



President to appoint CEC, ECs on advice of committee comprising PM, LoP, CJI

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA SAYS IN A LANDMARK JUDGEMENT.



MARCH 2, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a historic judgement, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on March 2 directed that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) will be appointed by the President on the advice tendered by a committee of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha or the leader of the single largest party in opposition and the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

The court said "fierce independence, neutrality and honesty" envisaged in the institution of the Election Commission of India (ECI) requires an end to government monopoly and "exclusive control" over

appointments to the highest poll body.

The court said the high-powered committee would continue to advise the President on the appointment until the Parliament enacts a law on the appointment process of Election Commissioners. Chief Election Commissioners and Election Commissioners have so far been appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister.

The judgment came on petitions filed through advocates Prashant Bhushan, Kaleeswaram Raj, Ashwini Upadhyay and senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan for an accountable and transparent appointment process.

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Justice K.M. Joseph, who authored the unanimous judgment for the five-member Bench, said what the Election Commission of India requires are "honest, independent" commissioners who could distinguish right from wrong, those who can "ordinarily and unrelentingly take on the high and mighty and persevere in the righteous path".

ANTONY BLINKEN SAYS RUSSIA CAN END WAR TOMORROW IF IT WANTS, URGES RETURN TO START TREATY NEGOTIATIONS



U.S Secretary of State Antony Blinken. File photo

MARCH 2, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): U.S. Secretary of state Antony Blinken, while addressing a press conference in Delhi on Thursday, March 2, said that Russia could end the Ukraine war tomorrow if it wanted. He said that only Russia and China refused to sign on to the Bali document and that at the UNGA, no G20 country voted with Russia.

Mr. Blinken said, "Every country is suffering from the impacts of the Russian War in Ukraine. We have to get food to those who are hungry and help countries become agriculturally sufficient. We also discussed at the G20 FMM that Russia must extend the Black Sea grain initiative."

He commended External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for coming out with a Chairs Summary at the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting, a first of its kind.

"Tomorrow we will hold a Quad FM meeting", the U.S. diplomat said.

On his brief meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Mr. Blinken said that he urged the Russian Minister to return to

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Quad to sharpen focus on counter-terrorism, soft-peddles Ukraine conflict

MARCH 3, 2023



The foreign ministers of Japan, India, the US and Australia before the Quad meeting. Photo / PTI

Ukraine conflict though it condemned North Korea's ballistic missile launches, says a TNS report.

On its main remit of the Indo-Pacific maritime domain, a meeting of Quad Foreign Ministers here on Thursday, March 2, issued a joint statement that "strongly" opposes any unilateral actions to change the status quo or increase tensions in South and East China Seas. It also expressed "serious concern" at the militarization of disputed features, the dangerous use of coast guard vessels and maritime militia,

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NEW DELHI (TIP): The Quad grouping of India, the US, Japan and Australia has decided to sharpen focus on counter-terrorism even as a joint statement avoided mentioning Russia and took no stand on the

Hindenburg: SC sets up six-member probe panel, wants report in 2 months

MARCH 2, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Thursday, March 2, set up a six-member expert committee headed by former SC judge Justice AM Sapre to investigate if there had been a regulatory failure in dealing with the alleged contravention of laws pertaining to the securities market in relation to the Adani Group or other companies in the wake of the Hindenburg Research report



The Supreme Court of India has set up a six-member expert committee to investigate if there had been a regulatory failure in dealing with the alleged contravention of laws pertaining to the securities market in relation to the Adani Group or other companies in the wake of the Hindenburg Research report

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud asked the committee to suggest measures to strengthen the regulatory framework and secure compliance with the existing framework for the protection of investors.

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GUEST COMMENT

Much ado about names

SC WARNS AGAINST MAKING INDIA A PRISONER OF ITS PAST

Reaffirming India's secular ethos, the Supreme Court has dismissed a petition seeking the formation of a commission to restore 'original' names of historical places 'renamed by barbaric foreign invaders.' Pulling up the overzealous petitioner, the Bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna has acknowledged that we cannot wish away the fact that our country was invaded repeatedly and also ruled by a foreign power. The court's assertion, 'India cannot be a prisoner of its past' should suffice to dissuade bigots from making demands to rename - or re-name - cities, roads, monuments etc.

The court has sharply observed that selective revisiting of the past is aimed at singling out a particular community. The words of Justice Joseph - 'I am a Christian but still very fond of

Hinduism, which is a great religion and should not be belittled' - underscore the values of tolerance, diversity and inclusivity that have shaped our nation. Any attempt to create disharmony by raking up the past should be unequivocally condemned not only by the judiciary but also by the political leadership. Unfortunately, the latter has no qualms about pursuing a British-style divide-and-rule agenda.

Over the past six months, the BJP-led Union Government has renamed a couple of iconic attractions in the Capital - Rajpath is now known as Kartavya Path and Mughal Gardens have become Amrit Udyan. These changes have been portrayed as necessary initiatives for making India shed the vestiges of its British and Mughal past.

Such renaming, however, is not a new

phenomenon. When the Congress was in power at the Centre, Connaught Place and Connaught Circus had been rechristened as Rajiv Chowk and Indira Chowk, respectively. 'Our government, our nomenclature' is a motto followed by ruling parties of all hues.

India has a long, rich history of assimilation. The dream of building a New India, envisaged as a communalism-free and casteism-free nation, will remain a dream as long as divisive attempts are made to rewrite/erase chapters of our history. A country that is fast emerging as a global leader cannot afford to let an unhealthy preoccupation with the past cast a shadow on its promising future.

(Tribune, India)

Sisodia's arrest

TRANSPARENT & FAIR PROBE A MUST TO REFUTE VENDETTA CHARGE

The arrest of Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia by the CBI in connection with alleged irregularities in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped excise policy is a major setback for the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which showcased corruption-free governance among its main planks to record thumping poll victories in Delhi and Punjab in recent years. The development has worsened the conflict between the state government and the BJP-ruled Centre, with the former accusing the latter of misusing Central agencies for political vendetta.

The contentious Delhi Excise Policy was scrapped in July last year after the Lieutenant Governor recommended a CBI inquiry into the allegations. Officials are accused of receiving

kickbacks from liquor traders to grant licenses, extending undue favors to the licensees, waiving/reducing license fee and renewing L-1 license without due approval. It is apparent that the policy was withdrawn due to some anomalies in its execution; AAP needs to do the answering about what had gone wrong. Meanwhile, the onus is on the CBI to come up with irrefutable evidence to establish that Sisodia was directly or indirectly involved in any wrongdoing and whether the money trail leads to him. If any inconsistency or lacuna is detected in the case against the Deputy CM, it will lend credence to AAP's allegation that he is being victimized.

At stake here is the credibility of the CBI as well as of the AAP government, particularly Sisodia, who has been entrusted with 18 of the 33 state

departments by CM Arvind Kejriwal. Central probe agencies have repeatedly been accused of targeting ministers in Opposition-ruled states and turning a blind eye to irregularities in states where the BJP is in power. The CBI needs to allay apprehensions over its 'pick-and-choose' approach by bringing details of the excise policy case into the public domain and looking into the L-G's role as well. A transparent and fair probe is a must to serve the interests of truth and justice; otherwise, the growing perception of vindictiveness will undermine the Centre's credentials and offer a lifeline to AAP and the beleaguered Opposition a year ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

(Tribune, India)



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Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja feted on his 80th birthday

FEBRUARY 25, 2023

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): The Indian Panorama publisher and editor Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja was feted on his 80th birthday.

At a Thanksgiving prayer held at Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar here on February 24, a number of Prof. Saluja's family and friends gathered to greet him and join in the prayers.



New York State Senator John Liu is presenting a State Senate proclamation to Prof. Saluja. Seen in the picture are members of the Gurdwara management led by Mr. Balbeer Singh Pahwa, President and Mr. Harcharan Singh Gulati, General Secretary.
Photo/ Jay Mandal- on assignment

On the occasion, the Ragi Jatha of Bhai Dilveer Singh Mukerian did Gurbani Kirtan and Giani Varinderpal Singh shared thoughts from Gurbani. The Gurdwara General Secretary Sardar Harcharan Singh Gulati, who conducted the program, spoke briefly about Prof. Saluja's life, his career as a college teacher and as journalist, and his contribution to the community.



Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar honored Prof. Saluja with a shawl and a plaque appreciating his services to community. On extreme right is the head priest of Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar.
Photo/ Jay Mandal- on assignment

New York State Senator John Liu who presented a Senate proclamation to Prof. Saluja described him as a fearless journalist, and as a person who has been a bridge between his community and the elected representatives.

Padma Shri Dr. Dattatreya Nori honored Prof. Saluja with a shawl on behalf of Sai Temple USA.



Padma Shri Dr. Dattatreya Nori honoring Prof. Saluja with a shawl
Photo / Vijay Shah

Present on the occasion were a large number of family and friends. Prof. Saluja's sons Ashishpal Saluja and Chitagam Saluja, daughter-in-law Madhu



Dr. VK Raju came all the way from West Virginia to greet and bless Prof. Saluja
Photo / Jay Mandal- on assignment

Saluja, and grandson Viraj Saluja were present.

Dr. VK Raju, eminent ophthalmologist from West Virginia who is the founder and President of the Eye Foundation of America which is working for elimination of childhood blindness across the world and Mr. Sunil Daware, Regional Manager, Air India (Americas) with family, graced the occasion.



A view of the sangat .

Photo / Vijay Shah



Ragi jatha of Bhai Dilveer Singh Mukerian doing Gurbani Kirtan.
Photo/ Jay Mandal- on assignment

A well-known community leader and the community's face in Mayor Eric Adam's administration, Mr. Dilip Chauhan joined in the prayers.

A large number of community leaders and eminent professionals came to greet Prof. Saluja. They included, among others, Dr. Urmillesh Arya, Indu Jaiswal, Beena Sabapathy, Anu Jain, Bina Kothari, Pinky Jaggi, Neeta Bhasin, Dr. Gitanjali Anand, Dr. Suman Munjal, Renu Chopra, Bobby Pohani, Mrs. & Mr. HP Singh, Mrs. and Mr. Tirlok Malik, Dr. Sunil Mehra, Dr. Satish Anand, Mr. Harpreet Singh Toor, Mr. Mohinder Taneja, Mr. Paramjit Singh Bedi, Mr. Gobind Munjal, Mr. Gurvinder Singh Josan, Mr. TJ Anand, Mr. Jay Jabir Singh, Mr. Kenny Singh, Mr. Kuldip Singh, Dr. Girish Kud, Mr. Arun Virmani, Mr. Pritpal Singh Mann and Mr. Pal Dhillon.

Prof. Saluja's colleagues Mr. Parveen Chopra, Mr. Jay Mandal, Mr. Vijay Shah and Mr. Gurinder Hothi attended the celebration.

Thanking Senator John Liu, Prof. Saluja said that the Senator was a personal friend for the last 20 years, and he was a great friend of the Sikh community. He thanked the Senator for his presence and the proclamation.



Prof. Saluja thanking the gathering for their presence and greetings
Photo/ Jay Mandal- on assignment

Prof. Saluja thanked the management of the Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar and the sangat for joining in the prayers thanking God for His Blessings.

The guests were treated to langar (dinner) at the Gurdwara.

INDIAN-ORIGIN BRITISH SCHOOLBOY TRAVELS TO POLAND WITH STATIONERY FOR WAR-HIT UKRAINIANS



Milan Paul Kumar travelled to Poland with his parents to hand over books and other stationery products collected in the UK for Ukrainian children displaced by Russia's invasion.

MARCH 2, 2023

NIRPAL SHERGILL

LONDON (TIP): A 10-year-old Indian-origin schoolboy and award-winning fundraiser has travelled to Poland with his parents to hand over books and other stationery products collected in the UK for Ukrainian children displaced by Russia's invasion.

Milan Paul Kumar from Bolton in Greater Manchester, northern England, arrived in the Polish city of Krakow earlier this week ahead of the first anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on Friday. According to local reports, Kumar and his family visited the Meeting Point integration center organized with the support of UNICEF and run by the Zustricz Foundation, among others.

"Most importantly, I have made lots of new friends who I will visit again," Kumar tweeted during his humanitarian mission. He handed over colored pencils, markers and coloring books acquired in a collection organized in Bolton and also donated gifts to add to the resources of a neighboring public library so that they could be used by Polish and Ukrainian children.

The schoolboy began his journey at the Ukrainian Centre in Bolton and while in Krakow was also invited to the Ukrainian Consulate by Wiaczeslaw Wojnarowskyj, the General Consulate of Ukraine.

His humanitarian mission this week has been backed by several organizations, including the Tesco Staff and National Literacy Trust.

Kumar, who washed vehicles to raise funds and donated his pocket money to the Ukraine Schools Appeal last year, is a recipient of the Princess Diana Award 2022 for his fundraising efforts and is also the #iwill Ambassador for Social and Humanitarian Action for the youth action movement based in London.

