



Biden marks January 6 anniversary, cautioning 'it could happen again'

HONORS DEFENDERS OF DEMOCRACY



Biden sings a hymn to democracy on the second anniversary of the assault on the Capitol
Photo credit / Today 90

JANUARY 6, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Marking the second anniversary of one of the nation's darkest days, President Joe Biden paid tribute Friday, January 6, to the heroism displayed on Jan. 6, 2021, while also warning that the forces that fueled the violence at the U.S. Capitol still lurk, a Politico report says.
Biden touted the nation's healing over the last two years but condemned the riot at the very citadel of the nation's democracy. He derided the mob "as sick insurrectionists" who wreaked havoc and drew blood in the name of Donald Trump.
"All of it was fueled by lies about the 2020 election," Biden said. "But on this day two years ago, our democracy held. We the People, as our Constitution refers to us, 'We the people' did not flinch."

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The INDIAN PANORAMA

Will bring out a profusely illustrated special edition to mark the 74th Republic Day of India. Articles and advertisements may please be emailed by January 18, 2023 to salujaindra@gmail.com For any questions, please call 646-247-9458. Visit www.theindianpanorama.news



NEW YORK JUDGE DECLINES TO DISMISS THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S \$250 MILLION SUIT AGAINST TRUMP AND FAMILY



The embattled Donald Trump
Official portrait 2017

JANUARY 6, 2023
NEW YORK (TIP): A New York judge declined on Friday, January 6, to throw out the state attorney general's civil fraud case against former President Donald J. Trump. There is now the likelihood that he will face a trial this fall.
In a sharply worded order, the judge, Justice Arthur F. Engoron of State Supreme Court in Manhattan, denied Mr. Trump's motion to dismiss the case, granting the attorney general, Letitia James, another victory in the matter.

CONTD ON PAGE 34

Biden administration proposes massive hike in immigration fees, including H-1B visas, popular among Indians



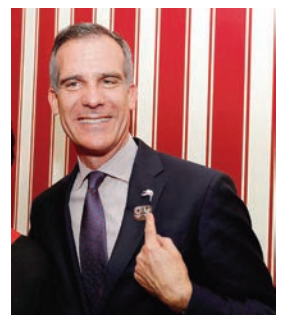
Biden administration proposes massive hike in immigration fees, including H-1B visas popular among Indians
Photo for representation

JANUARY 5, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Biden administration has proposed a massive hike in immigration fees, including the much sought-after H-1B visas for high-skilled foreign workers which is popular among Indian tech professionals.
Under the proposed rule, published by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on Wednesday, January 4, the application for the H-1B visa increases from USD 460 to USD 780, and L-1 from USD 460 to USD 1,385. The application fee for O-1 visas has been proposed to increase from USD 460 to USD 1,055.

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Eric Garcetti renominated US envoy to India

JANUARY 4, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden has renominated Eric Garcetti as the Ambassador to India among a large number of recommendations for various posts, including several Indian-Americans such as Richard Verma to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.



Eric Garcetti
File photo

The US had been without an envoy to India for over two years. Besides India, Biden has also approved nominations for Ambassadors to over 20 countries, including the UAE, Kuwait, Turkmenistan, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Colombia, Azerbaijan and Cambodia.
In July 2021, US President Biden nominated Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti as his Ambassador to India. But the Senate confirmation of Garcetti had been pending for more than a year.

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GUEST COMMENT

Foreign varsities in India makes sense, but don't forget public education

Foreign universities setting up and operating campuses in India is a step closer to realization. A likely offshoot would be a slowdown in the flight of capital and precious human resource. A fewer number of students might opt to go abroad for higher studies. The draft regulations unveiled by the University Grants Commission give autonomy on deciding the admission process and the fee, even permitting cash remittances to the parent university. Insisting on some form of regulatory oversight would help in the long run. The cost structure for students could end up being on the higher side, but would expectedly be far less than what education in a foreign setting would entail. This could result in an uptick in the number of applicants. Courses that have gained a global reputation, new

methods of teaching and evaluation, the high standards expected of the faculty and students, the focus on research and innovation, all these aspects augur well for the aspiring young Indians.

Barring some legacy colleges and the highly-competitive top technology, medical, business institutions, the private sector's shadow looms large in the higher education spectrum. The campuses may be impressive, their self-projection even more so, but not many can make the cut in quality education norms, or in nurturing a distinct ecosystem of student life that makes foreign universities a big draw. A campus is not just about buildings, it's about the culture of the place, its academic landscape, the cross-culture vibes it invites, the values it nourishes, the possibilities it offers. The foreign

institutions will bring in unique dynamics. A ripple effect, such as local universities adopting similar good practices, is possible. The reverse too - fee hikes matching the demands of the entrants.

Where does it leave the public education system, considering the widening inequality? The entry of foreign universities makes sense, but it should enhance the debate and efforts on improving the standard of education and infrastructure in Indian universities. Vacancies, delayed salaries, crumbling infrastructure and lack of funding for student-related activities are commonplace. First and foremost, fix the existing institutions before announcing new ones.

(Tribune, India)

Rising unemployment: Job creation is the biggest challenge for government

That the unemployment rate in India surged to 8.3% in December 2022, the highest in 16 months, should be a cause for concern among the economic policy-makers. According to data published by the Mumbai-based Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate had fallen to 6.4% in September - which was attributed to hiring around the holiday and festive season - but it rose steadily after that, to 7.8% in October and 8% in November. Among the states, Haryana's unemployment rate stands at a staggering 37.4%, while it is 28.5% in Rajasthan and 20.8% in Delhi. This news, coupled with the warning by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that a third of the world would be hit by recession in 2023, presents a sobering prognosis for the immediate future.

According to the CMIE data, the urban unemployment rate rose from 8.96% in November to 10.09% in December, while the rural unemployment rate fell marginally during this period, from 7.55% to 7.44%. Experts say that the rise in unemployment cannot be explained by the seasonal movement of labor in and out of agriculture. One factor that has contributed to the rise is the increase in the labor participation rate - which takes into account people who are working or looking for work - to 40.48% in December. The agriculture sector had absorbed a large number of workers who lost their jobs during the Covid pandemic, but experts say that people who returned to the cities and towns still are either looking for jobs or are underemployed.

While India remains one of the fastest-

growing economies in the world, the fact remains that jobs have not been created at a steady pace and exports have fallen. The MSMEs have been struggling since 2016, as is borne out by the fact that the unemployment rate was about 5% five years ago as compared to 8.3% now. Overall, the picture does not look good - the country's current account deficit reached an all-time high of \$36.4 billion in the July-September quarter, the trade deficit with China has risen to record levels, and the rupee had a terrible year, falling from Rs 74.33 to Rs 82.72 to the US dollar in 2022, a decline of 10.14%. All this, along with the IMF warning, suggests that we are in for another difficult year.

(Tribune, India)

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Swami Vivekananda

The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, which falls on January 12, is celebrated across India as National Youth Day, to honor one of the greatest philosophers and spiritual leaders. It also marks his ideas on how the young should participate in the modern world while upholding their values

Swami Vivekananda was a Hindu monk and one of the most celebrated spiritual leaders of India. He was more than just a spiritual mind; he was a prolific thinker, great orator and passionate patriot. He carried on the free-thinking philosophy of his guru, Ramakrishna Paramhansa forward into a new paradigm. He worked tirelessly towards betterment of the society, in servitude of the poor and needy, dedicating his all for his country. He was responsible for the revival of Hindu spiritualism and established Hinduism as a revered religion on world stage. His message of universal brotherhood and self-awakening remains relevant especially in the current backdrop of widespread political turmoil around the world. The young monk and his teachings have been an inspiration to many, and his words have become goals of self-improvement especially for the youth of the country. For this very reason, his birthday, January 12, is celebrated as the National Youth Day in India.

National Youth Day

The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda is celebrated across India as National Youth Day, to honour one of the greatest philosophers and spiritual leaders. It also marks his ideas on how the young should participate in the modern world while upholding their values. The decision to celebrate Vivekananda's birthday as National Youth Day was taken in 1984, and it was first marked on January 12, 1985.

The government had then said that the philosophy of Swamiji and the ideals for which he lived and worked "could be a great source of inspiration" for the Indian youth.

The day is marked all over India at schools and colleges, with processions, speeches, music, youth conventions, seminars, Yogasanas, presentations, competitions in essay-writing, recitations and sports every year. But due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the schools being shut, most of the events will be held in virtual mode.

Early Life and Education

Vivekananda was one of the eight children of Vishwanath Dutta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi. His father Vishwanath was a successful attorney with considerable influence in society. Narendranath's mother Bhuvaneshwari was a woman endowed with a strong, God-fearing mind who had a great impact on her son.

As a young boy, Narendranath displayed sharp intellect. His mischievous nature belied his interest in music, both instrumental as well as vocal. He excelled in his studies as well, first at the Metropolitan institution, and later at the Presidency College in Calcutta. By the time he graduated from the college, he had acquired a vast knowledge of different subjects. He was active in sports, gymnastics, wrestling and body building. He was an avid reader



and read up on almost everything under the sun. He perused the Hindu scriptures like the Bhagvad Gita and the Upanishads on one hand, while on the other hand he studied western philosophy, history and spirituality by David Hume, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Herbert Spencer.

Spiritual Crisis and Relationship with Ramkrishna Paramhansa

Although Narendranath's mother was a devout woman and he had grown up in a religious atmosphere at home, he underwent a deep spiritual crisis at the start of his youth. His well-studied knowledge led him to question the existence of God and for some time he believed in Agnosticism. Yet he could not completely ignore the existence of a Supreme Being. He became associated with Brahmo Movement led by Keshab Chandra Sen, for some time. The Bramho Samaj recognised one God unlike the idol-worshipping, superstition-ridden Hinduism. The host of philosophical questions regarding the existence of God roiling through his mind remained unanswered. During this spiritual crisis, Vivekananda first heard about Sri Ramakrishna from William Hastie, the Principal of the Scottish Church College.

Earlier, to satisfy his intellectual quest for God, Narendranath visited prominent spiritual leaders from all religions, asking them a single question, "Have you seen God?" Each time he came away without a satisfying answer. He put forward the same question to Sri Ramkrishna at his residence in Dakshinewar Kali Temple compounds.

Without a moment's hesitation, Sri Ramakrishna replied: "Yes, I have. I see God as clearly as I see you, only in a much deeper sense." Vivekananda, initially unimpressed by the simplicity of Ramkrishna, was astonished with Ramakrishna's reply. Ramakrishna gradually won over this argumentative young man with his patience and love. The more Narendranath visited Dakshineswar, the more his questions were answered.

Spiritual Awakening

In 1884, Narendranath underwent a considerable financial distress due to the death of his father as he had to support his mother and younger siblings. He asked Ramakrishna to pray to the Goddess for the financial welfare of his family. On Ramakrishna's suggestion he himself went to the temple to pray. But once he faced the Goddess he could not ask for money and wealth, instead he asked for 'Vivek' (conscience) and 'Bairagya' (reclusion). That day marked the complete spiritual awakening of Narendranath and he found himself drawn to an ascetic way of life.

Life of a Monk

During the middle of 1885, Ramakrishna, who had been suffering from throat cancer, fell seriously ill. In September 1885, Sri Ramakrishna was moved to Shyampukur in Calcutta, and a few months later Narendranath took a rented villa at Cossipore. Here, he formed a group of young people who were ardent followers of Sri Ramakrishna and together they nursed

their Guru with devoted care. On 16 August 1886, Sri Ramakrishna gave up his mortal body.

After the demise of Sri Ramakrishna, around fifteen of his disciples including Narendranath began to live together in a dilapidated building at Baranagar in North Calcutta, which was named Ramakrishna Math, the monastic order of Ramakrishna. Here, in 1887, they formally renounced all ties to the world and took vows of monkhood. The brotherhood rechristened themselves and Narendranath emerged as Vivekananda meaning "the bliss of discerning wisdom".

The brotherhood lived off on alms donated voluntarily by patrons during holy begging or 'madhukari', performed yoga and meditation. Vivekananda left the Math in 1886 and went on a tour of India on foot as a 'Parivrajak'. He travelled the breadth of the country, absorbing much of the social, cultural and religious aspects of the people he came in contact with. He witnessed the adversities of life that the common people faced, their ailments, and vowed to dedicate his life to bring relief to these suffering.

Lecture at the World Parliament of Religions

During the course of his wanderings, he came to know about the World Parliament of Religions being held in Chicago, America in 1893. He was keen to attend the meeting, to represent India, Hinduism and his Guru Sri Ramakrishna's philosophies. He found assertion of his wishes while he was meditating on the rocks of Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of India. Money was raised by his disciples in Madras (now Chennai) and Ajit Singh, Raja of Khetri, and Vivekananda left for Chicago on May 31, 1893 from Bombay.

He faced insurmountable hardships on his way to Chicago, but his spirits remained as indomitable as ever. On 11 September 1893, when the time came, he took the stage and stunned everyone with his opening line "My brothers and sisters of America". He received a standing ovation from the audience for the opening phrase. He went on to describe the principles of Vedanta and their spiritual significance, putting Hinduism on the map of World Religions.

He spent the next two and a half years in America and founded the Vedanta Society of New York in 1894. He also travelled to the United Kingdom to preach the tenets of the Vedanta and Hindu Spiritualism to the western world.

Death

Swami Vivekananda had predicted that he will not live till the age of forty. On July 4, 1902, he went about his days' work at the Belur Math, teaching Sanskrit grammar to the pupils. He retired to his room in the evening and died during meditation at around 9. He is said to have attained 'Mahasamadhi' and the great saint was cremated on the Banks of river Ganga.

INDIAN AMERICAN DEMOCRAT TAKES OATH AS TEXAS COUNTY JUDGE



Juli A. Mathew took oath as a judge in Fort Bend County, Texas

JANUARY 2, 2023

FORT BEND COUNTY, TX (TIP): Indian American Democrat Juli A. Mathew took oath as a judge in Fort Bend County, Texas, for a second consecutive term.

Mathew, a native of Thiruvalla in Kerala, was sworn-in via videoconferencing from Bheemanady in Kasaragod and will continue to serve as presiding judge for Number 3 of the Fort Bend County Court for a period of four years.

She ran for re-election and won with 123,116 votes, beating Republican Andrew Dornburg.

"I'm grateful for every supporter, prayer warrior, and voter during this journey," Mathew said in a Facebook post after winning the election.

"However, it is bittersweet this morning. Many qualified and outstanding candidates and colleagues that I know made huge sacrifices to run and some have not obtained the office they were seeking while others are still awaiting results. Thank you for standing up to accept the call of public service and your work and time is always remembered and honored," she wrote.

Mathew won her 2018 electoral bid for the bench against Republican Tricia Krenek by an impressive 8.24 per cent margin, making history as the first Indian American woman elected to the bench in the US.

A practicing attorney for 15 years with experience in mass tort, civil litigation, probate, and criminal matters, Mathew also heads the first Juvenile Intervention and Mental Health Court.

Judge Mathew grew up in Philadelphia and attended Penn State University before attending Delaware Law School for her Juris Doctorate.

A few of her academic achievements include -- in January 2021, she founded the Juvenile Intervention and Mental Health Court to assist young people with mental health issues.

Fort Bend has a large population of Indians, including Malayalis.

According to Mathews, 28.6 per cent of Fort Bend County are foreign born and of those 51 per cent are Asian-American.

The state of Texas had the most Indian Americans running for judicial positions in the November 8, 2022, midterms.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian - origin ex-minister Alok Sharma knighted in King's New Year Honors List

DECEMBER 31, 2022

LONDON (TIP): Alok Sharma, an Indian-origin former UK minister, has been knighted for his contribution to combatting climate change through his leadership at the COP26 summit by King Charles III in his first New Year Honors list released here.

Agra-born Sharma, 55, who was a Cabinet-level minister until October, is named on the "Overseas List" and leads a tally of over 30 Indian-origin campaigners, economists, academics, medics and philanthropists to be honored in the annual list issued in the name of the British monarch for their "incredible public service" across the UK and abroad.

"Alok Sharma receives a Knighthood for his contribution to combatting climate change through his leadership at COP26 and driving the UK to agree a historic agreement from individual countries that will have a major impact



Alok Sharma has been knighted for his contribution to combatting climate change through his leadership at the COP26 summit

in addressing climate change in the future," reads a UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) statement with reference to the

list honoring overseas contributions.

The UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26) was held last year in Scotland from October 31 to November 13. Sharma was the president of the conference, the first since the Paris Agreement of COP21 that expected parties to make enhanced commitments towards mitigating climate change.

"The UK's impact around the world depends on exceptional people like those recognized in His Majesty the King's New Year Honors list. I am grateful for their outstanding contribution," said Sir Philip Barton, Permanent Under-Secretary at the FCDO and Head of the Diplomatic Service.

In keeping with the climate theme, Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta received a Knights Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (GBE) for services to Economics and Natural Environment.

First Indian American Kavi Sharma American Girl's '2023 Girl of the Year' doll

DECEMBER 30, 2022

METUCHEN, NJ (TIP): Kavi Sharma is the newest Indian American cultural product and the American Girl's "2023 Girl of the Year" doll. She is 12 years old and lives in Metuchen, NJ. Her hobbies are singing, dancing and yoga. She aspires to attend Princeton University.

Since its first line of dolls was introduced in 1986, American Girl has launched a series of dolls from different ethnic groups, religions, and social classes. The company sells its dolls and books that accompany them in its stores and online.

Kavi is the first Indian American and South Asian American doll released by the company. It is available for purchase on the company's website.

The introduction of Kavi is a testament to the growing importance of the nearly 5 million-strong Indian American community.

Kavi is the first Indian American and South Asian American doll released by American Girl



In a blog post introducing Kavi, bestselling author Varsha Bajaj writes about the importance of Kavi's story. "Kavi is a trailblazer as American Girl's first Indian American doll," she writes. "The story is important to all the young girls who will see parts of their lives represented. Stories can be both mirrors and windows, allowing readers to see themselves and others who are different from them, and I hope that Kavi's story is a welcoming window for girls who might be unfamiliar with Kavi's world."

It is no surprise that Kavi came from New Jersey. The state has the largest concentration of Indian Americans. They consist of 4.35 percent of the state's population. Nearly 72 percent of the Garden State's Indian American population is first-generation immigrants who were born in India or another country.

The borough was quick to embrace Kavi.

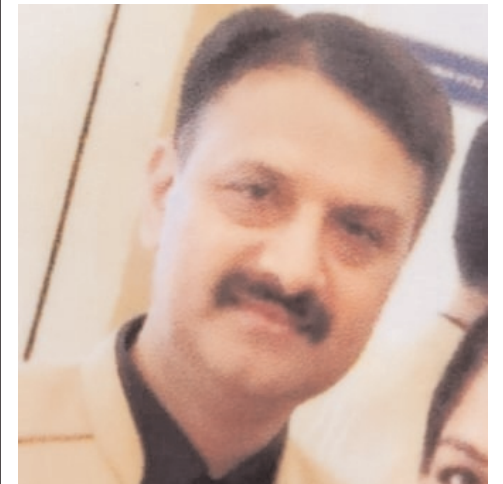
Mayor Jonathan M. Busch tweeted on Thursday: "We are so excited that American Girl chose Metuchen. Our Borough is a diverse, vibrant community with residents and programming that reflect the world around us. Kavi is a welcome addition to the 'Brainy Borough' and we can't wait for the children in our community to share her and their Metuchen stories with the rest of the country."

Bajaj, who has written a journal and a novel based on the Indian American doll, writes that Kavi is a proud Indian American.

"Kavi's family celebrates their Indian American culture through dance, food, clothing, and holidays," she writes. "Kavi takes weekly classes in classic Indian dance, and her favorite holiday to celebrate with her family is Diwali, which lasts five days every fall. Kavi also shares her culture in meaningful ways with her friends and classmates."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

HOSHIARPUR MAN KILLED IN CANADA; DAUGHTER INJURED



Varinder Singh

JANUARY 4, 2023

GARHSHANKAR (TIP): Varinder Singh of Kammowal, Hoshiarpur was killed at his home in Canada on the new year day.

He was shot dead at his home on January 1. His 21-year-old daughter, who was present there, was also injured in the incident.

Village sarpanch Amandeep Singh said that Varinder had gone to Canada with his wife and two daughters in 2019. Prior to that, he used to work at a hotel in Delhi. Varinder's mother Surinder Kaur told the reporters that she got to know about the incident through a phone call. She was told over phone that Varinder was at his residence in 16 Avenue, Street 38, Edmonton, on January 1 when some people opened fire at him. The victim's family has demanded that his son's body be brought to India so that he can be cremated, according to the customs here.

(Source: Tribune)

Several Indian Americans nominated by Biden to key administration positions



US President Joe Biden on Tuesday, January 3, re-nominated at least half a dozen Indian Americans to key administration positions

JANUARY 4, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden on Tuesday, January 3, re-nominated at least half a

dozen Indian Americans to key administration positions which could not be confirmed by the Senate in the last Congress.

The 118th Congress kicked off on Tuesday, January 3, with the swearing-in of Senators and the start of process of election of Speaker of the US House of Representatives.

Among those re-nominated by Biden and sent to the Senate were Richard Verma, to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, and Dr Vivek Hallegere Murthy, to be Representative of the US on the Executive Board of the World Health Organization.

Biden also sent to the Senate the re-nomination of Anjali Chaturvedi to be General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs; Ravi Chaudhary to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force; Geeta Rao Gupta to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues; and Radha Iyengar Plumb to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

All these key administration positions were nominated by Biden in the last Congress, but they were not confirmed by the Senate.

TWO INDIAN AMERICANS SONALI DESAI & MOH SHARMA GET KEY DEMOCRATIC JOBS



Sonali Desai and Moh Sharma are the first Asian American Pacific Islanders hired for senior positions within House Democratic leadership offices

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Two Indian Americans, Sonali Desai and Moh Sharma have been hired for senior positions within House Democratic leadership offices making them both the first South Asian Americans to hold each of their posts. They would also be the first Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in these posts

Desai will serve as the Executive Director of the House Democratic Caucus, led by Chair Pete Aguilar, while Moh Sharma has been named Director of Member Services for House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

Desai most recently served as Chief of Staff to Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) Chair Rep. Judy Chu. Sharma previously served as Director of Member Services and Outreach & Policy Advisor for the House Judiciary Committee.

"I am excited to congratulate Sonali and Moh on their new roles with the House Democratic Caucus and the Minority Leader's office, respectively," Chu stated.

"I'm thrilled to see House leadership offices hiring diverse staff, including AAPI staffers, in senior roles. For nearly nine years, my office has immensely benefited from Sonali Desai's tireless leadership, expansive legislative expertise, and continuous grace - skills that make her the perfect fit to help lead the Democratic Caucus as its Executive Director.

"Sonali has deep experience working closely with CAPAC, and I'm absolutely confident that she will ensure Members of the House Democratic Caucus successfully work together in achieving their goals under Chair Aguilar.

"I am also delighted that Minority Leader Jeffries has chosen Moh Sharma as his new Director of Member Services," Chu stated. "Moh first began her Hill career as the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) fellow and then as a legislative aide in my office and with CAPAC. She brings years of deep experience of coalition-building and legislative knowledge to the Office of the Minority Leader."

"We in CAPAC look forward to working with Sonali and Moh in their new capacities, and I applaud House

INDIAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO 29 MONTHS OF IMPRISONMENT IN US FOR BEING INVOLVED IN CALL CENTER SCAM



Indian citizen sentenced to 29 months of imprisonment in US for being involved in call center scam Photo for representation / iStock

JANUARY 5, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): An Indian citizen has been sentenced to 29 months of imprisonment for being involved in a call center scam.

Moin Idrishbhai Pinjara had pleaded guilty on November 30 and is expected to face removal proceedings following his imprisonment. US District Judge Andrew Hanen ordered him to pay USD 6,35,103 in restitution to the victims of the conspiracy.

US Attorney Alamdar S Hamdani said that between December 2019 and July 2020, Pinjara was a "runner" in an Indian-based call center scam.

Callers in India would contact potential victims in the United States to extort money from them. Pinjara would then use aliases and fake identification documents to pick up parcels containing cash which the victims had mailed.

(Source: PTI)

Indian American businessman Darshan Singh Dhaliwal to get Pravasi Bharatiya Samman

JANUARY 4

Darshan Singh Dhaliwal, a US-based businessman and a philanthropist, has been selected for the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the highest honor given by the Indian government to its settlers in foreign countries. Dhaliwal, who hails from Patiala, will be conferred the award during the Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in Indore.

Dhaliwal is known for his philanthropy in India and abroad. An incident had grabbed eyeballs when he was denied permission to enter India during the farmers' protest the now-repealed three farm laws. He was running a 'langar' at the Delhi border but had to return to the US.

Dhaliwal had moved to the US as a student of mechanical engineering in 1972. He married and settled there. He along with his brothers has business in gasoline and real estate sectors in the US.

DHALIWAL'S FATHER SUBEDAR KARTAR SINGH DHALIWAL WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN SOCIAL WORK. HIS FAMILY SAID, "WISCONSIN UNIVERSITY IN THE US HAS A CHAIR IN THE NAME OF OUR FATHER SUBEDAR KARTAR SINGH DHALIWAL. TILL DATE, THE CHAIR HAS SPONSORED EDUCATION OF OVER 400 TO 500 STUDENTS FROM PUNJAB WHO ARE WORKING IN DIFFERENT SECTORS IN THE US."



Darshan Singh Dhaliwal has been selected for the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman

He also organized the World Punjabi Conference in the US in 1997, which was attended by individuals from across the globe.

While talking to media, Dhaliwal said he felt honored that the Indian government was going to confer an award. Asserting that he felt proud to be an Indian, the businessman said he was invited to the PM's residence for a Sadbhavna event organized in 2019.

Dhaliwal has helped over 1,000 people from India get jobs and set up business in the US. He said, "We have contributed millions for social causes. We are planning to start an initiative on indoor farming which uses 5 per cent water and gives 10 times the result. We plan to start it in Punjab."

AAPI's 16th Annual Global Health Summit Inaugurated in Visakhapatnam

JANUARY 6, 2023

VISAKHAPATNAM / NEW YORK (TIP): The 16th annual Global Healthcare Summit (GHS) organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) was inaugurated with a beautiful rendition of Vande Mataram and the lighting of the traditional lamp by the Chief Guest, Smt. Vidadala Rajini, Honorable Minister for Health, Family Welfare & Medical Education and several other dignitaries, AAPI leaders and local organizers of the Summit at Hotel Novotel on the seashore in Visakhapatnam on January 6th, 2023.

Attended by nearly 500 delegates from the United States and India, the GHS 2023 is being jointly organized by AAPI and the local organizing committee at Visakhapatnam from January 6th to 8th, 2023. This Global Health Care Summit, with participation from leading medical professionals, thought leaders, heads of several health industry sectors, and policy-makers assumes importance especially in the context of the waning pandemic that has shaken the entire human race and has been instrumental in helping everyone realize that the predicament is common across all the continents.

