



The INDIAN PANORAMA

Will bring out a profusely illustrated New Year special edition to ring out the year 2022 and to ring in the year 2023. Articles and advertisements may please be emailed to salujaindra@gmail.com by December 18, 2022. For any questions, please email / text / call at 646-247-9458.

BIDEN SAYS HE WOULD TALK TO RUSSIA'S LEADER BUT ONLY IN CONSULTATION WITH NATO



President Joe Biden says he would talk to Putin but only in consultation with NATO

DECEMBER 1, 2022

WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP): President Biden said he would talk with President Vladimir Putin if the Russian leader expressed a desire to end his invasion of Ukraine, but Mr. Biden said he would do so only in consultation with NATO allies.

"I'm prepared if he's willing to talk to find out what he's willing to do," Mr. Biden said during a news conference at the White House following a three-hour meeting with President Emmanuel Macron of France. "But I'll only do it in consultation with my NATO allies. I'm not going to do it on my own."

Spouses of open work permit holders now eligible to work in Canada

THE MOVE WILL ALLOW MORE THAN 200,000 WORKERS WHO HAVE FAMILY MEMBERS IN CANADA TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES



Open work permits allow foreign nationals to legally work for any employer and in any job in Canada. Photo for representation only / iStock

DECEMBER 3, 2022

TORONTO (TIP): In a bid to keep families of open work permit holders together, which includes many Indians, Canada has announced that starting 2023 their spouses will be eligible to work in the country.

Open work permits allow foreign nationals to legally work for any employer and in any job in Canada.

"Today we are making an announcement that will make it easier for employers to find workers and for families to remain together while they're here," Sean Fraser, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced on Friday, December 2.

"Today, I'm announcing that we're expanding open work permit eligibility for spouses and dependent children of principle applicants who come through a variety of temporary programs," he added. contd on page 34

US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum welcomes extension of Ambassador Sandhu



The Indian government has extended Ambassador Sandhu's tenure in Washington DC by a year till the end of January 2024

DECEMBER 01, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum, on Wednesday, November 30, welcomed the one-year extension in the tenure of Taranjit Singh Sandhu as New Delhi's top envoy here, saying it will help consolidate the bilateral relations further.

Ambassador Sandhu brings unparalleled expertise and experience in his interactions with both the legislature and executive branches of the US government, the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum said. contd on page 34

Two Indian Americans at center of Hunter Biden's laptop story

DECEMBER 03, 2022 WASHINGTON, D.C.

(TIP): Two Indian Americans - Congressman Ro Khanna and Vijaya Gadde - prominently figure in US President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden's laptop story whose full disclosure Twitter CEO Elon Musk has announced would be released on the microblogging site.



Vijaya Gadde and Ro Khanna Twitter photo

Musk, the world's richest man who purchased Twitter last month, said on Friday, December 2, that he would release details about what he characterized as Twitter's "suppression" of a controversial story done by the New York Post newspaper about Hunter Biden's laptop that was published before the 2020 US election.

He also tweeted that it would be "awesome" and there would be a "live Q&A" on the topic. contd on page 34

Hyatt to acquire Dream Hotels Group

DECEMBER 2, 2022

NEW YORK (TIP): Hyatt has agreed to acquire Sant Singh Chatwal's Dream Hotels Group for up to \$300 million.

The deal includes 12 managed or franchised lifestyle hotels, like the Chatwal NY, the Margaritaville Times Square, and Dream Hotels brands, as well as another 24 in the pipeline with signed long-term agreements.

The agreement will increase Hyatt's portfolio by more than 1700 rooms, 30% in New York City alone.



Hyatt agrees to acquire Dream Hotels group of Sant Singh Chatwal



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The Kashmir Files row

VIEW IFFI JURY HEAD'S REMARKS IN CINEMATIC CONTEXT

It's been a huge commercial success, but The Kashmir Files has been mired in controversy since its release in March this year. The film, which revolves around the exodus and killing of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990, has drawn conflicting opinions. There's been praise for its poignant depiction of a tragic period as well as criticism for being loose with facts and fanning communal sentiments. The film's endorsement by the BJP added a political and divisive tinge to the debate. Now, the strong words used against it by the Israeli chairman of the jury of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa have created diplomatic ripples. The Israeli ambassador has had

to make an immediate intervention with an outright apology. His open letter lashes out at his countryman for abuse of hospitality.

A stinging critique of any movie vying for wider recognition would have led to furious reactions, but accompanied by critical discussions that a film festival facilitates. That Israeli writer-director Nadav Lapid's observations were aimed at The Kashmir Files touched a raw nerve. A sensitive subject, the emotions surrounding the events, the tight mesh of politics and an Indian setting with ministers in attendance - a heady mix, for sure. The filmmaker termed it a propaganda and vulgar movie, inappropriate for an artistic competitive

section of a prestigious film festival. The viewpoint would find many takers. However, Lapid slammed shut all attempts at nuanced conversations or artistic critique by politically labelling the movie vulgar.

The envoy's rebuff says it is insensitive to speak about events before deeply studying them and which are an open wound. Fair advice, but wasn't the jury head commenting on a cinematic production he was asked to judge? It would make sense to view the scathing review of The Kashmir Files only in the cinematic context. The notion that it undermines the plight of Kashmiri Pandits would be a false reading.

(Tribune, India)

Great responsibility: On India's G20 presidency

During G-20 presidency, India must etch its global dreams on domestic landscape

The Government launched its year of the G-20 presidency on December 1 with some pomp, and 100 monuments from Kashmir to Kanyakumari lit up with India's G-20 logo symbolizing the motto "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, or "one earth, one family, one future". In an editorial essay, Prime Minister Narendra Modi committed to making India's year of chairmanship as one that will focus on "healing our 'One Earth', creating harmony within our 'One Family' and giving hope for our 'One Future'". There are plans for about 200 G-20 meetings across India. The preparatory and ministerial meetings will culminate in grand plans for a G-20 Summit, which will bring leaders of the 'P-5' countries and others to New Delhi next September. India has taken the baton from Indonesia, which had a difficult time in even scheduling meetings and ensuring full participation due to differences over the Ukraine war. There was even uncertainty till the end

over whether all major leaders would attend; whether they would agree to a joint photo-opportunity (they did not), and whether there would be a joint statement - which was eventually forged. Like Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Mr. Modi will have to travel abroad to ensure that all G-20 leaders and invitees attend at the highest level. And officials will have to burn more midnight oil to achieve consensus on statements.

Symbolism and logistical coordination aside, the Government has a tough task ahead in conducting substantive negotiations to bring together a comprehensive G-20 agenda, where officials said they would focus on counter-terrorism, supply chain disruptions and global unity. In 2008, the first G-20 summit-level meeting in the U.S. was during a moment of crisis for the world's financial systems. In 2022, the task for Mr. Modi and his team is equally crucial, given the lasting effects of the Russian war in Ukraine, western

sanctions on energy that will deepen this month, economic downturns, pandemic worries and climate change issues that are testing the foundations of globalization and an interconnected global economy. In his editorial, Mr. Modi said India would forge its G-20 agenda through its tradition of "collective decision-making" that, like India's national consensus, would be made "... by blending millions of free voices into one harmonious melody". At a time India itself faces economic distress and social and communal tensions, the Government should be prepared for more scrutiny on upholding such ideals. Having raised the pitch on India's global prominence as G-20 President, and its power to shape the global narrative, the Government may find that with great power comes great responsibility, and a greater spotlight on its ability to translate its global dreams into the domestic landscape as well.

(The Hindu)

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17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to be held in Indore from Jan 8 to 10, 2023



17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention
(8-10 Jan 2023; Indore, Madhya Pradesh)

NEW YORK (TIP): The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) will be held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, from 8-10 January 2023, with the theme 'Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal', according to a press release issued by A. K. Vijayakrishnan, Consul (Community Affairs), Consulate General of India, New York.

The 17th PBD will include five Plenary Sessions on the following themes:

- Plenary Session I: Role of Diaspora Youth in Innovation and New Technologies
- Plenary Session II: Role of Indian Diaspora in promoting Indian

Healthcare Eco-system in Amrit Kaal: Vision @2047

- Plenary Session III: Leveraging the Soft Power of India- Goodwill through Craft, Cuisine & Creativity
- Plenary Session IV: Enabling global mobility of Indian workforce - Role of Indian Diaspora
- Plenary Session V: Harnessing the potential of women diaspora entrepreneurs towards an inclusive approach to nation building

More details regarding the event and registration forms for attending the event are available at:

<https://pbdindia.gov.in/programme>

VIRTUAL SESSION WITH SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN, CHIEF MINISTER OF MADHYA PRADESH ON 6TH DECEMBER 2022



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will chair a virtual session on December 6, to connect with the business community and Indian diaspora based globally

NEW YORK (TIP): Madhya Pradesh will be hosting the 'Global Investors Summit 2023' on 11th and 12th January 2023 at Indore in addition to the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas from January 8 to 10, 2023, according to the information provided by A. K. Vijayakrishnan, Consul (Community Affairs), Consulate General of India, New York to The Indian Panorama on December 2

Madhya Pradesh, the 'Heart of India', is a globally emerging investment destination. The state has recorded impressive growth in GSDP averaging over 10% during the last decade. It has witnessed a rapid increase in the core industries and industrial infrastructure, which act as a backbone for the upcoming industrial investments.

As a run-up to this, the Government of Madhya Pradesh is hosting a 'Virtual Session' chaired by Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday, 6th December 2022 at 8:00 PM Eastern Time. The objective of this virtual session is to connect with the business community and Indian diaspora based globally. The virtual summit will be a great platform to discuss the potential investment opportunities offered by Madhya Pradesh.

The Consulate is pleased to invite the diaspora for this virtual session with Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Persons interested in the virtual session may please register for by completing the registration form, following the link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScxx7OALsy16NyJ_q_mDAsrk9157Mk2gGgHcJk56A9vDQYsg/viewform

The video conference joining link will be sent to the email ID and mobile number of the registered participants.

Investor Showcase for the Uttar Pradesh Global Investor Summit 2023 at the Indian Consulate on December 13



NEW YORK (TIP): India is one of the world's fastest-growing major economies and offers abundant investment opportunities across different sectors. The northern Indian State of Uttar Pradesh, with its inherent strengths, present demographics, and future growth potential, has emerged as a top destination for industrial investment in the country and is moving towards becoming the 2nd largest State

economy. The Government of Uttar Pradesh is currently focusing on collaborations in the sectors of IT and Electronics, Agriculture and Food Processing, Defense and Aerospace, Pharmaceuticals and Medical devices, Energy, Tourism, Retail, Venture Capital, Automobile Components, Electric Vehicles and Textiles.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE ORGANIZING THE "UTTAR PRADESH GLOBAL INVESTOR SUMMIT 2023" (UPGIS) FROM 10 - 12 FEBRUARY 2023 IN LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH. IN ORDER TO APPRISE THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY ABOUT THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN UTTAR PRADESH AND THE COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENT AND THE SUMMIT, A DELEGATION OF UP GOVERNMENT LED BY MR. SURESH KHANNA, HON'BLE FINANCE MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH, ALONG WITH SENIOR BUREAUCRATS FROM THE GOVERNMENT, WOULD BE IN NEW YORK ON 13 DECEMBER.

The Consulate General of India in partnership with the UP Government, CII and USISPF is jointly organize an Investor Showcase for the UPGIS from 1700 hrs. followed by dinner on 13 December 2022, at the Consulate General of India, 3 East 64 Street, Between 5th and Madison Avenue, New York 10065 from 1700 hrs.

Finance Minister of Uttar Pradesh to interact with the Indian Diaspora on December 12, 2022



Suresh Khanna, Finance Minister of Uttar Pradesh, along with senior bureaucrats from the Government, would interact with the Indian diaspora in New York on December 12.

NEW YORK (TIP): The Uttar Pradesh State Government shall be organizing the "Uttar Pradesh Global Investor Summit 2023" (UPGIS) from 10 - 12 February 2023 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, says a press release issued by the Indian Consulate in New York.

In this regard, a delegation of UP Government led by Mr. Suresh Khanna, Finance Minister of Uttar Pradesh, along with senior bureaucrats from the Government, would be in New York on 12 December.

THE CONSULATE IS HOSTING AN INTERACTION OF MR. SURESH KHANNA, FINANCE MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH AND SENIOR BUREAUCRATS WITH THE DIASPORA, AT THE CONSULATE ON DECEMBER 12, 2022 AT 5:30 PM.

Those interested in an interaction with the visiting minister may please RSVP with names and contact details at: madad.newyork@mea.gov.in by 3:00 pm of December 8, 2022.

Indian-origin charity worker collects honor from Buckingham Palace

DECEMBER 3, 2022

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin businessman and charity worker has collected his Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) honor at an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London.

Mohan Mansigani, who is from north London, was conferred the honor for charitable services to health care in the late Queen Elizabeth II's 2021 Birthday Honors list in June last year. The trustee of the St John Ambulance charity collected the OBE from Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, St John's Ambulance Commandant-in-Chief (Youth).

"I have been lucky enough to give something back to the country that has given me so much through my work at St John and the Migration Museum," said Mansigani, who is also a Fellow of the UK's Institute of Chartered Accountants and joined St John Ambulance's board six years ago.

"As the son of immigrants and as a boy from Islington, being honored in this way is beyond my wildest dreams. I would like to dedicate this award to my wife Renu Mansigani who has selflessly taught young children human values over the last 20 years through the Mill



Mohan Mansigani, who is from North London, was conferred the honor for charitable services to health care in the late Queen Elizabeth II's 2021 Birthday Honors list in June last year

Photo for representation only

Hill Sai Centre and is truly worthy of recognition," he said.

Mansigani is known as a creative finance director with extensive private equity experience who has played a key leadership role in establishing Casual

Dining Group, previously known as Tragus, which operated popular UK restaurant brands such as Café Rouge and Strada.

"My father came to London in 1951 with the aim of supporting his family back in

India, thinking that he would return as soon as he achieved this goal. In the event he stayed and, from humble beginnings, built a successful business and raised a young family," Mansigani tells St John Ambulance - a charity providing first aid and emergency medical services primarily through volunteers.

"I was the first in my family to go to university and went on to qualify as a chartered accountant. From there I had a career as finance director of a number of restaurant chains including Costa Coffee and Cafe Rouge," he said.

Following the successful sale of his last business, Mansigani has been able to work with not-for-profit groups and he has been finance trustee at St John Ambulance since July 2016. The charity said his expertise was critical when St John Ambulance's main sources of income were halted by the covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

The businessman played a key role in securing funding to maintain St John's financial viability and enable the charity's teams - including almost 30,000 new vaccination volunteers - to support the state-funded National Health Service and local communities by delivering more than 1.6 million hours of activity.

Two Indian-origin students drown in Missouri Lake of the Ozarks



Uttej Kunta (24) and Shiva Kelligari (25) drowned in the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri over the Thanksgiving weekend

Image for representation only

NOVEMBER 29, 2022

MISSOURI (TIP): Two Indian-origin students from Telangana drowned in the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri over the Thanksgiving weekend even as one student was trying to save the other.

The victims were identified as Uttej Kunta (24) and Shiva Kelligari (25) by the Missouri State Highway Patrol, according to local media reports.

Troopers received a call around 2:40 pm Saturday requesting assistance to find two people last seen in the water at the .5-mile mark of the main channel near the Bagnel Dam, the media reported.

The drownings occurred when Kelligari began to struggle in the water, went under, and did not come back up. Kunta dove into the water to rescue Kelligari and did not come back up.

The body of the first man was recovered by rescue crews and pronounced dead two hours after the incident on Saturday. Crews couldn't recover the second body until 9 am Sunday morning.

Bradley Kinkade manages the Airbnb the men were staying in. He says he called 911 after hearing cries for help.

"I grabbed my phone called 911 and my daughter also grabbed hers and called 911," said Kinkade. "My brother jumped in the water tried to save him but by the time he got to the kayak, they were already gone."

Both men had come to the US from Telangana, India, to pursue a graduate degree in data science at the University of St Louis.

"We mourn with Uttej and Shiva's friends and loved ones, their classmates and professors, the staff members who supported their journeys here at SLU, and all those who grieve," SLU officials wrote in an email to students.

Meanwhile, Telangana minister K T Rama Rao in a tweet said that he has asked his team to assist the victims' families in getting the bodies back as soon as possible.

"I have already asked my team @KTRoffice to assist the family in getting the mortal remains back asap," he tweeted.

Indian-origin Jayathi Murthy becomes President of Oregon State University

NOVEMBER 29, 2022

EUGENE, OR (TIP): India-born eminent educator Jayathi Y Murthy has become the 16th President of the Oregon State University (OSU) - one of the top universities in the United States renowned worldwide for its cutting-edge research and facilities, particularly in the fields of AI, robotics and advanced technology.

Murthy, 64, is the first woman of color to lead OSU that works on addressing some of the most pressing issues facing the planet from climate change to sustainability.

An IIT Kanpur alum, Murthy is a leader in higher education engineering teaching, research, and service. She is widely recognized as a champion for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion and has made it her top priority at OSU.

"Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion is a deeply held conviction of mine and is central to my work as an educator and administrator," Murthy said. "As an engineer, I have often been the only woman in the room since I was 16." Murthy said international engagement and contributing to a global community are OSU priorities.

"At Oregon State, we celebrate the contributions and perspectives of more than 2,500 international students from over 100 countries and many international faculty and scholars



Jayathi Y Murthy has become the 16th President of the Oregon State University (OSU)

engaged in the university. The unique backgrounds and experiences of international students and faculty enrich Oregon State's teaching, research and community engagement." The US public university has more than 34,000 students enrolled in various academic and research programs. Indian students comprise the second largest group of international students at OSU after China.

"As someone who came to the US to attend graduate school from India, I know the challenges - and new opportunities - you may face," Murthy said. "Please know that at Oregon State, we are here to support you. And we welcome you warmly to Beaver Nation." "My own journey is a story of access to education and opportunity to grow and achieve. I thank my parents for being incredibly far-seeing. *(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)*

Indian American owned Tandon School of Engineering gifted \$1 billion investment by NYU

DECEMBER 1, 2022

NEW YORK (TIP): New York University will invest \$1 billion over 20 years to improve the ranking of its Tandon School of Engineering, named after Indian American philanthropists Chandrika and Ranjan Tandon.

The investment, announced by NYU President Andrew Hamilton, is also aimed at raising the profile of New York City as a technology hub.

A news release issued by the university said it has already acquired a 350,000 square foot building adjacent to Tandon School. "The purchase of the new facility will help support an ongoing \$1 billion investment in Tandon to significantly advance engineering at NYU by recruiting 40 new full-time tenure track faculty, fueling groundbreaking research, and growing and modernizing its Downtown Brooklyn campus," the release said. "The funding will fuel basic and applied research in key interdisciplinary areas of global import-secure wireless ecosystems and supply chains, health engineering, sustainable engineering, and data science to improve the human condition."

"Continuing the stunning upward trajectory! So, thrilling!" Chandrika



Tandon, who, along with her husband, Ranjan, donated \$100 million to the school in 2015, tweeted Wednesday. The philanthropist was present at an event where the announcement was made.

"Problems don't require an engineering solution, they require a multidisciplinary solution," she was quoted as saying by the official Twitter handle of NYU Tandon.

The media reported that the "investment includes \$600 million that was already slated" for the school and "an additional \$400 million in new funds."

The paper wrote that the 10-story 3 MetroTech Center building was purchased in September.

The \$100 million donated by the Tandons was used to improve lab and recruit academics specialized in the areas of robotics, health and data science.

"We feel privileged to be able to participate in the transformation that is happening at NYU and at the School of Engineering," Chandrika Tandon said while announcing the gift in 2015. "As a trustee of NYU, I have had a front row seat to the energy and excitement of the Global Network University and the scale of possibility it presents."

It was reported that the investment improved the position of Tandon School in the U.S. News and World Report ranking from 82 in 2006 to 33 this year.

Tandon, a Grammy-nominated artist, is a big proponent of technology. "Sitting with the with some of the greatest minds in in the engineering school, the potential of what is happening in technology, whether it's in the space of wearables, whether it's in the space of what is going to happen in in the fields of health, and the field of ... urban informatics, what's going to happen is mind-boggling," she said in an interview streamed last year on DesiMax. "So, technology is not something that is just sort of on the sidelines that one can sort of look at and say, "Oh, you know I'm an artist." The field of the arts has transformed, the field of health is transformed, and we ain't seen nothing yet. You know it's just beginning."

INDIAN-ORIGIN GURDEEP RANDHAWA BECOMES FIRST INDIAN TO BE APPOINTED TO A STATE PRESIDUM IN GERMANY



Gurdeep Singh Randhawa is the first Indian origin German national to be appointed to any state presidium in Germany by the CDU

NOVEMBER 25, 2022

BERLIN (TIP): Gurdeep Singh Randhawa, an Indian-origin German national, has been appointed to the Thuringia state Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party presidium.

Randhawa has been an active member of the CDU and has served in the party for several years now. His commitment to the party and hard work has been recognized by the CDU leadership and in August 2022, he was elected as the first representative of the Indian community in Germany.

This was the first time that an Indian has been appointed to any state presidium in Germany by the CDU.

Randhawa was earlier elected as the counsellor from Amt Wachsenburg and presidium member of the CDU from district Ilm. He has been closely associated with the Indian community and has been carrying their voice to the CDU leadership on some core issues affecting the community.

In a way, this development ensures that the Indian community has direct presence in state parliament affairs of the CDU in Thuringia. With the latest appointment of Randhawa, the Indian community in Thuringia would have more visibility in terms of connecting with the powerful CDU leadership.

In a brief message after his appointment, Randhawa mentioned that his appointment was the recognition of the role that Indians have played in building the German economy and society over the years. He said he wanted to set an example for young Indian-origin Germans to contribute towards building a strong Germany and also healthy and robust Indo-German relations.

INDIAN AMERICAN-LED COMPANY GETS USD 5 MILLION TO DEVELOP 'ZERO-PRESSURE' TIRES FOR US ARMY



The Ohio-based American Engineering Group (AEG), headed by Kerala-born Abraham Pannikottu, has developed an innovative carbon fiber pressure zero tire technology, which the Pentagon now wants it to manufacture for its armed forces.

NOVEMBER 26, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): An Indian American-led company has received USD 5 million in funding to develop and manufacture path-breaking 'zero-pressure' tires for the US Army, it said in a statement.

The Ohio-based American Engineering Group (AEG), headed by Kerala-born Abraham Pannikottu, has developed an innovative carbon fiber pressure zero tire technology, which the Pentagon now wants it to manufacture for its armed forces, the company said on Friday, November 25.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin Aruna Anand to lead Continental Automotive North America

NOVEMBER 25, 2022

MICHIGAN (TIP): Indian-origin Aruna Anand, a 25-year veteran of automotive industry has been named the new President and CEO of leading technology company Continental's Automotive group sector in North America, effective Dec 1.

She will also retain her current role as Head of the Architecture and Networking business area for the North American region of Continental Automotive, Auburn Hills, Michigan based company announced Nov 21. In this role, Anand is responsible for all global architecture and networking business activities that support customers based out of North America.

"It is an honor to be selected as Automotive President and CEO for North America," said Anand, an Electrical and Electronics Engineering graduate from Anna University, Chennai, India and a master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Oakland University. "I look forward to leading our talented team toward a bright future and providing our customers with leading technological solutions." "Aruna brings an outstanding combination of experience and talent to the President and CEO Automotive North America position," said Nikolai Setzer, CEO, Continental AG. She is a respected leader and is a technical expert in many areas that are the focus of our future growth. Aruna's dedication to our customers and our employees will help guide the success of Continental in the important North American market."