Last month, he received a letter from Queen Consort Camilla in praise of his story-telling efforts through a charity called Silver Stories.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Punjab Police lodge FIR a month after NRI complained of assault

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

JALANDHAR (TIP): A US-based NRI, who was in Jalandhar to spend time with his family, faced an assault and it took the police full one month to lodge a case.

The matter was brought before the media by former BJP minister Manoranjan Kalia.

On January 27, assailants chopped off 36-year-old NRI Amit's two fingers from the left hand with a sword. He underwent surgeries but his fingers remain stiff. His elder brother Puneet, who resides in Rama Mandi, too was attacked with the sword on his back, but he escaped without any major injury.

Father of Amit and Puneet, Gurbax Puri, who, too, is a US citizen, alleged: "We had been visiting the police staff for getting a case lodged for the past one month. Every time we went to the police station, we were asked to reach a compromise or get ready to face a counter FIR. We kept showing them the CCTV as an evidence to make our point that we are not to be blamed, but no one listened to us."

He said when he contacted Kalia, he called them to his place. "I understood the entire matter and called up ADGP NRI Affairs Parveen Sinha. He intervened in the matter and finally an FIR was lodged today," Kalia told the media persons. Gurbax Puri said, "We have faced such a shoddy treatment at



BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia along with an NRI family, which was assaulted in a road rage case a month ago in Jalandhar
Photo / Courtesy Sarabjit Singh

the hands of the police that we do not feel like coming back to India again."

Narrating the January 27 incident, Puneet said, "I and Amit were going home on our Activa scooter. Just then, some car-borne people, including two men and a woman, passed abusive remarks. We asked them the reason. Instead of replying, they began attacking us with a sword. They caused me injuries on my back. My brother Amit faced more grievous injuries. We had to rush him to hospital. Since he was working as a driver in the US, we doubt if he will be able to go into the same occupation again. We still have no clue as

to who those people were and why they attacked us so badly.

Rama Mandi SHO Navdeep Singh said, "It was actually a case of road rage. Now, the other side has also got an MLR done. We need to look into that as well."

Don't feel like coming back again

Every time we went to the police station, we were asked to reach a compromise or get ready to face a counter FIR...no one listened to us. We have faced such a shoddy treatment that we do not feel like coming back to India again, said Gurbax Puri, victim's father.

(Source: TNS)

Indian-origin girl student dies in fatal road mishap in UK



Athira Anilkumar Laly Kumari has been identified as the victim of the crash

Photo for representational purpose only

police.

Athira Anilkumar Laly Kumari has been identified as the victim of the crash by West Yorkshire Police as it appealed for witnesses.

According to the local Leeds Malayalee Association, Athira was from Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and had started her studies at Leeds Beckett University last month.

"Athira was one of two pedestrians that suffered serious injuries in the collision, which involved a black Volkswagen Golf and caused damage to a bus stop," West Yorkshire Police said in a statement on Friday.

"The second pedestrian, a man in his forties, is continuing to recover in the hospital. The [Volkswagen] Golf driver, a 25-year-old woman, was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and has since been released on bail as enquiries continue into the collision," the police said, appealing for footage from car cameras in the area on the day of the crash on February 22.

The case is now reportedly being handled by the Indian Consulate in Birmingham to offer assistance to the victim's family in India.

FEBRUARY 27, 2023

NIRPAL SHERGILL

LONDON (TIP): A 28-year-old Indian-origin female student was pronounced dead at the scene when a car smashed into a bus stop and hit pedestrians in Leeds, northern England, according to British

Indian dairy shop owner in New Zealand is targeted by robbers

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

WELLINGTON (TIP): A

dairy shop owner of Indian descent and his family were left traumatized after robbers stormed his shop in West Auckland to steal cigarettes and cash. Uresh Patel from Kaurilands said he was at the back of the shop when burglars entered and attacked on Monday, ripping the till from the counter and stealing cigarettes. "Three kids came in and one jumped over the counter. Two others came from the other side and grabbed the cash register," Patel told The NZ Herald.

"I heard my wife and daughter screaming. I rushed outside and tried to catch one of them but he attacked me and got away," he said. According to the police, two of the culprits were found and arrested in Glen Eden "without further incident", and another was held in the store by the public. "On top of that traumatizing event, we had to deal with the police who came half an hour later; they interrogated us like we are criminals," Manisha, Patel's wife, told The NZ Herald. She rued that nothing has changed ever since 34 year-old Janak Patel was stabbed to death in December 2022 by robbers in Sandringham, Auckland, where he worked. Following Janak's death, New Zealand erupted in protests with people turning up in huge numbers shouting "enough is enough" and holding placards reading, "change the law", in front of then Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's electoral office in Mt Albert.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Robbers target Indian dairy shop owner in New Zealand, steal cash

Photo for representation only

Two Indian American corporate leaders appointed by Joe Biden to his Export Council



Punit Renjen, the former CEO of Deloitte Consulting, and Rajesh Subramaniam, CEO and president of FedEx, have their names on the list of members the President intends to appoint as members of the influential President's Export Council.

MARCH 1, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden has announced his intent to appoint two Indian Americans

to his powerful Export Council which is the principal national advisory committee on international trade.

The president on Tuesday, February

28, announced a list of members he intends to appoint to the council, according to a White House press release.

Punit Renjen, the former CEO of Deloitte Consulting, and Rajesh Subramaniam, CEO and president of FedEx, have their names on the list of members the President intends to appoint as members of the influential President's Export Council.

The council will be headed by Mark Edin, chairman of Kastle Systems.

More than two dozen leaders from the corporate sector, labor, real estate, national security and law, have been tapped into the President's Export Council.

On December 31 last, Renjen retired as Deloitte Global CEO after having served in the role since June 2015. He now serves as Deloitte Global CEO Emeritus.

Subramaniam, as President and Chief Executive Officer of FedEx Corporation, is responsible for providing strategic direction for all FedEx operating companies.

Subramaniam is chair of the five-person Executive Committee, which plans and executes the corporation's strategic business activities.

INDIAN AMERICAN CHICAGO BASED ARTIST RAISES \$420,000 FOR TURKEY, SYRIA



Syed Rehman is the founder of Modern Wall Art, a custom home décor studio that creates pieces using Arabic calligraphy.

MARCH 2, 2023

CHICAGO (TIP): When a massive earthquake shook Turkey and Syria a few days ago, the tremors of how a sudden calamity can turn lives upside down were felt across the globe.

While humanitarian support and social organizations rushed to see how they can help those impacted by the disaster, many individuals around the world were also looking at how to pitch in and where to send across charity.

During this time, Syed Rehman, an artist who runs his custom home design studio in the suburbs of Skokie near Chicago decided to go beyond and directly help the needy. He not only started a campaign through his very active Instagram handle but also was inspired to go himself to Turkey and offer help.

"I have been involved with many charities in the past and when this calamity struck, suddenly an overwhelming number of people began sending me messages asking if there is a campaign I have started", Rehman told the media. But it was Rehman's little daughter who acted as a catalyst that led him to dive headlong into humanitarian work.

"One day, my daughter came back from school and asked me if I could go to Turkey and help the earthquake victims there," he recalls. "I saw this as a sign from God and I immediately got in touch with Human Concern International (HCI), Canada. Soon, we decided that we will fly to Turkey along with their team."

On the ground, Rehman discovered that the situation remains more dismal than we can see on screens. He along with the team not only distributed aid but also cooked hot meals for many who were rendered homeless by the earthquakes.

Rehman also continued posting a series of videos from the earthquake sites to explain to people the extent of the disaster while seeking support from people to donate generously. "We have been able to raise \$420,000 for the people," he says.

Rehman's experience on the ground has overwhelmed him and he has not been able to get back to his business as he is constantly thinking of ways in which he can provide help.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Community leader Darshana Patel to run for California Assembly



Patel's campaign earned early endorsements from Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna.

MARCH 2, 2023

PARMINDER AUJLA

SACRAMENTO (IP): Indian American community leader and research scientist Darshana Patel, a Democrat, has announced that she would run for the California State Assembly from the North County in 2024. "As the daughter of immigrants who struggled to realize the American Dream, I know the challenges that families can face during hard times," she told the media.

"I am running for state Assembly because I want to make sure that every person has the opportunity to succeed and thrive, and because I can use my experience as a scientist, elected school board member, and a civic leader to make a difference in their lives."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Shama Hakim Mesiwala creates history as California judge

MARCH 2, 2023

PARMINDER AUJLA

SACRAMENTO (TIP): Indian American Shama Hakim Mesiwala created history with her confirmation as Associate Justice of the California Third District Court of Appeal to become the first South Asian and Muslim American woman on any appellate court in the US.

Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero administered the oath of office to Mesiwala after she was unanimously confirmed as an associate justice of the Third District Court of Appeal in Sacramento, according to California Courts website.

The 48-year-old Democrat was confirmed on Feb 14 by the Commission on Judicial Appointments after being nominated by California Governor Gavin Newsom on Dec 23, 2022.

She was rated exceptionally well qualified, the highest rating given by the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (JNE), according to her official bio on California Courts website.

Congratulating Mesiwala on her unanimous confirmation, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association noted she "is the first South Asian American woman and the first Muslim American woman CA state appellate court justice.

A native Californian, Mesiwala was born in Stanford in 1974 and raised in Cupertino among the fruit orchards and burgeoning technology industries of Silicon Valley. Her father immigrated from Mumbai, India in the 1960's for educational opportunities and freedoms found only in America. She attended all public schools, graduating from UC San Diego magna cum laude in three years. She started law school at UC Davis King Hall at age 20 and graduated in 1998.

Mesiwala devoted her legal career to public service. She represented indigent criminal defendants at the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Sacramento and the Central California Appellate Program, where she argued cases before the California Supreme Court and California Courts of Appeal, according to the website.



Shama is the first South Asian and Muslim American woman on any appellate court in the US.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

COUNCIL MEMBERS JENNIFER GUTIÉRREZ AND KEVIN RILEY INTRODUCE HISTORIC LEGISLATION TO CREATE UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE IN NEW YORK CITY

MARCH 2, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP) : NYC Council Members Jennifer Gutiérrez and Kevin Riley are introducing on March 2, comprehensive legislation to create free Universal Child Care in New York City. The bill, Intro 941, which has been in formation for nearly a year, was crafted in careful consultation with advocates, providers, and other stakeholders, and informed by child care programs in cities and countries around the world. The legislation goes beyond proposing a slate of fixes to an inherently broken system, to fully reimagine child care in New York City and create equal access and equity for all.

The need for Universal Child Care is significant: with average annual costs between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for home- and center-based care, respectively, the affordability crisis for parents has reached new heights. Simultaneously, child care providers, who are predominantly women of color and immigrants, are in the bottom 3% of earners in NYC, and their employers are often forced to take out loans to keep facilities afloat. The bill's comprehensive plan looks to both ease the financial and logistical burden on families accessing childcare, as well as support and expand



the early childcare workforce. The bill will provide free, high-quality, and accessible child care for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age, expand hours and days of operation, and include access for undocumented children. The bill strengthens the provider pipeline, ensures pay parity, and creates opportunities for small business ownership, as well as building a healthier streetscape by creating a pathway for thousands of vacant commercial and community spaces to be converted into childcare locations.

The bill, which was partially inspired by Council Member Gutiérrez's own challenges with accessing child care, is being introduced to the first women-majority Council, with the most new mothers in the history of the legislative body.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

GILLIBRAND FIGHTS TO EXPAND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AND EXTEND PROGRAM'S SOLVENCY THROUGH 2096

MARCH 2, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C.

(TIP): U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand held on March 2, a video press conference announcing the Social Security Expansion Act of 2023. In 2021, Social Security lifted 26.3 million Americans out of poverty, but fast-rising costs and the aging population are putting benefits of current retirees and future generations at risk. This bill would expand Social Security benefits by \$2,400 a year and ensure Social Security is fully funded for the next 70+ years - all without raising taxes by one penny on over 93% of American households that make \$250,000 or less.

"Social Security touches the lives of every American, directly or indirectly. It impacts the lives of older Americans, people with disabilities, and wounded warriors. We must not only protect our Social Security system, but we must also strengthen and expand it," said Senator Gillibrand. "In 2021, Social Security lifted 26.3 million Americans out of poverty, including more than 18 million older adults. We have to ensure that it's giving retirees and their families the support they need - and the support they spent their entire lives earning. Social Security is truly a matter of survival for so many retirees and their families across New York and the country. Social Security is essential, and it's something that I will do everything in my power to protect and strengthen."

Nearly 90 years after Social Security was enacted, it remains one of the most popular and successful government programs in the history of the United States. Today, the nation's older adult poverty rate is just 10.3%. Social



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Twitter photo/ @sengillibrand

Security provides an essential lifeline to the one in seven older adults who rely on the program for 90% or more of their income, as well as the roughly 50% of Americans who are 55 years old and older living without retirement savings. The Social Security Expansion Act would ensure the program's solvency

through nearly the end of the century and require millionaires and billionaires to finally pay their fair share into the program. This bill would also help low-income workers stay out of poverty by:

- Improving the Special Minimum Benefit;
- Restoring student benefits up to age 22 for children of disabled or deceased workers;
- Strengthening benefits for older Americans and people with disabilities;
- Increasing cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs);
- Expanding program benefits across the board.