Shri. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, Honorable Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, in a message delivered to the AAPI delegates at the GHS, urged the members of "the American Association of Physicians of Indian origin to give back something to the society, which has given them an opportunity to pursue medical education and become successful in India and abroad."

Shri. Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed confidence, stating, "I'm sure this platform will bring together best in the healthcare field from professionals, who will provide innovative solutions for the challenges being faced by all." Lauding the world-renowned specialists from the United States, who have assembled in Visakhapatnam, Shri Jagan Reddy said, "I am informed that many specialists from the US are attending the conference, whose expertise will be very much useful since their ideas on technology and advances in various fields in solving health related issues in India. While this conference is focusing on mental health, neurology, maternal and child health, oncology, gastroenterology, neurology, cardiology, they will be very relevant to learn from the successful practices abroad."

Chief Guest at the Summit, Smt. Vidadala Rajini, Honorable Minister for Health, Family Welfare & Medical Education, said, "The Global Healthcare Summit is an important opportunity for all the healthcare professionals to learn from each other and enhance fellowship. I'm grateful to have this opportunity to attend and learn from all of you," she said. "I believe that by working with you, we can improve the health and wellbeing of the people in the state. The government has the ability to design the best policies on healthcare, while delivering the best of the patient's treatment eventually falls into the hands of the physicians." She praised AAPI delegates for their "dedication and passion to deliver the best patient care. Thank you all once again. The nation is indebted to you for your leadership, and for helping our vulnerable people." The state has already started taking measures to improve the performance of the healthcare sector by mapping the public healthcare and preventive healthcare system through effective interventions, she said.

While presenting a robust picture of how the state of Andhra Pradesh has become a role model in healthcare delivery with higher rate of investment in healthcare, the Health Minister of Andhra Pradesh said, "Thank you all for being here. And thank you for taking time and conducting such big summits over here. And



Smt. Vidadala Rajini, Honorable Minister for Health, Family Welfare & Medical Education inaugurated the Summit with the traditional lighting of the lamp



AAPI leaders and guests on the stage



A view of the gathering

likewise, it's a learning session for all of us. And all of your ideas will be taken into consideration by the government of Andhra Pradesh, and let's all work together and be a part of the growth story of us today."

Others who spoke on the occasion and felicitated AAPI and the local organizers of the Summit included, Shri. Gudivada Amarnath, Honorable Minister for IT.

Dr Ravi Kolli, President of AAPI in his opening remarks, while describing the objectives of the Summit, said, "The Global Healthcare Summit aims at raising awareness on key health care issues affecting the Indian subcontinent such as Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, Women's and Children's Health, Infectious Diseases and Mental Health." The highlight of this Summit is to reaffirm NRI Physicians' commitment towards improving health care and create model programs for management of various diseases

and to improve outcomes universally, he added. The Summit will be focusing on mental health, reduce the stigma for seeking mental health services, working on Physicians burnout, he added. In addition, AAPI is keen to collaborate with various state and federal government programs to enhance the quality of healthcare delivery, making it affordable, efficient, and equitable, especially helping with the management of various diseases, improving health outcomes universally, training the trainer sessions involving learning modules in different specialties, and tele-consultations.

"We are sure that the Summit will offer a rewarding experience not only on intellectual but on aesthetic front as well, as the scenic beauty of Visakhapatnam and the many places around will be worth going to during your trip. The organizing committee is immensely pleased to be at your service," said Dr. Ravi Raju, Chair of GHS (India) 2023.

Describing some of the objectives of the GHS, Dr. Prasad Chalasani, Chair of GHS (USA) 2023 said. "We hope to create an intellectually charged platform for experts to share their experiences on some of the common professional issues that still remain a challenge in spite of all the advancement. The exchange of expertise and transfer of technology by the best brains is bound to offer positive and innovative solutions to some of the problems faced by humankind."

Among the many initiatives that emerge from GHS 2023, a notable action plan will be for AAPI to collaborate with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to initiate an ambitious program to address mental health and wellness of students in high school in Andhra Pradesh. Some of the other initiatives that will be announced during the GHS 2023 include: effective treatment modalities on non-communicable medical diseases, reducing the infant and maternal mortality and HPV Vaccination.

Discussions and deliberations that are being addressed included, the Stigma of Mental illness, Suicide prevention, Management of Chronic diseases and Non Communicable Diseases, and other Global Health issues including Climate Change and its impact on health.

The essence of AAPI is educational. That translates into numerous Continuing Medical Education and non-CME seminars by experts in their fields. The GHS 2023 with the theme of "True and Total Health is the Wellbeing of Mind, Body, and Spirit" has several CME sessions that focus on Mental Health, Infant and Maternal Mortality as well as various other medical specialty updates, and Medical Jeopardy.

CME sessions with academicians from the United States offer unique opportunities for local medical staff and healthcare professionals to advance leanings and provide the best possible care for the people of India. The Summit will have a research competition for medical students and post graduate students from all over India. AAPI will confer Awards of excellence and lifetime achievements during the Summit.

"In our quest to fulfill the mission of AAPI, we are proud to share best practices and experiences from leading experts in the world and develop actionable plans and projects that enable access to affordable and quality healthcare for all people. To help accomplish this mission, we are excited to be here in Visakhapatnam and be part of the GHS 2023," Dr. Kolli urged. For more information on Global Health Summit, please visit: www.summit.aapiusa.org and www.GHS2023.com

(Based on a Press Release)

THE INDIAN PANORAMA EDITOR INDRAJIT SALUJA INTERVIEWS AMBASSADOR RANDHIR KUMAR JAISWAL, CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA AT NEW YORK

Students are ambassadors of the country



Ambassador Jaiswal says Indian students here are promoters of "economic ties, technological ties, cultural ties." File photo / TIP

Consul General of India at New York Mr. Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, a few days after joining the present position on 19th July 2020 in an interview with The Indian Panorama, had spelt out in brief his priorities which included nourishing and strengthening the already strong bonds between India and US, and exploring new areas of cooperation and relationship in diverse fields of economy, trade, technology, and culture etc. Ambassador Jaiswal added that serving the Indian Diaspora remained the primary focused concern of the Consulate. The strengthening of multi-stake holders relationship will be another priority, he said.

The Indian Panorama interviewed him a couple of times, and each time, Mr. Jaiswal was forthcoming on all issues raised, and questions asked.

Three days to the end of the year 2022, Mr. Jaiswal agreed to sit with the editor of The Indian Panorama to share for the readers of the publication his thoughts. It was a long interview in which Ambassador Jaiswal touched upon all the aforementioned areas.

In the part 1 of the interview published last week, Ambassador Jaiswal focused on the vibrant Indian American community and its contribution.

In this second part of the interview, we bring to readers Ambassador's perspective on Indian students as a powerhouse of knowledge, catalysts of national integration, and promoters of Indian arts, culture and values.

Here are some excerpts from the interview.

TIP: WE HAVE A LARGE NUMBER OF INDIANS STUDYING IN THE US. A LARGE CHUNK OF THEM IS ON THE EAST COAST WHERE THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PRESTIGIOUS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE THE PREFERRED DESTINATIONS FOR PURSUING STUDIES. THEY MAY NEED HELP FROM THE CONSULATE IN QUITE A FEW AREAS. HOW DOES YOUR CONSULATE HELP THEM?

AMBASSADOR: We have a very broad mandate. The consulate has a certain jurisdiction. Our jurisdiction comprises 10 states in northeast of United States which include six of New England- Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont-, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio. This is a conservative direction, in terms of rendering, consular services- Visa, passports, all sorts of documentation, which are required, and power of attorney etc. That is a constitution. In addition, we have a large community here so we have to maintain community links, community relations, and we have to see as to how we can strengthen the links of India with the community here, not just strengthen, but also continue to add value to it. It's a cross flow which helps all the stakeholders; it helps the country; it helps the community. So, that is a community part of our

coming up. So, that remains an important part of our function.

TIP: SINCE YOU WERE SPEAKING ABOUT THE UNDERSTANDING OF INDIA AMONGST THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND ALL THAT, DO YOU THINK STUDENTS CAN REALLY PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN PROMOTING AN UNDERSTANDING ABOUT INDIA HERE BECAUSE THEY ARE IN CONTACT WITH THE AMERICANS, THE MAINSTREAM AMERICANS WHERE THEY ARE STUDYING? DO YOU THINK SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE IN THE FIRST PLACE TO HAVE THE STUDENTS COME UNDER AN UMBRELLA AND THAT UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION GIVES THEM A FEED ON WHAT IS HAPPENING IN INDIA, AND ABOUT INDIAN VALUES, AND HOW THEY CAN PROBABLY PASS ON THAT KIND OF INFORMATION TO THEIR FRIENDS IN THE COLLEGES AND THE UNIVERSITIES WHERE THEY ARE STUDYING? HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN IDEA THAT AN ORGANIZATION OF STUDENTS UNDER YOUR JURISDICTION SHOULD BE CREATED?



A view of the gathering of new students at University of Connecticut meet and greet organized by GOPIO

File photo / Courtesy GOPIO-CT

function.

Then we have cultural relations that we have to maintain. We have this beautiful relationship. We have to promote cultural understanding. That cultural understanding enhances the value of our community here at the same time as it enhances mutual cooperation between the people of America and our people. The unity binds us together and we have to see how we can build this relationship. So, cultural understanding and better appreciation of each other are important. And that was the third pillar.

The fourth pillar, I would say is education. We have a large number of students here who are studying in various universities. We have upwards of 220,000 students in the United States. This year, I think, 82,000 fresh Indian students have come which makes us the largest international cohort. We have to take care of the welfare of students. We maintain close relations with the student bodies. They may have welfare issues. They may have several day-to-day issues which we have to attend every year. That's why you know we try to have a meet and greet with the students. Obviously, the space is a limitation. We can't invite 80,000 people but we do invite whoever we can, so that our student relations are smooth and efficient and cordial and we attend to their needs.

Education has other aspects to it. Also, there is a very strong education cooperation between universities here and universities in India on the research side, on faculty exchange and academics. And now with the new education policy, we see that more and more universities in the United States want to do more and more things with universities in India on research side, on finding ways to earn degrees. New programs are

AMBASSADOR : So, you know, students are ambassadors of the country. They bring with them their cultural values, their ethos, their fairs and festivals. Each year, I go around universities where I find them all celebrating Holi, Diwali and other festivals. The Indian organizations celebrate them. We were in Ohio. Ohio State University has very strong links with Punjab and Punjab Agricultural University. So very interestingly in Ohio, apart from the Indian association, you also had Punjabi Student Association. So, they celebrate fairs and festivals as per the calendar. So, I see like the Indian diaspora, the Indian students who come here, have a very important role to play as cultural ambassadors in the country. They live the American environment. So, they are very well placed to make an impact as far as understanding of India is concerned among the cohort, among the student groups and that has huge impact that will go a long way in promoting India-US friendship. That's on the cultural side.

The second thing is, of the 220,000 Indian students who come here, a majority of them are into STEM areas. Now, when you are an expert in data science or computer science etc. you add competitive value to the local economy. You provide talent based to the local economy, which serves the interests of local society of local economy. It adds competitive value and that leads to a very strong appreciation of the kind of value that Indian talent and skills is today, adding to not just American economy, but global economy. So, overall, you know, the large number of students that we have, they then become the conveyor belt or the conduit through which they promote economic ties, technological ties, cultural ties.

To be continued next week

AN UNCERTAIN MARCH

MESSAGE AGAINST MAJORITARIAN EXCLUSIVISM CANNOT BE MINORITY CONSOLIDATION



BY
**RAJESH
RAMACHANDRAN**

"INDIA'S PARTITION, FOUR WARS OVER THE TWO-NATION THEORY AND THE KILLING OF LAKHS OF HINDUS IN EAST PAKISTAN DO NOT MAKE THE CREATION OF AN INCLUSIVE POLITY EASY. IT CAN ONLY BE DONE WITH A HEAVY DOSE OF RATIONALISM AND AN EQUAL CONTEMPT FOR ALL CLERGIES.

UNFORTUNATELY, INDIAN SECULARISM ONLY MEANS PROSCRIBING MODERNITY AND PROSELYTIZATION OF PRE-MODERNITY. HINDUS WILL CONTINUE TO GET MOBILIZED UNDER THE HINDUTVA EXCLUSIVIST IDENTITY AS LONG AS THE ULAMA AND THE CHURCH ATTEMPT TO UNIFY PEOPLE USING RELIGIOUS IDENTITY."

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi was kind enough to send a personal invitation for the Bharat Jodo Yatra as it enters our region. Had it not been for the lingering aches and pains of a terrible chikungunya infection, I would definitely have loved to become a yatri, particularly because he writes that 'You, through all that you have done, are a valuable part of this conversation, and I would very much like to listen to you and share our perspectives. It doesn't matter whether we agree or disagree. It's important that we talk and listen in freedom.' Even if it is a mere template for a polite invitation letter and even if everybody gets the same letter, it is indeed nicely worded.

Creation of an inclusive polity can



While Rahul deserves appreciation for undertaking a grueling journey from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, one cannot agree with him. Photo credit / ANI

only be done with nationalism and equal contempt for all clergies. Unfortunately, Indian secularism only means proscribing modernity and proselytization of pre-modernity.

As a journalist, wanting to walk along with Rahul has one very important reason: to find out how much of the crowd is dependent on the organizing skills of the Hoodas or Warrings (or the respective satraps in each state as the yatra goes through it) and how many have come to just look at Rahul, the celebrity politician, and how many want to 'awaken the nation's conscience to crippling inequality, brutal social polarization, and violent authoritarianism,' as Rahul's letter puts it. If he succeeds in mobilizing the masses and helping them to cleanse themselves of the hatred that has seeped into the soul of India, he would have succeeded in his endeavor, regardless of electoral outcome.

But, while putting on record all the appreciation that Rahul deserves for undertaking this grueling journey from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, it has to be said that one cannot agree with him. Primarily, Rahul assumes that 'the mainstream media has become an instrument that serves only the interests and destructive ideology of those in power.' The Tribune is 'the' mainstream newspaper of the region, being its largest circulated daily, and it does not make sense to tar the mainstream media with such a terrible allegation in a letter of invitation to a mainstream media practitioner. It is an exhibition of ignorance of what the mainstream media is all about, or it is to mistake a few repugnant TV anchors for the mainstream.

Rahul is a member of Parliament from the hilly, backward constituency of Wayanad in Kerala. Nearly nobody in his constituency watches English or Hindi

news television. None of the mainstream media in Kerala has anything in common with those who had tricked Rahul into giving a terrible interview eight years ago. There are vibrant TV channels, nationally-renowned regional language newspapers, magazines, websites and whatnot reaching Rahul's constituency, and some of them are sympathetic to him and definitely opposed to the BJP. Will he not term them mainstream? Every state has its own mainstream media in its local language or sometimes in English. A few rogue, moneyed TV anchors of Delhi or Mumbai do not represent the diversity of Indian journalism. In fact, a person out to protect and nurture the country's diversity should learn more about its media diversity.

Almost every regional party worth its symbol has attempted to create its own cultural space by creating newspapers, magazines and TV channels. Even the CPI (M), which is now electorally limited to Kerala, has a bouquet of entertainment and news channels in Malayalam. So does the DMK in Tamil Nadu or SAD in Punjab. And if the Congress cannot find good journalists to revive Jawaharlal Nehru's National Herald and create its own 'mainstream media' in Hindi and English, its political rivals cannot be blamed. The attempt made by a former Congress MP to launch a TV channel anchored by a Radia Tapes-tainted veteran, borrowing the broadcast license from a Christian evangelist, was a hilarious episode, showing why the party is where it is.

Another disturbing aspect about the Bharat Jodo Yatra is its messaging. With have-beens like a former RAW chief and failed political wannabes like Kamal Haasan thronging the liberal-secular mela, it is a grand photo-op for all those who failed to gain entry into the present ruling dispensation and are waiting for

CREATION OF AN INCLUSIVE POLITY CAN ONLY BE DONE WITH NATIONALISM AND EQUAL CONTEMPT FOR ALL CLERGIES. UNFORTUNATELY, INDIAN SECULARISM ONLY MEANS PROSCRIBING MODERNITY AND PROSELYTIZATION OF PRE-MODERNITY.

the Opposition to come to power to become relevant again. The message against Hindutva or religious exclusivism as a political tool is not being communicated because for its antithesis - a political philosophy of inclusivism - to be convincing, it has to be appealing to the Hindus. This was said by none other than Sonia Gandhi's most trusted adviser and a former defense minister, who also happens to be a Catholic - AK Antony.

Some of his Leftist detractors had immediately slammed Antony for pushing a soft-Hindutva line. But in his own laconic way, Antony was trying to address the biggest crisis in the Congress - losing Hindu votes in search of minority consolidation. The politics of tactical voting, minority consolidation, splintering of caste votes, and caste and communal alliances for electoral opportunism has run its course. The new secular and liberal politics ought to eschew caste and religious markers altogether. The Congress that banned Salman Rushdie, maximizing the political gains of the offence-taking socio-cultural industry, should apologize for the reversal of the Shah Bano verdict and inaugurate a new language in political communication for a new India where we can have a Charlie Hebdo-kind of a 'mainstream' magazine.

India's Partition, four wars over the two-nation theory and the killing of lakhs of Hindus in East Pakistan do not make the creation of an inclusive polity easy. It can only be done with a heavy dose of rationalism and an equal contempt for all clergies. Unfortunately, Indian secularism only means proscribing modernity and proselytization of pre-modernity. Hindus will continue to get mobilized under the Hindutva exclusivist identity as long as the Ulama and the Church attempt to unify people using religious identity. It's worth noting that Rahul spent the longest in a state that witnessed Christian fanatics burning down a holy Hindu shrine long ago, and now sees Islamists of PFI threatening to kill Hindus and Christians.

(The author is Editor-in-Chief of Tribune, Chandigarh)

EUROPE'S WARS INSEPARABLE FROM PROFITEERING



BY ABHIJIT
BHATTACHARYYA

"THE PROLONGED RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR LAYS BARE THE STARK REALITY THAT EVEN AN IMMORAL WAR IS GOOD FOR THE MORAL AND ETHICAL HEALTH OF THE WEST BECAUSE THROUGH WRECKAGE, BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS OF WIDOWS, DESTITUTE AND ORPHANS EMERGE COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR WEALTH CREATION AND OPEN PLUNDER BY MERCHANTS AND MIDDLEMEN. SHORTAGE OF FOOD FACILITATES PROFITEERING TOO, THE WAY IT HAPPENED IN THE 1943 GREAT BENGAL FAMINE, KILLING 3 MILLION PEOPLE AMID THE WORLD WAR II INFLICTED BY EUROPE ON THE WORLD."

On the eve of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February last year, UK Defense Secretary Ben Wallace had exclaimed, "The Scots Guards kicked the backside of Tsar Nicholas I in the 1853 Crimea War and we can always do it again," comparing the 21st-century Russia-Ukraine conflict with the 19th-century war. The Tsar had been pitted against the combined might of England, France and the Ottoman Empire. The Russian defeat of yore and the lack of an international ally were sarcastically invoked to draw a parallel and warn Moscow to watch out for history repeating itself.

What the British Defense Secretary said was neither unsurprising nor unique. War has always had a macabre fascination for Europe. The gory combats and their inglorious consequences have been used to portray the grandeur of the warring West. Most of Europe's eminent and enlightened scholars, intellectuals and philosophers have been fascinated with, and have spoken eloquently on, the importance of



Photo caption: The prolonged Russia-Ukraine war lays bare the stark reality that even an immoral war is good for the moral and ethical health of the West. Photo / PTI

power, war and violence.

Machiavelli pointedly stated, "All armed prophets have conquered and unarmed ones failed." To him, war, power and hypocrisy are connected. For Thomas Hobbes, conflict emerges from the impulse of self-preservation, thereby making life a "war of all against all" and resulting in it being "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". The views of Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the power of the state influenced global politics. His 'Discourse on Inequality', according to Voltaire, was "against the human race". Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel unabashedly admired Napoleonic wars and thought that it was a good thing to have wars from time to time. In all these expressions of the European mindset, one thing is clear. There is an element of axiomatic intellectual honesty about justifying, propounding or defending political dishonesty which appears preferable to the hypocrisy of depicting political polemics as an honest and noble enterprise.

In this context, the prolonged Russia-Ukraine war lays bare the stark reality that even an immoral war is good for the moral and ethical health of the West because through wreckage, blood, sweat and tears of widows, destitute and orphans emerge countless opportunities for wealth creation and open plunder by merchants and middlemen. Shortage of food facilitates profiteering too, the way it happened in the 1943 Great Bengal famine, killing 3 million people amid the World War II inflicted by Europe on the world.

As the demand for guns surges, profit too skyrockets with the sale of every weapon or machine. Thus, the enterprise of military hardware production and sale becomes too tempting and lucrative to be eschewed, as after a long gap a 'real' war has come to European soil, where big-buck investments and astronomical profits are being made.

Further, if the war is between powerful belligerents, soaring profit is guaranteed because both possess the wherewithal to sustain a protracted conflict. In contrast, smaller wars in Third World countries reduce profitability as they are less destructive. Thus, the end of the 20-year-old Afghan war in August 2021 inflicted huge losses on arms and ammunition manufacturers.

Undoubtedly, Russia is in the wrong. And the criticism thereof is justified. Nevertheless, Russian wrongs also raise a question. Why is Moscow pursuing this seemingly irreversible, hostile path? Although one-third of the answer was given by the British Defense Secretary with his comment on the 1853 Crimea War, it nevertheless leaves two-thirds unanswered, which lies in what happened in the 1810s and the 1940s.

Russia saved the entire West from being annihilated by two European scourges of mankind (Napoleon and Hitler) in successive centuries. Indeed, it crushed the bloodthirsty Napoleon's 'Grand Armee' in the battles of Borodino (September 1812) and Leipzig (October 1813) much before the Duke of Wellington's victory over a weakened French army at Waterloo in June 1815. From the Napoleonic wars to the two World Wars and from the Balkanization of the 1990s to the present Ukraine war - all constitute intra-Europe conflicts, like ceaseless continental civil wars. And yet, the non-European world was inexorably dragged into these internecine disputes, thereby giving Europe pole position in world affairs.

So, what's next for the Russia-Ukraine war? Is a solution possible? Or will it again drag the entire Europe and the rest of the world into another Armageddon? Just hear the Europeans themselves on the "war within", because "Europe is united" and yet "Europe is not united". Europe is distressed because war fatigue

AS THE DEMAND FOR GUNS SURGES, PROFIT TOO SKYROCKETS WITH THE SALE OF EVERY WEAPON OR MACHINE. THUS, THE ENTERPRISE OF MILITARY HARDWARE PRODUCTION AND SALE BECOMES TOO TEMPTING AND LUCRATIVE TO BE ESCHEWED, AS AFTER A LONG GAP A 'REAL' WAR HAS COME TO EUROPEAN SOIL, WHERE BIG-BUCK INVESTMENTS AND ASTRONOMICAL PROFITS ARE BEING MADE. SHORTAGE OF FOOD FACILITATES PROFITEERING TOO.

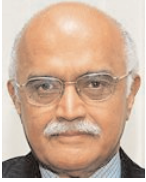
and economic downturn have already gripped virtually every nook and corner of it. Hence, Deutsch Bank warns of the peril in borrowing from US banks and former German Chancellor Angela Merkel admits that the Cold War never ended. French President Emmanuel Macron is being berated for repeatedly calling for considering Russia's legitimate security guarantee owing to NATO expansion in Russia's neighborhood.

The French certainly know best, owing to the post-World War I Versailles Treaty's monumental folly of humiliating the defeated Germany, thereby sowing the seeds of World War II. Criticism of the US came from top EU diplomat Josep Borrell: "Americans, our friend, take decisions which have economic impact on us." The EU has also accused Washington of profiting/profiteering from the Ukraine war. A more serious matter, however, is the growing intra-Europe conflict between Serbia and Kosovo. Serbia (former Yugoslavia) was attacked by the NATO and broken into seven pieces in the 1990s. Hence, Serbia, like Russia, is smarting and eyeing revenge.

Indeed, there's a real possibility of two simultaneous Balkan wars as the region is the 'tinderbox' of Europe where issues related to ethnic minorities have repeatedly triggered conflicts. Altogether, the possibility of the Russia-Ukraine conflict raising the stakes higher will only smoothen matters further for the profiteering brigade to make mega bucks from the sale of military merchandise.

(Abhijit Bhattacharyya is an author and columnist)

Global intel collection seeing a sea change



BY VAPPALA
BALACHANDRAN

IN FUTURE, OPEN-SOURCE INFORMATION WILL HAVE TO BE TACKLED BY GLOBAL SECURITY SERVICES. THE EXPLOSION OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENTS AS 'ADD-ONS' TO STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE CREATES A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE ANALYTICAL CAPABILITIES AS OUR AGENCIES DO NOT HAVE TIME OR CAPACITY TO MONITOR BILLIONS OF TERABYTES OF OPEN INFORMATION.

"SIGNIFICANTLY, GEN JIM HOCKENHULL, COMMANDER OF THE BRITISH STRATEGIC COMMAND, HAD DESCRIBED THE CURRENT BATTLE AS THE 'FIRST DIGITAL WAR' AT A DECEMBER 2022 ROYAL UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE SEMINAR. HE SAID MUCH OF THIS DIGITAL CAPABILITY WAS COMING NOT FROM THE TRADITIONAL MILITARY SOURCES BUT FROM "COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE SOURCES". THIS CREATES "ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY, BUT ALSO CREATES A REAL BURDEN IN TERMS OF BEING ABLE TO DEAL WITH INTELLIGENCE". HE SAID, "AS MANY AS 127 NEW DEVICES ARE BEING CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET EVERY SECOND ACROSS THE GLOBE AND THERE IS A REAL CHALLENGE OVER THE VERACITY OF THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION." HE ADDED A NOTE OF CAUTION THAT THIS INFORMATION WAS BEING USED NOT JUST BY SOURCES INSIDE THE MILITARY BUT IS BEING PROJECTED "FOR ALL TO SEE AND FOR ALL TO INTERPRET"."

A sea change is taking place in the intelligence collection and dissemination processes in western democracies. It has thrown the classical "intelligence cycle" to the wind. It is not clear whether this will augur well for the reliability of collected information. Although these changes were noticed earlier too, their constant use during Ukrainian resistance after the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022, has made them 'trendy'.

The traditional institutionalized collection of intelligence is being partly replaced by what is called 'crowd-sourced open-source intelligence' which had sprung up even before the Ukraine war started. Think tanks are acting as spokespersons instead of official channels.