Since joining the company in 1997, Anand has held numerous leadership positions



Aruna Anand has been named the new President and CEO of leading technology company Continental's Automotive North America, effective Dec 1.

across the different business areas of the Continental Automotive group sector. She was Head of Software for Gasoline Engine and Transmissions Systems for the Electronic Controls business unit within the company's then Powertrain division.

She also led the Wireless Product Group Engineering within the Connected Car Networking business unit of Continental's Vehicle Networking and Information business area. Prior to being named as the head of Architecture and Networking, Anand was responsible for leading Continental Engineering Services, an independently operating business unit that offers comprehensive engineering services.

In 2020, she was recognized by Automotive News as one of the 100 Leading Women in the North American Automotive industry. In 2018, Anand was honored with the prestigious Automotive News Rising Star award. She was also recently recognized at the Women of Color Awards Gala and received the Professional Achievement in Industry award.

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Edison Public Library and GOPIO-Edison organize a successful Diwali and Thanksgiving Celebration



partners, and audiences. He also thanked Dr Thomas Abraham, Chairman GOPIO International for his guidance for the GOPIO-Edison. Ritesh Agrawal managed the registration desk and guided the audience for the event and provided the benefits of becoming a member of GOPIO-Edison Chapter. The link for membership is tinyurl.com/GOPIO-EDISON-MEMBERSHIP.

The president of the chapter, Pallavi Verma and GOPIO Edison team were very encouraged to see audience turnout of the event and they have lined up some more events in Edison Public Library which they explained in details and can be found on GOPIO-Edison Facebook page www.facebook.com/GOPIO-Edison Those who want to donate may contact GOPIO-Edison at 848-459-5918 or send an e-mail gopio.edison.nj@gmail.com or send donation using www.paypal.me/GOPIOEdison

(Based on a press release)



Dignitaries, GOPIO-Edison officials, artists and audience at the Diwali Event at North Branch, Edison Public Library, Edison, NJ

DECEMBER 2 , 2022 EDISON, NJ (TIP): Global Organization of People of Indian Origin Edison NJ Chapter (GOPIO-Edison, NJ) hosted the "Diwali & Thanksgiving" celebration at North Branch of Library in Edison, NJ. The event was fully subscribed, and the audience came with family and children to participate. This was the third successful event organized by GOPIO-Edison since it was relaunched in March 2022.

The program started with lighting of lamps by dignitaries including Edison Councilman Ajay Patil, GOPIO Edison Chapter President Pallavi Verma Belwariar and GOPIO Life member Dr. Ramesh Pandey. GOPIO-Edison Team members also joined to light the lamp. The Library Hall was beautifully decorated with garlands, photobooth and welcome desk.

The Diwali Event Started with registration networking with tea that had generated lots of interest and people started coming from the Tristate area. Many came with their families to join the celebration and cultural event at the Edison Public Library. Before the start of the event, audiences enjoyed the tea and snacks and the opportunity for attendees to interact freely.

GOPIO-Edison Chapter President Pallavi Verma welcomed everyone. She appreciated the community coming together for the two major

celebrations. She gave a brief about GOPIO-Edison which was relaunched in March 2022 and successfully conducted a "India Book Launch" event on April 10th in the same library in partnership with Indian Consulate, NY and another event on November 6th for "Investment and retirement planning" with experts. The community had very enthusiastically participated in both the events and was fully subscribed. Emcees for the Diwali event were Srishti Agrawal and Anumegha Saxena and both conducted the program very well, engaging the audiences with games and bringing each participant to stage.

THE CULTURAL CELEBRATION EVENT PARTICIPANTS WERE MOHITA, ARHAN, DYKSHA, VERCHAS, VERAD, KAIVALYA AND HANSHIT. THE EVENT ALSO SAW SINGING BY PRATIBHA, YOGESH, ALONG WITH PALLAVI SINGING SOME POPULAR BOLLYWOOD NUMBERS FOR ENTERTAINMENT

At the end, all participants were given appreciation certificates for their participation. The program ended with GOPIO-Edison Board member Chitranjan Sahay Belwariar giving a vote of thanks to all the participants, Library staff, media

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A TALE OF TWO WARS

INDIA MUST LEARN FROM MISTAKES OF 1962, PAKISTAN FROM ITS EXCESSES OF 1971



BY
RAJESH
RAMACHANDRAN



Pakistani General AAK Niazi signed the instruments of surrender to India's General Jagjit Singh Aurora. No matter what former Pakistan army chief Bajwa claims, it is a fact that India captured 92,000 Pakistani soldiers as PoWs in 1971. File photo

The number 1962 is etched deeply in the Indian psyche, not merely as the year of a devastating defeat in war, but also as a metaphor for national humiliation. Something that reminds the nation of the perils of political hubris and nepotism in the military. The 60th anniversary of the India-China war, thus, is a great opportunity for Indian politicians, military leaders, strategic thinkers and commentators to once again take stock of what went wrong and plan to prevent another 'Himalayan blunder'.

The Tribune has been publishing a series of articles commemorating the 60th anniversary of the war and some of our readers found it revealing that even in defeat, Indians in uniform displayed extraordinary fortitude. Former Chief Election Commissioner MS Gill was so thrilled to read of the brave Sikhs fighting till the last man and the last bullet, not allowing their posts to be run over, that he phoned in for more stories of individual valor; and, letting out his characteristic chuckle, Gill sahib also wanted us to chronicle the tale of a member of an old colonial-collaborator family who ran away from the battlefield, leaving his turban behind. Well, let the cowards lie and the fearless be remembered.

PM Jawaharlal Nehru, defense minister VK Krishna Menon, Army chief Gen PN Thapar, defense secretary O Pulla Reddy, Intelligence Bureau Chief BN Mullick, Corps Commander Lt Gen BM Kaul and others are, rightly, blamed

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIA-CHINA WAR IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR POLITICIANS, MILITARY LEADERS AND STRATEGIC THINKERS TO TAKE STOCK OF WHAT WENT WRONG.

and remembered for their respective roles in sending India's matchless troops to death on the icy heights of the Himalayas without even basic winterwear, to say nothing of war-winning materiel. None of them is spared for the lack of preparedness and for getting conclusively fooled - politically, diplomatically and militarily. Now, after every incident in the north and east - be it at Doklam or Ladakh - Indians are reminded of the 1962 debacle, making policy-makers aware that no number of military exercises with the US at the eastern border will ever be enough to remain prepared against the neighbor's ambition to be a world leader.

Compare the Indians' somber remembrance of their defeat with that of the Pakistanis'. The 50th anniversary of the 1971 War fell a year ago. Not much was heard from the all-powerful Pakistani military-intelligence establishment, which had been exulting over the Americans handing over Afghanistan back to them: Why look

back when the future looks rosy, with a \$450-million military grant, getting dropped from the FATF watchlist and getting reinvited to the tango at Pentagon! Yet, the Pakistani military leadership did the unthinkable recently, which was one part ridiculous and one part scary.

Former army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, on his retirement tour to military units, blamed the political leadership for the 1971 defeat. As if that was not enough, he claimed that only 34,000 troops fought the war for Pakistan against 2.5 lakh Indian and two lakh Mukti Bahini fighters. It is a well-documented fact that just 3,000 Indian soldiers defeated 30,000 Pakistani troops in the final battle for Dhaka. Of course, everybody but Bajwa knows that 92,000 Pakistani officers and men were captured as prisoners of war and that India treated them with honor and returned them graciously even as Indian pilots were languishing in Pakistani prisons. The Pakistani government had

even issued a postage stamp in April 1973, seeking the return of 90,000 PoWs.

Worse, Bajwa seems to have forgotten that Pakistan was ruled by Yahya Khan, a military General, who claimed to be a descendent of Nadir Shah, the medieval invader who sacked Delhi. The debauched dictator was feted in Washington for facilitating Nixon's National Security Adviser Kissinger's meeting with Mao, thus opening the US-China strategic partnership lasting for about 40 years. Yahya Khan had chosen an equally brutal General, Tikka Khan - the Butcher of Balochistan - to be the governor of East Pakistan and another General, AAK Niazi, to be the military commander. The three Generals were responsible for the worst post-WW-2 genocide which the western media forgot to report. The official Bangladeshi count of the deaths during the conflict that ended in the Liberation War is 3 million dead - half the number of the victims of the Jewish holocaust. Officially, Pakistan admits that 26,000 civilians were killed.

Of the three million killed, at least half could be Hindus, but Indira Gandhi (whom Nixon loved to call 'that b***h') did not have a political agenda to count or categories the bodies of the innocent dead. Over one crore refugees poured into India. While Hollywood still has not made a movie on the Bengali holocaust, the American leadership celebrated Yahya during the holocaust and Tikka soon after. Tikka succeeded Yahya as the chief of army staff. The US, of course, did not think it right to deny visas to the butchers of Bangladesh. The death of hundreds of thousands, if not three million, never seemed to have overwhelmed the predecessors of those who denied the Gujarat chief minister a US visa over a communal riot that was investigated for 10 years by his political rivals.

The fatalities of the 13-day war that India won were few compared to the civilian deaths. But western-funded organizations like Amnesty International, which sought the commutation of the death sentences of the foot soldiers of the old US allies, never really investigated the 1971 war crimes or established the murders and rapes committed on the explicit orders of Yahya, Tikka and Niazi. Had their crimes been established, and their political careers exposed and visas denied to them, their successors would not have launched their Islamist misadventure in Kashmir that resulted in the exodus of Hindus from the Valley, nor the Kargil incursion, nor the attack on Mumbai.

After every failure, the Pakistani army gives itself a fig leaf of lies, blaming a non-existent political leadership. There was only a military leadership, in alliance with the US, in Pakistan in 1971, just as there is one now, too. Wonder what mischief the new one is up to.

(The author is editor-in-chief of Tribune, India).

HOW CHANGE BEGINS WITH RAHUL GANDHI'S BHARAT JODO YATRA

CONGRESS SUFFERED MAJOR SETBACKS DUE TO THE RAPID RISE OF COMMUNAL POLITICS IN INDIA. IT MAY TAKE SOME MORE TIME TO SEE CONGRESS REGAIN ITS GLORY AGAIN. BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS ABOUT TO OCCUR IN INDIAN POLITICS, AND THE BHARATH JODO YATRA OF MR. RAHUL GANDHI IS THE BEGINNING OF THAT FORTHCOMING POLITICAL CHANGE IN INDIA," SAID PROFESSOR YOGENDRA YADAV WHEN I ASKED HIS OPINION ABOUT THE WALKATHON.

BY SHARATH CHANDRA VEMUGANTI



The Bharat Jodo Yatra drew mammoth crowds

I walked in a daze, my left foot following the right, right following the left. This movement became automatic. Lunch and dinner breaks were the only scale to measure the distance I walked on any given day are the only scale to measure the distance I walked because time flew away during the Yatra or the Walkathon. Minor soreness in my body, aching legs, and calluses in my feet was testimony to the number of steps I walked, around 30,000 each day.

Slogans such as "Jodo - Bharath jodo," "Jai congress," and "Rahul Gandhi zindabad" filled the air. Scores of enthusiastic and excited congress sympathizers joined the already existing dense crowd forming a huge cavalcade that drove along the villages, towns, muddy roads, and national highways before encamping for food and rest. Every evening, the Yatra concluded with a roadside public meeting addressed by Mr. Rahul Gandhi, Member of Parliament from Waynad, Kerala. Tens of top congress leaders from Delhi and Hyderabad, hundreds of party workers, the CRPF, Telangana police, and other security forces all played roles in making the Yatra a success story every step of the way.

"Most NGOs in the country that work at the grassroots level are represented as a symbol of solidarity. They are supporting a Congress leader for the first time in their lives," said a senior journalist when I asked for his opinion. "Rahul Gandhi's focus has been on the message of forging unity in the country, which is targeted to be divided into religious lines by the BJP," he added. "I was always critical of Rahul Gandhi's leadership and non-serious attitude, but now I have to appreciate him. I can tell this "Any leader who goes to people and listens to their problems will always win" Rahul Gandhi is no exception," said a senior IPS officer.

"No one paid us to come, we were provided a vehicle with a full tank of diesel, and we're covering all other expenses," said a group of people from a village 200 km away from the Yatra. With great enthusiasm to see Rahul Gandhi, people stood all along the roads, business streets, and residential colonies to see and greet Mr. Gandhi. They waved back happily when Mr. Gandhi waved at them. People from all walks of life stepped up with Rahul Gandhi. All ages of children, women, and men. Young Men dominated the Yatra.

During the Yatra, people gave their opinions both explicitly and indirectly. When I casually questioned a bystander in the town of Kothur, en route to Hyderabad, about the Gandhi family's leadership, he retorted, "Can you show me any leader in the Congress party who can pull such a huge crowd? "I don't know what this huge presence of people indicates, but it is bringing back the long-buried memories of the Congress party," said a merchant in a medical shop in Mahbubnagar. Many people said that they wanted to see Rahul Gandhi. Young people in Devarakadra town said they wanted to see and greet the TPCC president, Mr. Revanth Reddy.

"My father drives a truck, and I am a college dropout. I support the Congress party because my father and grandfather supported it," said a young Muslim man in Shadnagar. Meeting Party workers from all 29 states of India at the Yatra's camp was an entirely new experience for me.

Mr. Rahul Gandhi was very sober and responsible when interacting with children, students, farmers, senior people, and party workers and heard about their difficulties. He was curious to know the local customs. Rahul ate their native food, danced with tribes, and played with kids. He prioritized people over leaders and did not campaign for Congress.

I told Mr. Rahul Gandhi, "Every NRI, though they don't vote in India, speaks daily to their parents, siblings, and friends. Thus, they can influence 2, 3, or 4 votes. Every inactive NRI vote is equivalent to 3 or 4 active Indian votes. Hence you should address a huge meeting of overseas Indians, and it should help connect the diaspora's young generation to the Congress party". He listened to me attentively and said that that was a good idea.

Along the way, I was surprised and mostly disappointed when almost everyone I met, whether they were friends, relatives, or political leaders, was curious to know if I was interested in electoral politics. Most of them did not understand that my social consciousness, patriotism, and belief in secularism and socialism led me to travel to India and join the Yatra.



President of IOCUSA Mohinder Singh Gilzian flew to India, as did many NRIs to join the Bharat Jodo Yatra



IOCUA General Secretary Rajendar Dichpally also joined the Yatra

While hundreds of NRI's participated in Yatra in India, as a mark of solidarity, members of the Indian overseas Congress organized walkathons in various countries, wherever they lived. Mr. Sam Pitroda, Chairman of IOC, and other leaders inspired the Indian diaspora across the globe, particularly in the USA. NRIs from various countries, including the USA, the U.K., Australia, and the Middle East, were seen participating in solidarity with the cause of the Walkathon, representing an umbrella organization, "The Indian overseas congress." This effort is indicative of the growing patriotism against nationalism and divisiveness in the Indi diaspora.

Congress suffered major setbacks due to the rapid rise of communal politics in India. It may take some more time to see Congress regain its glory again. But I am confident that a significant change is about to occur in Indian politics, and the Bharath Jodo Yatra of Mr. Rahul Gandhi is the beginning of that forthcoming political change in India," said professor Yogendra Yadav when I asked his opinion about the Walkathon.

No recent national-level politician has undertaken this arduous Walkathon since former Prime Minister Chandrasekhar in 1982. Bharath Jodo Yatra will register itself as a milestone in the history of India that future generations will read about. Indisputably, Rahul Gandhi's image has soared quickly. It has established Rahul Gandhi as a serious politician who is a patriot and people-oriented.

When Rahul Gandhi finishes this Yatra in Kashmir, the people of India will see a new, much evolved national leader who will not only be an equal counterweight to Shri Narendra Modi but one who has heard one-on-one, the voices of more Indians than any leader in our history. Jai Hind.

(Sharath Chandra Vemuganti, a Pharmacist in New York, hails from Telangana, India)

All hopes on CJI Chandrachud

UNAFRAID OF TAKING A STAND, THE TOP JUDGE LOOKS SET TO UPHOLD JUSTICE



BY
JULIO RIBEIRO

"MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE KIREN RIJITU WANTS TO DUMP THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM OF CHOOSING JUDGES FOR THE HIGH COURTS AND THE SUPREME COURT. CJI CHANDRACHUD IS NOT GOING TO ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN. THE PEOPLE SHOULD KEEP THEIR FINGERS CROSSED. IF THE POLITICAL EXECUTIVE IS GIVEN A FREE HAND TO SELECT JUDGES FOR THE SUPERIOR COURTS, WE WILL SOON GET ONLY 'COMMITTED JUDGES' ON THE PATTERN OF 'COMMITTED BUREAUCRATS'."

Thank the Almighty for the gift of the new Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, who speaks up when necessary and is not afraid of taking a stand. If columnists and writers were morally obliged to 'recuse' themselves from writing on persons with a biased slant, I would have had to 'recuse' myself on commenting about Justice Chandrachud. The reason is that his father, former CJI YV Chandrachud, was my teacher at Government Law College in 1948-50.

If the political executive is given a free hand to select judges for superior courts, we will get only 'committed judges' on the pattern of 'committed bureaucrats'.

Later, when I joined the Indian Police Service and was appointed the SP of Pune City (I was the last Superintendent to head that city's police as it was upgraded to a Police Commissionerate while I was still its SP in 1965). His father was the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court. Every month, he visited Pune, and the first stop he made on his way from the railway station to his place of residence in the city was the Superintendent's office to touch base with an old pupil.

Sometimes, Justice Jal Vimalalal, another of my law college teachers, would accompany him. During such visits, my office would literally stop functioning as the entire staff would leave their desk to get a glimpse of these eminent judges! My own stock rose



The Law Minister wants to dump the Collegium system of choosing judges, but the CJI is not going to allow that to happen.

Photo / PTI

proportionately to the number of times the judges peeped into my room. This is the principal reason why I feel elated when my friends spare kind words of praise for some of the orders passed by the CJI's Bench, since he assumed the highest office in the nation's judiciary.

The most glaring injustice the present CJI has taken upon himself to tackle is the recent trend of the judiciary at almost all levels to reverse, in practice, Justice VR Krishna Iyer's dictum of 'bail not jail!' Amendments to the UAPA Act make it almost impossible for subordinate judges to release those accused of terrorist acts on bail, but even when the offences with which they are charged do not disclose an act of terrorism, the lower judiciary is afraid to use its powers to correct basic wrongs, thereby ensuring that those who have not been convicted, not even faced a trial, languish in jails for years together without any hope of defending themselves.

Justice DY Chandrachud, in a public speech he delivered recently, commented that judicial officers at the district and taluka levels are afraid of making mistakes and prefer to go along with the NIA, the ED and other Central investigation agencies who tailor their investigations to keep inconvenient people in jail despite lack of any evidence necessary to convict them. The process becomes the punishment in such cases. After years of languishing in jail, these accused will, in all probability, go free. But at what cost?

Prof Anand Teltumbde, arrested two years ago in the Bhima Koregaon case, remarked on his release on bail recently that he had to spend two years of his life in prison, though he had committed no

crime! Rona Wilson, another activist imprisoned without trial for years in that same case, alleges that the evidence downloaded by the NIA from his computer was planted there. He got the matter examined by experts in the US. The expert opined that it was the neatest plant that he had discovered in his long career in this field!

With the disclosure that a spy software of Israeli origin called Pegasus had been purchased by our Intelligence agencies a few years ago, the needle of suspicion points at the Central Intelligence agencies and those who pull the puppet strings! Since no attempts to expedite the trial have been put in motion, it can safely be concluded that the plan is to ensure that persons who are inconvenient, but who the agencies find difficult to get convicted, will spend jail time for years without trial. This is against all canons of jurisprudence. The judiciary must oppose such cynical usage of criminal laws and procedures in the interest of equity and good conscience.

Home Minister Amit Shah recently stated in an election speech in Gujarat that the BJP had taught anti-social elements in his state a lesson they would never forget. He was referring to the anti-Muslim riots after the burning alive of 59 karsevaks on a train in Godhra in 2002. It was the most damaging statement by a BJP leader. The 2002 mayhem had shocked the conscience of the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee - of Shah's own political party.

Yet, an upright IPS officer, RB Sreekumar, was thrown in prison, along with activist Teesta Setalvad. He languished there for many months till the judiciary finally found its voice and

released him on bail. What major crime did Teesta and Sreekumar commit by pursuing the perpetrators of inhuman rapes and killings?

Sreekumar was penalized for simply obeying the law and the Constitution. Most colleagues played safe and avoided the problem altogether. Some decided to collaborate with the 'teachers of lessons'. If the judiciary had not changed course and decided to do its constitutional duty to implement the laws impartially, Sreekumar would have had to cool his heels in a cell for some more months, maybe even years.

After Shah's statement, it is clear that by targeting Teesta and Sreekumar, the State was pursuing the victims rather than the culprits. It is the duty of the judiciary to correct such wrongs.

Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijitu wants to dump the Collegium system of choosing judges for the High Courts and the Supreme Court. CJI Chandrachud is not going to allow that to happen. The people should keep their fingers crossed. If the political executive is given a free hand to select judges for the superior courts, we will soon get only 'committed judges' on the pattern of 'committed bureaucrats'.

Our jails are overcrowded. The majority of those in jail are awaiting trial. In Mumbai, there are many undertrials who have travelled on trains without purchasing tickets! They have no way of arranging for bail as they are mostly homeless and jobless. Successive governments have not been able to reduce their number. But surely, no government should fill jails with those who do not subscribe to its ideology.

(The author is a former Governor and a retired IPS officer)



Madhya Pradesh will be hosting the

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Infiflex evolving into a global firm with strong focus on and footprint in the US



Founder and President Jude Mohanty



NEW YORK (TIP): Infiflex, launched in 2010 as a small services provider in India with modest dreams, has evolved into a global firm with 200-plus employees, more than 7,000 clients and a footprint spanning India, Singapore and the United States. Already a top-three Google Premier Partner, a Microsoft Tier-1 Gold Partner and AWS Advanced Tier Partner, Infiflex has expanded its flagship platforms over time to create GIFFY, the rapid app development tool and CHEKIN, the secure authentication app.

It has started to create a stronghold in the US market. According to Infiflex US marketing leader, Juan Botero, "Our vision is to build a United States headquarter. It's huge because we live in

an era where companies are leaving the US, looking for reduction in human resource cost." To lead this expansion, the company partnered with tech veterans Greg Forrest, Ron Cole & Botero. Their combined talents of Corporate Development, Sales Leadership and knowledge of Digital Transformation provide the foundation to build a strong national US presence.

Today, Infiflex's current aims include establishing new investments, remaining active in corporate development and working alongside partners as frequently as possible. "Whatever technology you need to support your company's growth, you can deploy with GIFFY," said Botero, noting it can also be run in Microsoft Azure and AWS environments. "There are no limitations. And that's great news for small businesses."

With GIFFY and CHEKIN, Infiflex is seeking to simultaneously help midmarket businesses scale and protect themselves as necessary. Using the GIFFY framework, businesses can develop applications in short duration with minimal-to-no coding. CHEKIN, meanwhile, offers secure authentication to reduce login burden. The software lets customers sign in using their Google accounts, while including IP restriction, user bypassing, OU-based restrictions, signature setup and device registration features, among others.

"I was a software developer before starting Infiflex," recalled founder and president Jude Mohanty. "I noticed

developers do the same work over and over and not work to make complex tasks simple. That's why I created Infiflex. We make things simple. The name of our company comes from 'Infinite Flexibility,' and that is what we accomplish for our customers."

AS SMALLER FIRMS EMERGE FROM COVID-19, INFIFLEX BELIEVES IT IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO CAPITALIZE ON ITS TWO-CHANNEL STRATEGY:

- o Direct Channel - Targeting firms with more than 10 employees that use Google Workspace for their operations, across various sectors.
- o Indirect Sales - Seeking independent sales professionals, the partner channel and smaller developer companies with fewer than 10 staff that fall short against no-code and low-code offerings.