The Social Security Expansion Act has been endorsed by more than 50 major organizations, including: Social Security Works, AFA CWA, AFSCME, Alliance for Retired Americans, American Federation of Government Employees, American Federation of Teachers, American Postal Workers Union, BMWED/IBT, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE), United Food and Commercial Workers International Union. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

House Ethics Committee Opens investigation into Congressman George Santos

MARCH 3, 2023
WASHINGTON, DC (TIP):

The House Ethics Committee has officially launched an investigation into Congressman George Santos, who is accused of lying about much of his biography.

The committee announced in a release on Thursday, March 2, that the probe will have jurisdiction regarding whether the Republican "may have engaged in unlawful activity with respect to his 2022 congressional campaign; failed to properly disclose required information on statements filed with the House; violated federal conflict of interest laws in connection with his role in a firm providing fiduciary services; and/or engaged in sexual misconduct towards an individual seeking employment in his congressional office."



Congressman George Santos, who is accused of lying about much of his biography

Santos' response to the investigation came in a tweet: "The House Committee on Ethics has opened an investigation, and Congressman George Santos is fully cooperating. There will be no further comment made at this time."

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said this week: "If ethics finds something, we'll take action."

Santos previously told CNN that he was "not concerned" about the congressional investigation.

The congressman faces investigations at the local, state and federal level, primarily with a focus on campaign funds. There have been numerous calls for him to resign, as Santos' past has been scrutinized over fabrications about his heritage to his work history.



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New YORK



The Genius of Lala Har Dayal



on
March 4th, 2023
at
10:00 am EST/8:30 pm IST

A Talk by
Dr. Bhuvan Lall



Author, Filmmaker, Entrepreneur
&
Biographer of Lala Har Dayal



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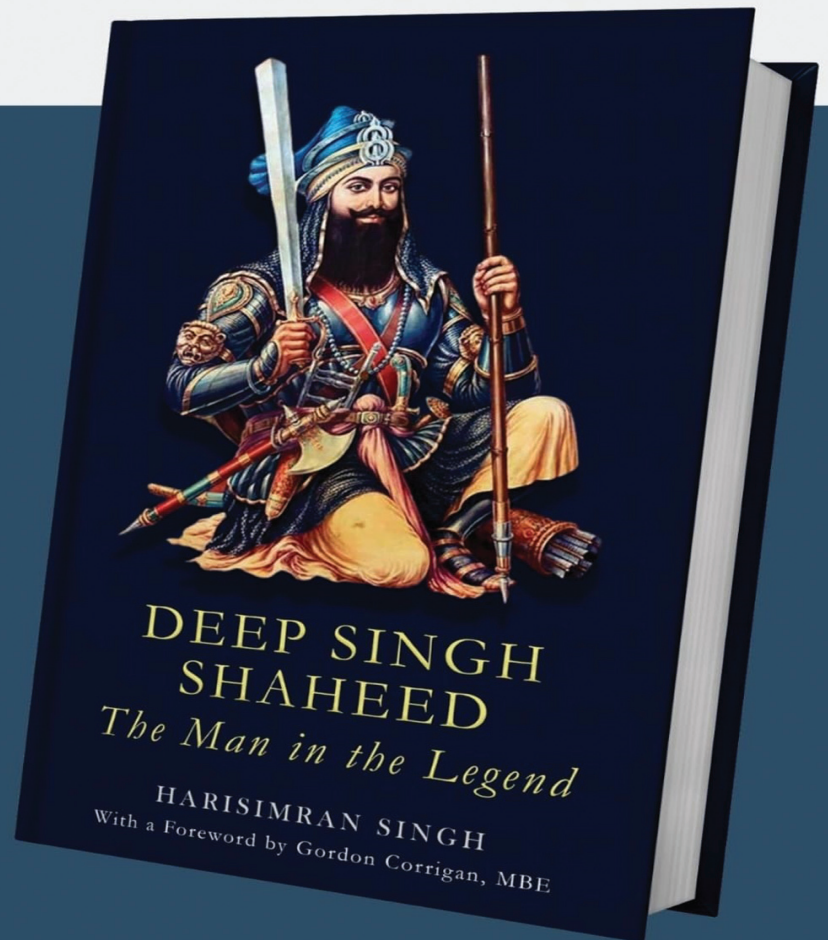
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Conflict reflects wider global rivalries

“IT IS EVIDENT THAT BOTH RUSSIA AND THE US HAVE DONE LITTLE TO END THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE. INDIA HAS OFFERED TO JOIN EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT AMIDST WESTERN CONCERNS OVER AN EMERGING RUSSIA-CHINA UNDERSTANDING ON THE ROAD AHEAD. THE US HAS REJECTED CHINESE OFFERS OF MEDIATION. MOREOVER, RUSSIA WILL NOT AGREE TO ANY SOLUTION WHICH INVOLVES IT LOSING CONTROL OF ITS VITAL AND HISTORICAL ACCESS TO THE SEA IN CRIMEA. THERE SHOULD ALSO BE RESTORATION OF PEACE AND HARMONY BETWEEN RUSSIANS AND UKRAINIANS LIVING IN SOUTHERN UKRAINE. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF ACCESS TO THE PORT CITY OF ODESSA REMAINS OPEN FOR USE INTERNATIONALLY.”



Over 14 million Ukrainians have been displaced during the war

CNN Screen shot

Following years of inept and confused leadership by the then President Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union fell apart, resulting in its former constituent republics attaining full independence on December 26, 1991.

An interesting aspect of this collapse was that large numbers of Russians continued living in virtually all erstwhile Soviet republics. Thousands of Russians still remain in their old homes, and the Russian language remains widely spoken in virtually every former Soviet republic.

Erstwhile Soviet republics have, however, enhanced cooperation with other neighbors. Interestingly, the predominantly Muslim ones - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, while Azerbaijan is a dialogue partner. Historical ties with Russia, even today, play an important role across Central Asia. Russia's western neighbors generally see greater benefit of cooperation with prosperous countries of western Europe, ranging from France and Germany to Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Russia has no reason to object to the Soviet Union's former European Republics (on its northern and western borders) seeking closer ties with their European neighbors, including France and Germany. Its genuine concerns arise when these neighbors enter into military alliances with the US and NATO. The principal aim of the US role in NATO is perceived as being aimed at 'surrounding and containing' Russia.

The recent escalation of tensions in Europe has arisen from the sudden regard and affection of US President Joe Biden for the leadership of the young and relatively inexperienced Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. What has, thereby, emerged in recent years has been Ukraine's growing security ties with the US. This has resulted in Ukraine being provided sophisticated weapons intended to give Kyiv the capabilities

to challenge Russian land and maritime security interests, and pursue its own territorial ambitions on its southern shores.

The main territorial dispute between Russia and Ukraine over the Crimean Peninsula continues. Crimea has been ruled by the Russian Black Sea Fleet since 1783. It has, thus, historically been under Russian, and not Ukrainian sovereignty, for well over two centuries now. Moreover, while Russia has sought unfettered access to the port of Odessa, it has not succeeded in this effort. But, it would be sensible if Black Sea ports are used by both countries, which do ultimately share an interest in maritime trade.

This is particularly important for crucial wheat supplies from Ukraine and Russia to West Asia and Africa. Odessa has also been, for long, the most well-located port for India's trade with both Ukraine and Russia. Any peace solution would naturally have to bear in mind the reality that under no circumstances will Russia agree to compromise its crucial national interests in Crimea. Moscow also has a natural interest in strengthening its historical access to the Black Sea port of Odessa.

Tensions between Ukraine and Russia flared up when Zelenskyy was elected President of Ukraine in 2019. Zelenskyy believed that he could assert his independence from Russia through close ties with the Biden administration. During his visit to Washington in 2021, he signed a joint declaration with President Biden; it was laced with strong anti-Russian rhetoric. The joint declaration said: "Unwavering commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea, and extending to its territorial waters in the face of Russian aggression." This was an assurance of support to Ukraine for actions which would undermine Russia's access to the sea in Crimea. This was accompanied by rapid transfer of sophisticated US military hardware to Ukraine.



G PARTHASARATHY

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops into southern Ukraine in February 2022 with the evident objective of seizing the cities of Luhansk and Donetsk by declaring them independent states. He, thereby, established Russia's control over areas where the Russians are well positioned.

There are an estimated 7.7 million Russians in Ukraine, which has a total population of 43.3 million. The Russian population resides predominantly in six southern areas of Ukraine which control Russia's access to the sea in Crimea. The Russian Black Sea Fleet has historically been Russia's gateway to the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Mediterranean Sea.

The poorly planned Russian military response that followed the Biden-Zelenskyy declaration, combined with massive US and NATO arms assistance to Ukraine, has threatened the historical and only Russian access to its southern seas. Russia had expected that it would rapidly take over large tracts of Ukraine, especially in Russian-dominated parts of southern Ukraine - from Crimea to Odessa. Fierce Ukrainian resistance, bolstered by arms support from the US and its NATO allies, blocked Russia's moves westwards. More importantly, Russian positions in southern Ukraine remain under constant attack.

Over 14 million Ukrainians have been displaced so far, with seven million now in neighboring countries. Casualties on both sides are estimated at around 3,00,000 killed or wounded. Worse still, there is substantial reason to believe the allegations, reinforced by writings of veteran American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, that in September 2022, the Biden administration destroyed two undersea oil pipelines carrying Russian gas. This was a gross violation of the international law that requires a thorough investigation.

It is evident that both Russia and the US have done little to end the conflict in Ukraine. India has offered to join efforts to resolve the conflict amidst western concerns over an emerging Russia-China understanding on the road ahead. The US has rejected Chinese offers of mediation. Moreover, Russia will not agree to any solution which involves it losing control of its vital and historical access to the sea in Crimea. There should also be restoration of peace and harmony between Russians and Ukrainians living in southern Ukraine. It would be helpful if access to the port city of Odessa remains open for use internationally.

(The author is Chancellor, Jammu Central University & India's former High Commissioner to Pakistan)

Lurking menace in Punjab

AAP GOVERNMENT YET TO FIND ITS FEET ON THE SECURITY FRONT

“THE OPPORTUNITY TO NIP THE TROUBLE IN THE BUD HAVING BEEN LOST, THE TASK OF THE LEADERSHIP, BOTH POLITICAL AND POLICE, WILL NOW BE MADE DIFFICULT. THE AAP GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEEK DOVAL'S HELP. HE CAN DO SO BEHIND THE PROVERBIAL CURTAIN WITHOUT ANNOUNCING HIS ROLE OF ADVISER. A DOUBLE-PRONGED APPROACH WOULD BE REQUIRED. THE BULK OF THE POPULATION, THE JAT SIKH FARMERS IN THE VILLAGES, HAD SUFFERED THE RAVAGES OF TERRORISM IN THE 1980S AND EARLY 1990S. THEY CAN BE WON OVER BY WELL-REASONED ARGUMENTS ON MULTIPLE FORA.”

Described as a 'radical preacher', Amritpal Singh aspires to be the next Bhindranwale. That aim will not be easy to achieve. Bhindranwale was the product of political machinations gone awry. Amritpal obviously wants to exploit the current gloomy mood of Punjabi youth, caused by unemployment and the rising prices of essential commodities, and aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict with its implications for global economy.

Amritpal can't be allowed to become larger than life. He has to be contained



Amritpal can't be allowed to become larger than life. He has to be contained before he assumes an aura of invincibility. Photo / PTI

before he assumes an aura of invincibility.

According to media reports, the police had arrested one of his associates, Lovepreet Singh 'Toofan', for allegedly kidnapping and assaulting Varinder Singh of Chamkaur Sahib. Amritpal had also been named in the FIR lodged at the Ajnala police station. Amritpal announced a march to the police station to demand Lovepreet's release. Anticipating trouble, police personnel were drawn from neighboring police stations and deployed at Ajnala.

Barricades had been set up, yet a massive crowd of supporters of Amritpal and his Waris Punjab De outfit, armed with swords and a few with guns, stormed the barricades, entered the police station and caused extensive damage to government property. A hundred trained policemen, given implicit instructions on what they should do if attacked by a mob, should normally have been able to deal with the mob and disperse it. But if they had not been told clearly of the type and extent of force they could use to counter violence by the mob, the situation was destined to get out of control, and it did! I would squarely categorize the response as a failure of the police leadership and the state's political leadership for not making its intention clear.

I would frown at armchair criticism of the police when dealing with piquant situations. On the ground, it is never easy to take quick decisions as events unravel in front of the police officer in charge on the spot. If he is a confident individual with his wits about him, the public should accept the decision, even if the results turn sour. It is the intent of the decision-maker that should matter.