On February 25, 2022, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) released a paper, 'Ukraine Through



The traditional institutionalized collection of intelligence is being partly replaced by 'crowd-sourced open-source intelligence'.
Image for representation / iStock

Russia's Eyes', based on documents accessed with the help of the Ukrainian intelligence. It said a February 2022 pre-invasion survey by the ninth Directorate of Russian intelligence Federal Security Service had found favorable conditions for a government change in Ukraine. Around 67 per cent of the Ukrainian public was 'distrustful' of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Although the majority trusted the army, that confidence did not extend to other institutions such as the police or even Parliament. In fact, 40 per cent of the respondents said they would not even join their army to defend Ukraine. Another point which swayed the decision towards invasion was a religious assessment that at least half of the Ukrainian population owing allegiance to the church would follow Moscow Patriarchy's wishes.

Simultaneously, not every component of the western intelligence alliance had shared the majority's cautious optimism that Ukraine would be able to resist the massive Russian thrust. On June 4, 2022, the American Public Broadcast Service (PBS) said there was a feeling in the US Senate and House Intelligence Committee that the White House did not extend all-out support to Zelenskyy before the invasion began due to reticence by US intelligence services, perhaps based on their bad experience with the then Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who fled in August 2021.

The PBS quoted Lt Gen Scott D Berrier, Director of Defense Intelligence Agency, who admitted to having told a hearing in March 2022 that it "was a bad assessment" on his part to have earlier concluded that "Ukrainians were not ready as I thought they should be". However, he admitted that this did not represent the entire intelligence community's feelings. On the other hand, he said the Ukrainians had fought "bravely and honorably".

An assessment by a team of scholars at Brunel University, London, on May 19, 2022, had said a new model of cooperative government-public intelligence infrastructure was set up where the highlight was 'crowd-sourced open-source intelligence'. Under this model, strategic intelligence collection has "transmuted into a distributed, globalized and even 'democratized' enterprise as open-source information has exploded in terms of scale and capabilities".

According to them, Russian reverses happened because they were unaware of the massive public-

private capability of the NATO-backed coalition in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, whereas Moscow, with a controlled media, was following the Cold War bureaucratic model of the intelligence process. In particular, they found that the Russian communication and intelligence infrastructure was failing. Consequently, they often used "in-field makeshift solutions such as mobile phones or unencrypted high-frequency radio which the Ukrainian military and even radio enthusiasts could have easily intercepted".

This assessment came true on January 1 when Ukraine conducted massive missile strikes on Makiivka in the Russian-occupied Donetsk region. This was described as one of the deadliest attacks on Russian forces, caused by careless use of mobile phones by Russian soldiers revealing their location, leading to a claim by Kyiv that 400 Russian soldiers had died and 300 injured. The Russian Defense Ministry has admitted to 63 deaths. A senior pro-Russian official of the region conveyed through 'Telegram' that a vocational school where the soldiers were housed was hit by the American high-mobility artillery rocket system (Himars).

Significantly, Gen Jim Hockenull, Commander of the British Strategic Command, had described the current battle as the 'first digital war' at a December 2022 Royal United Services Institute seminar. He said much of this digital capability was coming not from the traditional military sources but from "commercially available sources". This creates "enormous opportunity, but also creates a real burden in terms of being able to deal with intelligence". He said, "As many as 127 new devices are being connected to the Internet every second across the globe and there is a real challenge over the veracity of the available information." He added a note of caution that this information was being used not just by sources inside the military but is being projected "for all to see and for all to interpret".

American academic Amy Zegart has said in Foreign Affairs that the Ukraine war has proved that "intelligence isn't for government spy agencies anymore". She said a volunteer group at Stanford University led by retired US Army veteran Allison Puscioni, an open-source imagery analyst, has been providing evidence of Russian human rights violations to the United Nations. Zegart mentions that Bellingcat, an amateur investigators' group, had identified the Russian hit team that tried to assassinate Sergei Skripal, a Russian renegade intelligence officer, in the UK. She recommends a permanent agency for the US to deal with only open-source information.

In my opinion, this huge problem will have to be tackled in future by global security services. In my recent book on the history of intelligence, I had mentioned that even in 2007, all 16 US intelligence agencies were collecting one billion pieces of data everyday - much beyond their capacity to interpret.

The explosion of social media contents as "Add-ons" to strategic and tactical intelligence creates a serious challenge to the analytical capabilities as our agencies do not have time or capacity to monitor billions of terabytes of open information which might have bearing on security. Such an agency could also openly liaise with media outlets and technology enterprises and also work as a technology innovator.

(The author is Ex-Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India)

17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2023 is being held at Indore, India

**CHIEF GUEST, H.E. DR. MOHAMED IRFAAN ALI, HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOR, H.E. MR. CHANDRIKAPERSAD SANTOKHI, HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SURINAME**



Indore beckons NRIs



JANUARY 6, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is the flagship event of the Government of India. It provides an important platform to engage and connect with the overseas Indians and to enable the diaspora to interact with each other. The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention is being organized in partnership with the Madhya Pradesh Government from 08-10 January 2023 in Indore. The theme of this PBD Convention is "Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal". Over 3,500 diaspora members from nearly 70 different countries have registered for the PBD Convention.

PBD Convention will have three segments. On 08 January 2023, the inauguration of the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in partnership with Ministry of Youth affairs and Sports. H.E. Ms. Zaneta Mascarenhas, Member of Parliament of Australia, will be the Guest of Honor at the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

On 09 January 2023, the PBD Convention will be inaugurated by Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and will feature addresses by the

Chief Guest, H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, the President of Cooperative Republic of Guyana, and the Special Guest of Honor, H.E. Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Hon'ble President of the Republic of Suriname.

A Commemorative Postal Stamp 'Surakshit Jaayen, Prashikshit Jaayen' will be released to underline the importance of safe, legal, orderly and skilled migration. Hon'ble Prime Minister will also inaugurate the first-ever digital PBD Exhibition on theme "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav - Contribution of Diaspora in Indian Freedom Struggle" to highlight the contribution of our diaspora freedom fighters in India's Independence. In view of India's ongoing Presidency of the G20, a special Town Hall will also be organized on January 09.

On 10 January 2023, Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Smt. Droupadi Murmu will confer Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2023 and preside over the Valedictory Session. Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards are conferred to select Indian diaspora members to recognize their achievements and honor their contributions to various fields, both in India and abroad.

The PBD Convention will have five thematic Plenary sessions-

- First Plenary on 'Role of Diaspora Youth in Innovations and new Technologies', chaired by Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur.
- Second Plenary on 'Role of Indian Diaspora in promoting Indian Healthcare Eco-system in Amrit Kaal: Vision @2047', chaired by Minister

of Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and co-chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs, Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh.

- Third Plenary on 'Leveraging the soft power of India - Goodwill through craft, cuisine & creativity', chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi.
- Fourth Plenary on 'Enabling global mobility of Indian workforce - Role of Indian Diaspora', chaired by Minister of Education, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.
- Fifth Plenary on 'Harnessing the potential of diaspora entrepreneurs towards an inclusive approach to nation building', chaired by Minister of Finance, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman.

All the Plenary Sessions will feature panel discussions inviting eminent diaspora experts.

The forthcoming 17th PBD Convention holds significance as it is being organized as a physical event after a gap of four years and first after the onset of Covid-19 pandemic. The last PBD Convention in 2021 was held virtually during the Pandemic.

**The event would be webcast live on PBD website
<http://www.pbdindia.gov.in> and
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MEAIndia>.**

(Source: PIB)

Jan 6, 2021, insurrection at the US Capitol

On January 6, 2021, following the defeat of then U.S. President Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election, a mob of his supporters attacked the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The mob was seeking to keep Trump in power by preventing a joint session of Congress from counting the electoral college votes to formalize the victory of President-elect Joe Biden.

According to the House select committee investigating the incident, the attack was the culmination of a seven-part plan by Trump to overturn the election. Five people died either shortly before, during, or following the event: one was shot by Capitol Police, another died of a drug overdose, and three died of natural causes. Many people were injured, including 138 police officers. Four officers who responded to the attack killed themselves within seven months. The monetary damages caused by attackers exceed \$2.7 million.

Background

The conduct of the 2020 presidential election was significantly affected by the deadly COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, the early stages of which coincided with the first presidential primary elections in February and March. Because of the evident risk to public health, governors and election officials in several states postponed primary elections or implemented changes to election procedures to enable voters to cast their ballots safely. Among such measures were extending early-voting periods and loosening or eliminating requirements for obtaining or casting absentee (mail-in) ballots, which millions of voters were expected to use as a safer alternative to in-person voting. Correctly anticipating that Democratic voters would be more likely than Republican voters to use absentee ballots (in part because Trump had repeatedly downplayed the extent of the pandemic and the seriousness of the illness), the Trump campaign, the Republican National Committee (RNC), and Republican leaders in several states filed scores of lawsuits alleging that the changes undermined the constitutional authority of state legislatures to make election law or that they invited individual voter fraud. Nearly all of the suits were dismissed or withdrawn. Amid those failed challenges, Trump continued to falsely claim that Democrats were plotting to “rig” the election through voter fraud and by systematically forging, altering, or discarding absentee ballots, among other illegal means. His accusations were of a piece with his frequent assertions during the 2016 presidential campaign that the election of that year, which he won, would be rigged by Democrats.

In a press encounter in the early morning of November 4, the day after the election, Trump maintained his false narrative of Democratic cheating by declaring himself the winner and



denouncing the ongoing counting of absentee ballots as a “fraud on the American people.” During the next several weeks he continually accused Biden and the Democrats of having stolen the presidential election and repeated conspiracy theories involving ballot stuffing, dead voters, and malicious voting-machine software that deleted or changed millions of votes for Trump. His false accusations were indirectly endorsed by several Republican members of Congress who expressed uncertainty about the election’s outcome or who simply refused to publicly acknowledge Biden’s victory. Their calculated reticence helped to spread false doubts about the integrity of the election among rank-and-file Republicans. (Such manufactured doubts were later cited by Republican governors and election officials in several states to justify new “election integrity” laws that made it harder for some Democrats to vote and easier for partisan state legislatures to improperly influence or overturn statewide elections—see voter suppression.)

As vote counting continued, various groups of radicalized Trump supporters quickly coalesced around the idea that forceful protests and even violent direct action were necessary to stop the counting of fraudulent ballots and thereby to prevent Biden from taking office. A short-lived Facebook group calling itself “Stop the Steal” was created on November 4 and grew to some 320,000 members in less than 24 hours before the social media company shut it down because of posts containing



disinformation and calls for violence (see also collective violence). Stop the Steal enthusiasts soon migrated to other social media venues, where they repeated and elaborated conspiracy theories about the election and organized on-the-ground demonstrations in several cities, including at polling stations where supposedly fraudulent vote counting was underway.

After the electors from each state cast their votes for president and vice president on December 14, giving Biden a victory of 306 electoral votes to 232, Trump and his allies, as well as leaders of Stop the Steal and other pro-Trump

groups across the country, turned their attention to the last, formal step in the election of a U.S. president, the ceremonial opening and counting of the electoral votes of each state in a joint session of Congress, presided over by the vice president and commencing on January 6, a date fixed in federal law. Some allies reportedly advised Trump—incorrectly—that the vice president’s role in the electoral-vote counting would give Trump’s vice president, Mike Pence, the constitutional authority to replace Democratic slates of electors with Republican ones and thereby to block Congress’s confirmation of Biden’s

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victory.

The attack and its aftermath

Meanwhile, in several tweets beginning in mid-December, Trump encouraged his supporters to attend a rally and march on January 6 to protest the vote-counting ceremony. In one of the tweets, Trump stated, “Be there, will be wild!” At the rally, held at a public park near the White House, a crowd of thousands, which included members of paramilitary organizations and other right-wing extremists, listened to speeches by Trump’s personal attorney Rudy Giuliani and Trump’s sons Donald, Jr., and Eric, among others. In his own address, which began at about noon, Trump repeated well-worn falsehoods and conspiracy theories about the stolen election; called on Pence to block Congress’s confirmation of the electoral college vote—declaring that, if Pence failed to act, the rally crowd would not let the confirmation take place (“We’re just not going to let that happen”); encouraged the crowd to “walk down Pennsylvania Avenue” to the Capitol building; and urged his audience to “fight like hell” or “you’re not going to have a country anymore.” Although Trump did not explicitly direct those in attendance to commit illegal acts, his generally incendiary language plainly suggested to many in the crowd that they would be justified in violently attacking the Capitol and members of Congress to prevent Biden from becoming president.

Even before Trump finished his address shortly after 1:00 PM, and just as the joint session of Congress was being convened, a mob of his supporters—including members of right-wing extremist organizations, such as the Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers, and the Three Percenters, as well as self-identified adherents of the QAnon conspiracy theory—pushed through fences at the western perimeter of the Capitol grounds, forcing Capitol Police officers to retreat to additional barricades closer to the building (see United States: The 2020 U.S. election and United States presidential election of 2020: Aftermath: Trump’s refusal to concede and the insurrection at the Capitol). The mob grew larger as ever more people arrived from the rally at which Trump had spoken. Capitol Police officers, along with reinforcements from the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia, were overwhelmed. Many officers were brutally beaten with deadly weapons (bats, pipes, and flag poles), sprayed with chemical irritants, or crushed and trampled by the surging crowd. As the rioting continued outside, the joint session was temporarily adjourned to allow the House and Senate to separately debate a Republican challenge to the Democratic slate of electors from Arizona. By about 2:00 PM the rioters had breached the last barrier on the west side of the building and were running up the Capitol steps and scaling the walls of the West Terrace. Another mob also had broken through barriers on the east side of the Capitol.

Shortly after 2:00 PM the rioters shattered windows to break into the west side of the building, and for the next few hours they vandalized and looted the interior and ransacked offices as they searched for their perceived enemies in Congress. They also looked for Pence, whom they now denounced as a traitor for having refused to interfere in



Congress’s tabulation of electoral votes. (Shortly before the start of the joint session, Pence had released a letter in which he stated that “it is my considered judgment that my oath to support and defend the Constitution constrains me from claiming unilateral authority to determine which electoral votes should be counted and which should not.”) At about 2:20 PM Trump condemned Pence in a tweet to his followers, claiming that “Mike Pence didn’t have the courage to do what should have been done to protect our Country and our Constitution.” Only minutes after the break-in, members of the House and Senate were notified that protesters had entered the building. Realizing that their lives were in danger, many lawmakers fled or were evacuated from the building or hid behind desks or in barricaded offices and even closets. Pence was evacuated to a secure location within the complex.

The governors of Virginia and Maryland eventually dispatched National Guard units and state troopers to assist in securing the building; because of bureaucratic delays, the District of Columbia National Guard was not mobilized until about three hours after the start of the attack. The Capitol was finally cleared of rioters at about 6 PM, some four hours after they first entered the building. The vast majority of the attackers were not arrested on-site and simply walked away. Congress then resumed its tabulation of electoral votes (after dismissing Republican challenges to the slates of electors from Arizona and Pennsylvania), and Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 presidential election in the early morning hours of January 7.

The attack on the Capitol was broadcast live on major news networks. Trump himself watched some of the assault and reportedly was pleased and excited by what he saw. After initially resisting pressure from White House aides and House minority leader Kevin McCarthy

to condemn the attack, Trump reluctantly tweeted (at about 2:40 PM) a call to his followers to support the Capitol Police and to “stay peaceful.” A similar tweet was issued about half an hour later. At about 4:20 PM Trump tweeted a brief video in which he once again asserted that the election had been stolen. Expressing his “love” for the rioters, he urged them to “go home,” stating that “we have to have peace.” Later that day he tweeted:

On January 8 Trump was permanently banned from Twitter for having posted tweets before, during, and after the assault that violated the company’s policy against glorification of violence.

According to a Justice Department report released in July 2021, approximately 140 Capitol and Metropolitan police officers were criminally assaulted by the rioters in the January 6 attack. Among those victims, one died of a series of strokes after being hospitalized for injuries sustained in the attack, and two others committed suicide. One of the rioters was shot and killed by police, another died of a heart attack, and a third was apparently crushed to death by the stampeding mob. The rioters caused an estimated \$1.5 million in damage to the Capitol building.

On January 13, 2021, the House of Representatives, by a vote of 232 to 197, adopted a single article of impeachment against Trump for incitement of insurrection. At his Senate trial in February, which began three weeks after he left office on January 20, Trump was acquitted after only 57 senators, 10 short of the required two-thirds majority, voted to find him guilty.

During the first year after the attack, the FBI and the Justice Department arrested more than 725 of the rioters, charging them with a variety of federal crimes, including injuring law-enforcement officers, destruction and theft of government property, and conspiracy to obstruct a congressional

proceeding. As of early January 2022, the FBI had yet to identify and apprehend more than 350 additional persons believed to have committed violent crimes on the Capitol grounds.

In May 2021 Senate Republicans blocked passage of a House-passed bill that would have created a national commission to investigate the January 6 attack, claiming that it would unnecessarily duplicate ongoing investigations by two Senate committees and the Justice Department (the Senate investigation, however, was focused on intelligence and communication failures by law-enforcement agencies prior to the attack). In response, the House voted along near-party lines to create its own committee, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol, which held its first hearings in late July. By early January 2022 the committee had interviewed more than 300 people and collected thousands of pages of records related to the attack. It had also subpoenaed testimony and records from high-level members of the Trump administration and other Trump associates and supporters, some of whom refused to cooperate with the investigation.

In October 2021 Trump filed suit against the committee in federal district court, seeking to block the release of several hundred pages of records relating to his activities and communications before and during the attack, which the committee had originally requested in August. In December, after the district court rejected Trump’s request and an appellate court upheld that decision, Trump filed an emergency petition with the Supreme Court, asking that it review the district court’s ruling and that it block release of the documents pending its final decision in the case. The Supreme Court denied Trump’s request in January 2022, allowing the committee to begin receiving the documents from the National Archives.

MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO REDUCE VISA INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT TIME IN INDIA: US

State Department spokesperson says visa processing is recovering faster than projected



Making every effort to reduce visa interview appointment time in India, said State Department spokesperson Ned Price. Photo

JANUARY 5, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The United States is making every effort to reduce the waiting time for visa interview appointment in India as soon as possible, a State Department spokesperson said on Wednesday, January 4. "Visa processing is recovering faster than projected and over the coming year, we expect to reach pre-pandemic processing levels," State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference. visas in fiscal year 2022 than in any year since 2016, he said, adding that its embassy and consulates in India in particular broke their all-time record for the number of student visas issued in a single fiscal year. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Republican Kevin McCarthy elected as House Speaker in 15th round of votes

JANUARY 07, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Republican Kevin McCarthy was elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives on Saturday, January 7, which is hopefully expected to bring an end to political paralysis that the country has seen for days now. McCarthy, 57, replaces Nancy Pelosi, 82 of the Democratic Party, which lost the majority in the House after the November 8 midterm elections wherein the Republicans won 222 seats in the 435-member House against 212 of the Democrats.

McCarthy defeated 52-year-old Hakeem Sekou Jeffries by 216 to 212 votes, in the 15th round of votes that went past midnight. The Republican was able to muster a majority from the lawmakers present on the floor only after six of his party rebels voted present, which brought down the magic number from 218 to 215 votes.

McCarthy will be the 55th speaker. Congressman Matt Gaetz, one of his fiercest critics and opponents, refused to vote in favor of McCarthy in the 14th round and also in the 15th round. But



Republican Kevin McCarthy was elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives on Saturday, January 7. Photo credit / Bloomberg

moved his vote from against McCarthy to present, and so did five other GOP lawmakers.

In the 14th round, there were some last-minute floor negotiations in front of the cameras, wherein McCarthy walked up to Gaetz pleading for his vote. This was followed by some angry exchange of words between supporters of McCarthy and Gaetz. Congressman Richard Hudson was seen pulling his party colleague Mike Rogers, as he confronted Gaetz, during the 14th round of voting.

In the previous 13 rounds - two of which were held earlier in the day-, McCarthy had some frustrating and embarrassing

moments as he was opposed by a group of 20 lawmakers from his own party, mostly from the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus. It was only in the 12th and 13th rounds that more than a dozen of those GOP naysayers switched their votes. "Of the more than 50 speakers of the House, 15 have been in McCarthy's situation: needing multiple elections to win the gavel," NBC News said, reflecting the historic and unprecedented nature of the election of a House Speaker this year. There have been only four House speaker races that have gone so far in the past.

As a powerful Speaker of the House, McCarthy would be in a key position to play a key role in deciding the national policies, including those related to the budget. In this position, McCarthy is also third in the line of succession after President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. The 118th Congress has five Indian Americans as members of the House of Representatives. They are all from the Democratic Party -- Dr Ami Bera, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ro Khanna, Pramila Jayapal and Shri Thanedar.

All of them voted for Jeffries in the 14th round of votes. (Source: PTI)

Indian American Business Council & Consul General of India at Chicago jointly host Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Promotional Community Meet

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): Indian American Business Council [IABC] in collaboration with the office of the Consulate General of India under the leadership of Ambassador Somnath Ghosh held Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Promotional Community Meet & Reception with the express purpose of mobilizing robust representation and participation of the Indian diaspora from the Chicagoland area held at the Marriot Northwest in Hoffman Estate, Illinois. This promotional community meet attracted 20 community organizations who have stepped up to showcase enthusiastic support and interest in participating at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to be held in Indore City, India from January 8-10, 2023.

Several Chicago community's high-profile leaders spoke with Ambassador Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India taking the lead. Consul General Somnath Ghosh thanked Indian American Business Council and the participating organizations for their enthusiastic participation and said that it augurs well that the representation from Illinois at PBD will be robust. Consul General Somnath Ghosh eloquently outlined the success story of India and the trajectory of India accelerating economic growth and its march towards global eminence. Consul General Ghosh urged Indian diaspora to take this opportunity to visit India to attend the PBD to discuss and participate in nation building. Consul General Somnath Ghosh spent time interacting with each organizational groups and acknowledging them for their warm reception.



Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Promotional Reception with Consul General of India Mr. Somnath Ghosh (6th from the left) and prominent community leaders.

Earlier, Ajeet Singh, President of Indian American Business Council in his welcome address explained that it is our collective mission to ensure substantial representation of Indian Americans from Illinois at PBD.

Ajeet Singh thanked and acknowledged each of the twenty community organizations for their fervent support and particularly thanked Ambassador Somnath Ghosh and acknowledged Amarbir Ghoman and Harry Ghoman for graciously opening their magnificent Marriot facility to showcase Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event. Ajeet Singh announced IABC will host the 'Global India Conclave' in July 2023 in Chicago that will celebrate the magnificent transformational story of India and the sizeable contributions made by the Indian diaspora in India's march towards global eminence.

Dr. Bharat Barai, prominent leader who was a recipient of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Award from the then President of India - in his remarks - presented an overview and how Pravasi Bharatiya Divas meet has

evolved since its inception. Dr. Bharat Barai passionately advocated Indian Americans to attend and participate at the NRI Divas to engage in a conversation that seeks to bring about meaningful outcomes.

Dr. Sreenivas Reddy, Chairman of Illinois Medical Board and a leading Vascular/Interventional Radiologist highlighted the noteworthy role and the contributions of the Indian diaspora in nation rebuilding especially during the pandemic. Dr. Sreenivas Reddy thanked Consul General Somnath Ghosh for his spirited efforts in galvanizing the community to appraise the significance of participation at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and add that the year 2023 is a momentous year with Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, The Global India Conclave in Chicago, Global Peace Festival with Shree Shree Ravi Shankar ji and the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

Earlier, Mr. Amarbir Ghoman, CEO of the Marriot Northwest welcomed the guests and said he was deeply honored to be the host for this important PBD promotional

reception.

Indore City Mayor Shri. Pushyamitra Bhargav came on 'live' and addressed the gathering and said a historic welcome awaits the Indian diaspora at the PBD meet in his city which he said bears a rich history and rapid industrialization, Indore is famously known for its hospitable people, magnificent palaces and temples, street food, night markets, and more and added it is becoming a preferred destination. Kailash Vijayvargiya former Mayor of Indore and National General Secretary of BJP party also joined in inviting Indian Americans to join him at the PBD meet.

FIA Chairman Sunil Shah in his introductory remarks said that Federation of Indian Associations are excited to be a part of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas promotional event and said under the aegis of FIA we will mobilize good representation at the Pravasi Divas in Indore, India.

Anand Tiwari of Madhya Pradesh association made a power point presentation that exhibited the evolving beauty of Indore City and how it is rapidly transforming to be the 'Silicon Valley of the Madhya [middle] Pradesh.

Keerthi Kumar Ravoorti, Chair of Indian American Business Council served as the moderator for the event. Dr. Vemuri Murthy of Chicago Medical Society spoke at the event. Vinesh Virani, Executive Vice President of IABC proposed a vote of thanks and especially acknowledge Consular officers Vinod Gautham, Ranjit Singh and TD Bhutiya and others.

Photographs and Press release by Asian Media USA

International Indian Icon (3iii)

A PLATFORM FOR INDIAN TALENT ACROSS THE GLOBE! A GLOBAL TALENT HUNTS!



International Indian Icon (3iii - 2022) Season-6 Grand-finale Winners of all Category, Sharan Walia [3ii CEO] and judges



International Indian Icon (3iii - 2022) Season-6 Grand-finale Singing (Senior) Category winners Payal Roy Gaguli.

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): International Indian Icon (3iii) (Three Eye) by Gee Vision Inc. (Gee), Chicago USA is taking over the world as a global talent platform by giving young children and adults the opportunity to showcase their talent without any restrictions of location, culture, color, gender or age at a national and international level. Since its inception in 2017, Dec 30th 2022 Gee Vision Inc. completed 3iii 2022 Season-6 with the huge success 3iii S-6 episode production (Semi-finals, Finale and Grand finale) in n Plainfield, IL Suburb of Chicago) from Dec 29th to Dec 30th 2022. 3iii has reached a platform of 25,562 participants and a world-wide talent from the U.S., Canada, Europe, the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the Middle East, Asia and India with registrations from 46 countries of 7 continents. 1st 3iii S-6 Semi-final i.e., 3iii India 2022 with 102 on-site semi-finalists and 18 on-line semi-finalists (joined through Zoom) from all over Asia was shot in Delhi, India on Dec 26th & 27th 2022.

2nd 3iii S-6 semi-final and finale with 82 on-site semi-finalists; 23 on-line semifinalists from all over the world and 12 finalists i.e., 3iii India 2022 winners from India (joined through Zoom) was shot in Community Event Center, 24035 W. Riverwalk Ct., Plainfield, IL 60544 with multiple cameras and beautiful stage and 3iii Band by Suneer Mehmood on Dec 29th 2022.

3iii S-6 was judged by Bollywood Music composer, lyricist and singer ARKO, Hollywood actor and music manager BOBBY LEIGH, Ms India 2013 and International celebrity anchor SIMRAN AHUJA which was supported by 3iii International Jury consisting of Bollywood playback singer POONAL BHATIA, Bollywood entertainer from Dubai ABBAS ALI MITZA for singing; Gauri Jog, Pooja Joshi, Bharathi Devarakonda for Dance; Juhi Jigiasi and Pooja Nanjia for Fashion.