"That's happening a lot," said Botero, regarding stifled developers. "Your traditional developer's shop is competing with no-code/low-code solutions, and small developer shops struggle because they have an overhead. They have to keep a rate that is not competitive in the market. Using GIFFY, they can lower the rate and become more competitive."

As businesses in the US and beyond continue to struggle with increased costs and hard to find talent, the introduction to low code is allowing them to automate their businesses. It is allowing them to simplify how they work and make processes more sustainable. Infiflex

through its multiple entry points with customers allows us to meet the businesses where they are in the digital transformation journey. Whether it starts at Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace or building a website for lead capture to a fully customized workflow management platform, Infiflex can provide a solution for any small business to enterprise customer. And, as it pertains to the channel, opportunities likewise abound. "These are the people who are leveraging their professional network, and they're offering solutions to the companies that trust in them," said Botero.

"We think that GIFFY and CHEKIN would be interesting offerings. CHEKIN, especially, because of the emphasis that we now have on security, user identity, access and validation management, which are a few of the most important things to keep your network safe. They can each be an interesting addition to the portfolio of an independent sales professional here in the United States."

Moving forward, Infiflex plans to introduce a support specialist team for the US, a pre-sales group for helping partners approach clients and dedicated support tools. "They don't have to be technology experts to sell or use our products," explained Botero. After all, Infiflex represents stream-lined options for helping smaller companies run IT infrastructure as if they were a larger firm.

National Tax Security Awareness Week, Day 4: Choosing a unique Identity Protection PIN adds extra safety for taxpayers



DECEMBER 1, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): As part of a broader effort to increase security, the Internal Revenue Service and the Security Summit partners today reminded taxpayers they could get extra protection starting in January by joining the agency's Identity Protection Personal Identification Number (IP PIN) program.

Anyone who has a Social Security number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) and is able to verify their identity is eligible to enroll in the IP PIN program. More than 6.6 million taxpayers are now protecting

themselves against tax-related identity theft by participating in the IP PIN program. Last year, the IRS made changes to the program to make it easier for more taxpayers to join. The fastest and easiest way to receive an IP PIN is by using the Get an IP PIN tool, which will be available in January.

Today's reminder marks the fourth day of National Tax Security Awareness Week, which runs through Dec. 2. The Security Summit sponsors this annual observance as part of a larger effort between the IRS, the state tax agencies as well as the nation's tax software and tax professional industries.

The Security Summit was established in 2015 to protect taxpayers and the nation's tax system against tax-related identity theft. This unique collaboration between the public and private sectors has increased mutual defenses against criminals trying to file fraudulent tax returns and steal refunds.

One of the critical features of the IRS system involves an IP PIN, which is a six-digit number assigned to eligible taxpayers to help prevent the misuse of

their Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number on fraudulent federal income tax returns.

An IP PIN is known only to the taxpayer and the IRS. Initially designed for confirmed victims of tax-related identity theft, the IP PIN program was expanded in 2021 to include any taxpayer nationwide who wants the additional protection and security of using an IP PIN to file tax returns with the IRS.

"Preventing someone from filing a tax return under another person's name is the main reason we want people to have this special code," said IRS Acting Commissioner Doug O'Donnell. "We encourage people to apply for the code when the system opens up in January. This step provides an extra line of protection for taxpayers - and their tax return."

An IP PIN helps the IRS verify a taxpayer's identity and accept their federal income tax returns, regardless of whether they are filing electronically or on paper. The online Get an IP PIN tool at IRS.gov/IPPIN displays the taxpayer's IP

PIN. Any participating taxpayer will use the tool in each subsequent year to obtain a new number.

The IRS urges any IP PIN applicant previously rejected during the identity authentication process to try applying again in 2023. The authentication process has been refined and improved, enabling many taxpayers screened out in the past to have a better chance of passing the authentication process.

The Electronic Tax Administration Advisory Committee, or ETAAC, earlier this year highlighted the importance of the IP PIN to taxpayers and tax professionals.

"The IP PIN is the number one security tool currently available to taxpayers from the IRS," the independent advisory group said in its annual report to Congress. "This tool is the key to making it more difficult for criminals to file false tax returns in the name of the taxpayer. In our view, the benefits of increased IP PIN use are many."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

'India is a part of me': Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai

DECEMBER 03, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Indian-American Sundar Pichai was awarded the Padma Bhushan for 2022 in the Trade and Industry category. The Madurai-born Pichai was named one of the 17 awardees earlier this year.

He received India's third-highest civilian award in the presence of his close family members in San Francisco on Friday, December 2.

"I am deeply grateful to the Indian government and the people of India for this immense honor. It is incredibly meaningful to be honored in this way by the country that shaped me," 50-year-old Pichai said while accepting the award from India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

"India is a part of me. I carry it with me wherever I go. (Unlike this beautiful award which I will keep somewhere safe)," he said.

"I was fortunate to grow up in a family that cherished learning and knowledge, with parents who sacrificed a lot to make sure I had opportunities to explore my interests," Pichai said.

India's Consul General in San Francisco, T V Nagendra Prasad, was also present during the event.

Sandhu said that Pichai represented the limitless possibilities of technology for transformation.

"He has been making commendable efforts towards making digital tools, and skills accessible to across various



"India is a part of me and I carry it with me wherever I go," Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai has said, as he received the prestigious Padma Bhushan award from the Indian envoy to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu

segments of the society in different parts of the globe," he said.

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of technology that combines 3Ss - speed, simplicity and service, Sandhu hoped that Google would make full use of the digital revolution happening in India.

Pichai said that it had been amazing to return to India many times over the years to see the rapid pace of technological change.

The innovations created in India are benefitting people around the world - from digital payments to voice

technology, he said.

"I look forward to continuing the great partnership between Google and India, as we work together to bring the benefits of technology to more people," he said.

Businesses are seizing the opportunities for digital transformation, and more people have access to the internet than ever before, including in rural villages, Pichai said.

"Prime Minister Modi's Digital India vision has certainly been an accelerator for that progress and I'm proud that Google continues to invest in India, partnering with governments,

businesses, and communities over two transformative decades," he said.

"Every new technology that arrived at our doorstep made our lives better. And that experience put me on a path to Google, and the chance to help build technology that improves the lives of people all over the world," he said.

Pichai said he sees so much opportunity ahead.

On India taking over the G20 presidency, Pichai said: "It's an amazing opportunity to build consensus on strengthening the global economy by advancing an internet that is open, connected, secure, and works for everyone. That's a goal we share, and are committed to advancing with you." India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on Thursday.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to do this work together and bring the benefits of technology to more people," Pichai said.

Google this year added 24 new languages to its translation service using a new advancement in machine learning. Eight of them are languages native to India.

"It means so much to see how people can access information and knowledge in their preferred language, and see the world open up to them in new ways. That's why I continue to be so optimistic about technology, and why I believe India can and must continue to lead," he added.

(Source: PTI)

IMF says it fully supports India's G20 agenda

DECEMBER 03, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India, which is planning to use the ongoing global crises as an opportunity to seek consensus on issues that require urgent attention, a senior official from the international financial body has said.

India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on Thursday, December 1.

"They (India) are putting together a collective agenda for a much more prosperous future,"

Ceyla Pazarbasioglu, Director of the Strategy and Policy Review department at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), told a group of reporters ahead of her trip to China and India next week.

"They (India) plan to use the ongoing (global) crises as an opportunity to seek consensus on issues that really require urgent attention," she said on Thursday.



Ceyla Pazarbasioglu, Director of the Strategy and Policy Review department at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said that the IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India.

Pazarbasioglu was apparently referring to the food and energy crises due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

The IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India, she said.

The theme of India's G20 presidency is "One Earth, One Family, One Future."

"This means that India is prioritizing the need to set aside differences and work at the local level, the federal level, the international level," explained the IMF official.

India, she said, played an important role in negotiating the G20 declaration in Bali, Indonesia.

"As you know, we haven't been able to have a declaration or a communique in the past two ministerial meetings, they were chair summaries. I will not go into details on how many hours those took.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

U.S. Job Growth Remains Strong, Defying Fed's Rate Strategy

Employers added 263,000 workers in November, even as some industries showed signs of a slowdown. Wage growth exceeded expectations.

DECEMBER 2, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): America's jobs engine kept churning in November; the Labor Department reported Friday, December 2, a show of continued demand for workers despite the Federal Reserve's push to curb inflation, largely by tamping down hiring. Employers added 263,000 jobs, even as a wave of layoffs in the tech industry made headlines. That was only a slight drop from the revised figure of 284,000 for October.

The unemployment rate was unchanged at 3.7%, while wages were 5.1% higher than a year earlier, a bigger rise than expected. Those signs of strength perpetuate a strange duality: While a strong labor market may benefit workers in the short term, it could strengthen the Fed's resolve to raise rates even further, which would increase the likelihood of a recession in 2023.

"It upsets some of the narrative going into the report, which was that things are slowing down," said Neil Dutta, head of U.S. economics at Renaissance Macro. "The reason that this matters for everyone is that the Fed still sees the labor market as the mechanism by which they can solve the

inflation problem." Despite steady employment growth, the impact of higher interest rates is already evident. Hiring in goods-producing sectors like manufacturing and residential construction - which are more sensitive to rising borrowing costs - has slowed substantially, and the number of hours worked fell, mainly because of those industries. But robust hiring in health care and hospitality, where wages have also grown most rapidly, powered continued gains. Wages continue to increase, though still not at the pace of inflation.

Although inflation has been propelled by a variety of factors including the Russian invasion of Ukraine and rapid shifts in demand, the latest data may trouble the Fed chair, Jerome H. Powell, who has focused on inflation in service industries, where wages make up a large share of costs. "That could be enough to offset what should be a decline in goods pricing and inflation pressures," said Andrew Patterson, a senior international economist at Vanguard. "It hints at a move in a direction that the Fed does really not want to see."

(Source: The New York Times)

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"They (India) plan to use the ongoing (global) crises as an opportunity to seek consensus on issues that really require urgent attention," she said on Thursday. Pazarbasioglu was apparently referring to the food and energy crises due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. The IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India, she said.

Excise 'scam': CBI summons K Chandrasekhar Rao's daughter



The CBI on December 2 issued summons to K Kavitha, Telangana MLC, and the daughter of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, to appear before it on December 6 for questioning in connection with the agency's probe into alleged irregularities in formulating and implementing the Delhi excise policy.

In the summons, the CBI said, "It is requested that kindly intimate the place of residence (Hyderabad or preferably Delhi) as per your convenience for your examination at 11 hours on December 6, 2022, in connection with the investigation of the Delhi excise policy for 2021-22."

Kavitha said she had informed the CBI that she could meet at her residence in Hyderabad on December 6. "I have been issued a CBI notice under Section 160 of the CrPC seeking my clarification," she said.

The TRS MLC had earlier said she and her party leaders, who are currently under the radar of the central agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate, were ready to face any inquiry. She was reacting to reports that her name figured in a remand report by the ED on one of the accused (Amit Arora) in the case.

Moosewala murder mastermind Goldy Brar detained in California

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Singer-politician Sidhu Moosewala's murder mastermind Goldy Brar has been detained in California. According to sources in India's intelligence agencies, gangster Goldy Brar, who took responsibility for Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala's murder, has been detained in California.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has confirmed that Goldy Brar has been detained and he will be brought back to India soon. Goldy was caught in Union City, an area near Sacramento in California.

"The California police have detained him. They have contacted the Indian government and the Punjab Police and informed them about his detention. They have asked whether he needs to be deported," Mann told reporters in Ahmedabad. "We will definitely bring Goldy Brar to India as per the treaty with America so that the families which have lost their sons and daughters find some solace. Brar was the main mastermind, and there are others as well whose records are with us," he said.

However, till now no official statement has been received from the government of California in this matter.

But intelligence departments RAW, IB, Delhi Police Special Cell and Punjab Intelligence have definitely received such inputs that Brar has been located there and has been detained. Moosewala was gunned down in Jawaharke village of Punjab's Mansa on May 29. The incident took place a day after his security was withdrawn by the Punjab Police among



Goldy Brar

424 others.

Who is Goldy Brar?

Six years ago, Satinderjeet Singh alias Goldy Brar, currently one of the most-wanted gangsters in Punjab who was arrested in the United States, was a college drop-out who had clashed with the law a few times. But soon after he moved to Canada in 2019, ostensibly to study (he was on a student visa), he embraced the underworld, and started running extortion rackets and taking up contract killing assignments. Now, a man as 50 cases including murder, attempt to murder, extortion have been registered against him in various districts, police said. A resident of Mukstar in the Malwa belt of Punjab, Brar is a son of a former policeman. In 2012, when he was 18 years old, Brar was booked under section 336 (endangering life or personal safety of others) in a case

involving clash between two groups. But he was acquitted in the case. A Punjab Police official said Goldy Brar was booked four times before he moved to Canada. "In 2015, he was booked for murder in Muktsar but again secured acquittal after an out-of-court settlement. Later, two more cases were registered against him in Fazilka district."

Another police official who prepared the documents to secure red corner notice against Brar said there was no pending inquiry against him when he moved to Canada, so he was able to secure police clearance. A red corner notice, usually issued through Interpol, is a request to police departments around the world to apprehend a person pending extradition.

Brar may have been a known name in Punjab – from the safety of Canada, home to a significant Punjabi population, he extorted money from businessmen in the state, and carried out contract killings – but he was relatively unknown across the rest of the country.

That changed this year after he claimed responsibility for the sensational May 29 killing of rap singer Sidhu Moosewala, in Mansa district. According to the 1,850-page charge sheet filed in the Moosewala murder case, Goldy Brar was the mastermind behind the killing. Brar gave the news of the withdrawal of security of Moosewala to shooters on May 28 and had asked them to hurry up and kill the singer on May 29, as per the charge sheet. The security to the singer was withdrawn by the AAP government soon after it came to power. Source: *HT and Agencies*

Man arrested in Delhi over sextortion of American professor, siphoned \$48,000 via blackmail

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Rahul Kumar on allegations of sextortion of a USA professor. A case was registered by the International Operation Division of the CBI against the accused, who is a resident of New Delhi, with allegations including the sextortion of a professor at a prominent university in the USA.

The victim was allegedly lured via Facebook profile with a motive to extract sexually explicit images during video chatting. It was alleged that during a video chat, the victim was lured to send sexually-explicit videos which were recorded.

It was further alleged that the accused sent threats via messages and he even used accounts related to the sexually-explicit video chat.

Kumar allegedly demanded the amount on his PayPal account.

The accused threatened the victim to release the sexually-explicit video if he failed to send the amount as asked.

It was also alleged that the victim sent payments worth \$ 48,000 to his PayPal account.

Further, even after receiving the extortion money from the victim, the accused did not stop and continued sending threatening emails to the victim asking him to buy an iPhone charger and earphones. He also threatened the American professor of circulating the video, if his demands were not fulfilled.

Authorities launched searches at Kumar's property in Asola which led to the recovery of incriminating evidence. Source: *India Today*

AIIMS cyberattack probe points to 'foreign state actor'

The preliminary investigation into the cyberattack on some of the servers at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi has found that the hack originated from another country, and could possibly have involved "a foreign state actor", according to The Indian Express. The cyber incident that took place last month had brought the online management system of the institute to a halt, and raised concerns over the data of crores of patients being compromised, including that of high-profile political personalities.

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In), the country's premier cybersecurity agency, is learnt to have concluded its initial investigation into the cyberattack, including the diagnosis of the hack and a preliminary identification of the actors involved in it.

Investigators are also learnt to have found that AIIMS was using the services of a private company to design and run its servers, which is expected to trigger a policy change by the Centre that could lead to all bodies affiliated to the Government facing periodic safety audits.

Passenger killed on board train as rod breaks through window, pierces neck

A 34-year-old train passenger was killed when an iron rod pierced through his neck after protruding the glass window of a coach of the Delhi-Kanpur Seemanchal Express near Somna village in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh at around 8.40am on Friday, December 2.

The Government Railway Police (GRP) have registered a case under IPC 304-A (causing death by negligence) and started investigations to find out what exactly happened.

Railways spokesperson HS Upadhyay said, "The rod had come from outside into the general coach. Because of a serious injury from the rod, Sultanpur resident Hrishikesh Dubey died. This incident is being probed by the RPF and Government Railway Police."

Dubey worked in Delhi and he is survived by wife and two children, it is learnt. Dubey was on his way to attend a wedding and that he had spoken to his family over the phone minutes before the incident, investigators said.

The GRP have spoken to the local Permanent Way Inspector and others of the Engineering Department as well as contractors engaged for the work there, sources said. The train was moving at a speed of 130kmph when the incident happened, a spokesperson said.

Investigators say the iron rod, weighing around 7 kg, was kept at the side of the track for use in track-related engineering work being done by contractors. "We have spoken to Engineering Department officials and workers engaged by the contractors. Whoever is at the root of this negligence will be booked," a senior official told The Indian Express.

After impaling Dubey's neck, the rod went through the train's cubicle and emerged on the other side, barely missing passengers sitting there, images of the scene available with the railways show.

India to continue buying oil from Russia: Official

India will continue to buy crude oil from anywhere in the world, including Russia, to meet its energy needs, a top official said ahead of EU restrictions on Russian oil kicking in.

The executive body of the European Union has asked its 27-member countries to cap the price of Russian oil at USD 60 as part of the West's attempt to squeeze Moscow's oil revenues and limit its ability to wage war in Ukraine while keeping global prices and supplies steady.

"Unlike Iran and Venezuela, there are no sanctions on buying oil from Russia. So anyone who can arrange for shipping, insurance and financing outside of the EU can buy oil," the official said.

V-P Jagdeep Dhankhar enters Collegium debate, recalls NJAC repeal

NEW DELHI (TIP)

In an oblique reference to the Supreme Court's 2015 judgement striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014, which sought to overturn the Collegium system of appointments in the higher judiciary, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar, sharing the dais with Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, said Friday, December 2, it was "never too late to reflect".

Underlining the "primacy of the will of the people", Dhankhar, who was addressing a gathering at the 8th Dr L M Singhvi Memorial Lecture in New Delhi, said "that power was undone" and "the world does not know of any such instance".

His remarks come days after Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju questioned the Collegium system of judicial appointments, calling it "opaque" and "alien". The Minister's remarks attracted the displeasure of the Supreme Court earlier this week.

Speaking after CJI Chandrachud delivered the lecture on the topic of universal adult franchise, the Vice-President said, "The Indian Parliament, in 2015-216, was dealing with a Constitutional amendment Act and, as a matter of record, the entire Lok Sabha voted unanimously. There was no abstention and no dissension. And the amendment was passed. In Rajya Sabha, it was unanimous, there was one abstention. We, the people - their ordainment was converted into a constitutional provision. The power of the people came to be reflected... on a legitimate platform through applicable mechanisms. That power was undone. The world does not know of any such instance."



The Constitution (Ninety-Ninth Amendment) Act, which established the National Judicial Appointments Commission, and the NJAC Act were passed by Parliament in 2014 to set up a commission for appointing judges, replacing the Collegium system. The Collegium evolved through the Supreme Court ruling in the Second Judges Case in 1993 and its opinion on a Presidential reference in 1998 in what came to be known as the Third Judges Case.

The laws were repealed in October 2015, after the Supreme Court struck them down.

Dhankhar said, "If a Constitutional provision that carries the ordainment of people at large in such a vibrant democracy is undone, what will happen? I am appealing to everyone that these are the issues that should not be viewed on partisan lines."

He went on to ask the audience, which included former CJI R M Lodha, judges, lawyers, Union Minister Piyush Goyal,

Congress leader P Chidambaram, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, to think of any such similar instance in the world.

Referring to Article 145 (3) of the Constitution, which provides for setting up a minimum five-judge Bench for deciding a Constitutional matter, Dhankhar, also a senior advocate, said "Interpretation of the Constitution when a substantial question of law is involved can be done by the court. Nowhere it says that a provision can be run down."

Saying it was "never too late to reflect and think", he said, "As a student of law, a modest student of law, can parliamentary sovereignty be ever compromised? Can a succeeding Parliament be bound by what has been done by an earlier Parliament?"

Earlier, while delivering the lecture on the topic of universal adult franchise, CJI Chandrachud, who took office on November 9, said the citizens' exercise of the right to vote was an informed choice made by them.

"The actual realisation of one's vote is to continuously participate in democracy in everyday life, to ask questions from the elected representatives and to keep the state accountable. Consultation, dialogue, debate and negotiations occur among diverse social groups, with participation not confined to elections but extending to larger political and public spheres to facilitate social transformation," he said.

The CJI said the introduction of universal adult franchise in India was revolutionary at the time, when so-called mature Western democracies had just extended the right to vote to women, people of colour and the working class.

Source: The Indian Express

Man stabs live-in partner to death in Delhi as victim's teen daughter sleeps in other room

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A 35-year-old woman was allegedly stabbed to death by her live-in partner in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar, police said on December 2.

Rekha Rani's body had stab wounds and was recovered from her rented house in Ganesh Nagar where she was living with her 16-year-old daughter for 15 years, they said.

Police said her live-in-partner Manpreet Singh (45) was arrested from Punjab on Friday evening for killing her.

The daughter told police that her mother and the man used to fight over money.

Officers at the Tilak Nagar police station received a call at 12.38 pm and a team was sent to the house, police said.

The team found the door to be locked

and when they opened it, they found Rani's body, they said.

In her statement, the victim's daughter said she was sleeping in her room after taking medicine as she was unwell.

Unaware that her mother had already been killed, she called Rani on her phone thinking she might be in another room, a police officer said.

When Rani did not answer, she looked for her in the house but found Singh. When she asked him about her mother, she was told that Rani had gone out and she was also told to go out of the house, the officer said.

The officer said after Rani's daughter went out of the house, Singh locked the door and left.

It has been revealed that the woman suffered two injuries from a sharp weapon -- one to her jaw and neck and the

other to her hand, Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Ghanshyam Bansal said.

He said a case under Indian Penal Code sections 302 (murder) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender) has been registered on the victim's daughter's complaint.

It was in 2015 that Singh met Rani and soon after they started living together at Ganesh Nagar, police said.

"Gradually, Rekha felt insecure about Singh and she stopped him from contacting his family members. Singh felt frustrated and planned to kill her," Special CP (Crime) Ravindra Yadav said.

Singh, who was arrested from Patiala on Friday, is named in six criminal cases, including kidnapping for ransom and attempt to murder, he said.

Source: PTI

India in history this Week

DECEMBER 2, 2022, TO DECEMBER 7, 2022

02 DECEMBER



1911 Gateway of India was built in memory of his arrival at Bombay (now Mumbai), the first king of Britain to visit India, George V and Queen Mary.

1918 Gurudas Banerjee, the leading educationist and the first Indian Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, died.

1942 Sri Aurobindo Ashram School was established in Pondicherry (now Puducherry), which was later known as Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education.

1999 Private sector investment was approved in the insurance sector in India.

1937 Renowned politician, former Lok Sabha Speaker Manohar Joshi was born.

1918 India's leading educationist Gurudas Banerjee passed away

1989 Vishwanath Pratap Singh became the seventh Prime Minister of the country.

03 DECEMBER

1844 The first President of the country Dr. Rajendra Prasad was born.

1796 Baji Rao II was made the Peshwa of the Maratha Empire. He was the last Peshwa of the Maratha Empire.

1889 Revolutionary Khudiram Bose was born in the independence movement.

1915 A magnitude 6.5 earthquake in Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh killed 170 people and destroyed many homes.

1971 The Emergency came into force in the country after the war between India and Pakistan started.

1979 Hockey magician Major Dhyan Chand Singh died.

2004 India and Pakistan agreed to restore rail connectivity between Munabav and Khokhrapar after 40 years.



2011 Film actor Dev Anand died.

1984 Leaking toxic gas from the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal killed at least 3000 people and caused several thousands of physical deformities.