Senior IPS officers turned up later, according to the reports, and held talks with Amritpal. He seemed to have convinced the Police Commissioner of Amritsar and the Ajnala SSP that Lovepreet was not the man involved in

kidnapping Varinder! The senior officers agreed to release Lovepreet. This capitulation is what will trouble the police and the political leadership henceforth.

Lovepreet had been named by Varinder in his initial complaint. What the police needed to do was to check whether there actually had been a kidnapping. Who thrashed Varinder? It was reported that he had objected to Amritpal's utterances, and, if that is true, a motive for the assault was available.

The Ajnala police would have kept their supervising officers in the loop on such an important political happening. Deputing extra forces from neighboring police stations could have been ordered only by an officer with authority over all five police stations. If reserves were deputed from the armed battalion, the order could only have been issued from the state DGP's office. There is no way the seniors can claim that they were not in the know of the decision to arrest the men named in the FIR.

It is the police capitulation to the radical preacher that will come back to haunt the administration. I see the hand of the political leadership in this surrender to unlawful demands. There is no way the CM was kept out of the loop. It is evident that the AAP government led by Bhagwant Mann is still to find its feet on the security front. It could be its Achilles' heel.

An even worse scenario now is the possible recrudescence of terror in this sensitive border state. Our neighbor, mired in an economic morass, will try to fish in troubled waters across the border. In the 1980s, it had provided training and given shelter to Khalistani terrorists. It had also facilitated the movement of arms across the border. The neighbor will touch base with Amritpal, if it has not done so already.

NSA Ajit Doval is best placed to intervene. He knows what to do, how it has got to be done and who should be entrusted with the task. Amritpal cannot be permitted to become larger



BY
JULIO RIBEIRO

“IT IS THE POLICE CAPITULATION TO THE RADICAL PREACHER THAT WILL COME BACK TO HAUNT THE ADMINISTRATION. I SEE THE HAND OF THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THIS SURRENDER TO UNLAWFUL DEMANDS. THERE IS NO WAY THE CM WAS KEPT OUT OF THE LOOP. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE AAP GOVERNMENT LED BY BHAGWANT MANN IS STILL TO FIND ITS FEET ON THE SECURITY FRONT. IT COULD BE ITS ACHILLES' HEEL.”

than life. He has to be contained before he assumes an aura of invincibility. He has tasted victory in Ajnala. Consequently, support to him in Punjab will increase.

The Union Government may try to leverage the state government's failure in Ajnala to gain political advantage in a state that has not welcomed the BJP. It will be a mistake to do so. The AAP was voted to power with a massive majority. Mann was propelled to the CM's chair as the Sikh face of the AAP. The BJP has its own Sikh face in Capt Amarinder Singh, but he is a spent force. The wiser option for the Modi government is to leave this state alone lest it should burn its fingers.

An even worse option would be to play politics because Mann and his party have been pushed into a corner by a tyro who till last year was a clean-shaven Sikh living a nondescript life in Dubai. Sensing an opportunity for his latent talents, he grew a beard, started wearing clothes that imitated those of Bhindranwale and made his supporters carry Guru Granth Sahib to deter the police from acting.

The opportunity to nip the trouble in the bud having been lost, the task of the leadership, both political and police, will now be made difficult. The AAP government should seek Doval's help. He can do so behind the proverbial curtain without announcing his role of adviser. A double-pronged approach would be required. The bulk of the population, the Jat Sikh farmers in the villages, had suffered the ravages of terrorism in the 1980s and early 1990s. They can be won over by well-reasoned arguments on multiple fora.

At the same time, as the communication lines with the masses are developed, a quick rounding up of Amritpal and his cronies should be effected. All laws the BJP governments use against their political opponents and critics should be used against this looming menace before it bites both the state government and the Centre.

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

OPPOSITION UNITY REMAINS A BRIDGE TOO FAR



BY RADHIKA
RAMASESHAN



SISODIA'S ARREST HAS PROFOUND NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DIRECTION THE OPPOSITION WILL EVENTUALLY PURSUE. AFTER TARRING THE TMC AND AAP WITH THE CORRUPTION TAIN, IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE CONGRESS COULD INCLUDE THE OPPOSITION IN ITS ANTI-CORRUPTION BLITZKRIEG. THAT'S EXPECTING TOO MUCH. THE CORE OF ITS 2024 BLUEPRINT HAS ONLY ONE STRATEGY, AND THAT IS TO POSITION RAHUL AS MODI'S SOLE ADVERSARY.

"Refusing to reconcile with the reality that its pre-eminence as the Grand Old Party might be dated by now, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge qualified his imploration to the Opposition with the caveat that the exercise would follow the UPA template with the Congress heading the coalition because it was the only party that had never done business with the BJP. It's a fact few would dispute, but should the Congress grandstand at every opportunity on its 'unsullied' ideological 'credentials'? Can parties such as the SP be labelled as BJP's accomplices even as the subject of whether their campaigns against Hindutva were sufficiently robust should be debated? Has the Congress scored over other non-BJP entities on this marker? If the Congress's pro-secular, pro-minority credentials were impeccable, why did Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor intervene at the AICC plenary to emphasize that his party could have been 'more vocal' on the release of Bilkis Bano's rapists in Gujarat, the attacks on churches, lynchings in the name of cow vigilantism and the bulldozing of Muslim homes."

The ruling BJP could be sanguine in the belief that the country's attention has been deflected from the Hindenburg-Adani row by the arrest of Delhi minister and Aam Aadmi Party's backbone Manish Sisodia.

The development has profound national implications for the direction the Opposition will eventually pursue. The early indications augur well for the BJP because the arrest has reopened the fault lines running through the Congress and the regional parties, some of which it is counting on as its allies in the prelude to the 2024 General Election.

Delhi offers only seven parliamentary states. It is a quasi-state that is partially governed by the Centre, which has increasingly shrunk the space for the exercise of powers by the Arvind Kejriwal government after the BJP lost the 2015 and 2020 Assembly polls to the AAP.

Delhi is significant for the BJP because the seeds of the downfall of the Congress-helmed United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government were sown in the national capital in a long-drawn-out protest against the UPA's 'corruption' and 'misrule'; Kejriwal was then closely associated with the anti-corruption movement piloted by Anna Hazare. The India Against Corruption stir became a launch pad for Kejriwal's political career, which was carefully camouflaged by his 'activism' with a moral underpinning. The Congress was the principal casualty of the protests and the BJP the eventual gainer.

The arrest of Sisodia, a founding member of the AAP, provoked strong reactions from regional forces, but invited the Congress's endorsement. KT Rama Rao, working president of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), accused the BJP of "resorting to stealth politics by inciting Central agencies against Opposition parties in states where it can't come to power (on its own)." For the BJP, BRS-ruled Telangana is analogous to Delhi. The party's exertions have not fructified into tangible political gains. At best, the BJP can hope to unseat the Congress as the main Opposition party in Telangana, unless the ground situation dramatically changes. Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav lauded Sisodia's record in making quality education accessible to Delhi's underprivileged children and remarked, "The BJP proved that it is not only against education, but also against the future of Delhi's children."

The approval by the Congress's Delhi unit stood out all the more against the backdrop of the party's call for forging 'Opposition unity' before the next Lok Sabha battle at its just-concluded plenary in Raipur. Refusing to reconcile with the reality that its pre-eminence as the



The arrest of AAP leader Manish Sisodia has provoked strong reactions from regional forces but invited the Congress's endorsement.
Photo / PTI

Grand Old Party might be dated by now, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge qualified his imploration to the Opposition with the caveat that the exercise would follow the UPA template with the Congress heading the coalition because it was the only party that had never done business with the BJP. It's a fact few would dispute, but should the Congress grandstand at every opportunity on its 'unsullied' ideological 'credentials'? Can parties such as the SP be labelled as BJP's accomplices even as the subject of whether their campaigns against Hindutva were sufficiently robust should be debated? Has the Congress scored over other non-BJP entities on this marker? If the Congress's pro-secular, pro-minority credentials were impeccable, why did Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor intervene at the AICC plenary to emphasize that his party could have been 'more vocal' on the release of Bilkis Bano's rapists in Gujarat, the attacks on churches, lynchings in the name of cow vigilantism and the bulldozing of Muslim homes? "If we don't speak out in such cases, we are only surrendering our core responsibility of standing up for India's diversity and pluralism, which should be central to the Congress's core message," Tharoor had stated.

More evidence followed to demonstrate that the Congress was unwilling to cede the leadership position to a leader from a prospective ally. Addressing a meeting in Shillong, Rahul Gandhi aggressively engaged with the Trinamool Congress (which fought the Meghalaya elections solo) and listed the violence in West

Bengal, the Saradha scam and the alleged profligacy exhibited by the TMC in the Goa elections as proof of its 'tradition' and its propensity to 'help' the BJP and defeat the Congress.

Meghalaya's last Congress Chief Minister Mukul Sangma had crossed over to the TMC with a dozen legislators. At the same time, at a rally in Nagaland, Kharge made it amply clear that the Congress would lead the Opposition alliance that will come to power at the Centre in 2024. "The Congress will lead. We are talking with other parties. Because otherwise, democracy and the Constitution will go," claimed the Congress president.

Secularism apart, it is apparent that the Congress has acquired a sense of proprietorship over the public articulation and projection of corruption, exemplified in the Centre's alleged patronage to Adani and its silence on the questions raised by Rahul in Parliament. In his speech at the Raipur session, Rahul compared the Adani conglomerate with the East India Company and said, "History is being repeated." "The Independence struggle was against the East India Company. That was also a company, the company that took away India's wealth, infrastructure, ports..." he stressed.

After tarring the TMC and AAP with the corruption taint, it is inconceivable that the Congress could include the Opposition in its anti-corruption blitzkrieg. That's expecting too much. The core of its 2024 blueprint has only one strategy, and that is to position Rahul as Narendra Modi's sole adversary.

(The author is a senior journalist)

International Women's Day

The theme this year is 'DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality'. International Women's Day falls on March 8

International Women's Day, also known as IWD for short, grew out of the labour movement to become a recognised annual event by the United Nations (UN).

The seeds of it were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. A year later, the Socialist Party of America declared the first National Woman's Day.

The idea to make the day international came from a woman called Clara Zetkin, communist activist and advocate for women's rights. She suggested the idea in 1910 at an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. There were 100 women there, from 17 countries, and they agreed on her suggestion unanimously.

It was first celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. The centenary was celebrated in 2011, so this year we're technically celebrating the 111th International Women's Day.

Things were made official in 1975 when the United Nations started celebrating the day. The first theme adopted by the UN (in 1996) was "Celebrating the Past, Planning for the Future".

International Women's Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, in politics and in economics, while the political roots of the day mean strikes and protests are organised to raise awareness of continued inequality.

Why 8 March?

Clara's idea for an International Women's Day had no fixed date.

It wasn't formalised until a war-time strike in 1917 when Russian women demanded "bread and peace" - and four days into the strike the Tsar was forced to abdicate and the provisional government granted women the right to vote.

The date when the women's strike commenced on the Julian calendar, which was then in use in Russia, was Sunday 23 February. This day in the Gregorian calendar was 8 March - and that's when it's celebrated today.

Why do people wear the color purple?

Purple, green and white are the colours of IWD, according to the International Women's Day website.

"Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolizes hope. White represents purity, albeit a controversial concept. The colours originated from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the UK in 1908," they say.

How is Women's Day celebrated?

International Women's Day is a national holiday in many countries, including Russia where flower sales double during the three or four days around 8 March.

In China, many women are given a half-day off work on 8 March, as advised by the State Council.

In Italy, International Women's Day, or la Festa della Donna, is celebrated by the giving of mimosa blossoms. The origin of this tradition is unclear but it is believed to have started in Rome after World War Two.

In the US, the month of March is Women's History Month. A presidential



proclamation issued every year honours the achievements of American women.

What is the IWD 2023 theme?

The UN's theme for 2023 is "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". This theme aims to recognise and celebrate the contribution women and girls are making to technology and online education.

This year, IWD will also explore the impact of the digital gender gap on inequality for women and girls, as the UN estimates that women's lack of access to the online world will cause a \$1.5 trillion loss to gross domestic product of low and middle-income countries by 2025 if action isn't taken.

But there are also other themes around. The International Women's Day website - which says it's designed to "provide a platform to help forge positive change for women" - has chosen the theme #EmbraceEquity with organisers and events seeking to "challenge gender stereotypes, call out discrimination, draw attention to bias, and seek out inclusion".

Why do we need it?

In the past year, women in many countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Ukraine and the US have been fighting for their rights amid war, violence and policy changes in their respective countries.

In Afghanistan, the resurgence of the Taliban has hindered advancements in human rights with women and girls now banned from higher education, working most jobs outside of the home, travelling long distances without a male chaperone and they are instructed to cover their faces in public.

In Iran, protests were sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman arrested by morality police in Tehran on 13 September 2022 for allegedly violating Iran's strict rules requiring women to cover their hair with a scarf.