3iii Anchor/MC team included Simran Ahuja, Ajai Kumar and RJ Anya Ahuja.

Grand-finale of 3iii 2022 Season-6 was successfully concluded as per plan by declaring following Winners of International Indian Icon (3iii - 2022), Season-6 of different categories and age group.

SINGING:

ON-SITE IN CHICAGO:

- Payal Roy Gaguli (Senior)
- Tulip Ghosh (Junior)

* ON-LINE THROUGH ZOOM

- Sanika Pandey (Junior)

DANCE:

* ON-SITE IN CHICAGO

- Gazal Sethi (Senior)
- Nayan Nampally (Junior)

FASHION:

* ON-SITE IN CHICAGO

- Nayan Nampally (Junior)
- Riya (Senior)

I GOT TALENT:

* ON-SITE IN CHICAGO

- Tabla Jugalbandi (Junior):
 - Akshay Talreja Ashwin Nair Viral Patel
- Tejas Patnaik

* ON-LINE THROUGH ZOOM

- Surjeet Singh (Senior)
- Nihal Banda (Junior)

3III PREVIOUS 5 SEASONS HAVE BEEN JUDGED BY NUMEROUS

- Bollywood legendary music directors, singers and choreographers like legendary music director Jatin Pandit,
- Bollywood composer, lyricist and singer Arko Mukherjee,
- Bollywood Slumdog millionaires choreographer Longinus Fernandez.
- Bollywood actress Meenakshi Seshadri.
- Ms India 2013 Simian Ahuja

Show their talent in numerous categories such as Singing, Dancing, Instruments, acting, Fashion, Comedy and I Got Talent (Any Talent) across all 3 age groups Junior (16 Yr.), Senior (55 Years) and Super Senior (More than 55 Years).

1st 2 seasons of 3iii were aired on Zee TV USA while 3rd and 4th seasons were televised by Sahara One, Samay and Filmy TV channels. Discussion about airing / streaming Season-5 and 6 episodes on some global TV channels/OTT platform is in progress, soon TV channel / OTT platform will be announced. Talent are recognized in all talent categories across all 3 age groups as State Indian Icon at state level across the country, who are invited to compete at country level to be recognized as Indian Country Icon at country level across the globe and winners of all countries of all categories across all 3 age groups are invited to Chicago, USA

to join 3iii Episode Production (Semi-final, Finale & Grand-finale) on-line or onsite during last week of December.

3iii (Three Eye) founded by Mr Sharan Walia, the vision behind the platform for both on-line and on-site competition to not only show the beauty of Indian culture through song, dance, fashion and talent but also allow nonnatives to show their love for Indian culture by performing to Indian songs and dance.

Gee would also like to thank Mr. Naresh Shastri (3iii Execution Director) from Chicago for successfully executing 3iii globally since 3iii 2017 Season-1. Gee thanks 3iii India Partner Mr Ajit Bains and huge support of Mr. Sanjay Yadav in making 3iii India 2022 a huge success. Gee appreciates support of Dr Chidatmika Khatua, founder of Adi Tribal Foundation for collaborating with Gee Vision for Tribal Queen Global (TQG) to empower Tribal women and recognize Tribal talent globally.

Mr Raaj Rahhi as 3iii Director has taken the responsibility of entire 3iii episode production globally to make 3iii episodes to air/stream it globally on multiple TV channels and/or OTT Platform. TV and OTT platforms may contact Gee / 3iii for collaboration opportunities.

Gee would like to thank 3iii Advisory Board, 3iii International Jury and appreciates the volunteer support of Archana Mitta for supporting 3iii 2022 S-6 with her team.

Gee is on the move to create an International on-line and on-site platform 3iii for anyone who likes any type of Indian art and culture, living in any part of the world, without any restrictions of geographical boundaries, culture, color, gender and age to give them opportunity to showcase their talent at National and International Level.

Gee welcomes any talent of any category of any age group, gender, region, religion, and color without any discrimination to participate in the 3iii Global talent competition to showcase their talent to the world. Gee has a unique vision and mission of bringing a global talent community at one platform 3iii to share the knowledge, talent, experience and art with each other globally.

3iii 2023 Season-7 plan is being built and registration for the same will open on Apr1st 2023 on both 3iii websites www.internationalindianicon.com and www.3iii.us as well as on 3iii Apps (iOS & Android).

(Photographs and Press release by Asian Media USA)

Uniform laws on marriage, divorce matter for Parliament to decide: Supreme Court

Having uniform laws on marriage, divorce, succession, adoption and maintenance is a matter for Parliament to decide and not for the courts to determine, the Supreme Court said on Friday, January 6.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud was hearing a clutch of petitions, including the one by Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, who filed the petition in 2020 seeking uniform laws on the issue of marriage, divorce, adoption, maintenance and guardianship.

"This is a matter for Parliament to decide. We cannot make laws. This falls within Parliament's sovereignty. We cannot tell the Parliament you shall enact a law," said the bench also comprising justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala.

In his petition, Upadhyay pointed out the dichotomy that exists between laws applicable to different religions on the issue of marriage, divorce, adoption, maintenance and guardianship. Later, several other petitions were filed, some by Muslim women who were aggrieved by the discriminatory forms of divorce practiced under Muslim personal law.

Senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, along with advocate MR Shamshad, appearing for the Muslim Personal Law Board, informed the court that Upadhyay in 2015 had raised similar prayers in a writ petition filed in the top court, which he withdrew. He later filed a petition seeking enforcement of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) before the Delhi high court which is still pending.

Source: HT

Joshimath sinking: Uttarakhand CM orders evacuation of 600 families

DEHRADUN (TIP)

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has ordered immediate evacuation of around 600 families living in houses which have developed huge cracks and are at risk in sinking Joshimath town. He also reviewed the situation in the sinking town with officials via video conference.

Speaking to media persons here, the chief minister said, "Saving lives is our first priority. Officials have been asked to shift around 600 families living in endangered houses in Joshimath to safe locations."

"We are also working on short and long-term plans to address the situation in Joshimath," he said, as quoted by news agency PTI.

CM Dhami will visit Joshimath today, Saturday, to meet the affected people and hold a meeting with officials.

He further informed that Garhwal Commissioner Sushil Kumar and secretary, disaster management, Ranjit Kumar Sinha along with a team of experts are camping on the ground to constantly monitor the situation.

The chief minister also directed that relocation of people from the affected areas should be done expeditiously and medical treatment facilities should be available on ground and arrangements for airlifting people should also be made, PTI reported.

An immediate action plan as well as a long-term action plan should be prepared and work on both should be started in right earnest, Dhami said, adding that



The district administration has put a ban on the construction of Helang bypass by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), work of the Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project and other construction work undertaken by the municipality with immediate effect till further orders. (PTI photo)

procedures should be simplified to expedite work on treatment of danger zones, sewer and drainage.

Huge cracks have appeared in scores of houses while many have suffered subsidence.

Nearly 50 families have been moved to safer locations, officials said. Apart from them, 60 families living in a colony meant for Vishnu Prayag Jal Vidyut Pariyojana employees have been shifted elsewhere, its director Pankaj Chauhan said.

Marwari area, where an aquifer burst three days ago, is the worst hit as water is

constantly coming down from it.

All construction activities related to mega projects like the Char Dham all-weather road and the National Thermal Power Corporation's hydel project have been stopped till further orders on the demand of residents. The Auli ropeway, which is Asia's biggest, has been stopped after a huge crack developed beneath it, former president of the local municipality Rishi Prasad Sati said.

Land subsidence has been going on for more than a year but the problem has aggravated over the past fortnight, he said.

Air India passenger, who 'urinated' on woman, arrested

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Shankar Mishra, the Air India flyer who had allegedly urinated on a co-passenger while being drunk on a flight from New York to Delhi, has been arrested in Bengaluru, Delhi Police officials said.

Mishra has been brought to Delhi from Bengaluru, the officials added. He had been on the run since he left his Bengaluru residence. Mishra had also switched off his mobile phone after learning about the police case against him.

After the incident of Mishra allegedly urinating on his co-passenger was reported, the Delhi Police on January 5 had issued a look out notice to the concerned authorities after filing a case of sexual harassment and obscenity against him.

According to a PTI report, the Bengaluru police assisted Delhi police in arresting Shankar Mishra from Sanjay Nagar area in city. The accused is said to have been staying in his sister's place.

On Friday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in an advisory asked the airlines to file a complaint



anytime a passenger has been found to be unruly on board. The aviation regulator warned them of strict actions if found not complying with the regulations on flight safety.

Accused gets fired from job

Shankar Mishra, the man accused of urinating on his co-passenger on a New York-Delhi Air India flight, has been fired by his employer Wells Fargo on Friday. "Wells Fargo holds employees to

the highest standards of professional and personal behavior and we find these allegations deeply disturbing. This individual has been terminated from Wells Fargo. We are cooperating with law enforcement and ask that any additional inquiries be directed to them," the American bank said in a statement.

According to his LinkedIn profile, the accused is a management professional who graduated from Narsee Monjee Institute and went on to work with the

leading American financial services company, Citi Bank for 10 years where he started as a trainee analyst and rose to the position of Vice President. In his written article of 2015, he described the job as 'demanding' which stretches "self beyond the normal working hours". Recently in February 2021, he took up the role of Vice President at Wells Fargo.

A day after Delhi Police asked the authority concerned to issue a Look Out Circular (LOC), the Delhi Police has on Friday reached out to the US-based Wells Fargo company's legal department to cooperate with investigations.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) also issued show-cause notices to Air India officials and cabin crew of the New York-Delhi flight, asking why action should not be taken against them for "dereliction" of duty while handling the November 26 'urination' incident.

The aviation regulator said Air India's conduct appeared to be "unprofessional", and that prima facie, it seemed that provisions related to the handling of unruly passengers were not complied with.

India to host Global South summit for 120 nations

India will host a two-day virtual meeting of more than 120 nations next week titled "Voice of Global South Summit" which will provide important insights for the deliberations of the G20 summit, Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra said here on Friday, January 6.

"India's G20 Presidency will be shaped in consultation with member states and countries that are not part of the G20, but have an ecosystem of concerns, priorities and interests that are crucial for the success of G20. Evidence will show that relevant mechanisms that are supposed to take on board their concerns and mitigate them, both in multilateral and plurilateral settings, have proved inadequate," said the Foreign Secretary.

"Countries of the Global South often do not receive due attention and space on the global stage. The relevant existing international platforms are inadequate to address these challenges," said Kwatra.

The Global South largely refers to developing countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

The two-day summit will begin on January 12 with an inaugural session to be addressed by PM Narendra Modi. Several heads of government will attend the summit. *Source: TNS*

MCD House adjourned without electing Mayor after AAP, BJP clash

Amid a clash between the councillors of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the maiden meeting of the newly elected Municipal Corporation of Delhi House on Friday, January 6, was adjourned without electing the mayor and the deputy mayor.

The Arvind Kejriwal-led party also accused the BJP of trying to win the mayoral polls through "wrong means". The BJP, in response, said that "AAP doesn't have faith in the established rules and norms."

According to NDTV, AAP and BJP workers were seen hitting and pushing each other, falling and climbing on desks inside the MCD Civic Centre, at the meeting.

The protests on Friday erupted after BJP councillor Satya Sharma, the presiding officer overseeing the process, invited an alderman – a person over the age of 25 who is nominated to the corporation by the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) – to take oath. AAP MLAs and councillors rushed to the centre of the House, saying that elected councillors should have been sworn in before the nominated members.

Will adhere to timeline, 44 judges' names to be processed in three days, Centre tells SC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Forty-four names are likely to be processed for appointment as judges within two-three days, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Friday, January 6, as it sought to assure the court that the timeline for processing the names recommended by the Collegium would be followed.

Out of the 104 recommendations made by High Court Collegiums pending with the government, 44 are likely to be processed and sent to the Supreme Court by this weekend, Attorney General R Venkataramani told a Bench led by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul. The Bench – which also included Justice AS Oka – asked Venkataramani about the status of recommendation for appointments to various High Courts and the Supreme Court as also the recommendations for appointments of Chief Justices to certain High Courts and transfer of HC judges.

As the Bench talked about the recommendations made on December 13 for the elevation of Rajasthan HC Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal, Patna HC Chief Justice Sanjay Karol, Manipur HC Chief Justice PV Sanjay Kumar, Patna HC Judge Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Allahabad HC Judge Manoj Misra to the top court, Venkataramani urged it to defer the matter.

"Would your lordships defer this for a little while? I have some inputs given to me but I may have some difference of opinion on that," the Attorney General told the Bench. "This should not take time. They are already Chief Justices and senior judges," Justice Kaul told Venkataramani. The Bench took strong exception to the Centre sending back names reiterated by the Collegium, terming it a "matter of concern". There was nothing in the present scenario to prevent the appointment of a candidate after reiteration of recommendation of his name by the Collegium, it added. The Bench also objected to the Centre sitting over recommendations for transfer of HC judges, saying it gave rise to an impression that there is "third party interference" and sent a very wrong signal. "Ten recommendations for transfers have been made. These have been made in the end of September and end of November. In that the government has very limited role. Keeping them pending sends a very wrong signal. It's unacceptable to the Collegium," the Bench said.

The Bench – which was hearing a petition filed by the Advocates' Association, Bengaluru, alleging "wilful disobedience" of the time frame laid down to facilitate timely appointment of judges in its April 20, 2021, order – posted the matter for further hearing on February 3.

The Bench said the Centre had returned 22 names



recommended by the Collegium for appointment as judges for reconsideration.

"Rightly or wrongly, we will have to deal with it. There are 22 names which have been sent back. Out of that, some of the ones are... (which were) recommended by the Collegium but have been sent back. Some reiterated names have been sent back. Some third reiterations have been sent back. And some names are which the Collegium did not clear but the government in its wisdom feels these ought to be considered. So the Collegium will have to consider the views of the government whether those names, which we did not clear earlier, are now required to be cleared or not. The total of these three categories are pending today," it said.

Justice Kaul expressed concern over meritorious candidates withdrawing their consent for judgeship due to delay in clearing their names for appointment. Senior counsel Vikas Singh and advocate Prashant Bhushan sought to highlight the issue of seniority of a person recommended for judgeship being disturbed by the government.

Maintaining that nothing prevented the legislature from introducing a better system for appointment of judges, the Bench has been telling the government that until such a law was enacted, the Collegium system must be followed in letter and spirit.

The government may have its own views when a recommendation is made but it can't be kept on hold without sending it back with comments, it said.

Source: TNS

India bans People's Anti-Fascist Front, a proxy of Jaish-e-Mohammed

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Centre has banned the People's Anti-Fascist Front (PAFF), a proxy outfit of the terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed, for its involvement in terror acts in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere.

The Union Home Ministry on Friday, January 6, also designated Arbaz Ahmad Mir, a Lashkar-e-Taiba member, as an individual terrorist under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

In a notification, the ministry said the PAFF had been regularly issuing threats to security forces, political leaders and civilians working in Jammu and Kashmir from other states.

The PAFF, along with other organisations, is involved in proactively conspiring both physically and on social media to undertake violent terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and major cities in India, it said.

Along with other organisations, the PAFF is indulging in radicalisation of impressionable youth for recruitment and training in handling guns, ammunition and explosives. The group has also been involved in terrorism. It has committed



and participated in various acts of terrorism in India, the ministry said.

Therefore, exercising the powers conferred by clause (a) of sub-section (1) of Section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, the central government declared the PAFF a banned organisation, it said. *Source: PTI*

India in history this Week

JANUARY 6, 2023, TO JANUARY 12, 2023

06 JANUARY



- 1966 Oscar-winning Indian composer AR Rahman was born.
- 1967 Allah Rakha Rahman, who created a new place in the world of music, was born.
- 1959 One of the all-rounders of the country, Kapil Dev was born on this day.



- 1932 Famous Hindi writer Kamleshwar was born.
- 1928 Indian playwright and theatergoer Vijay Tendulkar was born.
- 1885 Bharatendu Harishchandra, one of the leading Hindi poets and writers of modern India, died.



- 1918 Bharata Vyas, the famous lyricist of Bollywood, was born.

07 JANUARY



- 1967 Irrfan Khan, who rejuvenated the characters of Hindi cinema world, stepped into the world.
- 1980 After less than three years of the overthrow of power due to emergency, the people of India once again handed over the reins of the country to Indira Gandhi.

08 JANUARY

- 1965 The first Indian cinema film to win internationally acclaimed filmmaker Bimal Roy. On this day, he said goodbye to the world.
- 1984 The first Indian woman pilot Sushma Mukhopadhyay died.

09 JANUARY

- 1982 The first Indian scientific expedition reaches Antarctica.
- 1915 Mahatma Gandhi arrives in Mumbai after returning from South Africa.
- 1934 Mahendra Kapoor, the famous playback singer of Hindi cinema, was born.

10 JANUARY

- 1916 British Ambassador Sir Thomas Roe meets Jahangir in Ajmer.

11 JANUARY

- 1922 The first insulin was given to patients with diabetes.
- 1954 Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi was born who raised a voice against child labor.
- 1966 Lal Bahadur Shastri, who won hearts with his simplicity, died in Tashkent.

12 JANUARY

- 1863 Swami Vivekananda, who brought Gyan Prakash to India, was born.

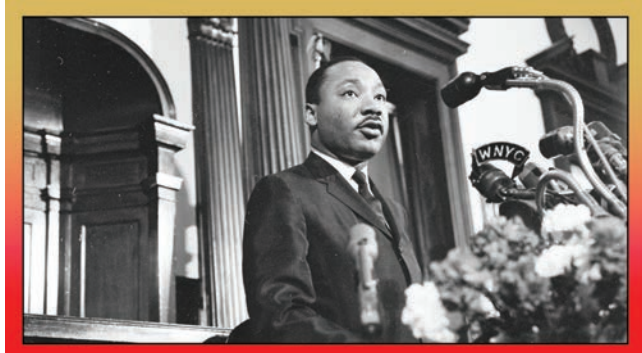


- 1948 Mahatma Gandhi gave his last speech and decided to go on a hunger strike against communal violence. He was deeply saddened by the partition of India in 1947.

AT THE APOLLO - UPTOWN HALL: MLK- BLUEPRINT FOR THE CULTURE



BY
MABEL PAIS



The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Photo credit/ apollotheater.org

EVENT DATE: JANUARY 15, 2023

EVENT TIME: 3:00 PM EST

LOCATION: APOLLO'S HISTORIC THEATER, 253 WEST 125TH STREET NEW YORK, NY

TICKETS: TICKETS ARE FREE, BUT RSVP IS REQUIRED

UPTOWN HALL: MLK- BLUEPRINT FOR THE CULTURE PRESENTED BY WNYC & THE APOLLO

The 17th annual Apollo Uptown Hall MLK celebration focuses on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's as the template for modern social and civil justice movements. This year is a celebration of young people impacting society through activism, engagement, and a commitment to justice.

The Apollo has a decades-long tradition of serving as a convener for local community residents as well as people from across New York City. That tradition continues as the Apollo partners with WNYC in its annual celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his enduring legacy on the culture. WNYC's 'Notes from America' host, Kai Wright moderates the first

hour of this year's celebration followed by music, spoken word and other forms of creative expressions with WQXR's Terrance McKnight. Learn more at apollotheater.org/event/uptown-hall-mlk-blueprint-for-the-culture

Following the in-person program, Celebrate MLK's National Day of Service with an inspiring panel on the Apollo Digital Stage featuring a discussion on the pivotal role of young voices affecting change within their communities, curated by the Apollo Young Producers.

APOLLO YOUNG PRODUCERS PRESENTS: YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS



Apollo Young Producers - left to right: Tania Maree Giordani, Natalie Hernandez, Luis Jonathan Hernandez, Deja Foxx.

Photo credit/ apollotheater.org

EVENT DATE: JANUARY 15, 2023

EVENT TIME: 5:00 PM EST

LOCATION: APOLLO DIGITAL STAGE

TICKETS: FREE, BUT RSVP IS REQUIRED

A VIRTUAL EVENT

PANEL DISCUSSION

Watch the Apollo Digital Stage, a virtual event celebrating Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the

National Day of Service. Curated by the Apollo Young Producers, a dynamic group of alumni from the Apollo's high school and college programs, this inspiring panel discussion highlights emerging activists and community leaders as they tackle gun violence, reproductive rights, and the need for holistic community care. Explore how young people can harness their unique talents to affect change and better serve their communities. Meet them on the Apollo Digital Stage to share resources, find support, and discuss experiences with the leaders of tomorrow.

'MLK: Young Changemakers' is a continuation of the Apollo's 2022-2023 season, 'The Next Movement,' an exploration of what's new, now and next in music, dance, art and ideas.

FEATURING PANELISTS

Luis Jonathan Hernandez, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Youth Over Guns

Deja Foxx, Activist, Founder of GenZ Girl Gang, Co-Founder El Rio RHAP

Tania Maree Giordani, Founder and Director at NourishNYC

Natalie Hernandez, Moderator

To learn more about each "changemaker" panelist, visit apollotheater.org/event/apollo-young-producers-presents-young-changemakers-2023/

HOW TO WATCH

Apollo Digital Stage

Facebook

Youtube

HEALTH SAFETY PROTOCOLS

For the safety of the artists, audiences and staff, face coverings are optional but encouraged for all attendees while inside the theater. For more information about the Apollo's COVID safety policies, visit apollotheater.org/covid-19.

JCC WELCOMES YOU TO NEW YEAR FITNESS FAIR



BY
MABEL PAIS



Fitness Class

Photo credit/JCC

WHEN: Sunday, January 8, 2023 from 10:30 AM to 4:30 PM

WHERE: Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan at 334 Amsterdam Avenue (at 76th Street)

WHAT: Hundreds of New Yorkers will kick off the new year with 20+ free fitness and wellness classes, offered in person and online, including Yoga for Bone Health, Dance Fitness, Nia Rockin' New Year's Jam, Self Defense, Tai Chi & Qi Gong, Zentangle, a salsa dance

soiree and wine tasting to close the day, and more.

BENEFITS:

In addition to the day-long festivities, the JCC will offer a discount to Health Club membership for those who register during the event, along with discounts on personal training and massage.

"We are delighted to welcome the community through our doors for this special annual event," said Melissa Donovan, Chief Operating Officer, Health & Wellness of MMJCCM. "It's vitally important that people have opportunities to connect with caring communities, vibrant programs, and evidence-based information on their wellness journey. The new year is a moment of reboot for many people, resolutions or not, and we love sharing a sampling of the wonderful classes and expertise that you can expect from the JCC year-round."

PRE-REGISTRATION:

To pre-register and for more information, visit mmjccm.org/newyears.

WHO: Hundreds of New Yorkers who want to start the new year with a focus on getting and staying fit and healthy.

HEALTH SAFETY PROTOCOLS

For updated health safety protocols, visit mmjccm.org/about/policies-practices#covid

THE MARLENE MEYERSON JCC MANHATTAN (MMJCCM):

Together with its community, the MMJCCM creates opportunities for people to connect, grow, and learn within an ever-changing landscape. Located on 76th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, the JCC is a vibrant non-profit community center on the Upper West Side. It also presents a robust slate of virtual programming, serving an even wider community. The JCC serves over 55,000 people annually through 1,200 programs each season that educate, inspire, and transform participants' minds, bodies, and spirits. Throughout COVID-19, the JCC has pivoted to meet the community online, exceeding 102,000 registrations to over 3,000 virtual classes and programs in the earliest part of the pandemic. Since its inception, the JCC has been committed to serving the community by offering programs, classes, and events that extend beyond neighborhood boundaries, reaching people at all stages of their lives. Learn more at mmjccm.org

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



Kartik Aaryan's Shehzada trailer to be attached to Shah Rukh Khan's Pathaan

Kartik Aaryan's next Shehzada is gearing for a big launch before its release a few days before Valentine's Day. Directed by Rohit Dhawan, the film will release on February 10, 2023. The film's trailer, which is due to be released soon, will also be attached to the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Pathaan on January 25, 2023. Kartik's last theatrical release was the blockbuster hit Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 in May.

The Hindi film also stars Kriti Sanon, Manisha Koirala, Paresh Rawal, Ronit Roy and Sachin Khedekar. Shehzada is the remake of the Allu Arjun's 2020 Telugu hit, Ala Vaikunthapuramuloo, which also starred Tabu. A first look teaser of the film was launched in November 2022. Kartik's character Bantu is seen beating up goons and stating, "Jab baat family pe aye toh discussion nahi karte, action karte hai (When it comes to your family, you don't stop to talk, you act first)."

Pathaan gets a UA certificate after 10 cuts

Pathaan featuring Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, and John Abraham has been embroiled in controversies ever since glimpses of it started showing up online. From leaked pictures to their song releases, there has been a mix of good and bad responses, nevertheless, the excitement around it has stayed intact.

Now the latest news suggests that Pathaan has been given a UA certificate post certain cuts in the films. This includes the close-up shots of Deepika Padukone which were deemed inappropriate along with the dialogues.

Three cuts have been made in the Besharam Rang song that were too bold for the viewers. Whether the saffron outfit that wreaked havoc on viewers has been removed or not was mentioned in the report. Words such as RAW have been replaced with subtler terms like "Humare" and "Langde Lulle" with "Toote Foote." Other words such as "Mrs. Bharatmata", "Ashok Chakra", and "scotch" were replaced with "Veer Puraskar", "SBU" and "drink" respectively. Also, any reference to Russia is also reported to have been eradicated.

Meanwhile, protesters tore down posters of Pathaan in Ahmedabad. In a video shared by the Bajrang Dal Gujarat on Twitter, people were seen shouting slogans as they tore posters and even huge cut-outs of Pathaan's star cast. The incident took place at Alpha One mall in Vastrapur, Ahmedabad where members of Bajrang Dal created a ruckus.



As Oscar vote draws closer, 'RRR' nets 11 mentions on 'Variety' shortlists

The 'Variety' editor responsible for making the Hollywood bible's predictions for the Oscars and Emmys has a lot of good news for the makers of 'RRR'. If Clayton Davis had the casting vote at the Academy, 'RRR' would be a close runner-up to 'Close', Lukas Ghont's 2022 Cannes Grand Prix-winning coming-of-age movie, in the Best Picture and the International Feature categories (though for the latter, it is not India's official entry).

And if Davis were the God of All Things at the Academy, music composer M.M. Keeravaani, along with playback singers Suddala Ashok Teja and Kala Bhairava, would come home with the Oscar for 'Komuram Bheemudo', staving off a challenge from 'Naatu Naatu'.

The period drama's director, S.S. Rajamouli, is in the running for Best Director, but he gets an honourable mention, in a field topped by Todd Field, the helmer of the highly anticipated film, 'Tar'.