1959 India and Nepal signed the agreement of Gandak Irrigation and Power Project.

1967 India's first rocket (Rohini RH 75) was launched from Thumba.

2008 Chief Minister of Maharashtra Vilasrao Deshmukh resigned from his post on the day after the terrorist incident of 23 November in Mumbai.

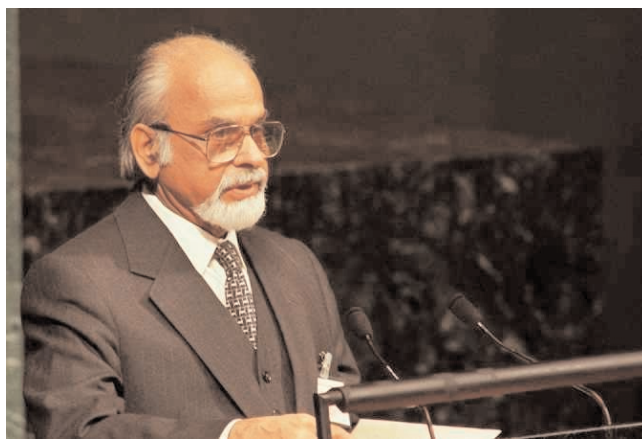
04 DECEMBER

2008 Renowned historian Romila Thapar was chosen for the Cluj honor.

1888 Birth of historian Ramesh Chandra Majumdar.

1860 Agustino Lawrenceo of Margao, Goa, received a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Paris. He became the first Indian to pursue a doctorate from a foreign university.

1899 For the first time, the vaccine of typhoid was used to protect humans from this disease.



1919 The twelfth Prime Minister of India, Indra Kumar Gujral was born.

1910 Ramaswamy Venkataraman, the eighth president of India, was born.

1971 The Indian Navy attacked the Pakistani Navy and Karachi.

05 DECEMBER

1955 The STD service that provides long distance telephone calls to every home came into existence on this day in 1955.

1971 India recognized Bangladesh as a country.

1895 The birth of Josh Malihabadi, the famous Urdu poet of India and Pakistan.



1941 Famous Indian female painter Amrita Shergill died in Lahore. Many of his artworks were appreciated worldwide.

1969 The birth of Anjali Bhagwat, the famous shooter who has illuminated the name of India in the world in shooting.

1998 Russia agrees to give 'Krivak class' multi-purpose warship to Indian Navy.

1999 Yukta Mukhi took the title of Miss World to her name.

1657 Shah Jahan's younger son Murad proclaimed himself king.

1943 Japanese airplane bombed Kolkata.

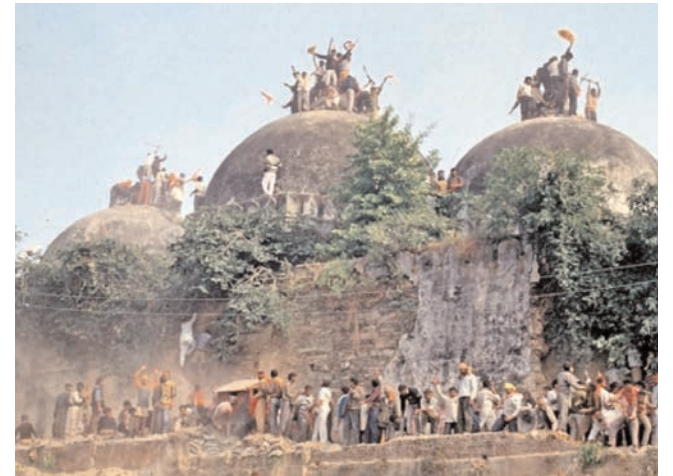
1950 Freedom fighter, poet, yogi and philosopher Arvind Ghosh died in Puducherry.

1950 Sikkim became a protected state of India.

06 DECEMBER

1732 Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of the East India Company, was born.

1907 The first incident of dacoity related to India's freedom struggle took place at Chingariporta railway station.



1992 Babri Masjid in Ayodhya was demolished by Hindu kar sevaks. After this, riots broke out in many states of India.

1907 The first incident of dacoity related to India's freedom struggle took place at Chingariporta railway station.

1956 Bahujan political leader and constitution builder Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar died.

1987 MiG-29 joined the Indian Air Force, renamed 'Baz'.

07 DECEMBER

1949 Indian Armed Forces Flag Day is celebrated.



1782 Hyder Ali, the ruler of Mysore died.

1825 The first steam-powered ship 'Enterprise' reached Kolkata.

1856 The 'Hindu widow' was officially married for the first time in the country.

1995 India launched communication satellite INSAT-2C.

2003 Raman Singh holds the post of Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.

2008 Indian golfer Jeev Milkha Singh won the Japan Tour title.

2016 Famous Indian actor, comedian, political satirist, playwright, film director and advocate Cho Ramaswamy passed away.

The 53rd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) - An Overview



BY
MURTAZA ALI KHAN

DURING THE 9-DAY FILM FESTIVAL, 280 FILMS FROM 79 COUNTRIES WERE SCREENED. 25 FEATURE AND 20 NON FEATURE FILMS FROM INDIA WERE SHOWCASED IN THE INDIA PANORAMA. 183 FILMS WERE PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING. THIS YEAR WE ALSO CELEBRATED 50 YEARS OF MANIPUR IN CINEMA WITH THE SCREENING OF 5 MANIPURI FILMS INCLUDING 'THE CHOSEN ONE.'

The 53rd International Film Festival concluded in Goa on November 28, 2022 with a colorful closing ceremony at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium. The ceremony was attended by Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr L Murugan and Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant. Bollywood celebrities such as Ajay Devgn, Ayushman Khurana, Esha Gupta, Anand L. Rai, Manushi Chhillar, Rana Duggubati, and the Dadasaheb Phalke winner Asha Parekh, were among those who attended the closing ceremony. The creators of the popular Israeli show Fauda, Lior Raz and Avi, were also present on the occasion. Ayushmann Khurrana performed on songs from his upcoming movie 'An Action Hero.' Telugu Star Chiranjeevi was awarded the Indian film personality of the year on the occasion. The closing film of this festival was the Polish film 'Perfect Number', directed by Krzysztof Zanussi.

On the final day of the festival a huge controversy broke out when the Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid, the jury chairman of the International Competition section of IFFI, called Indian filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri's 'The Kashmir Files' 'propaganda' and 'vulgar.' In response, the Israel ambassador to India Naor Gilon launched a scathing attack on Lapid for his incendiary remarks. Responding to Lapid's remarks, his fellow jury member and filmmaker Sudipto Sen explained, "As members of the jury it is our job to judge the technical, aesthetic quality, and socio-cultural relevance of a film. We are not supposed to indulge in making any kind of political comments on any film. But, if something like that happens that then doesn't reflect the opinion of the jury. The comment has to be taken completely in a personal capacity, for it doesn't have anything to do with the esteemed Jury Board."

During the 9-day film festival, 280 films from 79 countries were screened. 25 feature and 20 non feature films from India were showcased in the India Panorama. 183 films were part of the international programming. This year we also celebrated 50 years of Manipur in cinema with the screening of 5 Manipuri films including 'The Chosen One.' A highly interactive Film Technology Exhibition was also hosted as part of the 53rd IFFI. Various cameras, lights and various other equipment used in the filmmaking were exhibited during the festival. One of the major attractions of IFFI this year were the pavilions of more than 13 Indian states on the lines of Cannes Marché du Film, including those of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, and participating countries such as Russia and France.

New York-based Emmy-nominated filmmaker Tirllok Malik was amongst the leading international filmmakers to visit the various state and country pavilions stationed at the NFDC Film Bazaar held at the Marriott Goa. "I keep visiting India as regardless of wherever I live in the whole world my roots are here. Coming to IFFI is always very special as one gets to meet fellow filmmakers and so it's always very stimulating for the mind," rejoiced Malik who was particularly impressed with the pavilions from the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab as well as the pavilions from Russia and France. "I had very good conversations



Telugu Star Chiranjeevi honored with the Indian film personality of the year award by Minister Anurag Thakur



L to R: Emmy-nominated Indian-American filmmaker Tirllok Malik, Roskino Representative Sarfaraz Alam Safu, award-winning Indian filmmaker Suraj Kumar, and noted Indian critic Ajit Rai visit Russia Pavilion

about film development and production with the respective representatives at the pavilion such as Mr. Saurabh Vijay, Secretary, Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Maharashtra, Dr. Avinash Dhakne, Managing Director, MFSCDC Ltd, Shri Dinesh Kumar Sahgal Deputy Director, Film Bandhu, Uttar Pradesh Govt., Mr. Sarfaraz Alam Safu, Indian Representative, Roskino, Russian Federation, and Mr. Henri Prévost-Allard from Saint-Tropez, France, among others," added Malik.

"Over the years, I have had the pleasure of visiting the biggest film festivals in the US, Europe, Asia and elsewhere. And I wouldn't be exaggerating if I tell you that visiting IFFI this year has been one of my best festival experiences ever. Kudos to the Honorable Minister Shri Anurag Thakur, NFDC MD Sh. Ravinder Bhakar and the entire team at NFDC for the various new initiatives, such as the inclusion of the regional and international pavilions on the lines of the Cannes Film Market. I strongly feel that this will go a long way in making IFFI one of the biggest and most important festivals in the world," opined Malik.

Noted Indian critic and author who also visited the state and country pavilions at the IFFI 2022 alongside Malik touched upon the great association that India and Russia have shared over the many decades. "Russia has a rich legacy of cinema and the relationship between India and Russian on the cinematic front dates back to the times of Raj Kapoor. His popularity in Russia even surpassed the presidents. And an entire generation of Russians has grown up dancing to the tunes of Mithun Chakraborty's famous dance number 'I am a Disco Dancer.' So, I feel that Russia Pavilion is a good initiative. Russia was also the guest country at IFFI a few years ago," explained Rai who has been running a festival of Indian films in Russia called the Indian Film Festival Moscow since 2012. Emphasizing upon Indo-Russia co-productions, Roskino's Indian

representative is Sarfaraz Alam Safu added, "The India-Russia coproduction treaty dates back to 1993. Presently, many Russian companies want to come to India for shooting as well as to explore various possibilities for collaborations."

Award-winning Indian filmmaker Suraj Kumar whose film about Tagore's time in Argentina 'Thinking of Him,' was the closing film at the 2017 IFFI feels that initiatives such as the Russia Pavilion open up possibilities for film collaborations. "This has been my first experience of the Russia Pavilion at IFFI Goa. However, I have been regularly visiting the Russia Pavilion at the Cannes Film Festival. But the kind of content that they have brought to India as part of the pavilion is really amazing. I feel that it can be showcased on Indian television, OTT platforms, etc. after being dubbed into the various Indian languages. It's really a beautiful pavilion that they have come up with," opined Kumar whose short film about the spiritual awakening of Shri Aurobindo was screened in over 150 countries by the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India earlier in the year.

Film Bandhu is committed to make Uttar Pradesh a major film hub in the world. "As per the instructions of the Honorable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh we have devised a film policy for the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The idea is to offer various benefits to filmmakers who want to come to UP to shoot their films whether from different parts of India or abroad. In order to facilitate this, we have created a single window system wherein you can take the shooting permission online as well as apply for subsidy online. You are not even required to physically come to the Film Bandhu Office. Also, we are developing a Film City in Noida which will have world-class infrastructure. It will be spread across an area of 1000 acres. And next to the Film City an airport is also being constructed and it will have connectivity to the whole world. So, the filmmakers need not go to Delhi first. They can directly come to Noida and start shooting and once finished can go back directly with the finished product in their hard disk," explained Dinesh Kumar Sahgal, Deputy Director, Film Bandhu, UP Govt.

Amit Sharma, Senior Producer at Doordarshan, shared his excitement to be back in Goa for IFFI 2022. "There is always a scope for improvement and with each passing year we have seen IFFI go from a position of strength to strength. Take, for example, the case of the '75 Creative Minds,' which is now in its second year, I think that it's a wonderful initiative just like a lot of other new initiatives," averred Sharma. National Award-winning critic and senior journalist Giridhar Jha who was attending the 53rd IFFI was happy to be back on ground after the hiatus imposed by the pandemic. "A big booster dose to cinema though India's eyes that it desperately needed after a two-year disrupter called COVID-19, with a fest of movies from all across the globe on the platter for the film buffs of all kinds, and, of course, everything else on IFFI's electrifying sidelines. I&B Ministry and, above all, NFDC deserve kudos for pulling it off," signed off Jha.

(Murtaza Ali Khan is an Indian Film & TV Critic / Journalist who has been covering the world of entertainment for over 10 years. He tweets at @MurtazaCritic and can be mailed at: murtaza.jmi@gmail.com).

ENJOY HOLIDAY FUNTAINMENT BY MABEL PAIS

AT NJPAC.....here's what's happening....

LINDSEY STIRLING: SNOW WALTZ TOUR

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022 @ 8PM @ PRUDENTIAL HALL

Stirling's unique interpretation of beautifully nostalgic holiday music will be more dynamic than ever - intertwining dance, trapeze, lyra, and aerial all while delivering an impeccable violin performance. Lindsey's new Christmas album Snow Waltz is out October 7th via Concord. Featuring eight classic covers and five original tracks, Snow Waltz delivers Stirling's immersive arrangements and mesmerizing melodies but with a seasonal twist, featuring songs that promise to be the perfect soundtrack for the holiday season. Learn more at lindseystirling.com.

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022 @ 7:30PM @ PRUDENTIAL HALL

Spend a thought-provoking evening with astrophysicist, professor and New York Times best-selling author Neil deGrasse Tyson of the Hayden Planetarium. The author of the new book 'Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives on Civilization' will discuss how having a "cosmic perspective" profoundly influences what we think and feel about science, culture, politics and life itself. Take a journey to the far reaches of the universe in this cosmically fascinating conversation. Learn more at haydenplanetarium.org/tyson

MATT FRASER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2022 @ 8PM @ PRUDENTIAL HALL

Join psychic medium Matt Fraser for an incredible event! The star of the E! TV series 'Meet The Frasers' and best-selling author of 'When Heaven Calls' will make you gasp, laugh and cry as he performs uncanny live readings. You've seen him bring healing and hope to A-list celebrities, TV audiences and regular people around the world. Now, prepare for a roller coaster of emotions as Matt reveals unknowable secrets, reconnects members of our audience to their lost loved ones, and turns skeptics into true believers.

RECYCLED PERCUSSION

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9TH, 2022 @ 7PM @ VICTORIA THEATER

The turbo-charged drummers of Recycled Percussion create their own unique brand of high-energy "junk rock" by transforming everyday objects into percussive instruments.

This mind-blowing, immersive show expands the boundaries of modern percussion by incorporating items like power tools, ladders, buckets, trash cans and a whole lot more, turning them into incredibly expressive musical instruments. And at every performance, you get a drumstick and an unusual instrument so you can join in the fun. Learn more at recycledpercussion.com

THE TEMPTATIONS & THE FOUR TOPS

DECEMBER 10, 2022 @ 8PM @ PRUDENTIAL HALL



The Temptations & The Four Tops. Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

We "heard it through the grapevine" that The Temptations and The Four Tops are headed to NJPAC for one night only! Put a smooth groove in your step with these two Motown supergroups. Backed by a tight rhythm section and blazing brass ensemble, every song is a solid gold hit. Bring your sweetie, bring your grandkids-you're guaranteed to smile and sing along 'til it's time to go home! Learn more at temptationsofficial.com

FRAN LEBOWITZ

DECEMBER 11, 2022 @ 3PM @ PRUDENTIAL HALL

In a cultural landscape filled with endless pundits and talking heads, Fran Lebowitz stands out as one of today's most insightful social commentators. In essays, interviews and live appearances, she's always wickedly entertaining and unapologetically opinionated. Most recently, Fran starred in the Emmy-nominated Netflix documentary series 'Pretend It's a City,' directed by longtime pal Martin Scorsese (who also directed Public Speaking, Fran's 2010 HBO documentary). Join NJPAC for an evening of wit and



Fran Lebowitz.

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

wisecracks with the raconteur herself.

LIGHTWIRE THEATER PRESENTS: A VERY ELECTRIC CHRISTMAS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2022 @ 7PM @ VICTORIA THEATER

Light up the holidays with this magical family show! Lightwire Theater's 'A Very Electric Christmas' is performed in complete darkness with electroluminescent costumes, puppets and scenery. Kids and adults will both be dazzled by the glow-in-the-dark stagecraft, as the North Pole comes to life with soaring birds, dancing toy soldiers and a sparkling Christmas tree. This story of family, friendship and hope is set to timeless holiday hits, from classic (The Nutcracker) to contemporary (Mariah Carey).

TICKETS

For more Information and Tickets to any performance, visit njpac.org.

NJPAC

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 Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

NJYS CELEBRATES ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT BY MABEL PAIS



NJYS December Signature Concert collage. Photo Wharton Arts

The New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS) returns to the Union County Performing Arts Center (UCPAC) on Sunday, December 11 at 4:00 p.m. to celebrate music, dance, and the holiday season with Danzon, Tango and Bugler's Holiday! Don't miss this

uplifting show that explores dance rhythms across the world and shares the stories behind the music that are universal to the human experience.

The NJYS Youth Symphony, led by Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo, will share the stage with special guests Francis Goya, Romantic guitarist and multi-platinum artist; soprano saxophonist Tim Egan; and tango dancers Carolina Jaurena and Juan Alessandrini. Works by Astor Piazzola, Arturo Marquez, Francis Goya, and Leroy Anderson will be featured in this community celebration for all ages.

Jaurena and Alessandrini said, "We are excited to be part of this concert and collaborate with the New Jersey Youth Symphony. We are certain it will be a unique experience and we look forward to sharing our love and passion for tango with the audience."

"This is my first time performing with the New Jersey Youth Symphony, although several of my friends were members of NJYS in high school," said Egan. "As a saxophonist, I was always jealous that they got to play in (an) orchestra! I have been a Teaching Artist at the Paterson Music Project since 2021 and this year I had

the opportunity to coach the NJYS Clarinet Trio. I look forward to many more years of collaboration with this life-changing performing arts education organization."

TICKETS

Tickets are available at ucpac.org/event/nj-youth-symphony-danzon-tango-and-buglers-holiday.

WHARTON ARTS

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable their students to achieve their personal best. Learn more at whartonarts.org

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

DECEMBER FILMS BY MABEL PAIS

LAST FILM SHOW

DIR/WRIT: PAN NALIN L GUJARATI W/ENG SUBS L 1H 51M

India's Official Submission for Best International Feature Film at the 95th (Year 2022) Academy Awards



Last Film Show.

Photo / lastfilmshow.net

"A nuanced discourse about the art of filmmaking... Sonawane's mesmerizing cinematography pays tribute to the ghosts of the greatest filmmakers of all time." - Film Threat, Swapnil Dhruv Bose

"Paying homage to everyone from Sergio Leone to Satyajit Ray, this coming-of-age story is an ethereal take on the magic of movies."

- Indiewire, David Ehrlich

Samay, a 9-year-old boy living with his family in a remote village in India discovers films for the first time and is absolutely mesmerized. Against his father's wishes, he returns to the cinema day after day to watch more films, and even befriends the projectionist, who, in exchange for his lunch box, lets him watch movies for free. He quickly figures out that stories become light, light becomes films, and films become dreams. Samay and his wild gang of friends move heaven and earth to catch and project light to achieve a 35mm film projection. But little do they know that soon they'll be forced to make heartbreaking choices as an era is approaching to annihilate everything they love about their 35mm dreams...

Opening: In select theaters December 2, followed by digital release December 9

FOUR SAMOSAS

DIR/WRIT/PROD: RAVI KAPOOR L 2022 L USA L ENGLISH L 1H 20M

WORLD PREMIERE - 2022 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

Set entirely in LA's "Little India" in a world of sari places, curry restaurants, Indian amateur-dramatic groups and South-Asian revolutionaries, 'Four Samosas' is a love letter to all the "Little India's" around the world, and a celebration of re-discovering your voice and finding your crew.

When wannabe rapper Vinny discovers that his fatalistic ex-girlfriend Rina is now engaged to a goatshit recycler named Sanjay, Vinny decides to disrupt her future wedding by stealing her dowry diamonds from her father's grocery store. Crewing up with an actor who longs to go to Bollywood, a resourceful do-gooding newspaper editor and a malcontent immigrant engineer, Vinny and his gang somehow pull off the heist despite their obvious ineptitude. But will the theft get Vinny and Rina back together again or lead to more misery? And will Vinny ever finish a song?

Opening: In Theaters & On Demand on December 2nd

LEONOR WILL NEVER DIE

DIR: MARTIKA RAMIREZ ESCOBAR L 2022 | PHILIPPINES | FILIPINO W/ENGLISH SUBS |

1H 41M

Amplify Voices Award - 2022 Toronto International Film Festival

Special Jury Prize for Innovative Spirit - 2022 Sundance Film Festival



Leonor Will Never Die.

Photo / leonorwillneverdie.com

'Leonor Will Never Die' is the story of Leonor Reyes. She was once a groundbreaking figure in the Filipino film industry during its ragtag action cinema glory days, but now she struggles with old age, mounting bills, and the untimely death of her son. While revisiting an unfinished script about a fearless protagonist trying to avenge his brother's murder, Leonor is struck on the head by a falling television set and knocked into a coma. As she lies unconscious in the hospital, fantasy and reality begin to blur when Leonor finds herself awake inside her script, becoming the hero of her own story. An innovative blend of pulpy action homages, playful comedy, and touching family drama, 'Leonor Will Never Die' is a wonderfully imaginative tribute to the art of filmmaking.

Opening: Currently running in New York city, expanding to cities nationwide, December 2 onwards

COME FIND ME

DIR: DANIEL POLINER L 2021 L USA L 1H 44M

'Come Find Me' is a story about a mother and daughter facing major life changes and how their love challenges and sustains them. The daughter, Christina, is a young attorney rising toward partnership in a large firm with no other partners who look like her. The first half of the movie follows Christina and then it jumps forward two years and we watch her wedding from the point of view of her mother, Gloria, a recently retired and widowed public school principal.

Opening: Dec 2 in Chicago, on VOD January 13

LONG LINE OF LADIES

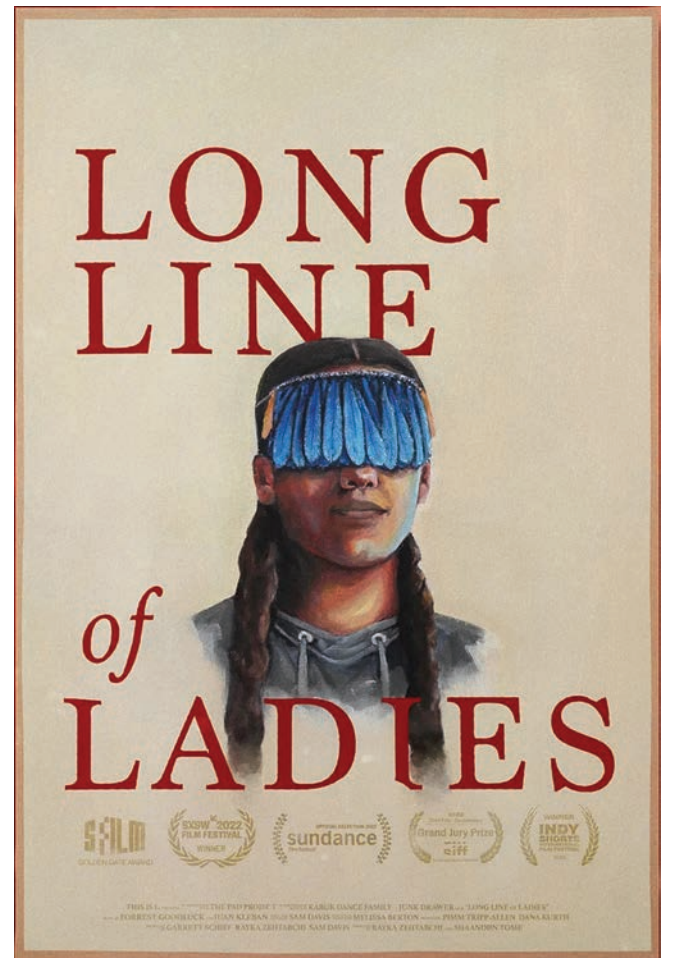
DIRS: RAYKA ZEHTABCHI & SHAANDIIN TOME L 2022 L USA L ENGLISH L 22M

WORLD PREMIERE - 2022 Sundance Film Festival

SXSW, Jury Award Winner

Seattle International Film Festival, Jury Award Winner

San Francisco International Film Festival, Golden Gate Award Winner



Long Line of Ladies, poster.