Since then, demonstrations have continued across the country with many Iranians - both female and male - calling for better rights for women and a change from the current political leadership. "Woman, life, freedom" is the slogan of the protests. Authorities have portrayed them as "riots" and responded with force. More than 500 people have died.

Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces on 24 February 2022, the UN report that gender gaps in food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty, and increased gender-based violence have worsened inside Ukraine and around the world due to war-induced price hikes and shortages.

On June 24 2022, the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade, a historic piece of legislation which protected the right to abortion for American women, causing widespread outcry and demonstrations in the US. A number of US women have sought support to get a termination from people in Mexico, where a historic ruling in 2021 effectively decriminalised abortion. In the past few years though, there has been progress. In November 2022, the European Parliament passed a law after a 10-year battle to ensure more

women are represented on publicly traded companies' boards by July 2026. "There are plenty of women qualified for top jobs and with our new European law, we will, make sure that they have a real chance to get them," the EU said.

Meanwhile parental leave laws were updated in Armenia and Colombia, and Spain passed laws to support menstrual health leave and extended access to abortion.

The International Olympic Committee reported the most gender-balanced Winter Games with women making up 45% of athletes at Beijing 2022. Though gender parity wasn't achieved, new guidelines promoted more balanced coverage of women's sport.

The Fifa Women's World Cup in 2023 is newly expanded, with 36 teams taking part. Ahead of the competition, the US Soccer Federation reached a historic agreement to pay its men's and women's teams equally, making it the first in the sport to promise both sexes matching money. Female players had filed a number of equal pay claims and lawsuits, arguing their case for more than five years.

Source: BBC



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ABOUT THE MASTERS

The Dr. Sharma Couple is founder chairmen of the world's largest reiki group (Reiki Healing Foundation) which has transformed millions worldwide through their mass awakening training workshops. They have created history and world record in the field of energy healing and have been honored by more than 175 national & international awards for their great contribution to society. They are the first couple to start raw food movement in India. They have shattered all age old myths & superstitions related to health, healing, nutrition, God, Hell & Heaven, planetary fears, black magic, bacterial hoax, fake spiritual and miracle performers. They have established the supremacy of eternal natural laws, natural healing powers and supreme human potentials. They have been consultants and spiritual guides to many prominent personalities of the world and have also authored several enlightening books. Their message is:

***"Never Follow Anyone, Never hang on Other's Wings,
Open your Own Gifted Wings & find Your Own Sky,
We are second to God, empowered with all His powers
To manifest our dreams, come and open all your petals."***

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Taxpayer Advocacy Panel welcomes 8 new members dedicated to improving IRS taxpayer services; seeks civic-minded volunteers to apply for next year's group

INTERESTED CANDIDATES FROM ALL STATES ENCOURAGED TO APPLY BY MARCH 31



MARCH 2, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Internal Revenue Service announced, March 2, the selection of eight new members to serve on the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel for 2023.

The IRS recommended and the Department of the Treasury approved the new members, who will join eight TAP alternates approved in a prior year, for a total of 16 new active members. When added to returning members, these new TAP members will round out the panel with 63 volunteers for 2023.

New members were selected from a pool of approximately 200 interested individuals who applied during an open recruitment period last spring and from alternate members who applied in previous years.

"Congratulations and welcome to all of our new Taxpayer Advocacy Panel members," said National Taxpayer Advocate Erin M. Collins. "I am grateful for the time and talents the members bring to the panel and their devotion to making the American tax system work better for everyone. Their commitment to listen to taxpayers, understand the problems they are experiencing, and then bring that perspective to the table with our IRS partners is a great model for how we can improve the taxpayer experience with the IRS when we work together."

TAP members serve as a conduit for bringing grassroots concerns raised by the taxpaying public to the attention of the IRS, and work on a variety of issues that impact taxpayers in key areas where the IRS and the public interact the most.

"I predict this is going to be a busy and productive year, and I know our TAP volunteers are up to the challenge," said 2023 National TAP Chair Dr. Eugene Lilly.

For a breakdown of the new TAP members by location, visit: www.improveirs.org/about-tap/members.

20 years of advocacy

For more than 20 years, TAP members have worked hard to make the tax system work better for taxpayers. In the last 20 years, the TAP has submitted more than 2,200 recommendations on customer service issues that directly impact how taxpayers interact with the IRS, whether by phone, mail or online.

In 2022 alone, the TAP made 201 recommendations to the IRS, many of which were implemented. These recommendations have resulted in improvements to IRS tax forms, instructions and publications that make them easier for taxpayers to understand.

Some examples of issues on which TAP members have partnered with the IRS to improve taxpayer service include: Implementing customer callback technology;

Providing taxpayers with the option to get copies of past tax returns through Free File;

Allowing longer extension times for taxpayers to file returns; and

Creating an online portal taxpayers can use to easily look up information needed to claim education credits.

Additionally, the TAP has developed outreach materials to educate entrepreneurs about tax return filing requirements, and successfully proposed improvements to the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Recruitment now open for 2024

Applications for the 2024 TAP year are

now being accepted from civic-minded volunteers looking for ways to serve their communities. TAP members volunteer to serve a three-year term and are expected to devote 200 to 300 hours per year to panel activities. The TAP continues to make a difference in the U.S. tax system, and new members have a unique opportunity to join this dynamic group.

To the extent possible, TAP members are selected in part to achieve demographic and geographic diversity, providing balanced representation from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, with an additional member representing the interests of taxpayers working, living or doing business abroad.

Who can apply?

Federal advisory committees are required to have a balanced representation of different viewpoints. Therefore, applicants from under-represented groups, such as Native Americans and non-tax professionals, are particularly encouraged to apply.

The TAP is currently seeking candidates in the following states and territories: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming. However, candidates residing in all locations are encouraged to apply, and all timely applications will be considered.

TAP members must be U.S. citizens who are current with their federal tax

obligations and able to commit 200 to 300 volunteer hours during the year. TAP members must also pass a Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal background check. Members cannot be federally registered lobbyists or current employees of the Department of the Treasury or the IRS. Former Treasury or IRS employees and former TAP members can be considered for appointment three years after their employment or previous TAP membership has ended. Tax practitioner applicants must be in good standing with the IRS (meaning not currently under suspension or disbarment).

New TAP members will serve a three-year term starting in Dec. 2023. Applicants chosen as alternate members will be considered to fill any vacancies in their areas during the next three years. Applications must be submitted by March 31, 2023, to be considered. Visit USAJobs for more details about how to apply to become a TAP member.

More about the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

The TAP is a federal advisory committee that serves an important role in tax administration. TAP members are a diverse group of citizens who possess a sense of civic duty, patriotism and belief in an effective and well-regarded tax system.

TAP members volunteer their time and energy to improve IRS services and taxpayer satisfaction by listening to taxpayers, identifying issues and making recommendations to improve IRS service and customer satisfaction.

Oversight and program support for the TAP are provided by the Taxpayer Advocate Service, an independent organization within the IRS led by the National Taxpayer Advocate.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

2023 IRS Nationwide Tax Forums to be held in five cities

TAX PROS MAY REGISTER NOW TO EARN CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS



MARCH 2, 2023

WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP): Registration for this summer's 2023 IRS Nationwide Tax Forums is now open. The forums return to an in-person format in five cities across the nation for the first time since 2019.

Held for more than 30 years, the IRS Nationwide Tax

Forums are the IRS's marquee outreach event to the tax professional community. Each of the five IRS Nationwide Tax Forums is a three-day event with more than 40 seminars and workshops on a wide variety of federal and state tax issues presented by experts from the IRS and partner organizations from the tax community.

2023 Nationwide Tax Forums:

City	Forum Dates
New Orleans, La.	July 11 - 13
Atlanta, Ga.	July 25 - 27
National Harbor, Md. (Washington, D.C., area)	August 8 - 10
San Diego, Calif.	August 22 - 24
Orlando, Fla.	August 29 - 31

The IRS Nationwide Tax Forums are designed specifically for tax professionals -- enrolled agents, certified public accountants, certified financial planners and Annual Filing Season Program participants -- as well as uncredentialed tax professionals. Attendees may earn up to 18 continuing education credits.

In addition to continuing professional education, attendees get access to the popular Case Resolution Program as well as dozens of exhibitors in the forum expo hall. Participants can also participate in focus groups and network with colleagues.

Tax professionals can register now at www.irstaxforum.com.

"FIA - Chicago Hosts its Spectacular 6th Indian Heritage Night along with the Windy City Bulls at NOW Arena"

HOFFMAN STATES, IL (TIP): The Indian-American community organization Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of Chicago, celebrated Indian Heritage Night for the 6th consecutive year, at the NOW Arena where the Windy City Bulls - the official NBA G League affiliates of the Chicago Bulls, took on the Raptors 905, a Canadian Basketball Team.

Chairman & Founder President FIA Sunil Shah, along with the FIA President Vinita Gulabani, and Founder & Past President Onkar Singh Sangha, presided over the Indian Heritage Night celebrations. The event began with the beautiful rendition of Jana Gana Mana, the Indian National anthem, by Saanika Sahu, Nishika Dubey, Samaira Sameer Bongale and Rishi Kanchi, while Chairman Shah, President Gulabani, Founding Member Neil Khot, Past President Hitesh Gandhi, Vice President Richa Chand & Vice President Altaf Bukhari stood in attention to pay regards to motherland India. This was a great honor since India is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava as 75 years of Independence. The American and Canadian National anthems were sung immediately followed by the Indian National anthem.

Chairman Shah & President Gulabani along with Team FIA was also presented a Certificate of Appreciation for celebrating 6 years of Indian Heritage Night. "This was a real honor for the Federation of Indian Associations," Sunil Shah said. Vinita Gulabani praised the cultural program participants, and all the friends and family that came to support the Indian Heritage Night. She said, "Seeing the beautiful showcase of our dance and music at the prestigious NOW Arena makes me and every Indian immensely proud of our rich Indian



FIA Leadership Team Sunil Shah, Founder President and Chairman and Vinita Gulabani, President being presented Certificate of Appreciation by the Windy City Bulls

Heritage and I hope the future generations will continue the tradition!"

Besides a very exciting game between the competing teams, and the Windy City Bulls finally winning in the end, the highlight of the evening was the exquisite dance performances arranged under the auspices of the FIA Vice President Richa Chand, showcasing the Indian Dance forms, during the quarter breaks and the half time that enthralled the audience.

There was a beautiful dance performance, presented by Team IACA Dancing Divas on a Bollywood song medley called, "Sauda Khara Khara", which means, it's a good deal to have a good time, a good life, a good life partner. Participants were: Ria Raj, Nysa Ranjan, Ridhima Bembey, Simran Kaur, Sriya Konchada.

The spectacular & scintillating Halftime Show special performance, by "Nriya Vijeta" from CDV (Chicago Dance Varsity) Studio made all the audience go crazy with their sensational Bollywood Dance fusion mix with a bit of "Garbha" style.. Participants were: Urvi Chitrapu,

Lasses Gadiraju, Saanvi Gubba, Pragati, Samiksha Joshi, Puja Shah, Pavithra Shankar, Malvika Sinha, Rupal Sinha, Dolly.

Another Dance performance by CDV, the "Flying Colors" during the second quarter break, presented by the little darlings dressed in the red sequin outfits stole everyone's hearts with their energetic freestyle performance on Bollywood's Ole O Mukkala Muqabala Dance number. Participants were: Agalya Saminathan, Mahi Jain, Suriya Soni, Ridhima Singh, Gracy Singh, Ahana Charanpahari, Aadhya, Riva Rithesh.

When asked about her experience, Dr Puja Joshi, owner and lead choreographer at CDV (Chicago Dance Varsity) Studio, expressed delight and said, "It was pure joy to watch her students perform for the second year in a row at FIA's Indian Heritage Night with Windy City Bulls at NOW Arena!" She thanked FIA for creating this unique opportunity for her students to showcase their dance skills to the Windy City Bulls audience.

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to all the performers by Chairman Shah & President Gulabani. The Event Coordination activities for Indian Heritage Night were led by Vice President Richa Chand, along with Gen Secretary Abir Maru. Treasurer Vaishal Talati and Directors Nilabh Dubey, Neela Patel & Hemendra Shah also assisted. Other FIA members who supported the event were, Advisory Board Member & IABC President - Ajeet Singh, INDIACO Owner - Chintan Patel, Aarush CEO - Manoj Rathod and Owner India Foodie Lounge -Yagnesh Patel. FIA also thanks Nathan Rodriguez, the Windy City Bulls Event coordinator for all his assistance and help during the event.

Also enjoyable was a fun zone with Windy City Bulls obstacle course and basketball hoops, one of the main attractions in the arena. Live mascots of Gus T. Bulls entertained the cheering crowds. The "Catch the t-shirt" act further energized attendees. Last but not the least; FIA greatly appreciates all its Team members, sponsors, supporters and Media Partners for their continued support. Special thanks to FIA Director; Yagnesh Patel, Owner India Foodie Lounge, Bartlett, IL for hosting Dinner and Holi Prep meeting after the Indian Heritage Night's successful conclusion and Team FIA is very thankful to them for their warm hospitality.

