The 17-year-old not only presented the straight bat for defence with grace, she also hit a six off Nat Sciver with remarkable ease.

She also became the first Indian women cricketer to hit a six on Test debut. It was only the second six hit by an Indian woman in Test cricket.

Shafali and her opening partner Smriti Mandhana who too looked set for notching up her maiden Test ton put together India's highest opening partnership - 167 - in Tests. They went past the 153-run partnership between Gargi Banerji and Sandhya Agarwal against Australia in Mumbai in 1984.

Japan set to ease virus emergency ahead of Olympics

Japan is set to announce a decision Thursday to ease a coronavirus state of emergency in Tokyo and six other areas this weekend, with new daily cases falling just as the country begins making final preparations for the Olympics starting in just over a month.

Japan has been struggling since late March to slow a wave of infections propelled by more contagious variants, with new daily cases soaring above 7,000 at one point and seriously ill patients straining hospitals in Tokyo, Osaka and other metropolitan areas.

Daily cases have since subsided significantly and Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga is expected to downgrade the state of emergency when it expires on Sunday to less stringent measures.

Despite concerns by medical experts and the public over the potential risks of holding the Olympics, Suga has said he is determined to hold a "safe and secure" Games starting July 23.

Holding the Olympics before elections in the fall is also a political gamble for Suga, whose support ratings have tumbled over dissatisfaction with his handling of the pandemic, a slow vaccination drive and a lack of explanation how he intends to ensure the virus doesn't spread during the Olympics.

India announce playing XI for WTC final, Ashwin & Jadeja both included

SOUTHAMPTON: India on Thursday, July 17, announced its playing XI for the World Test Championship (WTC) Final, which included both spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja. Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah and Ishant Sharma are the three pacers included in the playing XI to take on New Zealand.

BCCI took to Twitter to put the team out. There were no surprises in the team otherwise and it seems that the management has decided to go with their senior pros for the all important encounter, which begins from Friday at Southampton.

Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill will open the innings and the top order will be rounded off by the dependable Cheteshwar Pujara.

Indian captain Virat Kohli will hope to continue his purple patch on English soil at number 4 and he will be followed by his deputy Ajinkya Rahane.

Rishabh Pant will provide the firepower for this team in the number six spot and he will be followed by the two spinners who are effective batsmen as well.

Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja have for long been inseparable in Test cricket and it will be great to see the duo match their wits against a tough and in-form Kiwi batting line-up.

Jasprit Bumrah will be the man to



watch out for in the pace bowling department. Both Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma have been great with the red ball for India and it seems the management decided to go in for experience in place of youth as there were talks of Mohammed Siraj being in consideration for a place in the playing XI after impressive performances in Australia and at home against England.

India skipper Virat Kohli said his team

became more hungry and determined after the points system of the inaugural World Test Championship was changed midway due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The game's governing body ICC had changed the qualification criteria for the World Test Championship from maximum points earned to percentage points earned from the matches contested after many scheduled series were cancelled due to the global health crisis.

Naomi Osaka pulls out of Wimbledon but aims for Olympics

Women's tennis world No. 2 Naomi Osaka has withdrawn from the Wimbledon championship for personal reasons but will be ready for the Tokyo Olympics, British media reported on Thursday, June 17.

Osaka, 23, quit the French Open despite a first round victory after organisers fined her when she refused to attend mandatory post-match press conferences. She said unsympathetic questioning after games impacted her mental wellbeing.

"Naomi won't be playing Wimbledon this year. She is taking some personal time with friends and family. She will be ready for the Olympics and is excited to play in front of her home fans," a Times newspaper reporter quoted her team as saying.

The four-time Grand Slam winner had announced in the build-up to the French Open that she would not face the media and stuck to her stance, which led to a \$15,000 fine.

A strongly-worded letter from the board of the four Grand Slam tournaments followed, warning her of possible expulsion from Roland Garros and future majors - after which she announced her withdrawal on social



media.

French Open organisers defended their handling of the situation but accepted that the governing bodies need to do better on mental health issues.

Source: Reuters

Brazil cruise past Peru with 4-0 Copa America win

With Neymar in fine form and scoring a goal that took him past Ronaldo on the country's all-time goals list, Brazil scored early in the game and then got three more in a commanding second half to defeat Peru 4-0 in their Copa America clash on Thursday, June 17.

The result means Brazil are the first team in the tournament to win both their first games, and immediately go to the top of Group B, two points ahead of Colombia, who drew 0-0 with Venezuela earlier in the day.

The reigning champions won their opener 3-0 against Venezuela on Sunday but although coach Tite rotated their line-up, giving starts to Ederson, Alex Sandro, Thiago Silva, Everton and Gabriel Barbosa, it still took them only 12 minutes to get the opener when Alex Sandro volleyed home a cut back from Gabriel Jesus.

Peru, who reached the final of the last Copa America only to lose 3-1 to Brazil, were not overawed but they simply could not match a team who were sharper, quicker and more resilient.

Source: Reuters





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Message from Peter J. McDonnell, M.D. Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University, USA on the occasion of laying the foundation stone on December 10, 2020



"On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MO, I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautiful facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion. Best wishes, Peter"



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The work by the Eye Foundation of America team started in 1977 and has spread from India to 21 different countries. Additionally, EFA Focuses on teaching and training of health professionals who receive the Foundation's support at every level.
<https://youtube/B23VvUaloN4> <https://youtube/KiCzqLQe2VE>

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children". - Nelson Mandela

To know more about the work of Eye Foundation of America or to donate, visit www.eyefoundationofamerica.org

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May all be prosperous and happy!
May all be healthy!

The Eye Foundation of America
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