Photo / longlineofladies.com

'Long Line Of Ladies' intimately observes the months-long process of one girl and her tight-knit Karuk community as they come together to prepare for her Ihuk, the coming-of-age ceremony for girls which went dormant for over 120 years due to the violence and destruction brought on by the Gold Rush. In the weeks leading up to her Ihuk, Ahty learns traditional dances and songs and mentally and physically prepares to spend four days blindfolded and fasting. Meanwhile, the women and men around her work tirelessly to pass down knowledge, prepare regalia, tools and food, and above all, to promote the continued revitalization of their traditions.

Opening: Currently running on The New York Times OpDocs

CROSSING

DIR/WRIT: ARTHUR IAN L 2019 L ARMENIA/USA/RUSSIA L RUSSIAN W/ENG SUBS L

1H 18M

'Crossing' begins at the end of the Cold War with a dream and delivers us to the United States, 20 years later where those dreams are in jeopardy. It marks the feature directorial debut of Arthur Ian who wrote the script as well.

In the final years of the Cold War, a Soviet family splinters along East/West lines. Andrei (Tsaghikyan), a free-spirited teenager, leaves the USSR to follow his dream of becoming a successful businessman in the United States. Ultimately, Andrei's (Martin) dreams come to a halt 20 years later when his new world is shattered by the Great Recession. Forced to reunite with his family, including his eccentric mother (Sirtis), and caught between struggles both present and past, Andrei reexamines the values from the life that he left behind.

Opening: December 2 worldwide on multiple digital platforms including iTunes/AppleTV and Amazon.

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



Kriti dismisses dating rumours with Prabhas

Kriti Sanon has finally addressed rumours of her dating Prabhas. In an Instagram post, Kriti said that the "rumours are absolutely baseless." She also pulled up her Bhediya co-star Varun Dhawan for adding fuel to such reports.

On the sets of Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa, Varun had given the names of a few eligible single women from the Hindi film industry. He omitted Kriti's name from the list and when Karan Johar asked him for the reason the actor responded, "Kriti ka naam isiliye nahi tha kyunki Kriti ka naam kisi ke dil me hai. Ek aadmi hai jo Mumbai me nahi hai, vo iss waqt shooting kar raha hai Deepika (Padukone) ke saath. Varun's remarks led to a strong buzz that Kriti is dating Prabhas. She wrote, "It's neither pyaar (love), nor PR.. our Bhediya just went a little too wild on a reality show. And his fun banter led to some Howl-arious rumours (woman facepalming emoji)." Kriti added, "Before some portal announces my wedding date let me burst your bubble. The rumours are absolutely baseless! (folded hands and shrug emoji)." She put a 'fake news' sticker.

SRK, Kajol recreate 'DDLJ' moment at Red Sea Film Festival

Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol, one of the most loved on-screen jodis in Bollywood, stole everyone's attention at the ongoing Red Sea Film Festival.

On Thursday December 1, night, Shah Rukh and Kajol attended the film festival as their blockbuster 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' was the opening film.

Several pictures and videos from the first day of the festival have surfaced online, and undoubtedly it's a treat for SRK and Kajol's fans to see the duo gracing the stage with their charming presence.

In one of the clips, SRK is seen singing 'Tujhe dekha toh' song from 'DDLJ' for Kajol.

He also delivered his famous dialogue from 'Baazigar' for the film's leading lady.

Both actors were twinning in black for the special screening of their film. SRK also received a special honour at the Red Sea Film Festival.

"I am truly honoured to receive this award from the Red Sea International Film Festival. It's wonderful to be here among my fans from Saudi and the region who have always been huge supporters of my films. I'm looking forward to celebrating the region's talent and being a part of this exciting film community. Film is a unifier because it transits shared human experiences across cultures. You like a film because it stirs your emotions, be it in whatever language or culture it is from. And Thank God for subtitles. It brings all that is human to the fore and it shows perhaps better than any other art, how despite the immense diversity of the world we live in, our basic pursuits and emotions are the same," he said after receiving the award.

"Cinema celebrates diversity. It doesn't stop short of fully exploring differences. And doing so, in the most beautiful fashion, it teaches us to not be afraid of those differences," SRK added.

Apart from Shah Rukh and Kajol, AR Rahman and Priyanka Chopra were also amongst the other attendees at the opening ceremony of the film festival.



Source: ANI

Urvashi on Rishabh Pant controversy: 'People just assume stuff and write about it'

Bollywood actress Urvashi Rautela and Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant, who were once rumoured to be dating, got into a ward of words on social media after the actress alleged that the latter waited for her in a hotel lobby for almost 10 hours. While the feud seemingly ended a few months ago, Urvashi still gets trolled online.

The Hate Story 4 actress spoke about the negative things written about her.

During an interview with Hindustan Times, Urvashi clarified that RP stands for her co-star Ram Pothineni. "I was not even aware that Rishabh Pant is also known as RP," she said.

The actress added, "People just assume stuff and write about it. And to those believing in such rumours, I'd say they need to analyse a little. If you haven't seen anything, or just because some Youtuber or for that matter anyone is saying something, how can you simply believe it?"

The actress said that cricketers are loved and respected by people because they play for the country but "actors as well have done so much." She said that she has also represented the country many times and should be respected.

Talking about the viral video where fans were seen shouting her and Pant's names, she called those out who behave like 'gali-mohalle ke log.'



Vicky Kaushal is 'family' to Punjab's 'Katrina' Shehnaaz Gill

Actors Vicky Kaushal and Shehnaaz Gill reunited on the sets of the latter's upcoming chat show and left fans excited with bated breaths.

On Wednesday, November 30, Shehnaaz posted a bunch of pictures with Vicky, who is currently busy promoting his upcoming film 'Govinda Naam Mera'.

Alongside the pictures, Shehnaaz wrote, "Very seldom you meet a star who makes you feel you are one of them. Very seldom do you get this feeling that you know this person for ages and is family. Very seldom, in your second meeting, do you feel that you know this person like he is family. I guess this is what a true star is."

@vickykaushal09 I'm delighted to have met you once again and today's chat was more than just conversations... I wish you nothing but success, good health, and positivity always. All the best for #GovindaNaamMera Waheguru Mehar Kare. Tuhadi movie superhit Hove (sic)."

Re-sharing the pictures on his Instagram Story, Vicky penned a sweet note for Shehnaaz.

He wrote, "Such a pleasure meeting and chatting with you Shehnaaz. Such a pure soul you are! I wish only the best for you in life. Vicky x Shehnaaz," accompanied with a bunch of white heart emoticons.

Source: ANI





Pirates of The Caribbean 6 has been permanently scrapped?

Fans have been eagerly waiting for an update on Pirates Of The Caribbean 6. If one recalls, the initial plan was to create a spin-off with a female in lead. Margot Robbie was roped in and everything seemed to have been working well. Cut to, Johnny Depp winning the defamation trial and fans began demanding his return and Disney was under immense pressure. Amidst it all, has the upcoming film been scrapped for once and all?

It was just last month that Margot broke her silence and confirmed that POTC spin-off is currently on the back burner. She mentioned how the idea was to come up with a female-led project but it seems Disney isn't enthusiastic about it anymore. Many even speculated that Warner Bros may be contacting Johnny and offering him a comeback and that is why the spin-off had been shelved.

But a new report by Fandomwire via Insidethemagic.com claims Disney has permanently scrapped Pirates Of The Caribbean 6. It is neither happening with Johnny Depp or Margot Robbie. The decision has been made taking into consideration multiple roadblocks that have been faced ever since the evolution of the project.

Kim Kardashian feels relieved as divorce from Kanye West finally comes to settlement

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West officially separated after the SKIMS founder filed for a divorce from the rapper in February 2021. Kimye's divorce settlement comes with an order for the Donda artist to pay Kim \$200,000 monthly in child support, as per reports.

The court documents reportedly also state that the former couple will get joint custody with "equal access" to their four kids, North, Saint, Chicago, and Psalm. Meanwhile, now a source has disclosed how Kardashian really feels about all this drama.

As per HollywoodLife, a source close to Kim Kardashian has told the outlet that her divorce from Kanye West finally coming to a settlement is a "massive relief" for her. "Kim has been praying that Kanye would finally agree to settle this divorce, it's been such a struggle with him. So, of course, this is a massive relief, she's so ready to step into this new chapter of her life," the insider claimed.

"There's sadness as well though, she does wish that things could have been different. She feels like she doesn't even recognize the person that Kanye has turned into, it's upsetting beyond belief," the source added. They also said despite Kim Kardashian being "upset and angry" will still have a "connection" with Kanye West.

"He's the father of her children, she has to find a way to keep the peace with him for her kids' sake. The fact is her kids love their dad, and she wants them to have a good relationship with him, and she goes above and beyond to facilitate that," the insider said.

Meanwhile, as per the divorce settlement, Kim Kardashian will be getting most of their properties, including her and Kanye West's four homes in Hidden Hills, three in Idaho, one in Malibu, and more.



Felt 'stuck' in Marvel franchises for a decade: Zoe Saldana

Zoe Saldana is trying to get un-stuck from the Marvel Cinematic Universe. After spending over a decade in the MCU, the "Guardians of the Galaxy" star revealed she felt "stuck doing these franchises" for years.

"I'm very grateful for the opportunities that they provided, from collaborating with amazing directors and getting to meet cast members that I consider friends and getting to play a role that fans, especially children, love," Saldana told WWD. "I feel that for the last 10 years of my life, I've been just stuck. I felt stuck doing these franchises."

Saldana continued, "It also meant that I felt artistically stuck in my craft of not being able to expand or grow or challenge myself by playing different sorts of genres and different roles."

The actress is reprising her blockbuster "Avatar" role for sequel "Avatar: The Way of Water," out December 16.

"But today, now that I'm 44, I've been able to have these opportunities, and I took control over my aging and I took control over my voice and how I consider myself as a woman," the "From Scratch"



star and producer said. "I'm so happy that I'm able to collaborate with filmmakers and producers and people in this industry that want that for women,

that want women to be ageless and who don't fetishize women's youth. And so it's interesting. It's really interesting."

Earlier this year, Saldana hinted at a

more permanent exit from Marvel.

"I can never say no to anything, but that green makeup? I wouldn't be upset if it didn't happen again," she told Variety. "I miss Gamora, but I don't miss 3:30 a.m. calls and five-hour makeup sessions and trips to the dermatologist afterwards."

Saldana added, "Every time that, you know, that 8-year-old or that dad and mom or those generational fans that remind me that what I did was special to them, it makes me not be cynical about Marvel. It makes me understand that younger audiences should stop being overlooked. They have feelings too and if something impacts them, just because we consider it stupid or immature or cheeky, doesn't mean it's not special."

Fellow MCU co-star Elizabeth Olsen previously said she became "frustrated" with contractual obligations from Marvel. Olsen, who has played Wanda Maximoff aka the Scarlet Witch in MCU installments since 2014, told The New York Times, "I had this job security but I was losing these pieces that I felt were more part of my being. And the further I got away from that, the less I became considered for it."

Source: *IndeWire*



NOW, 'BLOODY PACKAGES' AT UKRAINIAN EMBASSIES

DECEMBER 2

KYIV (TIP): The Ukrainian embassy in Madrid has received a "bloody package" similar to the ones sent to other embassies abroad, Ukraine's foreign ministry said on December 2. The Spanish police have cordoned off the area surrounding the embassy.

This comes after a spate of six letter bombs targeted high-profile targets in Spain related to the war in Ukraine, including the United States' embassy, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, the Defence Minister, an arms manufacturer, an air base and a European satellite centre. On Friday, the Ukrainian foreign ministry said several of the country's embassies abroad have received "bloody packages" containing animal eyes.

Ukrainian embassies and consulates in six European countries have received packages containing animals' eyes in recent days, a Ukrainian official said Friday.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Oleh Nikolenko wrote on Facebook that the "bloody parcels" were received by the Ukrainian embassies in Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Croatia and Italy, as well as by consulates in Naples, Italy; Krakow, Poland and the Czech city of Brno.

He said that "we are studying the meaning of this message." Nikolenko said they arrived after a package containing an explosive device that was sent to the Ukrainian Embassy in Madrid ignited upon opening on Wednesday and injured an employee. That was one of multiple explosive parcels found in Spain this week.

In addition, the entrance to the residence of the Ukrainian ambassador to the Vatican was vandalized and the embassy in Kazakhstan was warned of a mine attack, though that wasn't confirmed, Nikolenko said.

All Ukrainian embassies and consulates have stepped up security measures. Nikolenko quoted Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba as saying that "we have reason to believe that a well-planned campaign of terror and intimidation of Ukrainian embassies is taking place." — AP

Putin open to dialogue, but pullout rider sticking point

SOCHI (TIP): Russian President Vladimir Putin is open to talks on a possible settlement in Ukraine and believes in a diplomatic solution. But the US' refusal to recognise the annexed territories as Russian hinders the chances of compromise, said the Kremlin.

The comments came in response to US president Joe Biden, speaking beside French president Emmanuel Macron, stating that the only way to end the war was for Putin to pull troops out and if he (Putin) was looking to end the conflict then he would be prepared to speak to the Kremlin chief.

"The President of the Russian Federation has always been, is and remains open to negotiations in order to ensure our interests," said Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov, adding that the US refusal to recognise "the new territories" as Russian was hindering a search for any potential compromise. "This significantly complicates the search for mutual



End war first: Biden

It's sick what he's doing. But the fact of the matter is, I have no immediate plans to contact Mr Putin. He is – let me choose my words very carefully – I'm prepared to speak with Mr Putin if in fact there is an interest in him deciding he's looking for a way to end the war. He hasn't done that yet. – Joe Biden, US Prez

ground for discussions," he said.

Biden was speaking during a state visit to Washington by French President Emmanuel Macron, who has warned against cutting off the Russian leader. At a joint news conference with Macron, Biden said, "the fact of the matter is, I have no immediate plans to contact Mr. Putin" but added, "I'm prepared to speak with Mr. Putin if in

fact there is an interest in him deciding he's looking for a way to end the war. He hasn't done that yet."

"If that's the case, in consultation with my French and my NATO friends, I'll be happy to sit down with Putin to see what he has in mind," he had added.

Moscow also said Putin has no regrets on invading Ukraine. (TNS)

EU tentatively backs \$60-per-barrel price cap on Russian oil

DECEMBER 2

BRUSSELS (TIP): The European Union tentatively agreed to a \$60-per-barrel price cap on Russian oil, a key step as Western sanctions aim to reorder the global oil market to prevent price spikes and starve President Vladimir Putin of funding for his war in Ukraine.

After a last-minute flurry of negotiations, the EU presidency, held by the Czech Republic, tweeted that "ambassadors have just reached an agreement on price cap for Russian seaborne #oil." The decision must still be officially approved with a written procedure but is expected to go through.

Europe needed to set the discounted price that other nations will pay by Monday, when an EU embargo on Russian oil shipped by sea and a ban on insurance for those supplies take effect. The price cap, which was led by the Group of Seven wealthy democracies and still needs their approval, aims to prevent a sudden loss of Russian oil to the world that could lead to a new surge in energy prices and further fuel inflation.

Poland long held up an agreement, seeking to set the cap as low as possible. Following more than 24 hours of deliberations, when other EU nations had signaled they would back the deal, Warsaw finally relented late Friday.

"Crippling Russia's energy revenues is at the core of stopping Russia's war machine," said Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, adding that she was happy the cap was pushed down a extra few dollars from an original proposal.



She said every dollar on the cap amounted to \$2 billion less for the Russian war chest. The \$60 figure sets the cap near the current price of Russia's crude, which recently fell below \$60 a barrel. Some criticize that as not low enough to cut into one of Russia's main sources of income. It is still a big discount to international benchmark Brent, which traded at about \$87 per barrel Friday, but could be high enough for Moscow to keep selling even while rejecting the idea of a cap.

There is a big risk to the global oil market of losing large amounts of crude from the world's No. 2 producer. It could drive up gasoline prices for drivers worldwide, which has stirred political turmoil for US President Joe Biden and leaders in other nations. Europe is already mired in an energy crisis, with governments facing protests over the soaring cost of living, while developing nations are even more vulnerable to shifts

in energy costs.

But the West has faced increasing pressure to target one of Russia's main moneymakers - oil - to slash the funds flowing into Putin's war chest and hurt Russia's economy as the war in Ukraine drags into a ninth month. The costs of oil and natural gas spiked after demand rebounded from the pandemic and then the invasion of Ukraine unsettled energy markets, feeding Russia's coffers.

Now, more uncertainty is ahead. COVID-19 restrictions in China and a slowing global economy could mean less thirst for oil. That is what OPEC and allied oil-producing countries, including Russia, pointed to in cutting back oil supplies to the world in October.

That competes with the EU embargo that could take more supplies off the market, mean an oil squeeze and higher prices. Russia exports roughly 5 million barrels of oil a day.

Putin has said he would not sell oil under a price cap and would retaliate against nations that implement the measure. However, Russia has already rerouted much of its supply to India, China and other Asian countries at discounted prices because Western customers have avoided it even before the EU embargo.

Most insurers are located in the EU or the United Kingdom and could be required to participate in the cap.

Russia also could sell oil off the books by using "dark fleet" tankers with obscure ownership. Oil could be transferred from one ship to another and mixed with oil of similar quality to disguise its origin. (AP)

Sixth letter bomb detected in Spain, US embassy latest target

DECEMBER 1

MADRID (TIP): Bomb disposal experts defused a letter bomb at the US Embassy in Madrid on December 1, the sixth such device sent to high-profile targets in a wave that prompted Spain to step up security and vow not to be deterred from supporting Ukraine.

The campaign began with a package sent to Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on November 24, spurring Madrid to tighten security around public buildings. Since Wednesday, similar devices have also been sent to the defence ministry, an air force base, a weapons manufacturer and the Ukrainian embassy - where a security officer was slightly injured.

Defence minister Margarita Robles, who was visiting the Ukrainian port city of Odesa on Thursday and met her Ukrainian counterpart Oleksii Reznikov, said the letter bombs would not deter Spain from supporting Ukraine's "just cause".

"What must be very clear is that none of these deliveries or any other violent action will change the clear and firm commitment of Spain, NATO countries and the European Union to support Ukraine," she said.

The latest package was intercepted at the US embassy by security officials and was later detonated in a controlled explosion by Spanish police.



UN seeks record humanitarian aid

The United Nations on Thursday asked member states for a record \$51.5 billion in aid funding, as disasters and ongoing Ukraine war drove up humanitarian needs

UN's humanitarian office said the funds would help 339 million people in 69 countries, an increase of 65 million people compared with the same time last year

Droughts in Horn of Africa, floods in Pakistan and conflict in Ukraine have pushed number of displaced people above 100 million worldwide, it said

On Wednesday, a package addressed to the Ukrainian ambassador to Spain detonated at the embassy. — Reuters

China set to loosen Covid curbs after week of historic protests

DECEMBER 1

BEIJING (TIP): China is set to announce in coming days an easing of its COVID-19 quarantine protocols and a reduction in mass testing, sources told Reuters, a marked shift in policy after anger over the world's toughest curbs fuelled widespread protests.

Cases nationwide remain near record highs but the changes come as some cities have been lifting their lockdowns in recent days, and a top official said the ability of the virus to cause disease was weakening.

Health authorities announcing the easing in their areas have not mentioned the protests - the biggest show of civil disobedience in China for years which ranged from candle-lit vigils in Beijing to street clashes with police in Guangzhou.

The measures due to be unveiled include a reduction in mass testing and regular nucleic acid tests and moves to allow positive cases and close contacts to isolate at home under certain conditions, the sources familiar with the matter said.

That is a far cry from earlier protocols that led to public frustrations as entire communities were locked down, sometimes for weeks, after even just one positive case.

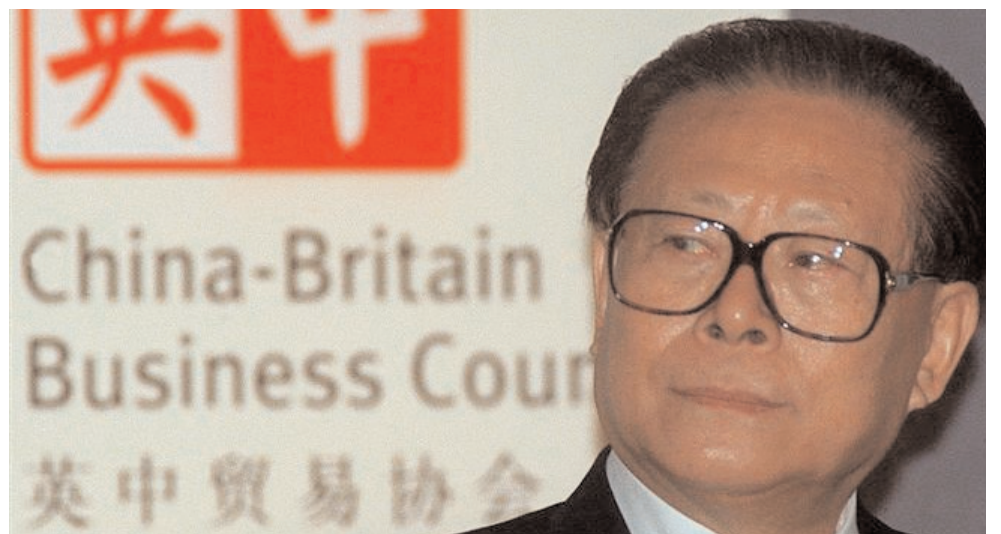
The frustration boiled over last week in demonstrations of public defiance unprecedented in mainland China since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012, and come as the economy is set to enter a new era of much slower growth than seen in decades.

CHANGING RULES

Less than 24 hours after violent protests in Guangzhou on Tuesday, authorities in at least seven districts of the sprawling manufacturing hub, said they were lifting temporary lockdowns. One district said it would allow schools, restaurants and businesses including cinemas to reopen. Cities including Chongqing and Zhengzhou also announced easings. Adding to the sense of a shift in direction, Vice Premier Sun Chunlan, who oversees COVID efforts, said the virus's ability to cause disease was weakening, state media reported.

"The country is facing a new situation and new tasks in epidemic prevention and control as the pathogenicity of the Omicron virus weakens, more people are vaccinated and experience in containing the virus is accumulated," Sun said in comments reported in state media. (Reuters)

China relaxes curbs, boosts security ahead of ex-Prez's funeral



DECEMBER 1

BEIJING (TIP): China relaxed its stringent zero-Covid restrictions in several cities after public protests and stepped up security across the country on December 1 as it braced for next week's high-profile funeral of former President Jiang Zemin who died a day earlier.

Flexible measures were implemented across China to ensure people's livelihoods amid the cold front, the official media reported.

After protests against zero-covid lockdowns, China's top industrial and

BLOW TO SUNAK AS LABOUR PARTY WINS BYELECTION

DECEMBER 2

LONDON (TIP): In a poll outcome perceived as the first electoral test of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's leadership, the Opposition Labour Party won an important by-election with an increased margin in a north-west England constituency on December 2.