FIA Chicago is a 501 (c)(3) status, non-profit umbrella organization of other Indian Associations in the Chicago land and Midwest representing in excess of 300,000 culturally diverse but united Asian-Indians. FIA has been actively engaged in serving the Indian American community for the past 10 years and has been instrumental in promoting Indian culture.

(Photographs/ Asian Media USA & Press release / Abir Maru and Richa Chand)

Indo American Association - Houston presents the Grammy Nominated Berklee Indian Ensemble

MARCH 2, 2023

HOUSTON (TIP): The Berklee Indian Ensemble is bringing its genre-bending sound to Houston for the first time ever! Fresh off the release of their GRAMMY nominated debut album, Shuruaat, the Ensemble is on the road with a slate of originals, new arrangements, songs from the album, and, of course, audience favorite classics. Join some of the Ensemble's most recognizable faces for an evening of joy, celebration, laughs, and of course, incredible music.

The Ensemble was founded in 2011 by Annette Philip, the first Indian music faculty member at the Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA). It is a world renowned collective known for honoring its Indian roots while boldly experimenting with a cross-pollination of genres, and multi-disciplinary art. The ensemble boasts over 300 million YouTube views and has organically transitioned from a university ensemble to a professional band.

Featuring over 400 students and alumni from 52 nations, the ensemble has collaborated with some of the world's most celebrated musicians such as Pt. Zakir Hussain and A.R. Rahman.



Berklee Indian Ensemble

In a world that is highly divided, Philip sees the band's

function as one of building bridges; a free-wheeling approach to musical cultures that prioritizes the people who make them, rather than the restrictions of genre or form. "There is a unique power when musicians from different cultural and musical backgrounds make art together with vulnerability and openness in a space that celebrates their similarities and differences....The music that gets created in this space comes across viscerally and allows a song in a foreign language to feel completely relatable because of the human connection, making you want to be part of it."

The Indo-American Association of Houston (IAA) is the area's longest running nonprofit arts organization with a mission to preserve and promote the performing arts of the Indian subcontinent. Now in its 30th season, it provides a platform for world-renowned artists as well as emerging artists in venues such as the Wortham Center, Brown Auditorium, Hobby Centre, MATCH, Asia Society and Stafford Civic Center. Over the years, IAA has built a reputation of fostering the appreciation of performing arts within the diverse Houston community.



CJI turns down plea for urgent listing of Hijab row cases

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud on Friday turned down a plea for an immediate listing of pleas seeking a directive to government institutions in Karnataka to allow students to appear for examinations wearing the hijab.

"I will list it immediately after the Holi vacation. I will create a bench," the CJI told a lawyer, who mentioned the matter. The Supreme Court closes for the Holi break on March 6 and will reopen on March 13.

The lawyer pointed out that the exams are starting on March 9. "What can I do if you come on the last day?" the CJI asked the lawyer, who responded by saying the requests for a hearing were mentioned twice over the last two months. "I will form a bench. I will list the matter," the CJI reiterated. But the lawyer asked: "What about the exams?" "I can't answer your questions," retorted the CJI. On February 22, the CJI said he would "take a call" soon on setting up a three-judge bench to take up the matter in view of a split verdict of the two judges of the previous bench in October 2022 after a group of students from Karnataka mentioned a similar plea. Another plea for listing the matter was made on January 23.

The pleas have pointed out that the exams are commencing from March 9 but those wearing hijab would not be allowed inside the examination centres due to the state government's ban on the headscarves in state-run institutions.

Source: HT

BJP and allies retain power in Tripura, Nagaland; hung verdict in Meghalaya

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies retained power in Tripura and Nagaland, while in Meghalaya, the National People's Party (NPP) emerged as the single largest party. The results show that voters in these northeastern States largely rejected calls for a change.

The polls in each of the three States were seen as a litmus test for the BJP with the 2024 Lok Sabha election just a year away.

The BJP and its regional ally, the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura, won 33 seats — 11 fewer than in 2018 but two more than the majority mark. The TIPRA Motha, which banked primarily on the 'Tiprasa' (tribal) people who dominate 20 of the 60 Assembly seats, lived up to the expectations by winning 13 of the 42 seats it contested.

The outcome was a setback for the Left Front, which saw its seat count dip to 11 from 16 five years ago. But the Congress gained from a seat-sharing agreement with the Left Front, winning three of the 13 seats it contested. The grand old party drew a blank in 2018.

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha attributed the party's victory to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J.P. Nadda's leadership besides the legwork of its grassroots workers.

"We shall continue with the good work initiated in 2018 and take Tripura forward," he said.

State BJP leaders said the victory underlined Mr. Saha's role as the saviour of the party's image after his predecessor Biplab Kumar Deb, who often courted controversies. Mr. Saha, a soft-spoken dental surgeon, replaced Mr. Deb as the Chief Minister nine months ahead of the



Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha is garlanded by BJP supporters in Agartala on March 2, 2023. | Photo Credit: PTI

elections.

Pradyot Bikram Manikya Debbarma, the chairman of Tipra Motha, said his party did well to emerge as the second largest within two years of its birth. "One has to acknowledge the discontent among the tribal people in Tripura," he said. One of the factors that helped the BJP win is believed to be the consolidation of the non-tribal voters wary of the Greater Tipraland demand of the Tipra Motha. Non-tribals dominate 40 seats in the State.

The BJP and its dominant regional ally, the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), had it fairly easy in Nagaland, a State virtually without any Opposition for a long time.

While the BJP maintained its 2018 seat count with 12 seats in the 60-member Assembly, the NDPP increased its tally to 25 from 17 in five years. Six other parties and Independents bagged the remaining

23 seats.

The other parties include the Republican Party of India (Athawale) and the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), which won two seats each. These parties are associated with the BJP at the national level.

The Congress, once a formidable force, failed to open its account for the second successive time, while the Naga People's Front managed only two seats, 24 fewer than in 2018.

Mandate 2023 in Nagaland proved to be historic with two women — NDPP's Hekani Jakhalu and Salhoutuonuo Kruse — becoming the first to be elected to the State Assembly.

"The people have reposed their faith in us once again. Our responsibility to address some key issues has increased," Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio.

Source: The Hindu

Sisodia, Satyendar Jain arrested as PM wants to stop good work being done in Delhi: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday, March 2, accused the BJP of attempting to sabotage his government's work in education and health sectors through the arrest of Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain and asserted that AAP leaders Atishi and Saurabh Bhardwaj who will be inducted into his Cabinet will perform with double the speed.

"If Manish Sisodia joins BJP today, won't he be released tomorrow," Kejriwal said and targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his first remarks after Sisodia and Jain who have been arrested on charges of corruption resigned from the cabinet.

The people who brought laurels for the



country from across the world were put behind bars by Prime Minister Modi, the AAP supremo alleged.

The chief minister claimed that there is no scam in excise policy and it is an

excuse to stall the good work being done in the national capital.

"But, I assure the people of Delhi that this will not happen. The Aam Aadmi Party is a storm. We will be unstoppable and our time has come," Kejriwal said.

Meanwhile, the BJP and Congress held protests, demanding that Kejriwal step down as chief minister.

The opposition BJP had been demanding the resignation of Jain after his arrest in May last year by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

Sisodia too faced the heat after his name cropped up in the excise policy scam in August 2022. He was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Sunday in connection with alleged corruption in the formulation

and implementation of the now-scrapped liquor policy for 2021-22.

The Aam Aadmi Party said it will launch a door-to-door campaign from March 5 under which all MLAs will apprise people about the "false cases" registered against Sisodia and Jain. The decision was taken at a meeting called by Kejriwal with AAP MLAs and councillors.

Earlier in the day, Kejriwal recommended the names of party MLAs Atishi and Saurabh Bhardwaj to Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena for their appointment to the Cabinet.

Atishi, a key member of Sisodia's education team, will become the first woman minister in the Kejriwal government. She represents the Kalkaji constituency.

Source: PTI

3 walk free in Hathras rape and murder

A court in Hathras has found only one of the four accused in the Hathras brutalisation and death of a Dalit girl guilty and exonerated the others, who have been in jail since September 2020, ruling out rape and murder.

The SC/ST court handed life imprisonment to Sandeep Singh Thakur for culpable homicide not amounting to murder and violating the SC/ST (Atrocities) Act. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on him. However, Ravi Singh, Ramu Singh and Luvkush Singh were exonerated.

Mahipal Singh Nimhotra, a counsel for the girl's family, said: "The court was not convinced that the victim was gang-raped and killed intentionally. We are going to appeal in the high court for a fresh hearing of the case."

The CBI had submitted its first chargesheet in December 2020 mentioning that the teen had been gang-raped and murdered by the four upper caste men. The family of the girl had accused Uttar Pradesh police of forcibly cremating the body in an agricultural field against the wishes of her parents.

Seema Kushwaha, another counsel for the girl's family, said: "We are not satisfied with the order of the SC/ST court as there is enough evidence to prove that all the four accused were involved in the crime. We will move the high court."

"The government had announced a compensation of Rs 25 lakh and a job for a member of the family, but the promises were not fulfilled. The family is still living in fear and has to be given security by the Central Reserve Police Force," Kushwaha added.

Karnataka BJP MLA's son caught taking bribe; Lokayukta raids house, recovers Rs 6 crore

The anti-corruption wing of Lokayukta on Friday raided the residence of BJP MLA Maadal Virupakshappa's son Prashant Maadal and recovered Rs 6 crore in cash.

Earlier on March 2, Karnataka Lokayukta officers caught Virupakshappa's son while taking a bribe of Rs 40 lakh.

"The anti-corruption branch of Lokayukta yesterday caught Prashanth Maadal, son of BJP MLA Maadal Virupakshappa, while taking a bribe of Rs 40 lakh. Over Rs 1.7 crore in cash was recovered from his office," the Karnataka Lokayukta said.

The Lokayukta was on duty after getting a complaint about the demand for a bribe. According to the Lokayukta, more than Rs 1.7 crore in cash was found at Prashanth Madal's office.

Virupakshappa's son Prashant is a chief accountant at Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

Further investigation is under way, officials said. *Source: ANI*

Quad to sharpen focus on counter-terrorism, soft-peddles Ukraine conflict

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Quad grouping of India, the US, Japan and Australia has decided to sharpen focus on counter-terrorism even as a joint statement avoided mentioning Russia and took no stand on the Ukraine conflict though it condemned North Korea's ballistic missile launches.

On its main remit of the Indo-Pacific maritime domain, a meeting of Quad Foreign Ministers here on Thursday issued a joint statement that "strongly" opposes any unilateral actions to change the status quo or increase tensions in South and East China Seas. It also expressed "serious concern" at the militarisation of disputed features, the dangerous use of coast guard vessels and maritime militia, and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities.

In a broadside at Pakistan, the joint statement denounced the use of terrorist proxies and committed to promote accountability for terrorist attacks including 26/11 Mumbai, "which claimed lives of citizens from all Quad countries".

At the Raisina Dialogue shortly after their Quad meeting, Foreign Ministers S Jaishankar, Penny Wong, Anthony Blinken and Hayashi Yoshimasa were unanimous in stating that the Quad is not a military grouping. Their disclaimer came weeks before all the four will participate in their fourth successive joint naval exercise, this time off the Australian coast for the first time. A meeting of the Quad Maritime Security Working Group will also be hosted by the US this month.

The same line-up of Quad Foreign



The foreign ministers before the Quad meeting. PTI

Ministers which had met last September in New York, reiterated their backing for reforms of the UN Security Council and support for the general principles of freedom, rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes without resorting to threat or use of force.

It noted that terrorism has become increasingly diffuse and adapted to technologies such as drones and the internet to commit and finance terrorist acts. Discussions at the Quad Counter-Terrorism Policy Meeting and tabletop exercise in Australia has led to the establishment of the Quad Working Group on Counter-Terrorism which will hold its first meeting in the US this year.

It will have an open architecture and will also explore cooperation with

Indo-Pacific partners with the purpose of countering new and emerging forms of terrorism, radicalisation to violence and violent extremism. The Quad also took a step forward in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance with the first tabletop exercise held here. The next step is to finalise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for a coordinated response mechanism.

With India and Japan acting as the brakes, the Quad did not condemn the Myanmar junta but sought an end to violence and detentions.

On Ukraine, the joint statement said they "continued to discuss our responses to the conflict in Ukraine and the immense human suffering it is causing, and concurred that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible". *Source: TNS*

Row over Rahul's Pegasus claim; BJP calls him 'serial offender'

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A fresh row began over Rahul Gandhi's speech at Cambridge University where he tore into the BJP government and PM Modi as he said Indian democracy is under attack. The lecture was delivered on March 1 but the full video of the speech was uploaded on March 3 following which BJP leaders condemned the Congress MP.