Also to land an honourable mention is 'RRR' star Jr NTR for Best Actor in a Leading Role, where the favourite is the 'Elvis' star, Austin Butler, followed by Brendan Fraser ('The Whale'). Jr NTR is in the honourable company of Will Smith ('Emancipation'), Hugh Jackman ('Son') and Bill Nighy ('Living'), who also have received honourable mentions. Vijayendra Prasad, 'RRR' screenplay writer, is on another list of honourable mentions, for Original Screenplay; so is Sabu Cyril, for Production Design and A. Sreekar Prasad for Film Editing. K.K. Senthil Kumar is among the five on Davis's shortlist for Best Cinematography in the formidable company of his compatriots behind the cameras of 'Batman', 'Top Gun: Maverick', 'Emancipation' and 'Nope'. Likewise, 'RRR' music composer M.M. Keeravaani is in the shortlist for Original Score.

Source: IANS



SRK renames Alia Bhatt giving her the quirky 'Kapoor' name of 'Amma Bhatt Kapoor'

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has shared a nickname for actress Alia Bhatt after she said she will call him 'Pathaan' after the film's release.

Alia had a banter filled exchange with SRK on Twitter, where the actor treated his fans with an 'Ask SRK' session on Twitter. Alia Bhatt joined the question and answer session, as she responded to a fan, who had asked Shah Rukh Khan, "Why does Alia call you just SR?"

Responding to why Alia Bhatt called Shah Rukh Khan only 'SR', the actor tweeted what 'SR' could stand for.

He wrote, "Could mean sweet and romantic or maybe senior and respected or maybe just Shah Rukh."

Alia revealed what 'SR' stood for, and tweeted, "More like sweet and respected :) But from 25th January I'm going to switch to calling you Pathaan. See I'm so creative na." After Alia Bhatt announced her new name for Shah Rukh, he too, came up with a name for Alia. In reference to Alia's daughter Raha Kapoor, he tweeted, "Done little one. And I am now going to call you little Amma (mother) Bhatt Kapoor!"



Laviscount could be the next James Bond after Daniel Craig

Lucien Laviscount is the new entrant in the lineup of Hollywood actors being considered for the James Bond franchise. The Emily in Paris star could replace Daniel Craig as 007 in the film series. The actor plays Alfie in the Netflix series headlined by Lily Collins. Alfie is the boyfriend of Lily's character Emily Cooper; he joined the series in season two.

The British actor, who is 30, is said to be the perfect age to play the character, according to the makers. Producer Barbara Broccoli has previously said that she wants the next actor as Bond to play the British secret agent for the next 15 years. Daniel last played the iconic character in the 2021 film No Time To Die. He acted in five films in the franchise beginning with Casino Royale in 2006.

According to a report in the Daily Mail, the only hinderance to Lucien's casting could be his previous appearance on the reality show Celebrity Big Brother in 2011, when he came in fifth place. A source told the British website, "Lucien ticks all of the boxes."

Murder Mystery 2 first look: Jennifer Aniston, Adam Sandler reunite in Paris this March

The first of the upcoming Netflix sequel, Murder Mystery 2, shows actors Jennifer Aniston and Adam Sandler reuniting in Paris. The second film, directed by Jeremy Garelick, will release on the streaming platform in March. Murder Mystery, which released on June 14, 2019, got a tremendous opening weekend with 30.8 million views in its first three days of release.

The first film featured Adam as New York City police officer Nick Spitz and Jennifer as his wife Audrey, a hairdresser and murder mystery novel enthusiast. The ordinary couple are caught up in a murder investigation on a billionaire's yacht in Europe. The sequel, which is also written by James Vanderbilt, gets Audrey and Nick involved in a new international case as their friend is kidnapped at his own wedding.

In the new photograph, Jennifer and Adam are listening in on a phone call on speakerphone on Paris' iconic street, Pont des Arts. Jennifer is wearing a fur-lined black coat and carrying some luggage, while Adam has his left arm in a sling. The actor is wearing a long coat and sunglasses in the first look.

In April 2022, Jennifer had shared an Instagram Reel wrapping up the film in Paris set to the song C'est Si Bon from Eartha Kitt. The video featured Adam and other crew members behind the scenes on the film. Adam and Jennifer are also producers on the sequel.

Actors Adeel Akhtar and John Kani will return for the sequel, while Mark Strong, Mélanie Laurent, Jodie Turner-Smith, Kuhoo Verma, Enrique Arce, Tony Goldwyn, Annie Mumolo and Zurin Villanueva are coming on board for the second film. Part of the film is also expected to take place in the Caribbean.

With the recent popularity of Rian Johnson's Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery, Netflix could have another murder mystery hit on its hands in March. The first film racked up 170 million hours in its first 28 days and even ended up in the list of top 10 most-watched Netflix movies of all time. The sequel is said to be loosely based on Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express.



Angelina Jolie seen on coffee date with Normal People star Paul Mescal

Angelina Jolie has been seen with Paul Mescal after a fan spotted and photographed the pair having coffee together in London, England on Tuesday. The Oscar-winning actor was seen in conversation with the young actor who broke through with his performance as Connell in the series Normal People in 2020. Angelina's 16-year-old daughter, Shiloh, was also present with them at the Almeida Café & Bar.

Earlier in the day, Angelina and Shiloh had watched Paul perform on stage at the Almeida Theatre. He is playing the lead role of Stanley in the Tennessee Williams play until February 4. The actors were spotted by a fan who photographed them. A Paul fan account on Instagram shared the photograph on their Instagram Story with the caption,

"Angelina Jolie saw 'A Streetcar named desire' yesterday and after they grabbed a coffee at the @almeida_theatre Cafe." Both have their backs to the camera; Paul is wearing a red T-shirt and Angelina is dressed in black.



Dave Bautista is relieved to say goodbye to MCU's Drax

Former wrestler Dave Bautista's breakout role in Hollywood was with the 2014 Marvel feature Guardians of the Galaxy directed by James Gunn. He played the warrior Drax the Destroyer in the superhero franchise film, becoming the comic relief in the series. The actor also received several kudos for his portrayal of Drax. This year, he says goodbye to the character after six movies over nine years.

Dave is not the first wrestler to join Hollywood. Dwayne Johnson and John Cena have also made a name for themselves in the industry. But filmmakers and fans have noted Dave's enthusiasm to branch out as an actor since he began acting in 2006. He was recently seen in Rian Johnson's Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery in December where he played Duke, a former video game streamer turned men's rights activist. Rian also stated he believes Dave has the potential to take a real dramatic lead role with an established filmmaker and deliver.

In a new interview with GQ magazine, Dave spoke about taking his acting career to the next level. He shared that



he had to say goodbye to Drax after all this time as he is more keen to take other kinds of parts in order to be a 'respected actor'. The actor had to spend four hours in makeup to transform himself into Drax. He said, "I'm so grateful for Drax. I love him. But there's a relief [that it's over]. It wasn't all pleasant. It was hard playing that role. The makeup process was beating me down. And I just don't know if I want Drax to be my legacy—it's a silly performance, and I want to do more dramatic stuff."

6-YEAR-OLD BOY SHOOTS TEACHER IN VIRGINIA SCHOOL

JANUARY 7

NORFOLK (TIP): A six-year-old student shot and wounded a teacher at his school in Virginia during an altercation inside a first-grade classroom on January 6, police and school officials in the city of Newport News said.

No students were injured in the shooting at Richneck Elementary School, police said. The teacher — a woman in her 30s — suffered life-threatening injuries. Her condition had improved somewhat by late afternoon, Newport News Police Chief Steve Drew said.

"We did not have a situation where someone was going around the school shooting," Drew told reporters, later adding that the gunshot was not an accident.

Drew said the student and teacher had known in each other in a classroom setting.

He said the boy had a handgun in the classroom, and investigators were trying to figure out where he obtained it. The police chief did not provide further details about the shooting or what happened inside the school.

Joselin Glover, whose son is in fourth grade, told The Virginian-Pilot newspaper she got a text from the school stating that one person was shot and another was in custody.

"My heart stopped," she said. "I was freaking out, very nervous. Just wondering if that one person was my son." Carlos, her 9-year-old, was at recess. But he said he and his classmates were soon holed up in the back of a classroom.

"Most of the whole class was crying," Carlos told the newspaper.

Parents and students were reunited at a gymnasium door, Newport News Public Schools said via Facebook.

The police chief did not specifically address questions about whether authorities were in touch with the boy's parents, but said members of the police department were handling that investigation.

"We have been in contact with our commonwealth's attorney (local prosecutor) and some other entities to help us best get services to this young man," Drew said.

Newport News is a city of about 185,000 people in southeastern Virginia known for its shipyard, which builds the nation's aircraft carriers and other U.S. Navy vessels.

Richneck has about 550 students who are in kindergarten through fifth grade, according to the Virginia Department of Education's website. School officials have already said that there will be no classes at the school on Monday. "Today our students got a lesson in gun violence," said George Parker III, Newport News schools superintendent, "and what guns can do to disrupt, not only an educational environment, but also a family, a community." (AP)

Operation to capture drug lord El Chapo's son leaves 29 dead in Mexico

JANUARY 7

MEXICO CITY (TIP): At least 29 people were killed in clashes sparked by an operation to capture a son of jailed Mexican drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman in northwest Mexico's Sinaloa state, Defence Minister Luis Cresencio Sandoval has confirmed.

The capture of Ovidio Guzman on January 5 left 19 assailants and 10 military troops dead and 35 others wounded, Sandoval was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency.

Army and National Guard troops led the operation to capture Ovidio Guzman, a leader of the Sinaloa drug cartel, leading to armed clashes and the exchange of heavy gunfire in the Jesus Maria district of the city of Culiacan.

According to Interior Minister Adan Augusto Lopez, Ovidio Guzman was arrested for a range of crimes, including possession of military weapons and attempted homicide.

Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Minister Marcelo Ebrard confirmed that the US requested Ovidio Guzman's extradition back in September 2019, adding that the



process could take several weeks.

Mexican law requires US authorities to first submit the evidence they have against Ovidio Guzman to a Mexican judge, who will then decide whether to proceed with the extradition request,

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said.

Ovidio Guzman faces charges of conspiracy to distribute cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana in the US, media reports said. (IANS)

Virgin Orbit set for historic satellite launch from Britain on Monday

JANUARY 6

LONDON (TIP): The first orbital satellite to set off for space from western Europe will be launched from Cornwall in southwest England on January 5.

Virgin Orbit, part-owned by billionaire Richard Branson, who founded the Virgin Atlantic airline, plans to use a modified Boeing 747 with a rocket attached under its wing for the first time outside the company's base in the United States.

Once the plane is at around 35,000 feet, the rocket will be released over the Atlantic, taking small satellites from seven customers into orbit in what is known as a horizontal launch.

The mission has been given a window for take-off from 2216 GMT on Monday but that is dependent on the weather plus other scheduling and system issues, and Virgin Orbit said there are back-up dates in mid and late January.

A successful ground test known as a "wet dress rehearsal", which involves fuelling the rocket inside a special safety zone, was held on Thursday, officials involved in the launch said.

The idea of releasing a rocket from a converted jetliner, pioneered by Orbital Sciences in the 1990s, is designed to offer a flexible and low-cost route to orbit as the number of small satellites in low Earth orbit grows dramatically.

The mission highlights an emerging small-launch sector just as Europe faces



a growing crisis due to the Ukraine war, cutting access to Russian Soyuz vehicles, as well as Ariane 6 delays and the grounding of Vega rockets after a failed launch last month.

Britain has a large space industry employing 47,000 people, who build more satellites than anywhere outside the United States, but those have had to travel to spaceports in the United States, French Guiana or Kazakhstan before they can make it into orbit.

With two vertical micro-launch sites planned in Scotland, Britain now faces competition from Scandinavia and Germany in a new market for small launchers carrying miniature "cubesat" payloads to low Earth orbit, but believes it has an advantage due to its proximity to less congested oceanic airspace.

Even so, the launch was delayed in part due to the myriad regulatory clearances needed on the inaugural

flight.

'START ME UP'

"When you look at the way that the low Earth orbit economy is developing, it's the place that everybody is looking to put their satellites, whether it be for climate change, observation or urban development, or indeed for security purposes," Ian Annett, deputy CEO of the UK Space Agency told Reuters.

"The ability to access low Earth orbit with micro-launches is definitely not a static market - it is one that is continuing to grow," he said.

The European Space Agency recently embraced the use of small launchers for some missions, though commentators such as Peter de Selding, co-founder of SpaceIntelReport.com, have questioned whether there is enough demand in Europe for multiple types.

(Reuters)

Beijing intimidates female journalists for critical coverage of China

JANUARY 5

BEIJING (TIP): China has been intimidating women journalists and researchers online to silence them and discredit their critical coverage of China, according to think tank Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI).

The increased harassment over the past year directed at women analysts of Asian descent is likely the result of an orchestrated campaign by the Chinese government, research by a think tank said.

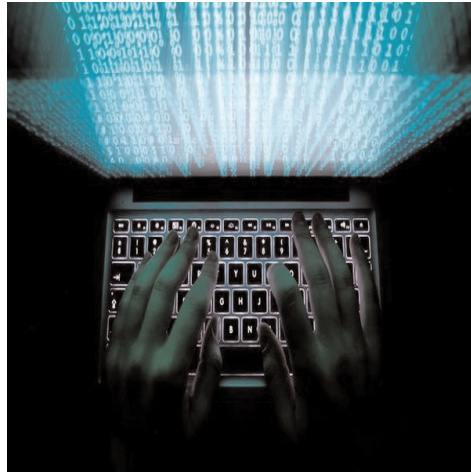
China is not going to stop trolling journalists because of an advocacy campaign," Hoffman wrote. "What we can do is put in place strong digital safety measures and online abuse policies in newsrooms that will help to mitigate the impact of these attacks."

A 2022 report by the International Center for Journalists found nearly three-quarters of women journalists it surveyed had experienced online threats.

Of those, 30 per cent said they self-censored on social media and 20 per cent had quit posting entirely. Some said the harassment led them to quit their jobs or even their profession altogether.

Harassment largely ranged from insults about an individual's appearance to accusations of being a traitor or threats of violence and rape.

The harassment "illustrates how online attacks can be used by authoritarian governments beyond borders to intimidate and silence



journalists," Nadine Hoffman, deputy director of the Washington-based International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF), wrote in an email to VOA. According to June and November reports from ASPI, a network popularly dubbed Spamouflage is likely behind the harassment.

"Spamouflage" refers to an extensive network of Beijing-linked accounts first identified in 2019. Activity from the network has been focused on Hong Kong pro-democracy protests, as well as Taiwan, COVID-19 and human rights abuses in Xinjiang, it reported.

But embassy spokesperson Liu Pengyu told VOA in June that "China condemns the harassment of female groups and opposes linking it to the Chinese government without evidence." Twitter first attributed a "significant state-backed" operation to China in 2019 when the social media company identified over

900 accounts it said were linked to Beijing.

And in June 2022, a Twitter spokesperson told VOA that the activity ASPI identified was part of the "Spamouflage" network, and the company had suspended more than 400 accounts in response.

According to VOA, the latest report from ASPI determined that graphic online depictions of sexual assault, as well as homophobia, racist imagery and life-threatening intimidation -- like telling targets to kill themselves -- "are a growing part of the Chinese Communist Party's toolkit of digital transnational repression." "People like you who betray the motherland, smear and slander at will, are really inferior to dogs," one tweet cited in the report said. Another read, "I advise you not to run around. Stray dogs are easy to kill." Journalists and researchers who concentrate on China are familiar with the pattern of abuse.

Yaqiu Wang, who focuses on issues including internet censorship for Human Rights Watch (HRW), has experienced online harassment over her work. The IWMF has found similar results in its research. As well as self-censorship, the IWMF has seen negative mental health repercussions for those targeted, Hoffman said.

"Online violence is a tool intended to silence women's voices in public spaces, whether by misogynists, authoritarian governments or other kinds of trolls," Hoffman wrote. "And, it works." (ANI)

Building collapse in northern Iraqi city kills 3, injures 9

JANUARY 6

BAGHDAD (TIP): A building under construction collapsed in Iraq's northern city of Mosul, killing three people and injuring nine others, police said January 6.

The Thursday afternoon collapse occurred in a western neighbourhood of Mosul when workers were casting the roof of the building with cement.

The police command in Ninevah province said the building is owned by the city's department in charge of the sewage system.

It said the nine injured were taken to a hospital in the city.

Large parts of Mosul were destroyed in 2017 during a monthslong battle against the Islamic State group that ended with Iraqi forces' victory over IS in the city.

The battle ended the extremists' caliphate in Iraq in July that year.

IS captured Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, in June 2014 and held it until their defeat three years later. AP

Hospitals in Beijing running out of beds

JANUARY 5

BEIJING (TIP): Patients, most of them elderly, are lying on stretchers in hallways and taking oxygen while sitting in wheelchairs as Covid surges in China's capital city Beijing.

The Chuiyangliu hospital in the city's east was packed with newly arrived patients on January 5. By mid-morning beds had run out, even as ambulances continued to bring those in need.

Hard-pressed nurses and doctors rushed to take information and triage the most urgent cases. The surge in severely ill people needing hospital care follows China abandonment of its most severe pandemic restrictions last month after nearly three years of lockdowns, travels bans and school closures that weighed heavily on the economy and prompted street protests not seen since the late 1980s.

It also comes as the European Union on Wednesday "strongly encouraged" its member states to impose pre-departure Covid testing of passengers from China.

At a briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Beijing has consistently "shared information and data with international community in an open and transparent manner." — AP

Ukraine pleads with allies to send tanks as fighting grinds on in east

JANUARY 5

KYIV (TIP): Ukrainian and Russian troops battled in eastern regions on January 5 as Kyiv tried to push back occupying forces, while President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged the West to provide his army with heavy tanks to boost their firepower.

The Ukrainian military said the Russians were focused on an offensive in the Bakhmut sector of the Donetsk region, but their attacks in the Avdiivka and Kupiansk sectors were unsuccessful.

The governor of neighbouring Luhansk region, meanwhile, said Ukrainian troops were recapturing areas there "step-by-step" but cautioned it was "not happening fast".

Luhansk and Donetsk make up the Donbas region, Ukraine's industrial heartland, parts of which were seized by Russian-backed proxies in 2014.

Russia declared Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions as part of its territory in September after referendums condemned by Ukraine



and Western countries. Russia does not fully control any of the four regions.

Bakhmut, which is now largely in ruins after months of battering by Russian artillery, is important because the Russian leadership wants to have a success to hold up to the Russian public after a series of setbacks in the war.

It is located on a strategic supply line between the Donetsk and Luhansk

regions. Gaining control of the city, with a pre-war population of 70,000-80,000 that has shrunk to close to 10,000, could give Russia a stepping stone to advance on two bigger cities - Kramatorsk and Sloviansk.

Fighting has been particularly tough there, with commanders on both sides describing it as a "meat grinder". (Reuters)

**FORMER SL PREZ
RAJAPAKSA RETURNS
HOME**

JANUARY 6

COLOMBO (TIP): Former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was ousted from power last year over his government's mishandling of the cash-strapped country's economy, has returned here from Dubai, his first foreign trip since returning to Sri Lanka four months ago. Rajapaksa and wife Ioma arrived at Bandaranaike International Airport here from Dubai on January 5. Rajapaksa, 73, fled Sri Lanka to the Maldives in July, as the country plunged into an economic crisis. (PTI)

**TRUST VOTE: HECTIC
PARLEYS IN NEPAL**

JANUARY 5

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda has intensified negotiations with other parties to secure the required majority votes ahead of a vote of confidence in Parliament next week. The Prachanda-led coalition requires at least 138 votes in the 275-member House of Representatives to survive the vote of confidence. Prachanda claims that he has the support of 169 lawmakers. (PTI)

**TALIBAN KILL 8 IN RAIDS
ON IS HIDEOUTS**

JANUARY 5

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Afghanistan's ruling Taliban killed eight Islamic State militants and arrested nine others in raids targeting key figures in a spate of attacks in Kabul, a Taliban government spokesman said on January 5. Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesman for the government, said the raids on Wednesday targeted militants who organised recent attacks on Kabul's Longan Hotel, Pakistan's embassy and the military airport. "These members had a main role in the attack on the Chinese hotel and paved the way for IS members to come to Afghanistan," Mujahid tweeted. — AP

**ELECTIONS THIS YEAR,
SAYS MYANMAR ARMY
LEADER**

JANUARY 4

BANGKOK (TIP): Myanmar's ruling military leader, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, presented a plan for an election later this year. He gave the details in a speech today during a ceremony at Naypyitaw, marking the 75th anniversary of the country's independence. "Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over state duties to the winning party in accordance with the democratic standards," Min Aung Hlaing said. (AP)

Pak PM Shehbaz Sharif holds talks with IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva to break deadlock over next tranche of assistance

JANUARY 6

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on January 6 held talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Kristalina Georgieva to break the deadlock over the release of the next tranche of assistance for the cash-strapped country.

The contact was made four days before an expected face-to-face meeting between the prime minister and the IMF chief on the sidelines of the Geneva Conference for flood victims.

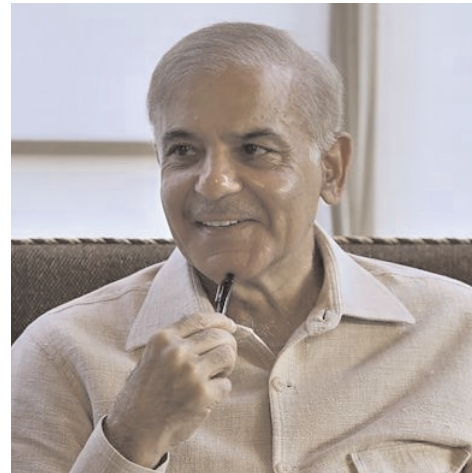
Addressing a business gathering here on Friday, Sharif confirmed he received a call from IMF Managing Director Georgieva and they discussed the issue of disbursement of an already pledged loan.

"I told the IMF that we cannot put more burden on our masses. I also urged that the IMF should send its delegation to Pakistan for talks," he said, adding that the delegation was expected to arrive over the next three or four days to discuss various issues.

The global lender has refused to issue the new instalment of the already agreed loan since Pakistan was not living up to the promises it made when the stalled loan of USD 6 billion was restored last year.

Prime Minister Sharif also sought relaxation in the demand to increase electricity prices to compensate for the deviation of around Rs 500 billion from the annual circular debt management plan.

These remain the major stumbling



blocks in reaching an initial understanding of a staff-level visit by the IMF to Pakistan.

"However, the government stood ready to impose flood levy and windfall income tax on commercial banks," sources said.

There was also a resolve from the Pakistani side to increase the energy prices in future against any further deviation.

Pakistan and the IMF had a round of engagement on November 18 last year, but could not finalise a schedule for formal talks on the overdue ninth review.

The IMF board in August last year approved the seventh and eighth reviews of Pakistan's bailout programme, allowing for a release of over USD 1.1 billion.

The much-needed bailout package from the IMF helped Pakistan avert an imminent default, amidst the persisting political uncertainty and the devastating

floods that have displaced more than 33 million people.

As the economy remains under pressure, the premier also made calls to the Chinese counterpart, Li Keqiang, seeking Beijing's help to avert a looming default while army chief General Asim Munir met the Saudi defence minister in Riyadh.

The contacts were made as the official foreign exchange reserves dipped to USD 5.6 billion.

In what appeared to be an alternative to the IMF, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, a day earlier, expressed hope of receiving a USD 3 billion second bailout from Saudi Arabia within days, vowing to raise money through the sale of assets to beef up the critically-low foreign exchange reserves.

But the Saudi cash assistance can only delay the default, as it cannot permanently solve the problem.

The finance minister had said that the government was committed to the IMF programme.

But at the same time, he added: "We will not take measures that may increase the burden on the common man." The IMF had earlier asked for a plan to end the additional Rs 500 billion circular debt, increase energy prices, imposition of new taxes, let the rupee gain its real value and achieve the primary budget surplus targets, excluding flood-related expenses – the conditions that will stoke inflation that is already standing at 25 per cent, the Express Tribune reported. (PTI)

General Bajwa wanted to get me killed, alleges Imran Khan

JANUARY 5

LAHORE (TIP): In a fresh attack on Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa (ret), Pakistan's ousted prime minister Imran Khan has alleged that the former army chief wanted to have him murdered and impose a state of emergency in the country.

Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, made the startling allegation during an interview with private Bol News channel in Lahore.

Khan, 70, had been at loggerheads with Bajwa ever since his ouster from power in April by a no-confidence motion.

He suffered bullet injuries in the right leg on November 3 when two gunmen fired a volley of bullets at him and others standing on a container-mounted truck in the Wazirabad area, some 150 km from



Lahore, where he was leading the long march to press for snap polls.

Khan said he was being told by many to stop levelling allegations against Bajwa as he had retired, but he could not cover up "the crimes that Gen Bajwa had committed", the Dawn newspaper reported, quoting the channel's Lahore

bureau chief.

According to the report, Khan, in the as-yet unaired interview, claimed that Bajwa "wanted me dead".

Khan has attacked Bajwa in the past. Bajwa is now the main target of Khan who not only sees him as the sole reason for all his failures in the government but also alleges that the retired general had toppled his government as part of a US conspiracy.

Last month, Khan accused Bajwa of playing a "double game" against his government and said that he committed a "big mistake" by extending the tenure of the then military chief in 2019.

Gen Bajwa, 61, retired on November 29 after getting a three-year extension in 2019 by the then Prime Minister Khan. (PTI)

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Why stomach growls when we feel hungry

The Greeks called it "borborygmi", which is also a medical term for stomach growling. This is a noise which doesn't exactly come from the stomach but originates when excessive gas moves back and forth in the intestines.

Our belly usually growls when we are hungry and our blood sugar level starts to dip. The growling sound is an indication that we need to feed the stomach to help intestines get the required nutrients from the blood. As soon as we eat something, it calms down the growling noise and our digestive system gets focused on absorbing the food rather than moving the air around.

But now the question arises, how does this air get trapped inside our digestive tracts? Well, if you talk while eating, that's believed to be one of the primary reasons. Talking while eating allows air to enter our digestive tract. Along with this, eating too fast or drinking excessive fluids while working out also enable air to enter our body.

The process that makes you growl

The process that sends signals to your body about the hungry stomach is called migrating motor complex (MMC) process. This means that our stomach and intestines get engaged in sensing the absence of food in the body. Thus, receptors in the stomach wall create waves of electrical activity and trigger hunger. Remember, a poor MMC functioning can lead to vomiting, indigestion, abdominal



pain and nausea.

Stomach can growl when it is full

Yes, not only when you are craving food but some of you must have experience growling when your stomach is full. Many may not notice it as the sound is relatively low. This growling is the result of undigested food, due to which our gut starts to produce gases.