Samantha Dixon retained the Chester seat for Labour Party with 17,309 votes, a 61 per cent share and nearly 11,000 more than her Conservative Party rival.

While Labour was expected to win the seat vacated following the resignation of a scandal-hit incumbent, the bigger margin is being seen as a public vote against the governing Tories. Labour leader Keir Starmer said the result showed people are "fed up" with the Conservative government.

It marks the worst result for the Conservatives in Chester since 1832, with candidate Liz Wardlaw getting 6,335 votes or 22.4 per cent.

"People in Chester and across our country are really worried," said Dixon, dubbing her win as a "resounding mandate" for Labour.

"This is the cost of 12 years of Conservative government. The government, which has wreaked havoc with our economy, destroyed our public services and betrayed the people who put their trust in them at the last general election," she said. (PTI)

PAK DIPLOMAT UBAID NIZAMANI SHOT AT IN KABUL

KABUL (TIP): The recently-appointed Charge d' Affairs of Pakistan in Kabul, Ubaid Nizamani, was targeted by a gunman injuring a guard in his security details. Nizamani took charge as Head of Mission of the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul less than a month back.

As per initial investigations of the Taliban, multiple shots were fired from a nearby building while he was walking in the grounds of the Pakistan Embassy compound in Afghanistan's Kabul. One Pakistani security personnel took two bullets while protecting Nizamani who is a familiar name for Indian diplomats as he was till recently the DG of South Asia and SAARC in the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Last month, he had received Pakistan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar who had held political consultations with Foreign Minister of Interim Afghan Government Amir Khan Mutaqqi. (TNS)

BLAST HITS SEMINARY IN NORTH AFGHANISTAN, KILLING 15

NOVEMBER 30

KABUL (TIP): A blast tore through a religious seminary in the northern Afghan province of Samangan on November 30, killing 15 people, a provincial spokesperson said. A spokesperson for Samangan's provincial government Emdadullah Muhajir, added that at least 20 people were also wounded in the explosion. It was not immediately clear who was behind the blast. The Taliban say they are focused on securing the war-torn nation since taking over the country last year, however several attacks have taken place in recent months, some of which have been claimed by the Islamic State. (AP)

NEPAL: HALF-DOZEN PM ASPIRANTS MAY CHALLENGE SHER BAHADUR DEUBA'S BID

NOVEMBER 29

KATHMANDU (TIP): About half a dozen leaders of the Nepali Congress, which has emerged as the single largest party in Nepal's parliamentary polls, have expressed their desire to become the country's next prime minister, according to official reports.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who is also the NC's president, discussed the issue of the government formation with Maoist Center Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" and Unified Socialist Chairman Madhav Kumar Nepal. With the continuation of the current coalition, it is estimated that there is a strong possibility that 76-year-old Deuba can become the Prime Minister again and that he will be elected as the leader of the NC parliamentary party. (PTI)

Suicide blast targeting police truck kills 4, injures over 20 in Pakistan

NOVEMBER 30

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI (TIP): A suicide bomber from the banned Pakistani Taliban blew himself up near a patrolling police truck carrying security personnel to protect polio workers in the restive Balochistan province on November 30, killing at least four people and injuring 26 others, including 23 policemen.

The attacker targeted the paramilitary Constabulary truck in Quetta's Baleli area, which was going to provide security to polio workers at the ongoing drive.

Quetta Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Ghulam Azfar Mahesar confirmed the attack and said that a total of three vehicles were hit in the blast.

"Looking at the crime scene and given that the truck toppled, it is estimated that 25 kilograms of explosives were used," he said.

The death toll from the targeted suicide attack in Quetta rose further as another child died during treatment, Geo News reported.

The attack killed a cop and a child on the spot, and reportedly left 26 including 23 cops wounded, it said.

The death toll climbed to 4 after a woman and her child injured in the bombing succumbed to their injuries later in the day, the report quoted the hospital administration as saying.

Earlier, the hospital administration had said that most of the injured are out of danger.

The banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group claimed responsibility for the attack which came just two days after the group announced



to call off its ceasefire.

It said the attack was in retaliation for the killing of Abdul Wali also known as Omar Khalid Khurrassni killed in Afghanistan in August.

Mahesar said that the explosion was a suicide attack as they have found the remains of a suicide bomber near the crime scene.

Preliminary police investigations showed that a rickshaw hit the police truck. Authorities have declared an emergency in the hospitals of Quetta to treat the victims.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the incident and directed the authorities to initiate an investigation into the attack.

According to the state-run Radio Pakistan, the premier expressed grief

and sorrow over the loss of life.

He also said that polio workers across the country were fulfilling their responsibilities without caring for their lives.

"Eliminating polio virus from the country is amongst the top priorities of the government and we will not rest until polio is completely eradicated," he said, asserting that "evil elements" would always fail to harm the anti-polio campaign in the country.

President Dr Arif Alvi also condemned the attack and prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased and the recovery of the injured.

He said that children were Pakistan's most valuable asset and the government was determined to protect them from diseases such as polio. (PTI)

Surge in malnutrition cases indicate urgent need for food security in Sri Lanka: Health Ministry

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka has reported a surge in the cases of malnutrition among children, according to the cash-strapped country's health ministry, indicating the urgent need to take steps toward food security to resolve the issue.

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Dr Chitramali de Silva, the bureau director of the health ministry's family health bureau, said that severe acute malnutrition among children had increased to 1.4 per cent this year up from 1.1 per cent.

"Sri Lanka, hit by its worst-ever economic crisis, is experiencing evidently increased malnutrition among children. Severe acute malnutrition among children had increased to 1.4 per cent this year up from 1.1 per cent," de Silva said.

She said that the north-central Polonnaruwa and the southern districts of Galle and Matara suffered the most

with a total of 18,420 children being detected with acute malnutrition.

The percentage of underweight children in 2022 stands at 15.3 per cent up from 12.2 per cent in 2021, she added.

The health ministry's comments came days after the UN World Food Program (WFP) said that at least 56,000 children in Sri Lanka currently suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST FIGURES PUBLISHED BY THE WFP, 32 PER CENT OF HOUSEHOLDS ARE NOW FOOD INSECURE, AND 68 PER CENT OF HOUSEHOLDS ARE TURNING TO FOOD-BASED COPING STRATEGIES SUCH AS EATING LESS PREFERRED FOOD OR REDUCING THE NUMBER OF MEALS AND PORTION SIZES.

De Silva said that stunting had

increased to 9.2 per cent up from 7 per cent while wasting had gone up over 10 per cent from being at 8 per cent.

"We have to take steps to create food security to stop malnutrition. We would appreciate donors and nongovernmental organisations stepping forward," she said.

Sri Lanka, a country of 22 million people, plunged into financial and political turmoil earlier this year as it faced a shortage of foreign currencies.

Due to this, the country has been unable to afford key imports, including fuel, fertilisers, and medicines, leading to serpentine queues.

The crisis led to shortages of essentials as the island was not able to fund imports due to foreign exchange shortages.

Street protests against the government for its mishandling of the economy led to the ouster of the then president Gotabaya Rajapaksa mid-July. (PTI)



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Period myths you need to set straight

All women have to suffer the agony of menstruation but much more incessant is the dark cloud of cultural nuances that hammer us down. Poor thing is that the infiltrators of this half-believed, half-cooked knowledge are women themselves and we have no option but to comply with these myths about periods. So, here's looking into the hell that is made of those five days of our everyday living.

We're always on 'that time of the month'

First of all, it's important to understand that a woman's menstrual cycle is not the same as her period. The actual time that a woman bleeds is known as menstruation, but her menstrual cycle is the entire time from one period starting to the next.

Although it's widely circulated that a woman's menstrual cycle lasts 28 days, that's only an average number. Some women's cycles are much longer, from 29 to 35 days, while others can be shorter. Situations like travel, weight fluctuation, emotions, and medication can all affect when a woman's period occurs, too.

So, comments about how women are "always on their time of the month" aren't appreciated.

Pain of a period is 'just like' anything you've experienced

The pain we get during a period is real. We're not talking about headaches or bumping into sharp corners. Some of us have to take off work and curl up in bed, hoping the pinching cramps will subside because it's that bad. This condition even has a medical name: dysmenorrhea. In fact, around 20 percent of women Trusted Source have dysmenorrhea that's severe enough to interfere with their daily activities. This condition affects our ability to concentrate, makes us more anxious, and can make us downright unpleasant. It's also not anything you've experienced before.

It's OK to dismiss our feelings when we're on our period

There's a very real physical change in a woman's body during this time. In the days leading up to a woman's period beginning — when she's "PMSing" — her levels of estrogen plummet, while her levels of



progesterone sharply increase.

Estrogen is linked to serotonin, the "happy hormone," and progesterone is linked to the part of the brain associated with fear, anxiety, and depression. The effects of hormones on mood are complicated, and while progesterone may depress some emotions, it has a mood-balancing effect.

It may be tempting to write off seemingly drastic changes in moods as "just hormones," but mood changes caused by hormones are still real. It may happen on a more monthly basis for us, but it doesn't invalidate our feelings.

Hormones define women

Speaking of hormones, women have been accused of being "hormonal" for a long time. Some men have even equated our feelings to hysteria, as if it's an illness, to explain female behavior, but news flash: Everyone has hormones, and nobody likes them to be messed with. Even men.

Just take a look at this study on male contraception, which was discontinued because participants couldn't handle contraception's side effects of acne, injection pain, and emotional disorders.

FOOD

Chicken 65

Ingredients

400 gms Boneless Chicken cut into small pieces, 1 Egg, 2 1/2 tbsp Cornflour, 1 tbsp Rice Flour, 1/2 cup thick Curd (Dahi), 1 1/2 tsp Ginger Garlic Paste, 1 1/2 tsp Red Chilly Powder, 1/4 tsp Black Pepper Powder, 1/2 tsp Coriander Powder, 1/2 tbsp Lemon Juice, 1 Sprig Curry Leaves, 2 - 3



cloves Garlic chopped Finely, 2 - 3 Green chillies Slit lengthwise, 1 tbsp finely chopped Coriander leaves, Salt To Taste, Oil for frying, 1 pinch Tandoori Color (Or Orange Color), Few sliced thin onions, Few lemon wedges, Chopped green coriander.

Method

- Take a bowl mix together ginger garlic paste, red chilly powder, black pepper powder, lemon juice, color, salt, coriander powder and whisked thick curd. Now add the chicken pieces. Cook the bowl and marinate them for 2 - 3 hours in a refrigerator.
- Before start frying to the marinated chicken pieces add a beaten egg and then cornflour and rice flour. Mix well so that all the chicken pieces are well coated with the flours. Make sure no lumps are formed. Heat oil in a kadai. Once it becomes hot drop the chicken pieces one by one in the oil and fry them till golden crisp. Do not put too many pieces but fry them in small batches so that all pieces are cooked evenly. Keep turning with a slotted spoon once in a while. Take them out on a paper towel and keep aside. In a separate pan heat 1 tbsp of oil. When it is hot add the curry leaves and chopped garlic. Once the garlic gets slightly golden brown add the slit green chillies.
- To this add the tomato ketchup and add the fried chicken pieces. Mix well.
- Dish out the pieces in a serving platter and garnish with thin sliced onions and lemon wedges and coriander leaves.

Tips to enhance your winter skin care routine

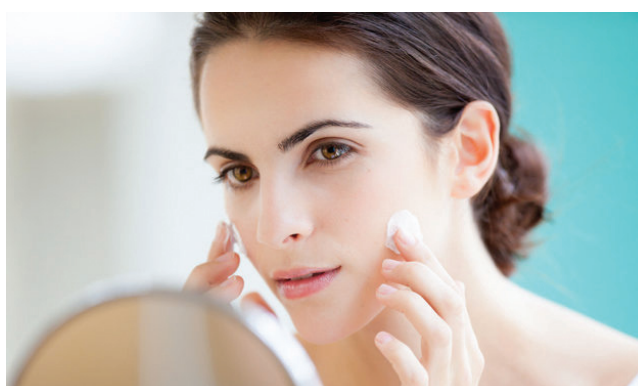
With all the good things that winter brings, it also brings along a few unwanted things. Chapped lips, dry skin, acne, and other skin conditions. To combat and prevent these from occurring, you must establish a good skincare routine or at least build the habit of regularly looking after your skin. There are many common mistakes that most people make when it comes to taking care of their skin in the winter season and we are here to help you cuties out with everything that you should actually be doing. In short - A comprehensive winter skincare guide!

How to Take Care of Your Skin in the Winter?

Below we've listed down all the things that entail good skincare habits to follow. Use them as a checklist and prioritize the ones that are most relevant to your daily lifestyle.

Sunscreen in Winter?

Yes, you do need sunscreen in the winter as well. This is a very common mistake that people make. Just because it's cold outside, doesn't mean the harmful UV rays from the sun aren't able to reach you. If you're exposed to the sun regularly, go out or even stay indoors, then sunscreen is a must. We recommend picking the right sunscreen for your skin type that UV protects, nourishes while also fight signs of ageing.



Lip Balms

Well, cuties, if you want that soft and supple lips, then lip balms are a must especially with the cold winter air that strips away your lips of their moisture. You definitely don't want to be going around with flaky chapped lips. Make sure you always carry a lip balm with you wherever you go. Check out our yummy vegan lip balms which will help you retain the moisture of your lips and safeguard them from harsh winter conditions.

Face Oil for Moisturization

Sometimes, using just a moisturizer may not be enough. Your skin needs an extra boost during the

winter season. Face oils are thicker in nature and have a higher viscosity. This allows for better moisture retention. The Grape Seed & Sea Buckthorn Glow-Restore Face Oils Blend can help you do just that. With 10 natural oils, this blend will help restore your natural glow and keep your face moisturized even in cold dry conditions.

Gentle Exfoliation

Even if you're not sweating much or being exposed to too much pollution, minute dirt particles will still settle onto your face. So yes, exfoliation in the winter is necessary. And since skin dries up quite a lot in this season, when you wash your face, make sure you use a cleanser and face wash that are gentle. A strong formulation might cause more damage than good.

Hyaluronic Acid Serum

The name might sound like it's some weird chemical picked up from the chemistry lab, but to keep it simple, it's basically a magic serum to keep your skin soft, supple & hydrated. 2% Hyaluronic Acid in a molecular weight ratio of 65:35 (low:high), gives your skin the right balance of deep action and surface hydration. This means that in winter it will not only nourishes the outer layer of the skin but goes deep within to hydrate from the inside.

Source: Plumgoodness.com

New single-dose drug 95% effective against sleeping sickness in adults: Study

A new, single-dose oral treatment for sleeping sickness is 95 per cent effective in adults and adolescents, regardless of disease stage, and could be a key factor in eliminating disease transmission by 2030, according to a study published in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

Developed by not-for-profit Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) and Sanofi, acoziborole, unlike current treatments for sleeping sickness, does not require multiple days of treatment, hospitalisation or highly skilled health personnel, the researchers said.

Transmitted by the bite of an infected tsetse fly, sleeping sickness, or human African trypanosomiasis (HAT), is a neglected tropical disease, which can be fatal if left untreated.

The Gambiense human African trypanosomiasis (g-HAT) form of the disease is found across countries in west and central Africa with most cases in Congo.

Until 2019, treatment for patients in the earlier stage of the disease was a daily injection for seven or more days and, for patients in the later disease stage, an intravenous drip for seven days, which requires hospitalisation, the researchers said.

Patients were also required to undergo a spinal tap, where fluid is collected from the spine, to diagnose the stage of sleeping sickness to determine the most appropriate treatment, they said.

In 2019, fexinidazole was introduced, a 10-day oral drug developed by DNDi as a first-line treatment for both stages of the disease, but its administration still requires skilled staff and, often, hospitalisation.

The new prospective study looks at the efficacy of one oral dose of acoziborole in treating g-HAT.

"Sleeping sickness threatens millions of people across sub-Saharan Africa. Many of the people at risk live in remote rural areas where there is little access to adequate health services, and where acoziborole has the potential to revolutionise treatment for sleeping sickness," said Dr. Antoine Tarral, Head of Human

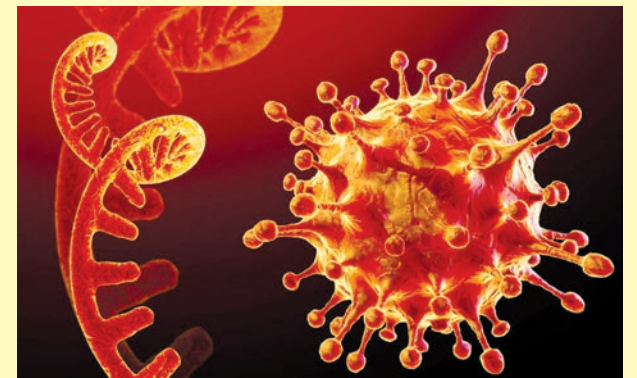


African Trypanosomiasis Clinical Program at DNDi, and lead author of the study.

"It is administered in a single dose and is effective across every stage of the disease, thereby eliminating the many barriers currently in place for people most vulnerable to the diseases, such as invasive treatments and long travel distances to a hospital or clinic, and opening the door to screen-and-treat approaches at the village level," Tarral said in a statement.

During the study, which recruited patients from 10 hospitals in Congo and Guinea, a single 960 mg oral dose of acoziborole was administered to 208 patients; 167 diagnosed with late-stage HAT and 41 with early or intermediate-stage g-HAT. The patients were followed up for 18 months to see if treatment was successful.

The researchers found that 18 months after treatment 95 per cent (159/167) of patients with late-stage g-HAT treated with acoziborole were cured. No trypanosomes, the microscopic parasites which cause g-HAT, were present in body fluids. *Source: PTI*



48,500-year-old zombie virus revived by scientists in Russia

French scientists have revived a 48,500-year-old "zombie virus" buried under a frozen lake in Russia. According to *New York Post*, the French scientists have sparked fears of yet another pandemic after the revival of the zombie virus.

The *New York Post* has quoted a viral study which is yet to be peer-reviewed. "The situation would be much more disastrous in the case of plant, animal, or human diseases caused by the revival of an ancient unknown virus," reads the study.

According to the preliminary report, global warming is irrevocably thawing enormous swathes of permafrost -- permanently frozen ground that covers a quarter of the Northern Hemisphere. This has had the unsettling effect of "releasing organic materials frozen for up to a million years" - possibly deadly germs included.

"Part of this organic matter also consists of revived cellular microbes (prokaryotes, unicellular eukaryotes) as well as viruses that remained dormant since prehistorical times," the researchers write.

According to the *New York Post*, scientists have, perhaps strangely, revived some of these so-called "zombie viruses" from the Siberian permafrost in order to investigate the awakening critters.

The oldest, Pandoravirus yedoma, was 48,500-year-old, a record age for a frozen virus returning to a form where it may infect other creatures. This breaks the previous record of a 30,000-year-old virus identified in Siberia by the same scientists in 2013.

The new strain is one of 13 viruses described in the study, each with its own genome, according to *Science Alert*.

While the Pandoravirus was discovered at the bottom of a lake in Yukechi Alas, Yakutia, Russia, others have been discovered everywhere from mammoth fur to Siberian wolf intestines.

Scientists discovered that all of the "zombie viruses" have the potential to be infectious and hence pose a "health danger" after researching the live cultures. They believe that covid-style pandemics will become more common in the future as melting permafrost releases long-dormant viruses like a microbial Captain America, as per *New York Post*.

"It is therefore legitimate to ponder the risk of ancient viral particles remaining infectious and getting back into circulation by the thawing of ancient permafrost layers," they write. *Source: ANI*

How women can reduce risk of hip fracture

Increasing their intake of protein and drinking regular cups of tea or coffee is a way women could reduce their risk of suffering a hip fracture, according to new research.

Food scientists at the University of Leeds in the UK have found that for women, a 25g a day increase in protein was associated with, on average, a 14% reduction in their risk of hip fracture. In a surprise twist, they also discovered that every additional cup of tea or coffee they drank was linked with a 4% reduction in risk.

Writing in the journal *Clinical Nutrition*, the researchers noted that the protective benefits were greater for women who were underweight, with a 25g/day increase in protein reducing their risk by 45%.

The protein could come in any form: meat, dairy or eggs; and for people on a plant-based diet, from beans, nuts or legumes. Three to four eggs would provide around 25g of protein as would a steak or piece of salmon. 100g of tofu would provide about 17g of protein.

Just over 3% of the women in the study group experienced a hip fracture.

The investigation - Foods, nutrients



and hip fracture risk: A prospective study of middle-aged women -- is based on a large observational analysis of more than 26,000 women.

As an observational study, the researchers were able to identify associations between factors in diet and health. They could not single out direct cause and effect.

James Webster, a doctoral researcher in the School of Food Science and Nutrition at Leeds who led the study, said: "Across the world, the costs to individuals and societies caused by hip fracture are enormous.

"Hip fracture can often lead to other chronic illnesses, loss of independence, and premature death. In the UK, the annual cost to the NHS is between £2 to £3 billion.

"Diet is a factor that people can

modify to protect themselves by maintaining healthy bones and muscles. This study is one of the first to investigate relationships between food and nutrient intakes and risk of hip fracture, with hip fractures accurately identified through hospital records.

"The results highlight which aspects of diet may be useful tools in reducing hip fracture risk in women, with evidence of links between higher protein, tea and coffee intakes and a reduced risk."

Proteins are the basic building blocks of life and are needed to keep cells, tissues and muscles working properly as well as contributing to bone health.

The recommended protein intake in the UK is 0.8g per kilogramme of bodyweight per day, a limit some nutritional experts believe is too low. As the study revealed, people who had a higher protein consumption had a reduction in the risk of hip fracture. However, intakes of protein which are very high -- where intake is greater than 2 to 3g of protein/kg body weight/day -- can have negative health effects. The study was not able to explore these very high protein intake levels. *Source: ANI*

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iOS 16.1.2 has arrived, and it's focused on the crash detection feature

Apple released a minor software update for iPhones today. Unlike many of its other iOS updates, the new iOS 16.1.2 was not released in tandem with updates to Apple's other operating systems like macOS or watchOS.

iOS 16.1.2 primarily does two things, per Apple's release notes: it improves compatibility with unspecified wireless carriers, and it optimizes the Crash Detection feature on the iPhone 14, iPhone 14 Plus, iPhone 14 Pro, and iPhone 14 Pro Max.

Apple hasn't gone into detail about what kinds of optimizations we're talking about. Crash Detection is a newly introduced feature that can notify emergency services when the phone's internal sensors have detected that you've been in an automobile accident. Apple developed algorithms that look at a variety of data from the phone's sensors (such as the accelerometer and G-force sensors) and other factors like microphone activity to attempt to accurately detect crashes.

Some users have complained that non-car-crash scenarios—specifically, rollercoaster rides at amusement parks—trigger the algorithm. But it's not clear whether the optimizations in iOS 16.1.2 address those issues or if they are simply meant to refine the algorithm in other scenarios.

The next iOS update is expected to be much more significant. iOS 16.2 will implement sports scores with Live Activities, allowing users to see live score updates for certain sports games either on the lock screen or in the iPhone 14 Pro's Dynamic Island. It will also include Apple's new Freeform visual note-taking app, lock screen widgets for sleep and medication tracking, additional always-on lock screen customizations for the iPhone 14 Pro, and support for 5G in India.

OnePlus beats Google with four years of major OS updates

Android OEMs still don't provide the six years of updates you get with Apple phones, but some manufacturers are trying to close that gap. OnePlus is adding an extra year to its smartphone update promise and is now offering four years of major OS updates and five years of security updates.

Timeline-wise, this plan matches Samsung's, though Samsung offers monthly security updates and OnePlus doesn't. The company is still only promising security updates every other month, so it can't do too much bragging. Android-maker Google—who you'd think would have the best update plan—is in a distant third, with only three years of OS updates and five years of security updates. There's still the timing of updates to consider. Execution-wise, OnePlus is faster than Samsung, as it took OnePlus just one month to ship Android 13 to its latest flagship, whereas Samsung took two months. Google wins here, as it's still the only Android company that offers an Apple-like update experience with day-one updates.