As Rahul Gandhi spoke about his recent Bharat Jodo Yatra, he said the opposition leaders in India are under surveillance. PM Modi is destroying the architecture of India and imposing an idea on India that the country can't absorb. "I am not bothered about the two, three good things that he is doing if he is blowing my country into smithereens and that's what he is



doing," Rahul Gandhi said when he was asked to list out a few policies of the government that he thinks are good.

Recalling the Supreme Court verdict

on Pegasus, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said even after SC verdict, the "entitled dynast" peddles lies on it. "The entitled dynast is a serial offender -- his hatred for one person transcends into hatred for the country time and again...Ironically, his daadi imposed Emergency and he preaches about democracy! What more can one say!" Shehzad said.

"After the spectacular no show of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, where Congress has been consigned to irrelevance in 3 states with a minority & tribal population, you have the immature dynast making the same ramblings & rantings that have been rejected by courts & court of public opinion!" the BJP spokesperson said. *Source: HT*

India in history this Week

MARCH 3, 2023, TO MARCH 9, 2023

03 MARCH

1885 The Indian Appropriation Rule was implemented by the Congress Party on this day in 1885.

1930 The movement started by Harijans to enter the Kala Rama Temple.

1931 Delhi Pact was signed by Mahatma Gandhi and Viceroy Irving.

1967 The International Space Treaty was signed by India in Moscow.

1993 Sharad Pawar was elected as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra.



1839 World famous businessman (Jamsetji Tata) was born.

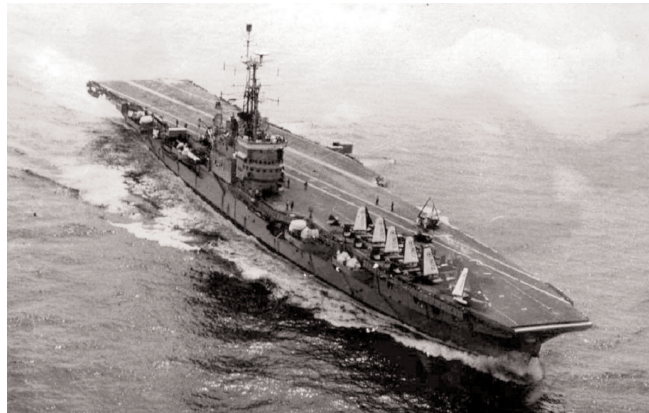
04 MARCH

1879 Bethune College of Calcutta was established in 1879.

1906 Hakim Abdul Majeed started the Hamdard dispensary in Delhi in 1906.

1924 In 1924, Shyam Lal Gupta composed the song Raising the Flag.

1951 Eleven countries participated in the first Asian Games in Delhi in 1951.



1961 In 1961 I.N.S. Vikrant was brought to Belfast.

05 MARCH

1931 Mahatma Gandhi ended the Civil Disobedience Movement.



1905 Sushila Didi, a freedom fighter who was instrumental in the revolutionary activities of Bhagat Singh, was born in Punjab.

2010 GP, one of the famous entrepreneurs of India. Birla died.

1783 Establishment of Geological Survey of India.

2009 Indian industrialist Vijay Mallya bought Bapu's legacy for Rs 18 lakhs

1949 The Jharkhand Party was founded in India in 1949.

1990 The government announced an interim relief of Rs 360 crore for the five lakh victims of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy.

2002 The Commonwealth Summit was held in 2002.



2008 India successfully test-fired the BrahMos missile from the sea into the ground.

2009 IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative Limited) became the first company in the world to make annual sales of 10 million tonnes of fertilizer in 2009.

06 MARCH

1915 Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore had their first meeting in Shantiniketan in 1915.

1947 The Economic Times started editing from Bombay.

1962 The great revolutionary Ambika Chokrovarti died in 1962.



1971 Sunil Gavaskar started his Test career in 1971.

1990 India won the Indira Gandhi Gold Cup hockey tournament.

1991 Chandrasekhar resigned as Prime Minister in 1991.

2000 India and China first spoke in Beijing on the security issue.

07 MARCH

1956 A huge steel tube plant was opened in Jamshedpur on this day in 1956.

1987 Sunil Gavaskar made history. Please tell that on this day, he scored 10,000 runs in a Test match.

1994 India and Iraq signed three Memorandum of Understanding in Tehran.



1998 Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was given the leadership of BJP's MP Party.

1835 Proposal was made to promote the propagation of European literature and science in India.

1985 The first antibody test for AIDS, the ELISA-type test, was started.

2007 Pakistan and India prepared in 2007 to help investigate terrorism.

1961 Renowned freedom fighter and senior leader Govind Ballabh Pant died in 1961.

08 MARCH

1909 International Women's Day is started to celebrate.

1948 Air India International was established.

1535 Bahadur Shah found Fateh at Chittor Fort.



1673 Chhatrapati Shivaji burst upon the fort of Panhala.

1930 Mahatma Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement.

1986 BJP leader Advani was elected party president.

1998 Indian Airlines flew with all women crew members.

1833 Journalist Vishwanath Narayan was born.

09 MARCH



1951 Famous tabla player Zakir Hussain is born.

2007 Indian doctors in Britain get legal success on discriminatory migrant rules.

1999 Indian-based, British-based industrialist Swaraj Paul was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Central Birmingham in 1999.



Suromurchhana Inc
&
Kolkata Sitar School
present



Vocal & Sitar Jugalbandi



Sanjoy Banerjee

(Vocal)

Indro Roy Chowdhury

(Sitar)

Accompaniment



Amit Chatterjee (Tabla)

Shankh Lahiri (Tabla)

Andrew Shantz (Harmonium)

Saturday, 11th March 2023 @ 6pm.

Romanti Auditorium, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
305 7th Avenue, 17th Floor, New York

Tickets \$20 & \$50

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Promotional partner:



Holi - The Festival of Colors

Just as Diwali is a festival of lights, Holi is a festival of colors. Holi this year falls on March 8

Holi is the festival of colors. The festival signifies the arrival of spring and the end of winter. In India, this is the last full moon of the year and 15 days after this full moon is the New Year in India. So before that last full moon, the tradition is to just take all the old stuff and put it in the fire and play Holi with colors.

There are many stories associated with Holi - of it being a beautiful full moon day, of welcoming spring, and of Krishna dancing with all the Gopis (devotees of Lord Krishna) while playing Holi.

Holi is a festival when we break all the barriers and feel a sense of oneness with everyone. This is the message of this vibrant festival. As we apply colors on one another and wish each one the very best: "Let your life be colorful."

If you leave a group of kids in a room that come from many different backgrounds (rich, poor, intelligent, not-so-intelligent), do you know how they'll play? They will play without finding any distinction between themselves. Similarly, Holi is one such festival that unites people of diverse backgrounds and professions.

Society divides people - sometimes on the basis of profession, gender, age groups. Holi is the time when we break all these barriers of gender, nationality, race, and religion. From the elderly to the young! You hug everybody and put colors on them. It's a unifying celebration.

The essence of Holi

There are different colors associated with our feelings and emotions. For instance:

- Red - anger
- Green - jealousy
- Yellow - vibrancy and happiness
- Pink - love
- Blue - vastness
- White - peace
- Saffron - sacrifice
- Violet - knowledge

Each person is a fountain of colors that keeps changing its hues. If your life is like Holi, where each color is seen clearly, then that adds charm to your life. Harmony in diversity makes life vibrant, joyful, and more colorful.

Like Holi, life should be colorful, not boring. When each color is seen clearly, it is vibrant. When all the colors get mixed, you end up with black.

Similarly, in our day-to-day lives, we play different roles. Each role and emotion needs to be clearly defined. Emotional confusion creates problems. When you are a father, you have to play the part of a father. You can't be a father at the workplace. When you mix roles in your life, you start making mistakes. Whatever role you play in life, give yourself fully to it.

In ignorance, emotions are a bother; in



knowledge, the same emotions add color. Tell yourself that you will do justice to all the roles you play. You can play all the roles: a good spouse, good child, good parent, and a good citizen. Assume that you have all these qualities in you. Just let them blossom

History of Holi

Holi is an ancient festival of India and was originally known as 'Holika'. The festivals finds a detailed description in early religious works such as Jaimini's Purvamimamsa-Sutras and Kathaka-Grhya-Sutras. Historians also believe that Holi was celebrated by all Aryans but more so in the Eastern part of India. It is said that Holi existed several centuries before Christ. However, the meaning of the festival is believed to have changed over the years. Earlier it was a special rite performed by married women for the happiness and well-being of their families and the full moon (Raka) was worshiped.

Holika Dahan

There are numerous mythological explanations that are described in the historical books regarding the death of Holika and its reference for the celebration of Holi. In accordance to those historical explanations

Holika was booned by Brahma for not getting any harm from fire or never getting burnt in fire. Following the

order of his Brother Hiranyakashyap



(who was also the father of Prahlad) Holika sat on fire with Prahlad in order to burn him in fire and let to death. It was Prahlad's prayers to Lord Vishnu that saved him from burning in fire. It was the protective shawl of Holika that flew to cover Prahlad's body from Holika who was having it. This is the story behind the celebration of Holika Dahan that is still followed by the people of India.

Legend of Holika and Prahlad

There was once a demon king by the name of Hiranyakashyap who won over the kingdom of earth. He was so egoistic that he commanded everybody in his kingdom to worship only him. But to his great disappointment, his son, Prahlad became an ardent devotee of Lord Naarayana and refused to worship his father.

Hiranyakashyap tried several ways to

kill his son Prahlad but Lord Vishnu saved him every time. Finally, he asked his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap. For, Hiranyakashyap knew that Holika had a boon, whereby, she could enter the fire unscathed.

Treacherously, Holika coaxed young Prahlad to sit in her lap and she herself took her seat in a blazing fire. The legend has it that Holika had to pay the price of her sinister desire by her life. Holika was not aware that the boon worked only when she entered the fire alone.

Prahlad, who kept chanting the name of Lord Naarayana all this while, came out unharmed, as the lord blessed him for his extreme devotion. Thus, Holi derives its name from Holika. And, is celebrated as a festival of victory of good over evil.

Holi is also celebrated as the triumph of a devotee. As the legend depicts that anybody, howsoever strong, cannot harm

a true devotee. And, those who dare torture a true devotee of god shall be reduced to ashes.

The Legend of Radha-Krishna

Young Krishna is known to be very playful and mischievous. The story goes that as a child, Krishna was extremely jealous of Radha's fair complexion since he himself was very dark.

One day, Krishna complained to his mother Yashoda about the injustice of nature which made Radha so fair and he so dark. To pacify the crying young Krishna, the doting mother asked him to go and colour Radha's face in whichever colour he wanted.

In a mischievous mood, naughty Krishna heeded the advice of mother Yashoda and applied colour on her beloved Radha's face; Making her one like himself.

Well, there is also a legend to explain Krishna's dark complexion. It so happened that once a demon attempted to kill infant Krishna by giving him poisoned milk. Because of which Krishna turned blue. But Krishna did not die and the demon shriveled up into ashes.

The Legend of Dhundhi

It is believed that there was once an Ogress called Dhundhi in the kingdom of Prithu (or Raghu). The female monster used to specially trouble little children who became fed-up of her. Dhundhi, had a boon from Lord Shiva that she would not be killed by gods, men nor suffer from arms nor from heat, cold or rain. These boons which made her almost invincible but she also had a weak point. She was also cursed by Lord Shiva that she would be in danger from boys going about crazy.

Deeply troubled by the Ogress, the King of Raghu consulted his priest. Giving the solution, the priest said that on Phalgun 15, the season of cold vanishes and summer starts. Boys with bits of wood in their hands may go out of their house, collect a heap of wood and grass, set it on fire with mantras, clap their hands, go around the fire thrice, laugh, sing and by their noise, laughter and homa, the ogress would die.

The legend has it that on the day of Holi, village boys displayed their united might and chased Dhundhi away by a blitzkrieg of shouts, abuses and pranks. It is for this reason that young boys are allowed to use rude words on the day of Holi without anybody taking offence. Children also take great pleasure in burning Holika.

Different Types Of Holi Celebrations In India

Lathmaar Holi

In what is known as the hub of holi in India - Barsana, Holi is known as Lathmaar Holi. Sounds violence?? There is more violence than the name signals off. The stick is in the hands of the women on this day and the men need to work a lot to save themselves from the immensely charged up womenfolk.

The birth place of Lord Krishna's beloved Radha, Barsana celebrates Holi with extreme enthusiasm as Krishna was famous for playing pranks on Radha and gopis. In fact, it was Krishna who started the tradition of colours by first applying colour on Radha's face.

Womenfolk, of Barsana it seems, after thousands of centuries want to take a sweet revenge of that prank of Krishna. Even men have not left their mischief and are still eager to apply colour on the women of Barsana.



Following the tradition, men of Nandgaon, the birthplace of Krishna, come to play Holi with the girls of Barsana, but instead of colours they are greeted with sticks.

Completely aware of what welcome awaits them in Barsana, men come fully padded and try their best to escape from the spirited women. Men are not supposed to retaliate on the day. The unlucky ones are forcefully led away and get a good thrashing from the women. Further, they are made to wear a female attire and dance in public. All in the spirit of Holi.