Irritable bowel syndrome

Usually, the noisy stomach is not considered a major health issue. But in case you experience increased growling problem, it may be a symptom of indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome or even a bout of diarrhea.

Sweet-tooth is harmful

If you have a sweet tooth, then the

noise that your stomach makes can be embarrassingly loud. This is due to the reason that excessive amount of sugar in the body can cause flatulence, resulting in increased intestinal noise.

What can be done?

Eat slowly and chew your food properly. This will help in aiding digestion and prevent production of unwanted gases in the body. Avoid talking while eating as it will prevent air from entering the body. While drinking as well, air can enter the body. This advice may sound weird but if you drink water using straw instead of a glass, it will limit the amount of air you can gulp. While exercising do not over hydrate yourself as heavy breathing during a workout can enable air to enter the body.

FOOD

Egg Fried Rice

Ingredients

Basmati Rice - 2 cups, Eggs - 10, Onions - 2 Spring, Onions - 1 bunch, Beans - 10, Carrot - 2, Capsicum - 2, Cabbage - 100 gms

Pepper Powder - 1/2 tblsp, Green Chillies - 2, Tomato Puree - 2 to 3 tblsp (or as required), Ajinomoto - 3 tsp (optional), Soy Sauce - 4 tblsp, Salt as per taste, Oil - 3 tblsp, Coriander Leaves - few, chopped

Method

- Pressure cook the rice until 1 whistle and remove.
- Chop all the vegetables finely and keep aside.
- Grind together the green chillies and mix well 2 tblsp water.
- Heat oil in a pan.
- Saute the onions for a minute.
- Add the chopped vegetables one by one and cook for a minute or two.
- Add the green chilli paste and tomato puree.
- Add salt and ajinomoto.
- Mix well and add soy sauce.
- Break the eggs into the pan and stir-fry for 3 to 4 minutes.
- Add the cooked rice and mix until all ingredients are combined.
- Garnish with coriander leaves.
- Serve.



Home remedies to advance menstruation

From the beneficial parsley to the healing vitamin C-rich fruits, nature has provided us a basket-full of home remedies to treat irregular and late monthly cycle. Here's a list of some of the most effective natural ways you can induce your periods (when it's irregular).

Parsley

Parsley has been traditionally used for inducing menstruation for centuries. Apiol and myristicin, two substances contained in parsley, stimulate contractions of the uterus, which results in the inducing effect of your monthly cycle.

Cumin

Cumin seeds, also known as jeera in Hindi, belong to the same family as parsley and also have a similar effect.

Carom seeds (Ajwain)

A concoction of carom seeds and jaggery will help in inducing periods besides relieving menstrual cramps. You can boil 1 tsp carom seeds with 1 tsp jaggery in 1 glass of water and consume it empty stomach in the morning.

Papayas

It's the most effective home remedy available to



prepone periods. Raw papaya stimulates contractions in the uterus and can help in inducing periods. The carotene present in papaya stimulates the estrogen hormone thereby inducing early period.

Ginger

Ginger tea is one of the most powerful emmenagogue (herbs with magical properties that stimulates menstrual flow, resulting in promotion of menstruation), but unlike parsley it can have some side effects, like acidity. For extremely delayed periods, a combination of parsley and ginger tea is recommended. Ginger is thought to increase the heat around the uterus, thus promoting contraction.

Coriander seeds

Coriander seeds are said to be the most effective home remedy for irregular periods because of its emmenagogue properties. You can boil 1 tsp. of coriander with 2 cups of water and wait until the water reduces to just one cup. Use a strainer to remove the seeds and drink the concoction thrice a day for a couple of days before your monthly period.

Fennel seeds (Saunf)

Fennel seeds, also known as saunf in Hindi, can be boiled in water to make a fragrant tea that should be consumed every morning on an empty stomach in order to regulate your period and have a healthy flow. You can mix 2 tsp of fennel seeds in a glass of water and leave it overnight. Strain the water and drink it in the morning.

Good hydration key to living longer, healthier life: Study

Scientists have found good levels of hydration may be key to living a longer and healthier life. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) study, adults who stay well-hydrated appear to be healthier, develop fewer chronic conditions, such as heart and lung disease, and live longer than those who may not get sufficient fluids.

Using health data gathered from 11,255 adults over a 30-year period, researchers analyzed links between serum sodium levels - which go up when fluid intake goes down - and various indicators of health.

The researchers found that adults with serum sodium levels at the higher end of a normal range were more likely to develop chronic conditions and show signs of advanced biological aging than those with serum sodium levels in the medium ranges. Adults with higher levels were also more likely to die at a younger age.

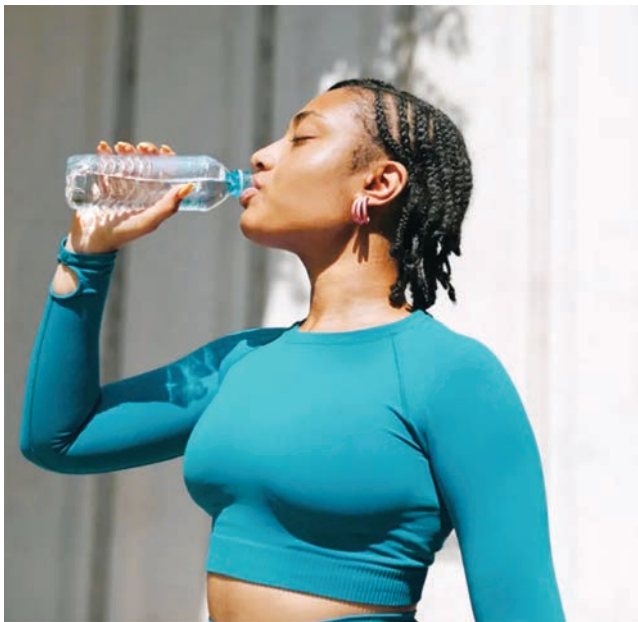
The findings are published in the journal *eBioMedicine*.

"The results suggest that proper hydration may slow down aging and prolong a disease-free life," said Natalia Dmitrieva, a study author and researcher in the Laboratory of Cardiovascular Regenerative Medicine at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of NIH.

For the analysis, researchers assessed information study participants shared during five medical visits - the first two when they were in their 50s, and the last when they were between ages 70-90, the study said.

To allow for a fair comparison between how hydration correlated with health outcomes, researchers excluded adults who had high levels of serum sodium at baseline check-ins or with underlying conditions, like obesity, that could affect serum sodium levels, the study said.

The scientists then evaluated how serum sodium



levels correlated with biological aging, which was assessed through 15 health markers. This included factors, such as systolic blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar, which provided insight about how well each person's cardiovascular, respiratory, metabolic, renal, and immune system was functioning. They also adjusted for factors, like age, race, biological sex, smoking status, and hypertension, the study said.

They found that adults with higher levels of normal serum sodium - with normal ranges falling between 135-146 milliequivalents per liter (mEq/L) - were more likely to show signs of faster biological aging. This was based on indicators like metabolic and cardiovascular health, lung function, and inflammation. *Source: PTI*

Japanese research reveals physical strain helps bone growth

We are frequently told to "take a load off" when things get too much, but when it comes to bone maintenance, doing the opposite can be beneficial. Some important processes for how physical strain induces bone formation have been uncovered by Japanese researchers.

Researchers from the National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Center Research Institute have shown that load affects the expression of the peptide osteocrin (OSTN), which increases when load is applied and decreases when it is reduced, in a study that was published in the journal 'Cell Reports'.

Bones and skeletal muscles are strengthened by the load associated with exercise, preventing bone and muscle atrophy, and maintaining bone and muscle strength is important for maintaining physical activity. The growth of long bones, such as the femur and tibia, is a very complex process controlled by genetic and environmental factors, such as exercise and gravity.

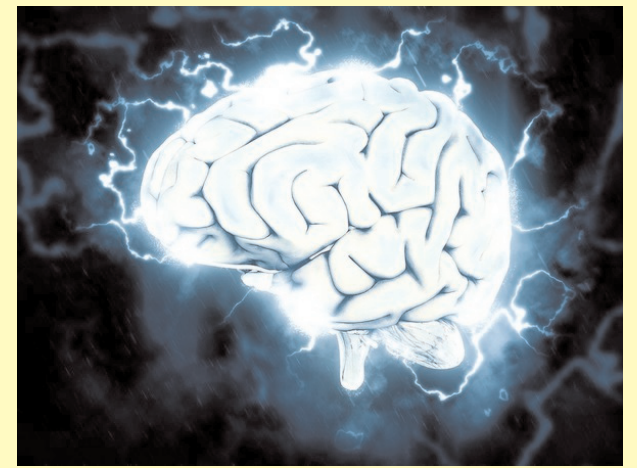
"Not much is known about how mechanical force initiates biochemical signals to control bone growth," says lead author of the study Haruko Watanabe-Takano. "We investigated how load is related to the metabolic balance adjustment of bone maintenance." Bone is maintained by the balanced activities of two types of cells - osteoblasts, which make bone, and osteoclasts, which break down bone - and is thought to be made in response load demand.

Specifically, the team investigated the expression of



OSTN, a peptide produced by osteoblasts, in mice. OSTN is critical to the regulation of bone growth, as well as physical endurance.

The researchers found that OSTN was very strongly expressed in bones such as the tibia, radius, and ulna, and in the region where the load was applied. Additionally, they showed that OSTN was secreted by the periosteal osteoblasts in these bones. The periosteum is a membrane found on the outer surface of bones, except at the joints of long bones, and is involved in bone remodeling and production, especially during growth. *Source: ANI*



Study finds brains rely on sight to identify a voice

A neuroscience study where participants were asked to identify U.S. presidents has found that to recognize a famous voice, human brains use the same center that lights up when the speaker's face is presented.

The new study, published last week in the *Journal of Neurophysiology*, suggests that voice and face recognition are linked even more intimately than previously thought. It offers an intriguing possibility that visual and auditory information relevant to identifying someone feeds into a common brain centre, allowing for more robust, well-rounded recognition by integrating separate modes of sensation.

"From behavioral research, we know that people can identify a familiar voice faster and more accurately when they can associate it with the speaker's face, but we never had a good explanation of why that happens," said senior author Taylor Abel, M.D., associate professor of neurological surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

"In the visual cortex, specifically in the part that typically processes faces, we also see electrical activity in response to famous people's voices, highlighting how deeply the two systems are interlinked."

Even though the interplay between the auditory and the visual brain processing systems has been widely acknowledged and investigated by various teams of neuroscientists all over the world, those systems were traditionally thought to be structurally and spatially distinct.

Until recently, few studies attempted to directly measure activity from the brain centre—the primary role of which is to consolidate and process visual information—to determine whether this centre is also engaged when participants are exposed to famous voice stimuli.

Researchers at Pitt had a unique opportunity to study that interaction in patients with epilepsy who, as part of their medical care, were temporarily implanted with electrodes measuring brain activity to determine the source of their seizures.

Source: ANI

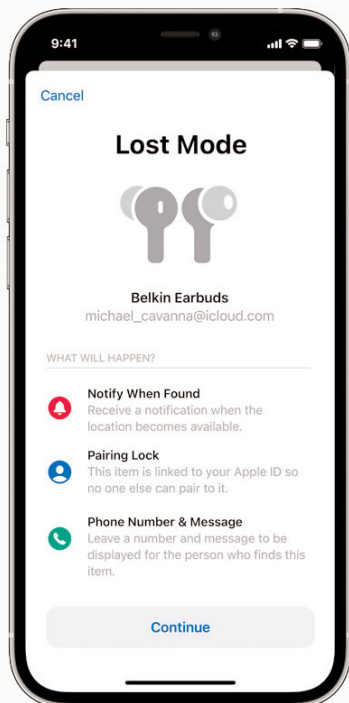
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Apple's 'Find My' app helps locate stolen car in US

Tech giant Apple's tracking application and service 'Find My' has helped to locate a stolen car of a man in Texas in the US.

Police were able to arrest four men who stole Dwayne Arrington's car by tracking them via AirPods, reports AppleInsider.

Arrington opened the Find My application after realising that his car was stolen.

According to the report, he noticed that his "AirPods taken in the theft were apparently stationary at a travel stop on Interstate 35." He then travelled to the truck stop and found five people in an SUV, and called the police for assistance.

Members of the group then woke up and ran away from the SUV, however, San Antonio Police arrested four of them but the fifth one drove away in the SUV.

"The arrest led to Arrington getting back his AirPods, with police also recovering his stolen car located elsewhere," the report said.

Meanwhile, last month, the 'Find My' feature had helped find a woman who fell 200 feet down a hill, following a car crash in the US state of California.

The victim had likely been in her crashed car overnight after leaving a family gathering.

Source: IANS

SpaceX kicks off New Year with landmark 200th space flight, launches 114 satellites

After successfully launching one satellite every week in 2022, Elon Musk's SpaceX is in no mood of taking any breaks. The Aerospace company has launched 114 satellites in the first mission of 2023 crossing the milestone of the 200th successful launch in its space exploration history.

The Transporter mission was the sixth dedicated smallsat rideshare mission for the company, which lifted off from Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. SpaceX used its Falcon-9 rocket to launch the satellites into Low Earth Orbit and said that this was the fifteenth launch and landing of this Falcon 9 stage booster.

"Falcon 9 carried 114 spacecraft to orbit that was set to deploy across 82 deployments, 78 of which have been confirmed. Teams are continuing to review data for the remaining payloads, though it may take customers some time to provide additional information on the status of their payloads," SpaceX said in a statement.

Among the 114 satellites, about three dozen were Earth-observing satellites, which are the size of a loaf of bread. These satellites are built and operated by the San Francisco-based company Planet. While the company launched 114 satellites, it still lags behind its own record of lifting off 143 satellites to space in a single mission.

The first launch of the year comes on the back of 61 successful launches in 2022. Apart from launching satellites and cargo, SpaceX also launched astronauts to the International Space Station and successfully returned them after completion of their six-month-long mission, showing its capability in transporting crew and cargo into



Apollo 7 astronaut Walter Cunningham dies at 90

Walter Cunningham, the last surviving astronaut from the first successful crewed space mission in NASA's Apollo program, died Tuesday in Houston. He was 90. NASA confirmed Cunningham's death in a statement but did not include its cause. His family said through a spokesman, Jeff Carr, that Cunningham "died in the hospital of natural causes."

Cunningham was one of three astronauts aboard the 1968 Apollo 7 mission, an 11-day spaceflight that beamed live television broadcasts as they orbited Earth, paving the way for the moon landing less than a year later.

Cunningham, then a civilian, crewed the mission with Navy Capt. Walter M. Schirra and Donn F. Eisele, an Air Force major.

Cunningham was the lunar module pilot on the space flight, which launched from Cape Kennedy Air Force Station, Florida, on Oct. 11 and splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean south of Bermuda. NASA said Cunningham, Eisele and Schirra flew a near perfect mission. Their spacecraft performed so well that the agency sent the next crew, Apollo 8, to orbit the moon as a prelude to the Apollo 11 moon landing in July 1969.

zero gravity.

SpaceX now aims to conduct the first orbital launch of Starship in 2023 alongside other big missions that include the Polaris Program, a

first-of-its-kind effort to rapidly advance human spaceflight capabilities. The program will consist of up to three human spaceflight missions.

New Twitter navigation tools arriving in Jan: Musk

Elon Musk has announced that new navigation features will arrive on Twitter in the New Year, as he aims to rejig the whole experience to make the platform faster.

"Twitter navigation coming in January that allows swiping to the side to switch between recommended & followed tweets, trends, topics, etc," he said in a tweet.

"Until then, tap the star icon on the upper right of the home screen to switch," he added.

Musk said that it is good to switch back and forth.

"As we improve Twitter AI, recommended tweets, lists and topics will become awesome," he noted.

On swiping across Lists on Twitter, Musk said that that will also happen.

A user asked him if they can also sort people they follow by categories. Musk was yet to reply to that.

As promised by the Twitter CEO, the "view counts for tweets" feature has become a hit among users.

Twitter has also updated the list of features for its Blue service, which mentioned that subscribers paying for the \$8 per month service will now get "prioritised



rankings in conversations." The Blue subscribers can also upload videos up to 60 minutes long from around the web at 1080p resolution and 2GB in file size.

Earlier, Twitter Blue subscribers were only able to

upload 10-minute-long videos on the platform at 1080p resolution with a file size limit of 512MB.

Google's Waze app adds new feature that warns about dangerous roads

Google-owned Waze app has added a new feature that notifies users of dangerous nearby roads based on traffic data while trying not to overwhelm them with alerts.

When using this new beta version of Waze, nearby high-risk roads are coloured red on the map, however, this may not be the case for roads that the user frequently travels on, reports The Verge, citing sources.

The feature also only displays one pop-up notification about the dangerous roads around the driver, possibly to keep caution from becoming anxious.

Countries that have access to the beta release of the app, will get a pop-up that states—"using reports from drivers and your route, you may see alerts for 'History of crashes' on some roads," said the report.

Source: IANS

Global economy to face tougher year in 2023, warns IMF chief

A third of the global economy will be in recession this year, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) chief has said, and warned that 2023 will be "tougher" than last year as the US, EU (European Union) and China will see their economies slow down.

Kristalina Georgieva, the chief of the IMF made these grim assertions on Sunday during a CBS news programme "Face the Nation." It comes at a time when the ongoing conflict in Ukraine shows no signs of abating after more than 10 months, with spiralling inflation, higher interest rates and the surge in coronavirus infections in China fuelled by the Omicron variant.

"We expect one-third of the world economy to be in recession," Kristalina Georgieva said on the news programme. The year 2023 will be tougher than last year because the economies of the US, the EU and China will slow down, she said. "Even in countries that are not in recession, it would feel like a recession for hundreds of millions of people," she explained. In October last year, the IMF trimmed its growth forecast for 2023.

"Global growth is forecast to slow from 6 per cent in 2021 to 3.2 per cent in 2022 and 2.7 per cent in 2023. This is the weakest growth profile since 2001 except for the global financial crisis and the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic," it said. *Source: PTI*

U.S. job growth solid in Dec; unemployment rate falls to 3.5%

WASHINGTON (TIP)

The U.S. economy added jobs at a solid clip in December, pushing the unemployment rate back to a pre-pandemic low of 3.5 per cent as the labour market remains tight, but Federal Reserve officials could draw some solace from a moderation in wage gains.

Still, the U.S. central bank's fight against inflation is far from being won. The Labor Department's closely watched employment report on Friday also showed household employment increasing by a whopping 717,000 jobs last month.

Recent declines in household employment had fanned speculation that nonfarm payrolls, the main measure of employment gains, were overstating job growth.

The labour market has remained strong, despite the Fed embarking last March on its fastest interest rate-hiking since the 1980s. It is underpinning the economy by sustaining consumer spending. But the economy's resilience raises the risk the Fed could lift its target interest rate above the 5.1 per cent peak the central bank projected last month and keep it there for a while.

"The labour market remains resilient but is losing pep and worker shortages remain intense," said Sal Guatieri, a senior economist at BMO Capital Markets in Toronto. "While wage growth has moderated, it's still far from consistent with price stability. Don't look for the Fed to ratchet down its hawkish talk or slow the pace of rate hikes on February 1."

Nonfarm payrolls increased 223,000 last month. Data for November was revised lower to show 256,000 jobs added instead of 263,000 as previously reported. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast payrolls increasing by 200,000 jobs, with estimates ranging from 130,000 to 350,000. The economy added 4.5 million jobs in 2022, with employment gains averaging 375,000 per month.

Employment gains last month were led by the leisure and hospitality industry, which added 67,000 jobs. Restaurants and bars as well as amusement parks, gambling and recreation places



accounted for the bulk of the increase in hiring.

Leisure and hospitality payrolls remain 932,000 below their pre-pandemic level.

Healthcare industry employment increased by 55,000 jobs. Construction payrolls rose 28,000, despite the house market collapsing under the weight of higher borrowing costs. Manufacturing employment rose 8,000. There were also gains in transportation and warehousing payrolls as well as retail.

Government employment rose 3,000, though a strike by 36,000 university employees in California hurt state government education payrolls which fell 24,000.

Average hourly earnings rose 0.3 per cent after increasing 0.4 per cent in the prior month. That lowered the year-on-year increase in wages to 4.6 per cent from 4.8 per cent in November. Wages growth could pick up in January as several states raise their minimum wage and most workers across the country get cost of living adjustments. *Source: Reuters*

Amazon to cut over 18,000 jobs

SEATTLE (TIP)

Amazon plans to cut more than 18,000 jobs, the largest number in the firm's history, as it battles to save costs.

The online giant, which employs 1.5 million people globally, did not say which countries the job cuts would hit, but said they would include Europe.

Most of the job losses will come from its consumer retail business and its human resources division.

Boss Andy Jassy cited the "uncertain economy" for the cuts, saying it had "hired rapidly over several years."

"We don't take these decisions lightly or underestimate how much they might affect the lives of those who are impacted," he said in a memo to staff.

He said the announcement had been brought forward due to one of the firm's employees leaking the cuts externally. "Companies that last a long time go through different phases. They're not in heavy people expansion mode every year," he added.

Reacting to the announcement, one Amazon Fresh store worker told the BBC: "We're not allowed to speak about it, even to each other."

"I'd like to keep my job, obviously," the employee said. But they were aware that there are a number of vacancies at the moment in the UK and if this job was axed, they would simply apply for another.

Amazon has seen sales slow after business boomed during the pandemic when customers at home spent a lot online.



India's services sector growth hits 6-month high in December on strong demand

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Indian services sector growth touched a six-month high in December, supported by a robust intake of new work and favourable market conditions, a monthly survey said on January 4.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 56.4 in November to 58.5 in December, highlighting the strongest rate of expansion since mid-2022. For the 17th straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"December saw a welcome expansion in Indian services activity, underscoring the resilience of demand as 2022 came to an end," said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Lima noted that "as we head into 2023, companies signalled strong optimism towards the outlook for output. Around 31 per cent of panellists forecast growth, while only 2 per cent anticipate a contraction."

Meanwhile, in December, more jobs were created and companies



remained strongly upbeat towards the year ahead outlook for business activity.

"Positive sentiment and ongoing growth of new business continued to support job creation, but there were areas where capacities were reportedly adequate to cope with current requirements," Lima said.

On the inflation front, input costs at services companies rose further, with companies mentioning wage pressures and higher prices for energy, food and transportation.

"Inflation trends were mixed, as input prices rose at a faster pace

and the upturn in charges moderated. On the expense front, services firms reported pressure from energy, food, staff and transportation costs," Lima said.

Meanwhile, the S&P Global India Composite PMI Output Index -- which measures combined services and manufacturing output -- rose from 56.7 in November to 59.4 in December.

"Aggregate sales rose sharply and at the fastest pace since August, boosted by quicker expansions at goods producers and services companies," the survey said. *Source: PTI*

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 - JANUARY 9 TO JANUARY 15, 2023

**Aries**

Ganesha says, you will be capable to purchase brand-new items this week, and because of your goodness and personality, you will certainly accomplish. You'll be able to confirm that the prior decisions you chose were wise ones instead of mistakes. You can achieve it no matter what you decide. Your spouse will highlight your talents and shortcomings this week in regard to your love relationship, bringing out the finest in you. Create a personalized gift for them. You will be experiencing migraines on the medical front but ignoring them might be harmful.

**Taurus**

Ganesha says, this week, you'll have the want to accomplish many goals, and everything you do is going to be accomplished. You'll be capable of maintaining your attention on all areas of your existence and finish each project on time. Keep your composure, and achievement will come quickly. Bring your partner to a place they like for personal outings. This is a great time to prolong the discussion because you wish to offer them anything else but are reluctant to. On the healthcare side, be careful while selecting a snooze pattern since you might get cervical soreness.

**Gemini**

Ganesha says your day is going to be anything less than a joyful surprise. Due to your involvement in philanthropy and efforts this week, you will feel joyful and thrilled. You'll succeed one day because of your good personality. This week, your action of kindness has the potential to change people's fortunes. The love life this week will require persistence. It's possible that your spouse won't support all of your decisions. We shall discuss with seniors on your wedded relationship. Your general well-being will be superb. You should stick to your exercise routine.

**Cancer**

Ganesha says, your actions from previously will dictate how you behave now. You will be prepared to put everything into anything you decide to do. This week, you're learning to set aside your prior mistakes. This week, you'll respect oneself. Ensure you don't make rash decisions when it pertains to romance. A subsequent period of peace may be disturbed by your partner's slight unease over your connection. On the domestic level, this week will be a strong and consistent day. The wellbeing of the aged will be affected by climate variations. You'll have such a good day all around.

**Leo**

Ganesha says, Kindness and happiness are in plenty this week. You will have a day of advantages this week. You won't be carrying any weights this week. It's going to be a good day this week. The company will run well this week, and all will proceed as planned. Your dating relationship will become chaotic. You'll really have to communicate easily with your friend. This week, you might not agree with everybody in your household, but all will turn out for the best in the finish. You won't need to worry concerning your wellness, it will be fine.

**Virgo**

Ganesha says, you will evaluate a bunch of data this week, either good or bad, as this is the initial journey to a new start. Take little steps as opposed to a massive leap. You will experience nice and happy at the end of the day. This week, your partner could surprise you with something truly lovely, and you'll be thrilled to be a share of it. Your house sides of the line' judicial issues affecting household land or assets will be resolved by day's end. This week, you'll need to drive and stroll carefully due to the chance you'll have a minor accident.

**Libra**

Ganesha says, this week, you'll notice a favorable change in your view of life. You'll view your situation with renewed eyes this week and from a more positive angle. You'll feel revitalized, eager to step outside of your own range this week and advance in every facet of your existence. You might impress your partner romantically by taking an unusual action for them. Take exceptional management of your wellness now and throughout this week. Keep clear from peaks this week.

**Scorpio**

Ganesha says, you'll address the issues with your work this week. It's essential. You get the opportunity this week to accept all that is wrong with your circumstances and not allow it to influence your decision. You'll sharpen and bolster your assessment skills this week. The best time to propose marriage to your partner and to heighten their desire to you is this week. Jupiter is going to be on your team. You should start exercising Pilates and relaxation this week since they will assist you in a number of approaches and help you define your objectives.

**Sagittarius**

Ganesha says, This week, you'll priorities your needs and your work. This week, you'll be capable to learn what motivates you and nourishes your cognitive powers. You'll improve your professional productivity by focusing on the aspects of your career that are right ahead of you. Try to strengthen your bond with your mate this week. This week, interpersonal difficulties will face newlywed couples. It's possible that you've been engaging in demanding activities for a while to maintain your physique in condition, and as a consequence, you're currently dealing with shoulder discomfort. It might be wise to take a rest this week.