The first phone to get this treatment will probably be the OnePlus 11, which is due out in the next few months. OnePlus is going through a rocky merger with BBK sister company Oppo, a move that brought major negative changes to OnePlus' Android skin. OnePlus used to ship an excellent lightweight-yet-customizable build of Android, but after the Oppo merger, the skin looks like a clunky iOS copy.

Rolls-Royce successfully tests hydrogen-powered jet engine

Britain's Rolls-Royce said it has successfully run an aircraft engine on hydrogen, a world aviation first that marks a major step towards proving the gas could be key to decarbonising air travel.

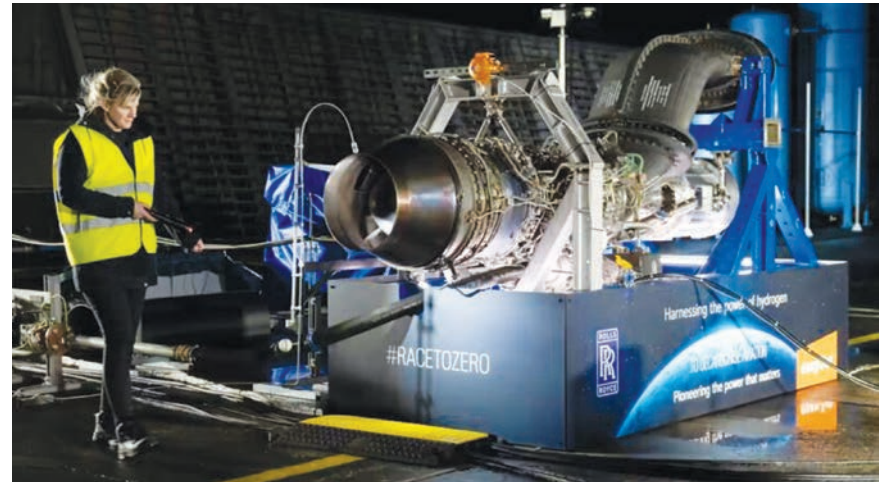
The ground test, using a converted Rolls-Royce AE 2100-A regional aircraft engine, used green hydrogen created by wind and tidal power, the British company said.

Rolls and its testing programme partner easyJet are seeking to prove that hydrogen can safely and efficiently deliver power for civil aero engines.

They said they were already planning a second set of tests, with a longer-term ambition to carry out flight tests. Hydrogen is one of a number of competing technologies that could help the aviation industry achieve its goal of becoming net zero by 2050.

Planemaker Airbus is working with French-US engine maker CFM International to test hydrogen propulsion technology.

It said in February it planned to fit a specially adapted version of a current generation engine near the back of an A380 superjumbo test plane. The aircraft manufacturer however told the European Union in



A Rolls-Royce hydrogen-fueled aircraft engine is tested at Boscombe Down in the UK. Flying is one of the most difficult industries to decarbonize, and hydrogen-powered aircraft are still years away from carrying a plane over long distances.

2021 that most airliners will rely on traditional jet engines until at least 2050. A switch to hydrogen-powered engines would require a complete redesign of airframes and infrastructure at airports.

Eric Schulz, chief executive of SHZ Consulting, said in July that the changes in design are so massive it would take more than one generation of aircraft to get there. Other technologies backed by companies such as Rolls-Royce include electric engines, which

would be initially suitable for short flights, and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

Engines that are already in service can use a mixture of SAF and conventional fuels, but it is only currently produced in minuscule levels. It could eventually be produced by combining carbon captured from the air with green hydrogen, but the process is energy intensive and not yet available on a large scale.

Source: Reuters

San Francisco allows police to use robots to remotely kill suspects

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors has voted to allow the San Francisco Police Department to use lethal robots against suspects, ushering the sci-fi dystopia trope into reality. As the AP reports, the robots would be remote-controlled—not autonomous—and would use explosives to kill or incapacitate suspects when lives are at stake.

The police have had bomb disposal robots forever, but the Pandora's box of weaponizing them was originally opened by the Dallas Police Department. In 2016, after failed negotiations with a holed-up active shooter, the DPD wired up a disposal robot with explosives, drove it up to the suspect, and detonated it, killing the shooter. The SFPD now has the authority to make this a tactic.

The police equipment policy being drafted details the SFPD's current robot lineup. The SFPD has 17 robots in total, 12 of which are currently functioning. The AP says that the police department doesn't have any "pre-armed" robots yet and "has no plans to arm robots with guns" but that it could rig up explosives to a robot. Some bomb disposal robots do their "disposal" work by firing a shotgun shell at the bomb, so in essence, they are already rolling guns. Like most police gear, these robots have close ties to the military, and some of the bomb disposal robots owned by the SFPD, like the Talon robot, are also sold to the military configured as remote-controlled machine-gun platforms.

For now, though, the SFPD is focusing on exploding robots, and SFPD spokesperson Allison Maxie told the AP, "Robots equipped in this manner would only be used in extreme circumstances to save or prevent further loss of innocent lives." The San Francisco Public Defender's office sent a letter to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors saying "the ability to kill community members remotely" is "dehumanizing and militaristic" and that "the streets of San Francisco are neither a battlefield nor a war zone." The letter also notes that most other jurisdictions have rejected the idea of police with killer robots—Virginia, Maine, and North Dakota have banned weaponized robots, and Oakland backed away from an armed robot program after public backlash.

Source: Arstechnica



A Talon robot, one of the models in the SFPD robot lineup.

New device can make hydrogen when dunked in salt water

With renewable energy becoming cheaper, there's a growing impetus to find ways of economically storing it. Batteries can handle short-term fluxes in production but may not be able to handle longer-term shortfalls or seasonal changes in power output. Hydrogen is one of several options being considered that has the potential to serve as a longer-term bridge between periods of high renewable productivity.

But hydrogen comes with its own issues. Obtaining it by splitting water is pretty inefficient, energy-wise, and storing it for long periods can be challenging. Most hydrogen-producing catalysts also work best with pure water—not necessarily an item that's easy to obtain as climate change is boosting the intensity of droughts.

A group of researchers based in China has now developed a device that can output hydrogen when starting with seawater—in fact, the device needs to be sitting in seawater to work. The key concept for getting it to work will be familiar to anyone who understands how most waterproof clothing works.

India halves windfall tax on crude oil; slashes levy on diesel exports

The government on Thursday, December 1, slashed to less than half the windfall profit tax on domestically produced crude oil and also reduced the levy on diesel.

The tax on crude oil produced by firms such as ONGC has been reduced to Rs 4,900 per tonne from the existing Rs 10,200 per tonne. The government also cut the rate on export of diesel to Rs 8 per litre from Rs 10.5 per litre. The new rates will be effective from December 2.

The tax on crude oil produced by firms such as state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has been reduced to Rs 4,900 per tonne from the existing Rs 10,200 per tonne, as per a government notification issued on Thursday.

In the fortnightly revision of windfall profit tax, the government cut the rate on export of diesel to Rs 8 per litre from Rs 10.5 per litre. The levy includes Rs 1.5 per litre as road infrastructure cess.

The special additional excise duty on petrol continues to remain nil and that on aviation fuel ATF at Rs 5 a litre.

When the levy was first introduced, a windfall tax on export of petrol alongside diesel and ATF (Aviation Turbine Fuel) too was levied. But the tax on petrol was scrapped in subsequent fortnightly reviews.

Source: PTI

US consumer spending solid in October; weekly jobless claims fall

WASHINGTON (TIP)

US consumer spending elevated solidly in October, whereas inflation moderated, giving the financial system a strong enhance in the beginning of the fourth quarter because it navigates a excessive rate of interest surroundings.

Consumer spending, which accounts for greater than two-thirds of US financial exercise, jumped 0.8% after an unrevised 0.6% enhance in September, the commerce division mentioned on Thursday. October's acquire was in line with economists' expectations.

Spending final month was boosted by wage good points amid labor market resilience, one-time tax refunds in California, which noticed some households receiving as a lot as \$1,050 in stimulus checks, and value of residing changes for meals stamp recipients.

The Federal Reserve is in the midst of what has turn into the quickest price-mountaineering cycle because the Nineteen Eighties, because it battles excessive inflation, elevating the dangers of a recession subsequent 12 months. Fed Chair Jerome Powell mentioned on



Wednesday the US central financial institution might reduce the tempo of its price will increase "as soon as December." That intention was supported by a moderation in the inflation development final month. The private consumption expenditures (PCE) worth index rose 0.3 after advancing by the identical margin in September. In the 12 months via October, the PCE worth index elevated 6.0% after advancing 6.3% in September. Excluding the unstable meals and power parts, the PCE worth index rose 0.2% after gaining 0.5% in September. The so-known as core PCE worth index climbed 5.0% on a 12 months-

on-12 months foundation in October after growing 5.2% in September.

The Fed tracks the PCE worth indexes for its 2% inflation goal. Other inflation measures have proven indicators of slowing. The annual consumer worth index elevated lower than 8% in October for the primary time in eight months.

The Fed has raised its coverage price by 375 foundation factors this 12 months from close to zero to a 3.75%-4.00% vary.

News on the labor market remained upbeat, although demand for employees is slowing.

A separate report from the Labor Department on Thursday confirmed preliminary claims for state unemployment advantages dropped 16,000 to a seasonally adjusted 225,000 for the week ended Nov. 26. That unwound some of the surge in the prior week, which had boosted claims.

While some of the rise mirrored a surge in layoffs in the expertise sector, claims additionally are usually unstable in the beginning of the vacation season as corporations quickly shut or sluggish hiring.

Source: Reuters

India's second quarter GDP growth slows to 6.3%

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India's real (inflation adjusted) gross domestic product (GDP) grew 6.3% in the July-September quarter, far slower than 13.5% in the previous quarter, official data released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation showed.

Gross value added, which strips out the subsidies and indirect taxes, grew 5.6% year-on-year in the second quarter, compared with 12.7% in the first quarter, the data showed. In 2021-22, GDP growth was 8.4% in the July-September quarter.

GDP is the sum of all goods and services produced in an economy and is taken to be the widest measure of incomes generated.

Among key economic sectors, agricultural growth increased 4.6% while manufacturing fell 4.3%. The construction sector saw a 6.6% annual increase in economic activity, the data showed. The mining sector shrunk 2.8%, compared to a growth of 6.5% in the previous three months.

Nominal GDP, at current prices in the second quarter FY22, was estimated at Rs 65.31 lakh crore, as against Rs 64.95 lakh crore in the previous quarter, according to the data. The government's capital spending increased more than 40% as the Centre stepped up expenditure on infrastructure from roads to railways.

Data released separately showed the growth rate in the production of eight key sectors slowed down to 0.1% in October against 8.7% in the same month last year. In September, the core sectors' output growth stood at 7.8%.

Source: HT

Air India announces merger with Vistara by 2024

The Tata Group announced the consolidation of its airlines - Vistara and Air India. Air India will be the country's leading domestic and international carrier with a combined fleet of 218 aircraft and India's largest international carrier and second-largest domestic carrier, the group said in a statement.

Vistara will merge with Air India after all the requisite approvals come in, the company said. As part of the merger transaction, SIA will invest Rs 2,059 crore in Air India and following the consolidation, SIA will hold a 25.1 per cent shareholding in Air India, it added.

The transaction is estimated to be completed by March 2024. "The merger of Vistara and Air India is an important milestone in our journey to make Air India a truly world-class airline. We are transforming Air India, with the aim of providing a great customer experience, every time, for every customer. As part of the transformation, Air India is focusing on growing both its network and fleet, revamping its customer proposition, enhancing safety, reliability, and on-time performance," N Chandrasekaran, the chairman of Tata Sons, said in a statement. "We are excited about the opportunity of creating a strong Air India which would offer both full-service and low-cost service across domestic and international routes," he added.

Tata Sons acquired a 100 per cent stake in Air India on January 27, 2022, through its fully-owned subsidiary, Talace Private Limited.

Vistara, which is a 51-49 joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, is a full-service carrier with international operations to the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

Source: India Today

GeM closes in on Amazon, Flipkart in gross merchandise value

The Government eMarketplace (GeM), the six-year-old public procurement website, is closing in on e-commerce giants Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart in terms of gross merchandise value (GMV).

Prashant Kumar Singh, chief executive officer of GeM, recently said the portal would be the largest e-commerce platform in India by the end of the current financial year, crossing Amazon and Flipkart. Singh pegged the FY23 GMV target for GeM at Rs 2 trillion (around \$25 billion).

In FY22, GeM recorded a GMV of \$14.2 billion, as against Amazon India's \$17 billion and Flipkart's \$23 billion.

GeM is time-efficient as the turnaround time for award of contract on the platform is significantly lower than state-specific portals.

This has reduced the share of cancelled tenders to single digit in several states.

The portal also saves cost in the range of 8-10 per cent of GMV. If GeM manages to achieve the Rs 2-trillion target by FY23-end, it will save around Rs 20,000 crore to the public exchequer and public sector undertakings.

The average order value per day has witnessed a six-fold jump, and the average number of orders per day has almost doubled in FY23 compared to FY21.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

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The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope by Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - DECEMBER 5 TO DECEMBER 11



ARIES : Ganesha says, you're fortunate this week, so you'll do well in the appointments you'll be having. Your agility will be useful in handling a monetary deficiency if you work in commerce. This week, you'll ruin your relationship out of jealousy. Don't toss behind what you currently possess but be honest with your hour companion about how you're experiencing and what you're not accomplishing in existence. This week, getting outside and spending some time in the fresh air will assist you unwind and discover solace.



TAURUS : Ganesha says, this week, individuals in your career will give you some good challenges. You need to focus on your regions of expertise this week. Don't question the decisions you've already committed. This week, you'll feel tricked out of your partner's commitment. Even though you can feel abandoned and left out, try to have an open mind and respect your partner's situation. Feel encouraged to interact sans restraints. This week, you need to be really careful about what you eat. You could have an issue with gastritis. Take good care.



GEMINI : Ganesha says, you're going to squander a lot of income this week as a consequence of your hasty decisions. The seventh sector predicts gains from unanticipated resources that will contribute to a feeling of balance. Most likely, you'll seize the chance presented by the universe working to your advantage. The individual you worry about will be astounded by you. A tiny delight in the afternoon will make your heart feel better if you're married. It's possible that you're concerned about the surroundings. Try to step back from the circumstance and unwind.



CANCER : Ganesha says, this week, you'll have to do a bunch of preparation before you throw your trumps. You'll most likely get the cooperation you want; just watch out that you don't forfeit it on a little issue. Taking chances is fortunate this week. You and your partner will travel with one another this week. If you and your partner have similar goals, you'll succeed. This week, you'll evaluate the challenges in your way together, but communicating your ideas to your partner will be difficult. Migraine will make pondering more difficult this week. To prevent getting tired and annoyed, take a brief day off in between.



LEO : Ganesha says, Profits will fill your optimism this week. This week, you will profit from every transaction you enter into. Rather than setting protracted implementation depends on this week, live in the present and enjoy it. Although they may crave your company this week, your partner's responsibilities to their career and home will keep them busy. Make an effort to inspire them with enthusiasm around what they are really eager to perform. This week, you'll feel inclined to change your usual dietary behaviors. If you intend to keep a balanced desire, eat nutritious foods.



VIRGO : Ganesha says, establishing any commercial or economic obligations this week is highly advised. Your seventh quarter demonstrates a deficiency of power on Wednesday and Thursday. Be happy with what occurs easily this week. Your partner will do one more chore just to make you feel wonderful. Your partner will wow you by showing their affection in novel ways. At a certain moment, you'll stop shoving folks away from you. Your fitness will make you feel a little bit lighter this week. You'll be able to forever put a stop to your migraines.



LIBRA : Ganesha says, you need to concentrate on the investment you acquired a long period before this week. Additionally, a completely alternative income arrangement will be available to you. Ensure sure you're familiar with the most recent fashions. Your partner will ask you to devote long-term later on this week. Invest more quality with your partner talking about how you think about the relationship. Avoiding speedy decisions about your romantic life might have tragic consequences. Your knowledge of your own condition has been beginning to decline. Do not repeat the identical error because you will lament it in the future.



SCORPIO : Ganesha says your profits will increase this week, according to the tenth sector. Regardless, if they are regretting their choices, those who have recently made investments have moved in the correct direction. This week, your amorous dreams will spring fulfilled in every way. Your companion will be interested in hearing your account of events. Your meeting will make the week better. You'll need to focus extra concentration this week on the young children living in your home. Ensure to have your regular appointment if you're anticipating a child.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says, your luck will come your way this week if you donate to charity. You'll be requested to offer assistance this week on a lengthy job. Addressing constitutional problems in corporations will benefit people. All of your collaborators', business associates' and your own misconceptions will be dispelled this week. This week, someone will become involved in your connection to help you grow nearer to your partner. Be appreciative to the person. Your health will need some care this week. Your ingestion of sodium and carbohydrates will be out of proportion, which will cause your pulse rate to be out of equilibrium. Make sure you take care of yourself.



CAPRICORN : Ganesha says this week is a great one to organize a business event. In the big scheme of things, capital organisation will produce gains. This week, you'll approach out to people using your new market campaigns, and you'll nearly surely get a favorable response. Be free to reveal yourself right now. Jupiter is in an advantageous situation, so you should benefit from it. Husbands and wives are travelling this week to break up the routine of their daily life. The senior and older adults in your household will require more care this week. Your fitness, however, will be alright. Be sure to safeguard yourself.



AQUARIUS : Ganesha says, you will definitely carve out availability for the right opportunity this week. You could think of completely switching careers, but this is a dangerous course of action. It will prove too challenging for you to comprehend if you don't go gently and undertake significant modifications. You must stop waiting for your unrequited love to approach you. You must be straightforward in articulating what is on your mind, allowing the phrase to argue on its own. The only way to reach their emotions is to be genuine. You'll have a typical workweek this week. This week won't have any highs and lows, and neither will it have any boring periods.



PISCES : Ganesha says, think about your company right now and what changes you may make to strengthen your stance and set yourself apart from the competitors. Your employees will appreciate you for providing a decent company. This week, circumstances involving you and your companion will still get a bit more challenging. Keep a modest character and attend to their issues first. Because they will sense supportive feelings, letting them talk can improve your relationship. This week, you'll begin a new routine. You'll also ask a friend or someone of your household for guidance on your routine.

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : DECEMBER 5 TO DECEMBER 11
BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA**

DECEMBER 5 : Ganesha says you have lots of chances today to improve your financial situation. Travelling or transacting internationally will be advantageous. Property-related disputes will be resolved. While also demanding more attention, children will bring you good news. Take good care of yourself. Later in the year, you are planning a pilgrimage that will bring you comfort and peace of mind.

DECEMBER 6 : Ganesha says you're a great host and you enjoy having people over, but you need to rein in your tendency to act stubbornly and extravagantly at times. A trip or transaction abroad might turn out to be very advantageous. Some people find a healthy romantic period during the wedding process. You would priorities real estate transactions, building projects, and renovations. Confrontations of any kind and situations that cause stress and tension should be avoided.

DECEMBER 7 : Ganesha says although you are incredibly talented and highly regarded by your friends and coworkers, you need to check your tendency to act rigidly, extravagantly, and occasionally jealously. People with piles and high blood pressure need to take extra precautions

with their health. Despite occasional disputes and arguments, the marital front appears to be comfortable. You'll gain popularity among your friends and in social settings thanks to your creative thinking.

DECEMBER 8 : Ganesha says you have a great memory and amazing technical skills, but you need to work on your tendency to occasionally be irritable and vindictive. The company you work for would experience many changes today. These would greatly benefit you but also change your daily routine. Propositions would be appealing to businesspeople looking to make quick cash. Women who are pregnant should pay closer attention to their health. It's important to pay attention to your diet and prescription medications.

DECEMBER 9 : Ganesha says you must practice financial restraint today and refrain from spending money on unnecessary comforts and luxuries. You two would grow closer and have more respect for one another. For the majority of you, a far-off journey later in the year seems most likely. You shouldn't be let down by the high expectations you have of your family members. Additionally, you would spend some

truly special and romantic time with your partner.

DECEMBER 10 : Ganesha says you enjoy surrounding yourself with beautiful things. Even if you are not an artist, you enjoy collecting items with artistic value. This year, there may be occasions for improper communications with your employer. Before giving your work to your seniors, double-check it. Although many factors would not be in your favor, support and assistance from friends and family members would give you new energy and make things more comfortable than they otherwise might be. It would not be an easy time.

DECEMBER 11 : Ganesha says you put in a lot of effort, and your dedication and efforts are always appreciated, but you need to rein in your tendency to act erratically, stubbornly, and lazily at times. This year, your employer and you will be closely linked. As a result, you would take on a significant role as an ambassador for the company. At a social gathering, you would be the centre of attention. You would meet new people and develop significant connections. Although your health appears to be in good shape, it is still advised that you take preventive medicine.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ||



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Bhagavad Gita Jayanti

Gita Jayanti is a very important day for Hindus. On this day, the holy book of Hindus, Bhagavad Gita was born, ie Gita Jayanti is the day when Lord Shri Krishna told the Gita to Arjuna. It is celebrated on Shukla Ekadashi on the 11th day of Margashirsha month of the Hindu calendar. The Bhagavad Gita was described by Lord Krishna himself before the Mahabharata war began. It is believed that in the Mahabharata, the seeds of the Pandavas and the Kauravas had decided to go to war even after every possible reconciliation effort.

The 'Bhagavad Gita' was revealed by Krishna himself to Arjuna at the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Now this place is called Kurukshetra in the Indian state of Haryana. Kurukshetra is the holy and main religious place of Hindus. This book is written by a third person. Which was narrated by Sanjay to King Dhritarashtra, because the Gita was described between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. Sanjay was blessed and empowered by his teacher, Ved Vyas, that he could see the events in the battlefield from a distance.

The festival of Gita Jayanti is celebrated all over the world by all the devotees (followers of Sanatana Dharma) of Lord Krishna. The Gita contains about 700 verses that provide knowledge to many humans about many important aspects of life. Those who want to progress spiritually study the Gita.

Most people also fast on this day because it is the day of Ekadashi (Ekadashi fasting is the eleventh day of the moon and Amavasya) - it occurs twice every lunar month. On this day, bhajans and pujas are organized. In places where this festival is celebrated grandly, stage play and Gita chanting competitions are organized to show children as a way to encourage their interest to read Gita. Yogis, monks and learned scholars give talks and organize this sacred book. Letters, booklets and books containing the essence of the Gita are distributed to the public. Distributing free copies of the Gita on this holy day is particularly auspicious.

Gita Jayanti 2022 date

According to Hindu Panchang, Gita Jayanti is celebrated with great fanfare on Mokshada Ekadashi of Shukla Paksha of Margashirsha month. This year, Gita Jayanti will be celebrated on 3 December.

Gita Jayanti: Significance

The Bhagavad Gita is the most sacred and significant Hindu script. This day is celebrated by followers of Lord Krishna around the world. That's the reason it is known as Bhagavad Gita Jayanti too. It is regarded as Shrimad Bhagavad Gita and considered it as one of the most sacred text in Hindu religion.

The Bhagavad Gita was described in Dwapar Yuga by Lord Krishna himself to his dear friend Arjun at the battle field of Kurukshetra. Now this place is called Kurukshetra in the Indian state of Haryana. Kurukshetra is the holy and main religious place of Hindus. It was written by Veda Vyas. It is mentioned that when Lord Krishna was giving knowledge of Gita to Arjuna to come back from Kurukshetra's battlefield then the whole gyan was narrated by Sanjay to King Dhritarashtra because Sanjay was blessed by his teacher Ved Vyas and had an ability that he could see the events in the battlefield from a distance.