**Capricorn**

Ganesha says, you will master the skill of choosing the greatest options this week. You will get more from your connections, and you will see a shift in your relationships with your relatives as well. Each of these will aid in creating a fresh outlook in preparation for a fresh beginning. You will go outside with your buddy to a peaceful area and talk about your upcoming ambitions there. Your psychological state this week may suffer as a result of how literally and strictly you are treating matters. Maintain your composure and pay attention to the moment. If you are uncomfortable preceding bed, you will get migraines.

**Aquarius**

Ganesha says, you'll be in charge of oneself this week. You'll be ready to speak your mind loudly and plainly this week. You will have a day of extreme patience this week. Without any reluctance or inconveniences, you will receive what you want in its entirety. You will blatantly request what you want this week. On the emotional side, there's a possibility that you'll be capable of making a wonderful proposal to anyone you genuinely admire. Regarding your wellness, you're going to mentally examine oneself. Visit a beautiful setting and look for peace there.

**Pisces**

Ganesha says, you'll be capable of finishing chores that you've been intending to do for a while. This week, you will get rid of negative influences from your existence and encounter like-minded people. You will get attraction and great luck on this day, but you'll also learn priceless truths. Your beloved will be going through a happy time in their relationship. This week, Jupiter will favor couples, enabling them to plan for a kid as well as buy a nice home or additional luxuries. You should watch what you eat since food poisoning could happen. For a normal checkup, contact a physician, and don't take things carelessly.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JANUARY 9 TO JANUARY 15, 2023 BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

JANUARY 9

Ganesha says today is predicted to bring both financial success and good health. Entrepreneurs will put their money into more lucrative projects. Through social events and travel, promising contacts will develop. Despite your irregular behavior with her, your spouse will be quite accommodating and offer you her whole love and affection. Although it won't last long, a crush inside the group will temporarily lift your mood. A distant relative's unexpected assistance will greatly advance your professional standing.

JANUARY 10

Ganesha says your opportunities to realize your dreams may be plentiful on this day. You would put a great priority on taking a vacation to a faraway place. You'll make new connections and successful alliances throughout this time as well. There will be long-expected financial gains. Your financial position will be significantly better than anticipated due to speculation and unanticipated gains. While your spouse would provide you with love and support and listen to your worries, you might find that your kids take advantage of your generosity and let you down.

JANUARY 11

Ganesha says you might observe the development of fresh concepts and schemes. Your ability to generate

more money and forge significant connections will both increase thanks to Day. In spite of acting very possessively and erratically, a spouse will show love and concern. By the end, it's possible that you'll take a trip, ideally to a far-off place. Your confidence will increase when you receive support from your superiors and coworkers. Some people will benefit financially from assignments abroad.

JANUARY 12

Ganesha says providing you take advantage of the options being presented to you, you will experience good financial advantages. You'll become popular and gain favors thanks to your extroverted nature and charisma. Your spouse and kids will take good care of you, but they can be very demanding at times. Some people are about to get married, while others will find romance to help them stay in the appropriate frame of mind and mood. There will be calm at home with family members offering all available assistance and cooperation.

JANUARY 13

Ganesha says this time, don't be reluctant to carry out your new plans. If you can seize the appropriate opportunities, fame and money will be at your door. Gains from speculation are also highly plausible. There will be ideal life partners for those looking for

marriage relationships. Despite the long hours you might put in at work, your health will improve. You will form new connections and attachments that will open up doors for you.

JANUARY 14

Ganesha says the day can have a lot of fresh surprises and benefits for you. This time, your long-held desires are probably going to come true. Your financial situation will improve, and your confidence will increase, if you find new sources of income. Legal matters are likely to take much longer than anticipated and prove to be quite expensive. Children will excel in their chosen vocations and show you support and understanding. Work-related travel is advantageous and extremely gratifying.

JANUARY 15

Ganesha says your confidence will increase as business prospers and you make money. The legal issues that have been weighing on your mind will be resolved to your satisfaction. The family's elders and young ones will need a lot of your focus. You may worry and worry about your spouse's health. Near the end of the year, athletes and artists can anticipate some renown. For some, promotions and pay raises are likely. A tight relationship could get strained due to unimportant matters.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ||



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Sikh History This Week

JANUARY 6, 2023, TO JANUARY 12, 2023

6th January



1846 Battle of Budowlal between Sikhs and British.

1989 Sardar Satwant Singh and Kehar Singh hanged for gunning down Indira Gandhi. As Prime Minister of India, she had ordered the June 1984 attack on Harimandir Sahib by the Indian Armed Forces.

Sardar Satwant Singh and Sardar Kehar Singh were hanged till death. They were co-accused with Sardar Beant Singh for gunning down Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984. Sikh Panth holds Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India, responsible for the desecration of Harimander Sahib in 1984's Bluestar operation.

7th January

1924: 62 members of the SGPC were arrested from the precincts of Sri Darbar Sahib under Section 120, 121 (2) Indian Penal Code (Sedition) and Section 17A and 17B of the Act of 1908 by Special order of Punjab Governor.



1974: Through the efforts of Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Yogi, the US Army Dress Code was amended to allow Sikhs to wear beards and turbans and to maintain the five Kakkars.

8th January

1685 Baba Aalla Singh, founder of Patiala State, was born. BABA AALLA SINGH JI was born in village Phull to father Baba Ram Singh "Phulwansi" and mother Saabhi. He was introduced to amrit by Baba Deep Singh Ji, in TheekriWala village. In sunmat 1810, he laid the foundation stone of a temporary structure for the Patiala fort while the construction of a permanent structure began in sunmat 1820. Simultaneously he founded the Patiala city. Barnala, Longowal, Sunaam, Bathinda, and Patiala were under his control. He passed



away on 22nd Aug. 1765 in Patiala.

9th January

1961 Fateh Singh broke his fast after assurances regarding Punjabi Suba from the Indian Government.

1983 Akali Dal organized a convention for GurSikh intellectuals in connection with the Dharam Yudh Morcha.

10th January

1770 Sikhs attack Delhi from Panipat side.

1943 Harbans Singh Babbar of Sirhala was arrested.

11th January



1666: Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji released from prison.

1843: A friendship treaty was signed between Maharaja Sher Singh and Amir Dost Mohamed Khan, ruler of Kabul. This treaty was signed during Mohamed Khan's visit to Lahore.

1915: Giani Mewa Singh Lopokae hanged until death.

12th January

1758 Baba Aalla Singh attacked Abdul Samand Khan of Sirhind and reached a mutual agreement.

1797 Shah Zaman lost 20,000 soldiers against Sikhs in a battle in Amritsar during his 3rd invasion. In a reckless hand-to-hand fighting at Amritsar, Shah Zaman lost 20,000 of his choicest soldiers against 15,000 Sikhs. During his 3rd invasion, Shah Zaman reached Peshawar in Nov. 1796 and entered Lahore in Jan. 1797. Sikh Sardars vacated Lahore and assembled at Amritsar to face Shah Zaman. Shah Zaman was defeated at Amritsar and returned to Lahore. The Sikhs pursued the retreating Afghans up to the outskirts of Lahore. Ranjit Singh with his 9000 troops was made responsible for security of the holy city. This marked the beginning of the rise of Ranjit Singh. Sikhs cut off his supply lines and forced Shah Zaman to return

back.



1922 British government announced its decision to finally withdraw from the management of the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar. The British government announced its decision to finally withdraw from the management of Sri Darbar Sahib at Amritsar and leave the administration in the hands of the Sikh community. The government had mistakenly believed that the Sikh community wanted to use the Gurudwara resources for political purposes. Despite its intense efforts, it found no Sikh willing to accept the office of Sarbrah at its hands. Finally, the government was left with no option but to negotiate with the SGPC, conceding the demands of Baba Kharak Singh, the uncrowned King of the Sikhs.

1922 The Akalis under Mula Singh Bahawal took control of Anandpur Sahib.

1922 The militant Akalis under Kishan Singh Garhgaj helped capture the Gurudwara of Kiratpur Sahib. Akalis forcibly captured the Kirtapur Gurudwara, despite the SGPC's disapproval of such measures. The Akalis were helped by the Chakravarti Jatha under the leadership of Kishan Singh Garhgaj.

1923 Letters of the solidiers published in Babbar Akalis Doaba newspaper. These letters expressed the gist of their talks with District Commissioner of Jalandhar.



1982 Harsimran Singh, Chief organizer of Dal Khalsa, arrested. Harsimran Singh, Mukh Panch (chief Organizer) of the Dal Khalsa was arrested from Mohali near Chandigarh. The Dal Khalsa leaders believed that that was possible because of a conspiracy by some member of the Organisation. Harsimran Singh was tortured by the police and forced to read out a written statement if he wanted to save his life. The police told him that they had the permission of the Government to kill him in a fake encounter near the Indo-Pakistan border. Such atrocities were perpetrated on various Sikhs arrested during that period.

Paush Purnima

Paush Purnima refers to the full moon of the "Shukla Paksha" in the month of Pausha, as per the Hindu Calendar. It is a significant day for Hindus and is celebrated all over the country by fasting, worshipping and conducting the Satyanarayan Katha. On the day of the Paush Purnima, the moon is visible in its complete size, and it is said that bathing in holy water, donating to the poor and offering "Prasada" to Suryadev on this day shall rid a person of all their sins and guide them towards the path of salvation. A full moon marks the day of Purnima, and according to the Hindu calendar, there are a total of twelve Purnimas in a year. However, the Pausha Purnima and the Magha Purnima are given the most importance.

Significance

The Paush Purnima is a significant day for the Hindu religion. The day marks the end of winter and the beginning of the Magha month, and even the "Maha Kumbh Mela" falls during this period.

The Paush Purnima is an opportunity for devotees to end their inner darkness and follow the path of enlightenment, thus attaining salvation. According to the Hindu religion, taking a bath in the holy water at a Hindu pilgrimage place on this auspicious day rids a person of all their sins and helps them attain "Moksha."

It is believed that a person who wakes up early in the morning on this day and bathes in the holy water as he offers his prayers to the rising sun shall be forgiven for all the sins he has committed in his past lives and be entitled to salvation.

The Fasting Procedure

On the auspicious occasion of the Pausha Purnima, devotees all over the country bathe in the holy water of the Ganges, make donations and fast in an attempt to impress Suryadev and attain ultimate salvation. Mentioned below is the procedure to follow on the day of the Paush Purnima to impress Suryadev.

Take a vow to fast throughout the day before taking a bath in the holy water.

Pray to the Lord of Oceans, Varun dev.

Now bathe in a holy river.

Offer holy water to Suryadev while chanting his mantras.

After the bath, pray to Lord Krishna by offering Prasada to the Lord.

Donate food to a needy person or a Brahmin.

Also, donate woollen clothes, blankets, and jaggery to the poor.

Rituals

Let us look at some of the rituals that are followed on the day of the Paush Purnima.

Bathing is the most important ritual on the day of Paush Purnima. Devotees wake up very early in the morning and take a bath in the holy rivers at sunrise as they offer 'Argha' to the rising sun.

After bathing, devotees must worship the "Shiva Linga" with water and meditate near the "Shiva Linga" in order to absorb the spiritual energy.

Devotees are known to organise a Satyanarayan Katha on this day as they fast and pray to the Lord Vishnu and offer Prasada to the Lord.

After the Katha, the Aarti is done, and the Prasada is distributed to the members present in the ceremony.

On the day of Paush Purnima, 'Pushyabhishek Yatra' is celebrated in the temples of Lord Krishna all over India.

Recitations of the Ramayana and the Bhagavad Gita are also organised on this day.

Devotees must donate things and food to the poor on this day

Under 'Anna Daan', free food is served in temples and ashrams to needy people all over India.

Paush Purnima Vrat Katha (Stories Related to Paush Purnima)

Mythology of Paush Purnima

According to mythological texts, there was a time when a demon named Durgam had spread terror on the



Important information

Shakambhari Purnima 2023, Paush Purnima 2023

Friday, 06 January 2023

Purnima Tithi starts : 06 January 2023 at 02:14 AM

Purnima Tithi ends : 07 January 2023 at 04:37 AM

Earth. Due to this, the rain stopped, and this situation lasted for a hundred years. Due to lack of rain, there was a shortage of food and water, and there was a severe drought, due to which people started dying. Life on Earth was beginning to end. The inaccessible demon had also stolen all the four Vedas of Brahma. Then Maa Durga incarnated as Maa Shakambhari Devi. Goddess Shakambhari had a hundred eyes. Seeing the plight of the Earth, his tears started flowing, and in this way, the water flowed again on the whole Earth. After this, Maa Shakambhari put an end to Durgam.

Second story of Paush Purnima

According to another legend, Goddess Shakambhari did penance for 100 years and used to eat vegetarian food once at the end of the month. As a result of her penance, trees and plants had grown on their own in a lifeless place where there was no water for 100 years. From far and wide, sages and saints came there to see the miracle of the mother and were given vegetarian food. Since the mother used to take only vegetarian food, The name of the mother was Shakambhari Mata.

Mantras to Chant on the Paush Purnima

Mantras of Lord Surya:
Om Ghrini Surya Aditya
Om Hrim Hrim Suryay Sahastrakiranray
Manovanchhit Falam Dehi Dehi Swaha
Om Aih Surya Sahastranshaon Tejo Rashe
Jagatpatye, Anukampayama Bhaktya, Grihanarghai
Divakar:
Om Hrim Ghrini: Surya Aditya: Cleam Om

Om Hrim Hrim Suryaya Namah

Om Surya Namah.

Om Ghrini Surya Namah.

Moon Darshan worship mantra:

Om Kshirputray Vidmahe Amrit Tatvay Dheemahi,
Tanno Chandra: Prachodayat.

This mantra should be chanted while offering Argha to the moon.

Shakambhari Mata Mantra:

Neelavarnanilotpalvilochana.

Mushtinshilimukhapoorna Kamalankamalalaya.'

Paush Purnima is the opportunity to end your inner darkness, hence, use it to the fullest. May Suryadev be enchanted by your prayers and help you succeed in life.

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"If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it?"

"If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?"

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

Interview of Dr Kirori Lal Meena, Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament

THE INDIAN PANORAMA SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN RAJASTHAN, DR YASHPAL GOYAL SPOKE
WITH DR KIRORI LAL MEENA ON THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE BILL



Dr Kirori Lal Meena addressing a rally

Though he is a BJP Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan, Dr Kirori Lal Meena, is known for his clever and genuine protests. In last 4 years of Gehlot government, Meena joined protests with others regardless of party politics and gender bias. Meena leads their sit-in, roadblocks, sleeping on ground in all seasons with them, entering into secretariat and CM's residence. Meena enables them to get justice and demands fulfilled. Meena makes the Gehlot government answerable on public agitations.

None else among BJP's political figures has such a boldness, competence and sharpness to challenge the Gehlot government in the state. Last year in August, unceasing charisma that he is, he forcibly hoisted a Meena community flag (Jai Meenesh) over Amargarh Fort, and got it opened for all other community people who worship there. As he has stronghold in eastern districts of Alwar, Dausa, Karauli, Sawaimadhopur, Bharatpur, and tribal belt of Banswara districts, no government (specially Congress led) can dare to stop him but they tried to resolve the demands and issues on top priority and on the spot.

The 70 years vibrant Meena, having an MBBS degree, was first elected from Mahwa assembly in Dausa district in 1985, then he was a cabinet minister in the previous Raje government during 2003-08, and due to political differences with Raje he quit the BJP party in 2008. His wife Golma Devi (like Rabri Devi of Bihar) entered into politics as an Independent MLA and was MoS in the Gehlot's second term 2008-13. He joined PA Sangma led National People's Party, but finally returned to the BJP fold and was offered Rajya Sabha MP seat from Rajasthan in 2018.

Using his political credentials and power of Meena community and being Prime Minister's blue eyed boy, Dr Kirori Lal was prompted to place a private member's bill on Uniform Civil Code in Rajya Sabha amidst Opposition parties' allegations of killing democracy and unity in diversity.

Will it be a 'litmus test' of the NDA government or will it be disastrous like the 3-farmers bills which were withdrawn after yearlong agitation in Punjab and Haryana states last year. In a frank conversation with Dr Yash Goyal, Meena revealed the facts of the bill that he hoped to get through in near future, if not soon, may be before the LS polls in 2024.

HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN, WHAT IS UNIFORM CIVIL CODE ?

It means a common law for everyone in the country. Without considering the religion, castes and domicile, one common law should come in force to protect the personal rights of all citizens. I belong to a tribe, I am Hindu, I can have two marriages. You cannot do it, and if anyone does it he would be punished under the section 494 of IPC for seven years. In our country, Muslim man can do 3/4/5

marriages, whereas in the neighbouring country Pakistan, a second marriage is only possible when Muslim man gets his wife's consent. There is a disparity in law, and to remove/correct this disparity, Uniform Civil Code needs to be applied. The bill titled 'The Uniform Civil Code in India Bill, 2022' was brought in Rajya Sabha for every religion and caste. There is no uniform law in our country with regard to marriage, divorce, adoption, succession, property, and these subjects are controlled by the personal laws. Hence the UCC should be ensured to all citizens residing in areas where the population of entire geographical areas resides.

WHEN THE NDA GOVERNMENT LED BY PM NARENDRA MODI HAS FULL MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT, WHY THIS BILL WAS MOVED AS A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL?

There are certain rules of public interest that gives information to the government and Janta at large. This is/was a national interest issue, that is why I introduced it. Member of Parliament (MPs) usually bring such private bills in every session, and it is up to the House and a debate cutting across the party lines to decide nor not to decide on such public matters.

EARLIER BJP AND ITS MPS DISCOURAGED THIS UCC IF MOVED THROUGH YOU, THEN WHAT BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER IN PARLIAMENT ?

This is wrong. This question does not arise. No one in BJP/MPs opposed it. It was a pertinent issue in early days of Jan Sangh (now BJP) along with abrogation of article 370 in Kashmir, Ram Mandir Nirman, and CAA (The Citizenship (Amendment) Act). These have been very important agenda of the BJP party. This is the ideology and thinking of BJP that a common law be enacted in the country.

IS THIS PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL TAKEN UP SERIOUSLY BY RS MPS ?

It is a sensitive issue. A lot of Opposition. The Indian courts are worried and wanted it to be taken up in Parliament. You can consider it as a "Litmus Test" of the BJP government on this particular bill.

WHETHER UCC WOULD BE APPLICABLE TO ALL CASTES LIKE SC/ST/OBC/MBC/EWS? WILL IT BE GOVERNING MARRIAGES IN THESE CASTES ?

The traditions of tribes are different in many states. The intention of this bill to bring uniformity and what would be its framework, it would be decided in the UCC. I remember during former Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje's tenure a bill was brought for daughters' right in father's property. This is not possible in Muslims but a Shariat Law is applied and accepted in marriage, adoption, and divorce. The rights of women are curtailed in the muslim community, hence, the UCC would empower them. The wrong trend of religious conversion would be contained.

WHAT IS THE MAIN POINT IN THIS BILL WHICH WILL BE TAKEN UP FIRST TO START WITH ?

The Central government shall, within a period of six months from the coming into force of this act, constitute a Committee to be called National Inspection & Investigation Committee for the purpose of UCC and its implementation in the country. The Committee will consist of a Chairperson, who shall be a retired Chief Justice of India, Union Minister of Home Affairs-ex-officio member, Union Minister of Law and Justice-ex-officio member and other members mentioned in the bill. The Central government would, after due appropriation made

by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide adequate funds to the committee for carrying out the purposes of this act.

India a nation of diversity in culture. Unity in Diversity. Ekta Meain Anekta Hai. The committee would give its report keeping a view that no dispute shall arise, no unrest to prevail, and the communal harmony be maintained.

WHAT ARE THE LEGAL OBJECTS AND RESASONS TO INTRODUCE THIS BILL ?

I like to quote it : The Statement of Objects and Reasons clearly said, "Besides, no government showed proper will power to implement these constitutional provisions, because the minorities, especially the Muslims believed that the UCC will lead to the violation of their personal laws. Hence,, only to compile the Hindu Laws, this Acts like the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, the Hindu Succession Act,

1956, the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 and Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 were enacted. In these Acts along with the Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, laws related to different religious communities of the Hindus are included vide which women have been given right to divorce and succession and caste has been termed irrelevant for marriage. Also polygamy has been done away with. In the present context, it seems our country is divided into three classes on UCC, namely political, social and religious. In the Shah Bano case, the Supreme Court decided that section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 is applicable to all irrespective of religion, caste and community. The court directed that Shah Bano must be provided with living expenses. The then Chief Justice Y V Chandrachud said the UCC would end the dissimilarities in the Indian law which would help in establishing national unity. Hence, the SC had observed that the Parliament may make the law related to the UCC.

In the Constituent Assembly, while on the one hand there were people like Dr B R Ambedkar who desired reform in the society and wanted to accept UCC, and there were also Muslim representatives who took side to retaining the Personal Laws based on the religious enshrines. As a result, regarding the UCC, only one line could be added as article 44 of under Part IV as Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution. In this article it is stated that the State shall endeavour to secure for citizens a UCC throughout the territory of India. Since the UCC has been included in the Directive Principles of State Policy of the state, hence this can not be enforced.

Not only the SC, the High Courts have also expressed their concern and worry on UCC many times. Thus, it is a proper time to introduce this bill and get it passed in Parliament".

WILL THIS ACT BRING GENDER EQUALITY TOO ?

Gender inequality does exist in the society and particularly in minorities. Its level is very high and worrying. I believe this act will change gender inequality into neutrality, and the discrimination would end.

NDA GOVERNMENT IS IN POWER FOR THE LAST 8 YEARS, HOW COME THIS BILL IS DELAYED ?

This is true. Every thing has its own time. The Modi government has so many other issues to be taken up first. Now time has come for this. India has witnessed a number of cases of Love Jihad, and Live in Relationship. Recently in Delhi it was terrible and scary that a man (Aftab Ameen) chopped off his wife's body into 35 pieces. Our party has a serious concern and worried on such matters. This is also a subject for intellectuals. Therefore, it is high time to get this act passed.

contd on page 38



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History This Week

JANUARY 06 TO JANUARY 12, 2023

JANUARY 6



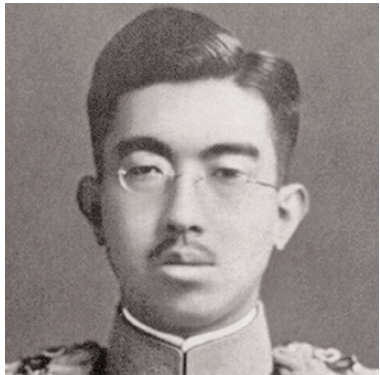
President Franklin Roosevelt

January 6, 1941 - President Franklin Roosevelt delivered his State of the Union address to Congress asking for support for the lend-lease program aiding Allies fighting the Axis powers. Roosevelt also defined four essential freedoms worth defending; freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

January 6, 1990 - Poland's Communist Party disbanded and then reorganized as the Social Democratic Party, an opposition party to Solidarity.

Birthdays - Joan of Arc (1412-1431) was born in France. After a series of mystic visitations by saints, she inspired French troops to break the British siege at Orleans and win several important victories during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between France and Britain. She was eventually captured and sold to the British who tried her for heresy and burned her at the stake. In 1920, Joan of Arc was canonized a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

JANUARY 7



Emperor Hirohito of Japan

January 7, 1989 - Emperor Hirohito of Japan died after a long illness. He had ruled for 62 years and was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.

January 7, 1999 - The first presidential impeachment trial in 130 years began as members of the U.S. Senate were sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist to decide whether President Clinton should be removed from office.

House prosecutors had delivered two articles of impeachment charging Clinton with perjury and obstruction of justice.

Birthdays - Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) the 13th U.S. President was born in a log cabin in Cayuga County, New York. He was a Whig who became president upon the sudden death of Zachary Taylor in 1850 from cholera. Best remembered for signing five bills concerning slavery known as the Compromise of 1850 which temporarily prevented civil war in the U.S. He was not re-nominated by his party.

JANUARY 8



President Woodrow Wilson

January 8, 1918 - Amid the ongoing World War in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points, calling for a reduction of arms, self determination for governments, and the creation of a League of Nations, all intended to serve as a basis for resolving the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in Europe.

January 8, 1959 - Charles de Gaulle took office as the first president of France's Fifth Republic. De Gaulle had led the Free French government in exile during Nazi occupation. Following the war, he advocated a strong presidency to balance the powerful National Assembly. He was chosen to head the new government following years of political instability in which no French government was able to stay in power for more than a few months. On this day in 1966, he took office for a second term.

January 8, 1964 - President Lyndon Johnson declared War on Poverty during his State of the Union message before Congress.

January 8, 1982 - The American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) Company was broken up as a result of an antitrust suit. AT&T gave up 22 local Bell system companies, opening the U.S. telephone system to competition.

January 8, 1987 - The Dow Jones industrial average first topped the 2,000 mark.

Birthdays - Elvis Presley (1935-1977) was born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

JANUARY 9

January 9, 1960 - With the first blast of dynamite, construction work began on the Aswan High Dam across the Nile River in southern Egypt. One third of the project's billion-dollar cost was underwritten by Soviet Russia. The dam created Lake Nasser, one of the world's largest reservoirs, at nearly 2,000 square miles and irrigated over 100,000 acres of surrounding desert. The dam was opened in January of 1971 by President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and President Nikolai Podgorny of the Soviet Union.



Richard M. Nixon

Birthdays - Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994) the 37th U.S. President, was born in Yorba Linda, California. He served as vice president under Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953-61, then made an unsuccessful run for the presidency, narrowly losing to John F. Kennedy. Nixon ran for governor of California in 1962 and lost. He then told reporters he was leaving politics. However, he re-emerged in 1968 and ran a successful presidential campaign against Hubert Humphrey. He won reelection by a landslide in 1972, but resigned two years later amid impeachment proceedings resulting from the Watergate scandal.

Birthdays - Carrie Lane Chapman (1859-1947) was born in Ripon, Wisconsin. She was the women's rights pioneer who founded the National League of Women Voters in 1919.

JANUARY 10

January 10, 1776 - Common Sense, a fifty page pamphlet by Thomas Paine, was published. It sold over 500,000 copies in America and Europe, influencing, among others, the authors of the Declaration of Independence.

January 10, 1861 - Florida became the third state to secede from the Union in events leading up to the American Civil War.

January 10, 1863 - The world's first underground railway service opened in London, the Metropolitan line between Paddington and Farringdon.

January 10, 1878 - An Amendment granting women the right to vote was introduced in Congress by Senator A.A. Sargent of California. The amendment didn't pass until 1920, forty-two years later.



Glenn Curtiss

January 10, 1912 - The flying boat airplane, invented by Glenn Curtiss, made its first flight at Hammondsport, New York.

January 10, 1920 - The League of Nations officially came into existence with the goal of resolving international disputes, reducing armaments, and preventing future wars. The first Assembly gathered in Geneva ten months later with 41 nations represented. More than 20 nations later joined, however, the U.S. did not join due to a lack of support for the League in Congress.