Gita Jayanti celebration

Devotees recite Bhagwad Gita on this auspicious day of Gita Jayanti. Gita contains about 700 verses that provide knowledge to many humans about many important aspects of life. Those who want to progress spiritually study the Gita. On this day, bhajans and pujas are organised and sweets are distributed. People organise stage play and Gita chanting competitions to show children as a way to encourage their interest to read Gita. Yogis and Monks give their speech and explain its deep meaning to the mass. Letters, booklets and books containing the essence of the Gita are distributed to the public. It enables people and families to lead both a brave and positive active life.

Rituals

The day is celebrated with great enthusiasm by the



Important information

5159th Anniversary of the Gita

Saturday, 03 December 2022

The International Geeta Festival will be held on 03 December 2022.

devotees in all Lord Krishna Temples and perform puja and special prayers.

On this day, devotees from various parts of India and abroad would like to go to Kurukshetra and take a bath in the sacred river - Sannihit Sarovar and Brahma Sarovar. Some people even organise Bhagwad Gita Paath at home.

People can get rid of Pitra Dosha by reading Bhagwad Gita.

On the auspicious day of Ekadashi, devotees do not eat grains like - rice, wheat or barley those who observe fast. Many celebrations takes place to teach today's young people the importance of Dharma by explaining Gita on this special day.

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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

Spouses of open work permit holders now eligible to work in Canada

The move will allow more than 200,000 workers who have family members in Canada, or that will be coming to the country, to continue to be with their loved ones and work while they're here to support themselves, the Minister said.

With the new policy shift, the Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) expects more than 100,000 spouses to fill gaps in the labor force.

This policy change, according to Fraser, will be implemented in three phases to allow people to continue to come and be with their families who are not simply amongst the highest skilled professions.

The first Phase involves people who come through a high wage stream to the temporary foreign worker programme, the international mobility programme and the postgraduate work programme. This is expected to be launched early in the new year.

The second phase will seek to expand access to the same rules for people who come in through a lower wage stream, "so people who are here making a contribution to Canada's economy don't have to make the tough decision to be apart from their children and their spouse while they do". Fraser said.

This phase will take root after consultations with Canadian provinces and territories.

The third phase, the programme will be expanded to include families of agricultural workers, which would again require consultations with provinces and territories.

Fraser said that the move will not only plug the gaps in the Canadian labor market but will also make the immigration system more "compassionate".

"By recognizing that a person who is here making a

contribution to our economy, deserves to be with their loved ones while they make that contribution," he said.

The policy change is likely to have an incredible impact on the Canadian economy, which lost almost \$13 billion over the past year due to a nationwide labor and skill shortage in the manufacturing sector, according to a labor survey.

The most recent job vacancy data showed there were 958,500 open roles in Canada in August and one million unemployed people.

To address acute labor shortage, Canada unveiled its ambitious immigration plan last month to welcome half a million immigrants each year by 2025.

The North American nation increased its 2023 immigration target to 465,000 and its 2024 target to 485,000, up 4 per cent and 7.5 per cent, respectively. (Source: IANS)

US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum welcomes extension of Ambassador Sandhu

"His extension will help consolidate US-India relations and take it to new heights," the forum's president and CEO Mukesh Aghi said in a statement.

Congratulating Sandhu on his extension till 2024, Aghi said the ambassador has been a veteran of US-India relations, and an exceptional asset to the U.S.-India partnership, shepherding this relationship to new heights.

"He has seen the evolution of the strategic partnership through his multiple years of experience in the U.S., right from his earlier years in the foreign service in the late 90s, to his stint as DCM and now as Ambassador in Washington," Aghi said.

"Ambassador Sandhu brings unparalleled expertise and experience in his interactions with both the legislature and executive branches of the US government," Aghi said. (Source: PTI)

Two Indian Americans at center of Hunter Biden's laptop story

The story claimed to contain emails retrieved from a laptop belonging to Hunter. The New York Post said it learned of the emails' existence from Trump's ex-White House chief strategist Steve Bannon and obtained the emails from Trump's personal lawyer at the time Rudy Giuliani.

Twitter initially limited the distribution of the story, citing concerns that it could be the result of a foreign disinformation campaign. But the social media company quickly backtracked on its response, with then-CEO Jack Dorsey calling the decision to block the link "unacceptable." Khanna is the Democratic Congressman representing Silicon Valley in the US House of Representatives, while Gadde, an attorney, served as general counsel and the head of legal, policy, and trust at Twitter, before she was fired by new boss and CEO Musk.

A series of tweets along with internal communications of Twitter was released by writer Matt Taibbi regarding the allegations that the social media platform during the 2020 election cycle had suppressed news and information related to the laptop

of Hunter.

According to the information released by Taibbi, Khanna appears to have questioned the decision of Twitter to restrict access to an investigative report of the New York Post newspaper on the laptop of Hunter.

As the information started coming in, Musk in a tweet said: "Ro Khanna is great". Khanna in a confidential email to Gadde opposed the so-called censorship by Twitter.

"I say this as a total Biden partisan and convinced he did not do anything wrong. But the story now has become more about censorship than relatively innocuous emails and it's become a bigger deal than it would have been," Khanna wrote to Gadde.

"In the heat of a presidential campaign, restricting dissemination of newspaper articles (even if New York Post is far right) seems like it will invite more backlash than it will do good," Khanna wrote to Gadde and requested her not to share the text of their emails.

Khanna said that such a move by Twitter seems to be a violation of the 1st Amendment principles.

"If there is a hack of classified information or other information that could expose a serious war crime and the NYT was to publish it, I think NYT should have that right. A journalist should not be held accountable for the illegal actions of the source unless they actively aided the hack," Khanna said.

In response to Khanna's email, Gadde defended Twitter's policy and its decision on the Post story.

"We put out a clarifying threat of Tweets earlier this evening to explain our policy around the posting of private information and linking directly to hacked materials," she wrote.

"The press secretary's account was not permanently suspended - we requested that she delete the tweet containing material that is in violation of our rules and her account is restricted until she complies," Gadde wrote to Khanna.

Taibbi wrote that some of the first tools for controlling speech were designed to combat the likes of spam and financial fraudsters.

"Slowly, over time, Twitter staff and executives began to find more and more uses for these tools. Outsiders began petitioning the company to manipulate speech as well: first a little, then more often, then constantly," Taibbi wrote.

"By 2020, requests from connected actors to delete tweets were routine. One executive would write to another: 'More to review from the Biden team.' The reply would come back: 'Handled,'" he noted.

According to Taibbi, both parties had access to these tools.

For instance, in 2020, requests from both the Trump White House and the Biden campaign were received and honored. However, this system wasn't balanced, he wrote.

"It was based on contacts. Because Twitter was and is overwhelmingly staffed by people of one political orientation, there were more channels, more ways to complain, open to the left (well, Democrats) than the right," he said in one of the tweets.

"The resulting slant in content moderation decisions is visible in the documents you're about to read. However, it's also the assessment of multiple current and former high-level executives," Taibbi said.

(Source: PTI)



**The Indian Panorama
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Located 95 km from Srinagar at a height of 7200 ft, Pahalgam, known as the 'Valley of Shepherds', is a famous hill station in Jammu and Kashmir where many films have been shot. Standing at the confluence of Lidder river and the Sheshnag lake, Pahalgam is surrounded by thickly wooded pine forests, breathtaking vistas of meadows and the snow-clad Himalayan mountains.

Serving as the base camp during the Amarnath Yatra, the Pahalgam-Chandanwari-Amarnath route is preferred by tourists trying to reach the mountain cave of Lord Shiva. The town also holds an amazing two-day long Snow Festival that showcases winter sports like skiing, snow-sledging and many more which tourists can participate in. Other activities that tourists can indulge in are golf, trekking and angling.

Apart from being a pilgrimage site, Pahalgam is also a treat for adventure junkies and is the starting point for several treks. However, the highlight of the activities available for tourists is the white water rafting facility winding down the Lidder River through the forests and down the rapids.

While shopping in Pahalgam, remember that there are only three banks with ATM machines (SBI, HDFC and J&K) and hawkers will ask for five times the rate of the product, so don't forget to bargain. However, the Kashmiri shawls, carpets and clothing with chain-stitch embroidery are beautiful and a must buy.

BETAAB VALLEY

Betaab Valley was known as Hagan Valley until the blockbuster movie Betaab, starring Sunny Deol and Amrita Singh, was shot here. About 15 km away from Pahalgam, this place falls en route Amarnath yatra. This picture-perfect destination, featuring snow-clad mountains and lush pine trees, comes straight from the movies. It is home to mouth of the River Sheshnag and a wide variety of birds. A beautiful green-coloured bridge is built across the river that takes tourists to the pine tree valley. Resting between two major mountain ranges, Pir Panjal and Zaskar, Betaab Valley acts as a base for trekking to other major mountain ranges. While here, you can also explore nearby tourist places like Tulian Lake and Baisaran.

ARU VALLEY

Aru is one of the most scenic and quiet attractions of Kashmir and is therefore loved by artists and nature lovers. Vast

Pahalgam: The 'Valley of Shepherds'



meadows surrounded by the mist-covered mountains covered with pine trees add to the beauty of this valley. It acts as a base camp for Kolhoi Glacier, Tarsar Lake, Lidderwat, Vishansar-Kishansar, and Kangan. A lot of tourists choose to camp here for a night and sink in the quiet of the nature. Aru is surrounded by many beautiful alpine lakes and meadows and is therefore home to many hotels and restaurants, if you do not want to camp and stay longer. Activities like horse riding, trout fishing, trekking and photography can be enjoyed here.

BAISARAN

Surrounded by immensely wooded forests of pine, Baisaran is a beautiful valley straight out of Yash Chopra's movies. Popularly known as mini Switzerland of India, this meadow is

only 5 kilometres away from Pahalgam and can be easily reached by pony. It also acts as a base for trekkers visiting Tulian Lake. The way to Baisaran provides a perfect photo opportunity as the ponies take you through crisscross paths, lined by pine trees, up to the valley. There are not many food joints up there but small size tapries, where they sell exceptionally good tea. It's ideal for picnicking and a must-visit attraction in Pahalgam.

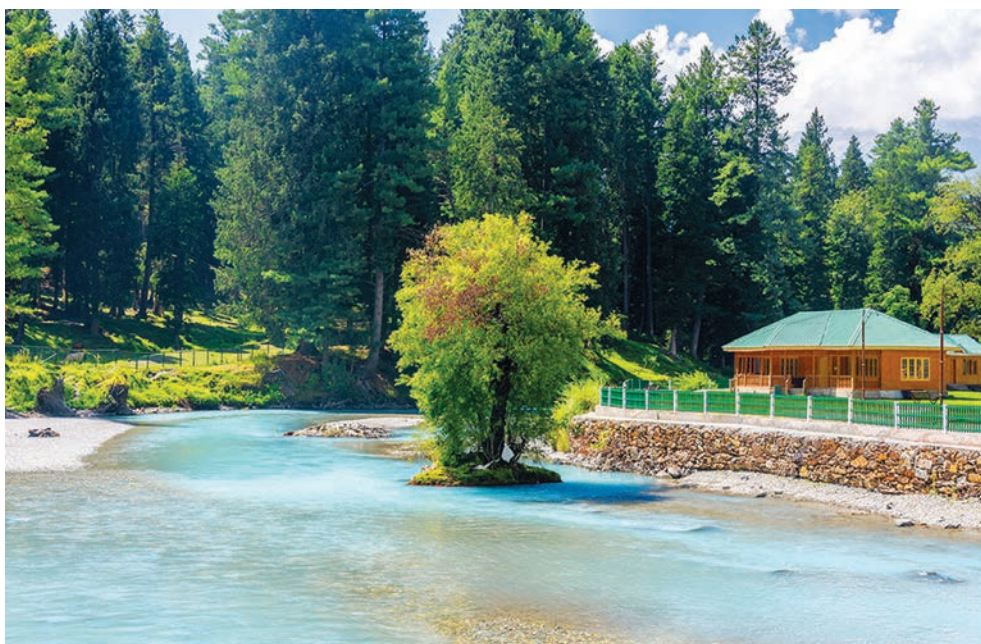
CHANDANWARI

Chandanwari is the starting point of pilgrimage to one of the holiest shrines of Hindus, Amarnath Temple. Easily accessible by road, this place has been a part of several Bollywood movies, the most famous of which is Betaab. Also a wonderful picnic spot, Chandanwari offers sledding opportunities for

adventure enthusiasts. Unless you are extremely unfortunate, you are bound to find snow here. Gum boots are available on rent from the nearby stalls and locals running the sledding camps will tip you on the dos and don'ts of sledding.

MAMLESHWAR TEMPLE

As per legend, it was Mamleshwar Temple where Lord Ganesh stood as a doorkeeper for her mother and didn't allow Lord Shiva to enter its premises. Consequently, Lord Shiva cuts his head off without knowing that he was his own son and following his mother's order. Dating back to 400 AD, this impressive stone edifice is about a kilometre away from Pahalgam, resting amid mist-covered mountains. The complex is lush green and is situated across the Kolahoi stream, which is another beautiful attraction of the region.





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History This Week

DECEMBER 02 TO DECEMBER 08

DECEMBER 2



Enrico Fermi

December 2, 1942 - Physicists led by Enrico Fermi carried out the world's first successful nuclear chain reaction at the University of Chicago.

December 2, 1954 - The U.S. Senate condemned Senator Joseph McCarthy for misconduct following his ruthless investigations of thousands of alleged Communists.

December 2, 1971 - The United Arab Emirates was formed, consisting of seven Arab kingdoms on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula including the former Trucial states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qaiwain and Fujairah. Ras al-Khaimah became a member in 1972. The area has some of the world's largest reserves of petroleum and natural gas.

December 2, 1979 - Electors in Iran voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new constitution granting absolute power to Ayatollah Khomeini.

December 2, 1982 - The first permanent artificial heart was implanted in 61-year-old Barney C. Clark by Dr. William De Vries at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City. Clark, who was near death at the time of the operation, survived 112 days after the implantation.

DECEMBER 3



Edith Sampson

December 3, 1962 - Edith Sampson was sworn in as the first African American female judge, after she was elected associate judge of the Municipal Court in Chicago.

December 3, 1967 - The first successful heart transplant was

performed by Dr. Christiaan Barnard at Cape Town, South Africa, on Louis Washkansky, who lived for 18 days.

December 3, 1984 - A deadly gas leak (of methyl isocyanate) at a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, killed at least 3,000 persons and injured more than 200,000.

December 3, 1993 - Britain's Princess Diana announced she was stepping out of the public spotlight, desiring more privacy amid unyielding attention from the tabloid press and 'paparazzi.'

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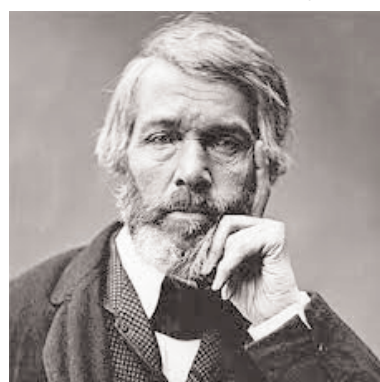
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DECEMBER 4

December 4, 1918 - The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed.

December 4, 1943 - During World War II, the second Cairo Conference took place, attended by Prime Minister Churchill, President Roosevelt and President Inonu of Turkey.



Thomas Carlyle

December 4, 1943 - During World War II, the second Cairo Conference took place, attended by Prime Minister Churchill, President Roosevelt and President Inonu of Turkey.

DECEMBER 5

December 5, 1933 - The 18th Amendment (Prohibition Amendment) to the U.S. Constitution was repealed. For

nearly 14 years, since January 29, 1920, it had outlawed the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages in the U.S.

December 5, 1955 - In Alabama, the Montgomery bus boycott began in response to the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat on a municipal bus to a white man. Organized by the African American community, the boycott lasted until December 20, 1956, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling integrated the public transportation system.

December 5, 1955 - The AFL-CIO was founded after two separate labor organizations, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, joined together following 20 years of rivalry, thus becoming the leading advocate for trade unions in the U.S.



Martin van Buren

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DECEMBER 6

December 6, 1917 - Two ships collided at Halifax, Nova Scotia, resulting in an explosion that killed more than 1,500 persons and injured 8,000. The Norwegian ship Imo collided with the French munitions ship Mont Blanc which was loaded with supplies for the war in Europe, including 5,000 tons of TNT. A tidal wave caused by the explosion destroyed much of the city.

December 6, 1921 - The Irish Free State became an independent member of the British Commonwealth.

December 6, 1971 - The Democratic Republic of Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan, was recognized by India. Pakistan then broke off diplomatic relations with India.



Gerald Ford

December 6, 1973 - Gerald Ford was sworn in as vice president under Richard Nixon following the resignation of Spiro Agnew who pleaded no contest to charges of income tax evasion.

December 6, 1978 - In Spain, a new constitution was approved by referendum, providing for a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary form of government.

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DECEMBER 7

December 7, 43 B.C. - Cicero (Marcus Tullius) died. He was a writer, statesman, and was considered ancient Rome's greatest orator.

December 7, 1787 - Delaware became the first state to adopt the new constitution of the United States of America.

December 7, 1941 - The U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by nearly 200 Japanese aircraft in a raid that lasted just over one hour and left nearly 3,000 Americans dead.

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DECEMBER 8

December 8, 1940 - During the Blitz, the House of Commons and Tower of London were seriously damaged amid an overnight air raid by German bombers on London.

December 8, 1941 - A day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States and Britain declared war on Japan.



John Lennon

December 8, 1980 - Former Beatle musician John Lennon was assassinated in New York City.

December 8, 1987 - President Ronald Reagan and Soviet Russia's General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty eliminating all intermediate-range and shorter-range nuclear missiles.

December 8, 1991 - The USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) ceased to exist, as the leaders of Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine signed an agreement creating the Commonwealth of Independent States. The remaining republics of the former USSR, with the exception of Georgia, joined the new Commonwealth.



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JAPAN SHOCK SPAIN IN DRAMATIC STYLE TO SEND GERMANY TUMBLING OUT OF WORLD CUP

DOHA (TIP)

Japan staged their second stunning turnaround of the World Cup to beat 2010 champions Spain 2-1 on Thursday, December 2, to surge into the last-16 stage along with their beaten opponents and dump Germany out in one of the greatest nights for the Samurai Blue.

Staring at the prospect of an early World Cup exit at halftime, Japan set up a Round-of-16 clash with Croatia — the beaten finalists in 2018 — while Spain had to rely on goal difference to edge out Germany. They now face Morocco.

Japan's turnaround was built on coach Hajime Moriyasu's revamp of his side at the break when they were losing 1-0.

On came Ritsu Doan and within three minutes he hammered in a shot from the edge of the box which Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon — whose poor clearance had created the danger in the first place — could not keep out.

With Japan's noisy travelling fans barely catching their breath, Ao Tanaka scored from point-blank range in the 51st minute, bundling the ball in after the other halftime sub Kaoru Mitoma cut the ball back from the byline.

The VAR system took several minutes to confirm the ball had not gone out before Mitoma's touch. Replays suggested that a sliver of the ball had not crossed the line and the verdict sparked wild celebrations similar to the scenes that followed Japan's 2-1 comeback win over Germany last week.

Source: Reuters

South Korea beat Portugal to squeeze into next round



AL RAYYAN, QATAR (TIP)

South Korea scored a last-gasp goal to beat already-qualified Portugal 2-1 at the World Cup in a comeback win that sent the Asian side into the last 16 ahead of Uruguay on goals scored.

With the clock ticking down on South Korea's time in the tournament, striker Son Heung-min ran free after a Portugal corner in added time and slipped a pass to Hwang Hee-chan who fired past Diogo Costa to spark wild celebrations.

After the whistle blew, the anxious Korean players gathered in a circle awaiting the end of the Uruguay-Ghana game and exploded with joy when the news arrived that the South Americans had only won 2-0 in their Group H clash.

South Korea had to beat Portugal at the Education City Stadium to stand a chance of going through to the last 16 and their win catapulted them from fourth to second place by virtue of having scored four goals in the tournament to Uruguay's two.

Portugal finished top despite the loss and should avoid facing likely Group G winners Brazil in the knockout stage.

Winger Ricardo Horta had put Portugal ahead with their first goal attempt in the fifth minute when he found himself inside the box and converted a neat cut-back by defender



Diogo Dalot.

The Koreans thought they had levelled in the 17th when a close-range shot by defender Kim Jin-su beat keeper Diogo Costa at his right post but the effort was disallowed for offside.

However, they did manage to equalise 10 minutes later through defender Kim Young-gwon who scored after the ball bounced off Cristiano Ronaldo's back following a corner. Ronaldo, seeking a goal to equal Portugal's overall World Cup record of nine scored by the great Eusebio, had his first chance just after the half-hour mark with a solo effort which Kim Seung-gyu saved and he was in any case offside.

The Portugal captain had another one-on-one with Kim but his effort was too weak to trouble the keeper and he was given a rest in the 65th minute when replaced by striker Andre Silva.

Morocco enter knock out stage after beating Canada 2-1

Morocco advanced to the last 16 at the World Cup for just the second time after clinging on for a 2-1 win over Canada on

Thursday, December 1. The victory meant it finished top of Group F ahead of 2018 World Cup finalist Croatia and semifinalist Belgium. Croatia went through in second and No. 2-ranked Belgium was surprisingly eliminated after their 0-0 draw.

The Moroccans' only other trip past the group stage came in 1986.

Hakim Ziyech scored for Morocco in the fourth minute after a bad error by Canada goalkeeper Milan Borjan left the winger to shoot the ball into an empty goal. Youssef En-Nesyri added a second in the 23rd.

It looked then like Morocco would overrun the Canadians.

But Nayef Aguerd's own-goal just before halftime made it 2-1 and lifted Canada enough for them to put pressure on Morocco in search of an equalizing goal for most of the second half.

Canada came agonizingly close when a header from captain Atiba Hutchinson, who came on as a second-half substitute, bounced off the crossbar and onto the goal-line.

Source: Agencies

'We deserved it': German fans react after early FIFA World Cup exit

DOHA (TIP)

In a quickly-emptying east Berlin bar, Eric Warncke is "disappointed" by Germany's shock exit from the World Cup, but says he already suspected it might happen. After a surprise 2-1 loss in the opening game to Japan, the team left themselves a hill to climb to make it through to the knockout round in Qatar. A tense 1-1 draw against Spain gave them hope of qualification, but the Spaniards' own defeat at the hands of the Japanese Thursday sealed the Germans' fate despite a turbulent 4-2 win over Costa Rica.

"Nobody expected Japan to beat Spain, but in the end we were knocked out deservedly," Warncke, 27, says.

To his mind, there are "too few characters, too few leaders" in Hansi Flick's squad compared with the previous sides.

Germany used to pride itself on being a "tournament team", which always had a chance of winning World Cups.



German subs on the bench react after the World Cup group E match between Costa Rica and Germany at the Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, Qatar | Photo Credit: AP

"Individually they are all good players, but it's not a team," he says, lamenting the disappearance of Bastian Schweinsteiger and Lukas Podolski, who lifted the

trophy in 2014.

Like him, his friend Rico Wagner, 23, summed up the feeling: "Disappointed, but we also deserved it".

After a rollercoaster game in which Germany first seemed to be going through, then did not and finally could not do enough despite a late push, the fans in the bar showed their frustration.

Even before the TV commentator confirmed Japan's win and Germany's exit, crying "this is a debacle, this is a disaster," some fans grabbed their coats and headed for the door.

The full-time whistle, when it came, was met with angry shouts.

Germany should have made it "to the quarter finals, definitely", says Levent Lanzke, 41.

"On paper it was possible, but Japan turned up. Costa Rica, too," he said with a shrug.

"Put it this way, I don't begrudge Japan," he said.

Source: AFP



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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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