January 10, 1922 - Arthur Griffith was elected president of the newly formed Irish Free State.

January 10, 1946 - The first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly took place in London with delegates from 51 countries. The U.N. superseded its predecessor, the League of Nations.

January 10, 1984 - The U.S. and Vatican established full diplomatic relations after a break of 116 years.

JANUARY 11

January 11, 1861 - Alabama seceded from the Union in events leading up to the American Civil War.

January 11, 1964 - The U.S. Surgeon General declared cigarettes may be hazardous to health, the first such official government report.

January 11, 1990 - In Lithuania, 200,000 persons

demanding political independence from Soviet Russia after Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the Soviet Union, publicly warned that separatism could lead to tragedy. Independence was achieved in September of 1991, three months before the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.



Alexander Hamilton

Birthdays - Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) was born in the British West Indies. He was a founder of the United States who favored a strong central government and co-authored the Federalist Papers, a series of essays in defense of the new Constitution. He was selected by George Washington to be the first Secretary of the Treasury. He died from a gunshot wound received during a duel with Aaron Burr.

JANUARY 12

January 12, 1879 - In Southern Africa, the Zulu War began between the British and the natives of Zululand, ultimately resulting in the destruction of the Zulu Empire.



Hattie W. Caraway

January 12, 1932 - Hattie W. Caraway, a Democrat from Arkansas, was appointed to the U.S. Senate to fill the term of her deceased husband.

January 12, 1990 - Romania outlawed the Communist Party following the overthrow of Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu who had ruled for 24 years.

January 12, 1991 - Congress authorized President George Bush to use military force against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait.

Jodhpur: The Blue City

Jodhpur is the second-largest city in Rajasthan and the former capital of the Marwar region. It is popularly called "the Blue City" as it looks completely blue from an aerial view because of its blue walls and houses. Jodhpur is primarily famous for its temples, lakes and snacks, with the magnificent Mehrangarh Fort being the main attraction.

The magic of Jodhpur lies in the streets of the old city itself, which circles the mighty Mehrangarh. Hundreds of shops, guesthouses, eating joints, and vendors make it a bustling chirpy town, especially near the landmark clock tower and Sardar Market. The new and modern Jodhpur lies beyond Mehrangarh. Nearby Jaswant Tada and Umaid Bhawan Palace are also among the top attractions in Jodhpur.

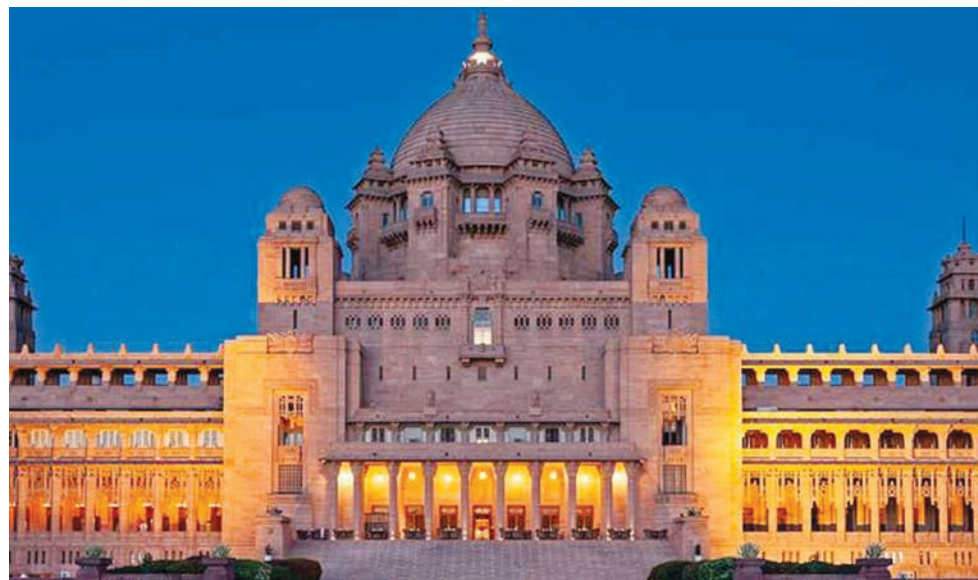
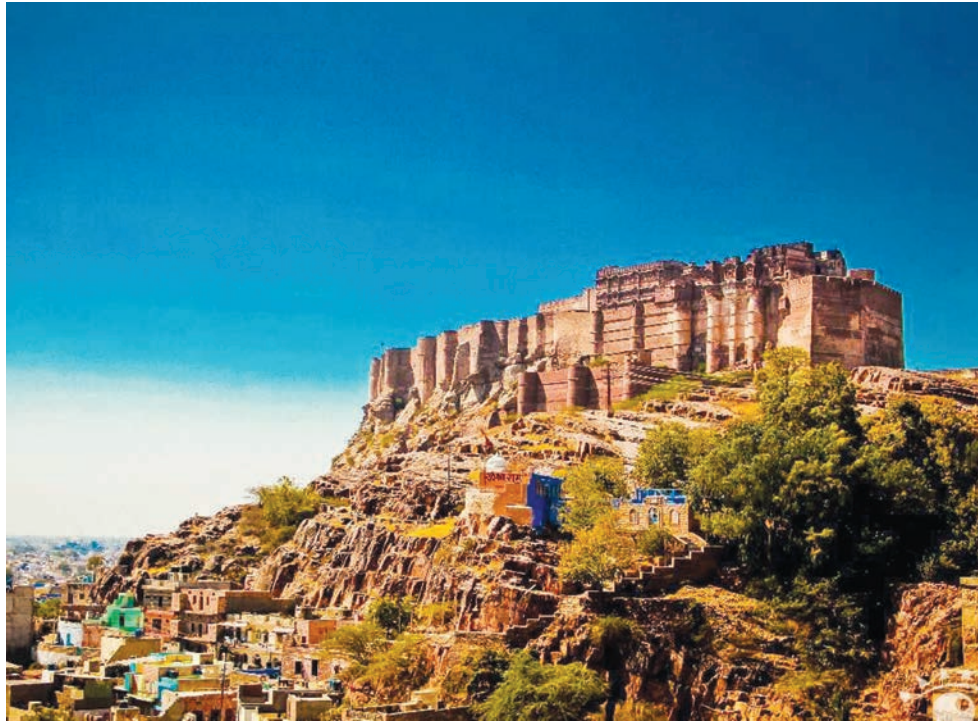
Jodhpur is famous for its delectable food items, especially Pyaaj Kachori, Mirchi Bada and Mawa Kachori. In September, the city hosts the colourful Marwar Festival and Rajasthan International Folk Festival. Some traditional villages are located around Jodhpur, and a tour of these villages (called Bishnoi Village Safari) is one of the popular things to do here. One of the strangest temples in India, where a Royal Enfield motorbike is worshipped, is located nearby and worth visiting. The ancient Thar desert town of Osian is also located here, 65km north of Jodhpur.

Seen in the backdrop of the movies, the most popular being The Dark Knight Rises, Jodhpur attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors worldwide. Moreover, it is conveniently located in the centre of Rajasthan, making it the base for visiting nearby places.

Mehrangarh Fort

Mehrangarh, also known as Mehran Fort was built by Rao Jodha in 1459 in Jodhpur, is one of the largest forts in the country. It is situated at the top of a 410 feet elevated hill and guarded by massive walls. One of the most easily recognisable forts in Jodhpur, it has appeared in many Hollywood and Bollywood productions such as The Lion King, The Dark Knight Rises, and the more recent - Thugs of Hindostan. The entrance of the fort, atop a hill, is majestic and has seven gates. These are called Victory Gate, Fateh Gate, Gopal Gate, Bhairon Gate, Dedh Kamra Gate, Marti Gate and finally Loha Gate. Each of these was built at different times and serves a very specific purpose. While one still has marks of cannon balls being hit on it, the other has spikes that can protect it from elephant and animal attacks. However, Victory Gate was built to commemorate the win of Maharaja Man Singh over Jaipur and Bikaner armies. The fort also has opulent palaces such as the Sheesh Mahal (Glass Palace) and Phool Mahal (Rose Palace).

The intricate carvings on the walls of the fort, the sprawling courtyards, its impressive history, striking palaces, museums and galleries allure tourists from all over the world. The fort also has one of the well-stocked museums of Rajasthan. There are six different galleries in the Mehrangarh Museum: Elephant's howdahs, Palanquins, Daulat Khana, Armoury, Paintings and the



Turban Gallery, National Geological Monument, Nagnecha Mataji Temple, Chamunda Temple and Rao Jodha Desert Rock Park are the tourist attractions in Mehrangarh Fort.

Umaid Bhawan Palace

Voted as the Best Hotel in the world, Umaid Bhawan Palace is also a major tourist attraction in Jodhpur. Apart from being a heritage hotel, it is a museum and the residence of the Royal Family of the present owner, Raja Gaj Singh. Because of its location on the highest point in Jodhpur, the Chittar Hill, it is also referred to as the Chittar Palace. Built-in 1943, the palace was commissioned in 1929, was built in order to provide employment to the drought and grief-stricken farmers of the area and thus took longer to complete. Umaid Bhawan Palace offers amazing hospitality along with heritage walks to unforgettable dining experiences. It was recently in the news for being the site of the Bollywood Superstar Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas - a renowned Pop Star from the Band - One Direction.

At present, the 347 - room palace has been divided into three parts. One part is the residence of the royal family, where the tourists are not allowed to enter. The second houses a museum which displays a rich collection of photographs, arms, clocks, stuffed animals and many other

sandy terrain. With Rajasthan being the desert state of India, a trip to this cultural oasis will only feel complete by availing a camel safari. The city of Jodhpur offers multiple packages of varying durations for its visitors. The shortest of these safaris allows one to travel 70 km across the glistening sheets of golden sand of the Thar desert to the ancient town of Osian, steeped in cultural history significant to both Hindus and Jains. If you're feeling especially adventurous, there are packages offering travellers the opportunity to undertake the incredible journey from the blue city of Jodhpur to the golden city of Jaisalmer, spanning roughly 250 km of the mesmerising desert.

Toorji Ka Jhalra

Constructed in 1740, Toorji Ka Jhalra, commonly called stepwell of Jodhpur, is an intricate design of stepwell, one of the few remaining structures depicting the traditional water management systems of Jodhpur. This architectural wonder was built by the queen-consort of Maharaja Abhaya Singh, a sign of the age-old tradition of the region where royal women were in charge of overseeing the public water works. The design and structure help onlookers comprehend the lifestyle of the earlier generations who had used it in its prime, with the site serving as the local watering hole for its time.

Jaswant Thada

In the royal state of Jodhpur lies Jaswant Thada, a splendid marble cenotaph monument that is also a mausoleum for the kings of Marwar. The memorial was built in the honour and memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II by his son Maharaja Sardar Singh in 1899 and is still used by the Marwar Royal Family as cremation grounds. The beautiful edifice is made out of intricately carved marble that is offset vibrantly against the red steps that lead up to the entrance. Jaswant Thada in Jodhpur is considered as an architectural landmark and must be seen by one and all. On the steps leading up to the monument, one can see local musicians and folk dancers entertain the visitors.

The cenotaph also has a beautifully maintained garden which the tourists can explore along with the monument. You can explore the intricate artistry on the carved marbles. The skilfully carved thin sheets of marble are worth appreciating. The entire structure resembles a temple with unmatched beauty. It is also called the Taj Mahal of Marwar and attracts tourists from all over the world.

Mandore Garden

Famous royal cenotaphs, Mandore Garden is located just 9 kilometres away from Jodhpur in Mandore which was once the ruling seat of the Pratiharas dynasty. The garden is a part of the more massive Mehrangarh Fort, and also houses the famous Hall of Heroes and the temple of Three Hundred Million Gods. The garden also has a Government Museum, which is full of artefacts and old relics.

Source: Holidify



possessions of the royal family. The third part of the palace has been converted into a five-star hotel and offers the most exquisite services to its clientele. It is one of the most popular hotels in Jodhpur. Perched atop the mighty Chittar Hill, this palace is often referred to as the Chittar Palace too. To add to the beauty of the palace, there is a beautiful garden outside with lush greenery and different varieties of flowers.

Camel Safari

A trip to the desert would be incomplete without a camel safari across the seemingly endless expanse of the

contd from page 1

Biden marks January 6 anniversary...

Biden also honored 14 Americans who stood up for democracy after the 2020 election, awarding medals to members of law enforcement, including Capitol Police officers who held off rioters, as well as election officials who stood their ground in the face of Trump's onslaught of lies.

Two years later, the images from that day remain horrifying. The scene that unfolded - mobs pushing through police barricades, breaking windows, then occupying seats of power - was one that Americans are accustomed to watching in distant lands with authoritarian regimes.

But Biden made clear that the violence - which included gunshots fired in the Capitol, one death, and an armed occupation of the Senate floor - was born from the man who swore an oath to protect the very democratic traditions that rioters tried to undo in his name.

"Our democracy was attacked. The U.S. Capitol was breached, which had never happened before in our nation's history, even in the Civil War," said Biden, who warned that the anti-democratic forces had not subsided.

"We know it could happen again," Biden said. "There's no guarantee. Except for us. Except for all of you."

The event, emotional at times, largely focused on those who sacrificed so much that day. Biden described in vivid detail the assaults at the capital and awarded one of the nation's highest civilian honors to several law enforcement officers, including Michael Fanone, Harry Dunn and Eugene Goodman.

Others hailed were local officials such as Russell "Rusty" Bowers, the former speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives, as well Georgia poll workers Shaye Moss and Ruby Freeman, who both withstood threats on their lives from Trump supporters in the weeks after the 2020 election.

Three of the medals given to law enforcement officers were done so posthumously: Brian Sicknick and Howard Liebengood of the U.S. Capitol Police and Jeffrey Smith of the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police. Sicknick suffered a stroke the day after the riot; both Smith and Liebengood died by suicide in the wake of the insurrection.

"All of America watched it on television. America owes you," the president said. "It owes you all a debt of gratitude, one we can never fully repay unless we live up to what you did."

Trump spent the end of 2020 declaring the election was "rigged" and making baseless accusations of widespread voter fraud that numerous federal courts and senior members of his administration said did not exist. Trump was enabled by dozens of fellow Republicans willing to object to the count, a maneuver they knew would delay but not change the outcome.

This year, the Jan. 6 anniversary fell at a moment of political opportunity for Biden. He addressed the nation at the same time the Republican-led House of Representatives remained in chaos trying to choose its next speaker, and Trump, the GOP's only declared presidential candidate to date, continued to espouse widely-rejected election denialism.

Homegrown threats against the nation's democracy have been a familiar theme for Biden, who launched his presidential campaign because he felt Trump was tearing at the nation's fabric.

As the general election campaign ramped up last fall, Biden delivered a pair of speeches urging vigilance against violent anti-democratic forces, one set against the backdrop of Independence Hall and the other, just days before the midterms, coming after the brutal assault of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband.

Though the midterms have passed and the House Jan. 6 committee has all but finished its work, Biden will continue to sound the alarms in the months ahead, believing the threat has not dissipated.

The president's speech Friday came as House leadership remained in limbo, with a right-wing faction

of the GOP paralyzing the process to select a speaker. Many of those same lawmakers - as well as others expected to play prominent roles in the new Congress - voted against Biden's certification and have pushed false claims of election fraud.

And while many of the most prominent election deniers lost in November, West Wing aides also point to Trump's shadow looming over the political landscape. Though the former president has been politically weakened in recent months, many close to Biden believe Trump will still emerge as the GOP presidential nominee next year. As Biden takes steps to likely launch his own campaign in the coming months, some in his orbit are preparing to make Jan. 6 a central issue in the campaign. (Source: Politico)

New York judge declines to dismiss...

In September, Ms. James filed a lawsuit accusing Mr. Trump, three of his adult children and their family business of overvaluing his assets by billions of dollars.

In his written order, Justice Engoron said that some of the arguments repeatedly made by Mr. Trump's lawyers were "frivolous," and had been "borderline frivolous even the first time defendants made them."

The judge also rejected a separate attempt by Mr. Trump's daughter Ivanka, who is named as a defendant in Ms. James's lawsuit, to dismiss the accusations against her.

"Once again," Ms. James said in a statement, "Donald Trump's attempts to evade the law have been rejected." The decision, she added, "makes clear that Donald Trump is not above the law and must answer for his actions in court."

Since leaving office, former President Donald J. Trump has been facing several investigations into his business dealings and political activities.

Biden administration proposes...

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

In its federal notification, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said that USCIS is primarily funded by fees charged to applicants and petitioners for immigration and naturalization benefit requests. These fee collections fund the cost of fairly and efficiently adjudicating immigration benefit requests, including those provided without charge to refugees, asylum, and certain other applicants or petitioners, it argued.

The proposed rule went on a 60-day public opposition period, following which it is expected to be enforced. Under the proposed rule, the fee for the H-2B petitions (for seasonal, non-agricultural workers) is proposed to increase from USD 460 to USD 1,080.

"Economists would note that fee increase on these visa categories would work against the desire of US policymakers for more workers to enter the United States legally," Forbes said in a news report.

While there is no increase in the premium processing, the number of days is now 15 business days from the existing 15 days.

However, in this proposal, DHS would eliminate the additional biometric services fee in most cases by including the costs in the underlying immigration benefit request fee.

The USCIS said the new fees would allow the immigration agency to more fully recover its operating costs, re-establish and maintain timely case processing, and prevent the accumulation of future case backlogs.

The agency receives approximately 96 per cent of its funding from filing fees, not from congressional appropriations, it said.

The proposed fee rule is the result of a comprehensive fee review at the USCIS. That review determined that the agency's current fees, which have remained unchanged since 2016, fall far short of

recovering the full cost of agency operations.

The USCIS generally publishes a fee rule biennially and proposes these changes to account for the expansion of humanitarian programs, federally mandated pay raises, additional staffing requirements, and other essential investments, a media statement said. (Source: PTI)

Eric Garcetti renominated US envoy...

His nomination was initially blocked by Republican Senator Chuck Grassley because of allegations of inappropriate behavior by one of his senior staffers.

Former US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has been proposed as US representative on the Executive Board of the WHO, Kalpana Kotagal as Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Geeta Rao Gupta as Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, Anjali Chaturvedi as General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs and Ravi Chaudhary as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

Biden has also nominated the first Muslim-American woman to be a judge on a federal court as part of a list of diverse judicial nominees. If confirmed by the US Senate, Nusrat Jahan Choudhury of Bangladeshi descent would serve in a federal district court in New York state. Appointments were also announced for the chiefs of Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Federal Aviation Administration, Postal Regulatory Commission, Federal Communications Commission, Archivist of the US, Circuit and District Judges and Insurance Trust Funds. (Source: TNS)

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Interview of Dr Kirori Lal Meena, Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament

IN RAJYA SABHA, MANY POLITICAL PARTIES INCLUDING CONGRESS, TMC, MDMK, RJD, SP, CPI, CPIM, NCP HAVE OPPOSED YOUR MOVE TO PLACE THIS BILL, HOW WOULD YOU CONVINC THEM ?

All those parties who opposed it are doing politics of appeasement. They are engaged in misleading a 'Dharam Vishesh' (a particular religion), creating fear, and they have making them a vote bank. Therefore they (Opposition) are making anti-act atmosphere. Even the Teen Talak act was accepted by the Muslim women and they are happy now. Of course, Opposition made hue and cry on this too. Opposition always trying to create fear like a terror in the minds of Muslims so that they can bank on their votes in election. The Central government has clearly stated this is not against any religion and caste. Everyone will get benefit of UCC. This is the main purpose.

YOU (MEENA) BELONG TO SCHEDULED TRIBE COMMUNITY, WILL IT AFFECT ST CASTES ?

As I am, I can do two marriages, because the Hindu law does not apply to the tribe. The tribe is governed by their customs rather than the law. In such a situation, the Uniform Civil Code will not have any effect on the tribal class. As I said earlier the Muslim men in India can do 3/4/5 marriages, but in Pakistan, one has to take legal permission from his wife. That's a disparity to be corrected.

WHAT WOULD BE THE FUTURE LINE OF ACTION OF THIS PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL ?

This bill will go up to the President for her approval/consent. Then it would go to Business Advisory Committee of Parliament to take decision on it when and whether to place the bill in Parliament. When it is placed, a debate will be invited to clear the bill.

DO NOT YOU EXPECT ANY STRONG RESENTMENT AGAINST THIS BILL ON STREETS BY THE OPPOSITION PARTIES AND NGOS ?

No possibility of untoward incident. Bringing-in this bill will not harm anyone nor it would do injustice to any citizen. (TIP)



Sania Mirza to retire after WTA 1000 event in Dubai in February

Sania Mirza, India's former doubles world number one, said she will call time on her career aged 36 after next month's Dubai Tennis Championships, after her 2022 retirement plans were delayed due to injury.

Mirza, regarded as her country's greatest women's tennis player, has won six Grand Slam doubles titles and will compete in her final major this month at the Australian Open, where she bagged the women's doubles crown in 2016.

"I was going to stop right after the WTA Finals because we were going to make the WTA Finals, but I tore my tendon in my elbow right before U.S. Open, so I had to pull out of everything," Mirza told the WTA Tour's website in an interview published on Friday.

Mirza, who has been dealing with a lingering calf injury, had planned to retire at the end of the 2022 season but an elbow injury in August ruled her out of the U.S. Open.

"Honestly, the person that I am, I like to do things on my own terms. So I don't want to be forced out by injury. So I've been training," she added.

Mirza became the first Indian to win a WTA singles title, when she won her hometown Hyderabad event in 2005. She broke into the top 30 by 2007 and reached her career-high ranking of world number 27.

After being plagued by a recurring, career-threatening wrist injury, Mirza forged a doubles partnership with Swiss great Martina Hingis. The self-styled "Santina" team won 14 titles, including Wimbledon and the U.S. and Australian Opens.

Sri Lanka beat India by 16 runs to level series

PUNE (TIP)

Suryakumar Yadav and Axar Patel struck blistering fifties in a stunning 91-run stand, albeit in a losing cause as Sri Lanka tightened the screws in the nick of time to beat India by 16 runs in the second T20I and level the three-match series 1-1 here on Thursday, January 5.

Skipper Dasun Shanaka made a rear-guard unbeaten 56 off 22 balls, while wicket-keeper Kusal Mendis hit a 31-ball 52 to power Sri Lanka to an imposing 206 for 6.

India had a nightmarish start to their chase slumping to 57 for 5 before Axar (65 off 31) and Surya (51 off 36) raised hopes of an improbable win with a scintillating sixth-wicket stand.

The task became tough once Surya departed in the 16th over, but Axar and Shivam Mavi (26 off 15) shared quick 41 runs to bring down the equation to 21 off the last over.

But Axar's dismissal in the third ball of the final over was the last nail in the coffin for India.

Chasing the total, India lost openers Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill in the second over to Kasun Rajitha.

If that was not enough debutant Rahul Tripathi sneaked one to Kusal Mendis off Dilshan Madhushanaka in the next over before skipper Hardik Pandya departed an over later as India slumped to 34 for 4 in 4.4 overs.

Surya and Deepak Hooda tried to stabilise the innings with a hard-fought 23-run partnership but with the asking rate creeping up, the latter departed in search of



a big shot, caught by Dhananjaya de Silva off Hasarnaga de Silva as India lost half of their side for 57. Surya and Axar tried to up the ante with a sensational 91-run sixth-wicket partnership off just 40 balls to keep India afloat after a forgettable start.

Axar was particularly severe on off-spinner Maheesh Theekshana, clobbering the bowler for a four and six over long-on in the 13th over.

It was not just Theekshana, Hasaranga de Silva too had to bear the brunt of Axar's aggression as the left-hander smacked the bowler for a hat-trick of sixes in the 14th over.

Axar brought up his maiden fifty off just 20 balls with a six of Karunaratne over long-off.

Surya followed suit, registering another fine fifty with a six off

over square-leg off Madhushanaka.

The duo raised hopes of a famous victory but it was not to be as the visitors pulled the strings just in time to level the series.

Earlier, it was a disastrous performance from the Indian bowlers after electing to field as the Lankan batters went hammer and tongs from the onset. Barring Axar (2/24 from his 4 overs), all other Indian bowlers went for runs. Even though speedster Umar Malik (3/48) picked up three wickets, he too was taken to the cleaners, while last match's hero Mavi (0/53) looked a pale shadow of himself.

Arshdeep Singh conceded 19 runs of the second over, which included two back-to-back no balls that yielded 17 runs.

Source: PTI

Djokovic advances to face Medvedev in Adelaide semis

ADELAIDE (TIP)

Novak Djokovic beat Denis Shapovalov 6-3 6-4 at the Adelaide International on Friday, January 6, to set up a semifinal with Daniil Medvedev.

The combined ATP-WTA event is a warmup for this year's Australian Open, which the top-seeded Djokovic missed last year after being barred from the country because he was not vaccinated against COVID-19.

"Early on he was a better player. He was dictating," said 35-year-old Serb Djokovic after improving to 8-0 against his Canadian opponent.

"(Then) I started finding my serve and my groove on the court."

The 21-time Grand Slam winner, who is preparing for a shot at a 10th Australian Open title, will face third-seeded Medvedev on Saturday. "I don't think there's going to be too many short points tomorrow unless we both serve well," Djokovic said.

"Normally when you play Daniil, you have to be ready to go the distance, physically, mentally, game-wise."



Medvedev, the runner-up last year to Rafael Nadal in the Australian Open, defeated fellow Russian Karen Khachanov 6-3 6-3 on Friday.

"It's never easy to play your compatriot," Medvedev said. "I'm happy that I managed to really raise my level, especially in the end of both sets, and really happy to be through to the semis."

Source: AP

Weightlifter K Sanjita Chanu fails dope test

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLFF) chief Sahdev Yadav had made a sensational claim to this correspondent during the National Games last October, when he said a lot of weightlifters don't join national camps in order to dope-up before domestic tournaments. Yadav's statement has been substantiated as K Sanjita Chanu, a two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist — and winner of silver behind Mirabai Chanu in the 49kg category at the National Games — has been provisionally suspended for a doping offence.

Sanjita's sample was taken on September 30, the day she lifted a total of 187kg to finish second. Both her 'A' and 'B' samples have shown the presence of Drostanolone, an anabolic steroid that is in the specified list of the World Anti-doping Agency (WADA) prohibited list.

Sanjita, who will now have to appear before the anti-doping disciplinary panel of the National Anti-Doping Agency, can get a four-year suspension for this offence. If found guilty, she stands to lose her National Games silver. Previously, Sanjita was erroneously banned by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) in June 2018 after her samples taken during the 2017 World Championships showed the presence of testosterone. Sanjita had claimed a 'conspiracy' behind that offence and was given the all-clear by the IWF in January 2019, through a letter by its legal counsel Dr Eva Nyirfa. Source: TNS



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