The next day, it is the turn of men of Barsana. They reciprocate by invading Nandgaon and drench the womenfolk of Nandgaon in colours of kesudo, naturally occurring orange-red dye and palash. This day, women of Nadagow beat the invaders from Barsana. It is a colorful site.

Dhulandi Holi in Haryana

Celebrated magnanimously in the state of Haryana, Dhulandi is a celebration of the bond between Bhabhi (sister-in-law) and Devar (brother-in-law). This relationship of playing pranks and annoying each other is literally like the bond between partners in crime. On this special day, Bhabhis get an advantage to drag their Devars in mock rage. This is how they payback for the gags they play. Besides, smearing colors and splashing water is a ritual, the real essence of Holi lies in bringing colors and joy in otherwise mundane life.

Phoolon Ki Holi in Vrindavan

Celebrated on the Ekadashi in the Holi week, Phoolon ki Holi is played with petals of fresh flowers in Banke Bihari temple, Vrindavan with great fervor by the Krishna disciples. The exquisiteness lies in the ambiance that's filled with

fragrance and flowers, the scenic vista takes you to a different world. Unlike, usual Holi festival which is played with colors and water, Phoolon ki Holi is more about connecting with God of love and joy by showering him with flowers. Not too lengthy, a 15-minute affair is enough to take you in a trance.

Rangpanchami in Maharashtra

Out of the myriad ways of playing Holi, Rangpanchami celebrated in Maharashtra is yet another exquisite style. Celebrated on the 5th day preceding Phalgun Purnima, the fun seems ceaseless. Lord Krishna with his notorious comrades used to steal butter from the neighborhood and to keep the butter safe from these butter-thieves, women used to hide it in the highest chambers in the houses. Dated from that time, the tradition is followed in Mumbai and many cities of Maharashtra in the name of Krishna Leela. To relive the antics, every year pandals are set to break pots. The pots are hung on the great height and boys in huge numbers form pyramids. Trained boys climb up onto them while women deter them from reaching to the pot by splashing

water and colors. The sight of this ceaseless battle brings verve and joy to the clocked-up life in big cities.

Royal Holi in Jaipur

The land that is already famous as Pink city is a delight to watch on the auspicious day of Holi as it is soaked in multiple hues,

unrestricted to pink. The royals of the City Palace in Jaipur organize a grand ceremony in their condominium every year. This blazes up the excitement of Holi amongst the local folks and the foreign tourists. Every year, Jaipur is hoarded with huge footfall during this festival as it is the time when people get to smear the royal family with colors. The frolicsome grand celebration of the Holi Festival in Jaipur etches the indelible memories in the hearts of the visitors.

Basant Utsav in West Bengal

The day marked as the birth anniversary of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Holi has this special significance in West Bengal. The land of writers and scholars celebrates the festival of colors with songs, dance, and chanting hymns in the University at Shantiniketan, Kolkata which was founded by the legend Rabindra Nath Tagore. Unlike the rambunctious Holi celebration all over India, here it is subdued and restrained but the essence of festivity is fine-tuned. No wonder if you dread the rowdiness, Holi in Bengal can be an option for a moderate and graceful way of celebrating Holi.

Hola Mohalla in Anandpur, Punjab

Lionized by Sikh Guru Gobind Singh, Hola Mohalla is a festival that is out of the ordinary and celebrated one day after Holi. Giving tribute to the mettle and valor of the Sikh men, it is celebrated as an event that exhibits martial arts, stunts, and mock fights followed by the usual tradition of playing with colors in the evening. There is a massive arrangement for langar (food) that is served in the Gurudwara all throughout the day. A one-day fun and frolic affair is held in open ground at a ford across the creek Charan Ganga, Hola Mohalla is the biggest festival of Anandpur Sahib, Punjab.

Phalgun Purnima in Bihar

The harbinger of the spring season, Holi in Bihar is celebrated to mark good harvests and fertility of the land besides the significance of the mythological tale of Prahlad winning over Holika. On the eve of Phalgun Purnima, bonfires are lit by putting cow dung cakes, grains from the fresh harvest, and wood of the Holika tree. Holi is marked as the beginning of the new year in Bihar therefore people clean their houses to bring positivity and prosperity to their life. Apart from smearing colors, folks in Bihar also use mud, the air fills with high pitch folk songs sung to the tune of the dholak. Folks indulge in consuming intoxicating bhang to brighten up the mood during this festival. They sing, dance, laugh, and enjoy the true spirit of the festival.



Hola Mohalla- the Sikh festival of display of martial prowess

Hola Mohalla is all about exploring the essence of Punjabi culture. Hola Mohalla this year falls on March 8

Falling on the second day of the month of Chet, which usually comes in March as per the Gregorian calendar, Hola Mohalla is all about exploring the essence of Punjabi culture.

Organized at a grand scale in Anandpur Sahib in Punjab, this festival takes people on a fun-packed ride of heritage, glorifying the Sikh Culture.

Mohalla is a word that is usually used to describe a cheerful procession. And Hola Mohalla primarily implies to be a form of an army column that is accompanied by the war drums, standard-bearers, and much pomp and show.

Hola Mohalla was first organized by the tenth guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. It is believed that the main purpose of organizing this festival was to fundamentally strengthen the Sikh Community with fair use of military exercises and mock battles.

Daredevil acts like bareback horse-riding by the warriors, standing upright simultaneously on two speeding horses to even tent pegging are a few common acts on display during this Indian festival.

Hola Mohalla truly depicts the bravado of Sikh men through mock fighting of the Sikh warriors, which they have showcased in the battlefields over history.

Meaning of "Hola Mohalla"

The word "Hola" is a masculine form of feminine sounding "Holi" and is more likely to have evolved from word "halla" which implies a military charge. "Mohalla" is derived from an Arabic word mahalla, implying a colony, in this case an army procession. Thus, when combined together, the words "Hola Mohalla" mean "the charge of an army."



When is Hola Mohalla Celebrated?

The dates of Hola Mohalla celebrations are based on the traditional lunar calendar of Sikhism, known as "Nanakshahi calendar". The festival commences on the second day of Chett month, which is also the first month of Nanakshahi calendar.

The festival of Hola Mohalla usually coincides or differs by a day with holi

celebrations in the Gregorian calendar month of March. Holi is celebrated in the Phalgun month of Hindu calendar and the celebration falls on the first day of lunar month Chett.

Hola Mohalla History

The festival of Hola Mohalla was founded by the 10th Guru of Sikhism – Guru Gobind Singh. The history of Hola

Mohalla dates back to 1699, when Guru Gobind Singh formed the Khalsa Panth, which is a warrior community of Sikhs. Khalsa was formed by the Guru to wage war against the atrocities and conversion philosophy of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

The legend has it that in 1699 Guru Gobind Singh asked the sikhs to gather at Anandpur on the day of Vaisakhi, an



annual spring harvest festival celebrated in Punjab. It was on this day that the Guru appointed "Panj Pyares" and called them as the first Khalsa in Sikh traditions.

Subsequently, in the following year of 1701 on 7th March, Guru Gobind Singh initiated a new tradition of mock battles and poetry at the Lohgarh fort in Anandpur Sahib. Since then the festival of Hola Mohalla is being annually celebrated at Anandpur Sahib and has also spread to other Gurudwaras like Kirtarpur Sahib in Rupnagar district and is also replicated in the Gurudwaras around the world.

Hola Mohalla at Anandpur Sahib

Though the festivities of Hola Mohalla last for three days, people start gathering at Anandpur Sahib, a week before the main festival. The festival at Anandpur Sahib is specially celebrated as a display of war skills and valour of the Sikh community.

Huge colorful procession is organized in which Sikh warriors display their skills of sword fighting, horse riding, martial arts, tent pegging and other daring activities like standing on two galloping horses, riding a bareback horse etc. The Akali warriors also known as Nihang and Khalsa warriors are main participants in mock battles.

Apart from the mock battles, religious processions are also held, giving the people a deep insight into the Sikh religion. Sikhs as well as people of different faith from around the world gather at Anandpur Sahib to witness the grand festival of Hola Mohalla. Nihangs riding on horseback, spray gulal at the audiences. Religious sermons are organized at various durbars in Anandpur Sahib.

A huge fair is set up at Anandpur Sahib with various stalls for children and elderly. Stalls sell all type of weapons replica – swords, daggers, spear etc and also local delicacies. Another attraction of Hola Mohalla at Anandpur Sahib is the make shift tent houses for the performers and the people coming from far places.

The festival concludes on the third day with a huge procession by Nihang warriors followed by hundred of Sikh pilgrims. The procession is headed by the Panj Pyare and originates from Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib, one of the five panch takhts (religious thrones) of Sikhism.

The procession then passes through other Gurudwaras – Quila Anandgarh, Mata Jitoji and Lohgarh Sahib, before terminating at Takht. Langars are organized at Gurudwaras as well as other locations for the visitors. Villagers too volunteer for organizing langar as community service.

Hola Mohalla Celebration around the Globe

The festival of Hola Mohalla is celebrated in other Gurudwaras of India and the Gurudwaras across the world as well. Religious sermons and poetry are recited. Stories of valor of Guru Gobind Singh and other religious Gurus are told to the devotees. The procession at Anandpur Sahib is also replicated at other places as well, with Sikh warriors displaying their battle skills.

Hola Mohalla is also celebrated in the countries having good presence of Sikh Diaspora. The celebrations are usually marked by recitation of Guru Grant Sahib and story of Guru Gobind Singh and other religious gurus of Sikhs.



Significance of Hola Mohalla

Hola Mohalla gives a chance to the Sikh community to reaffirm their faith in religious customs and beliefs along with remembering their religious Gurus. The festival is a kind of tribute to Guru Gobind Singh who formed Khalsa

warrior community to fight back invaders, and provide protection to the vulnerable, poor, oppressed and needy.

People belonging to other religions and cultures get to know Sikh religion and admire their unity and war skills. The festival of Hola Mohalla also signifies

unity in diversity as it is a huge congregation of not only Sikhs but also millions of various faiths and religions. People belonging to different religions and castes enjoy the festivities and dine at the langars (community feast) together.

'GATHERING OF GIVERS' MARKS WOMEN'S DAY

BY MABEL PAIS

Come get inspired at The International Day of Women celebration! Discover new connections!



Gathering of participants on Women's Day

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

Women@NJPAC, for over 25 years, has enabled women to channel their time, talent and treasure in promoting the beneficial role of the arts in our everyday lives.

Now, more than ever, we need the arts in all of its manifestations as we continue to fight injustice, reaffirm the autonomy and resilience of women and find sustenance for the journey toward equity and

justice for all.

The 'Gathering of Givers' event is a unique experience, offering women from across the state of New Jersey the chance to gather, connect, heal, motivate each other and recommit their energies to the collective fight ahead.

Join the illustrious group of women on International Women's Day for inspiration, healing and new connections as we work toward lasting change in our communities, our state and our world.

PROGRAM

What: 'Gathering of Givers: Embracing Resilience and Unleashing Hope'

When: Wednesday March 8, 2023, 8:30-11:30AM

Where: NJPAC, 1 Center Street, Newark, NJ

How: Rsvp @ njpac.tfaforms.net/257 or call 973.353.7566

Who: Featuring

Aisha Glover, VP, Center for Urban Innovation, Audible

Nina Cooke John, Principal, Studio Cooke John; Architect and Artist, 'Shadow of A Face', The Harriet Tubman Monument, Newark, NJ

Tamara Linde, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, PSEG; and Board Chair, Community Foundation of New Jersey

Nelba Márquez-Greene, Founder, The Ana Grace Project

LaMonica McIver, Council President, Newark Municipal Council

Angelica M. Ogando, MBA, Co-Founder & COO of Yoshida Academy; Co-Founder & CEO of Warrior Queen Cosmetics

fayemi shakur, Arts and Cultural Affairs Director, City of Newark

Senator M. Theresa Ruiz, New Jersey Senate Majority Leader

Lindsay Schambach, Executive Director, Imagine Scheherazade Tillet, Co-Founder, The Long Walk Home

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

TIK TOK COMEDIAN PINKY PATEL MAKES MILLIONS LAUGH

BY MABEL PAIS

"I want little Indian girls to watch their moms laugh because they have a phone in front of them and when they peek over their shoulders, it's me, an Indian woman on their screen, making their mom laugh. To me, that is full circle." - Pinky Patel



Pinky Patel facebook.com/PinkyPatelOfficial

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) brings us PINKY PATEL and her 'NEW CROWN WHO DHIS' TOUR at the Victoria Theater, Newark on Saturday, March 11, at 8 PM.

Pinky Patel, originally from Illinois, is a PTA mom turned creator, comedian, and social media personality with over 5 M Tik Tok followers. She is a fresh new comedian who got her start on TikTok, making millions of people laugh.

When Pinky is not busy giving out free hits of serotonin, you can find her being an everyday PTA mom to her two young roommates and trying to find new and inventive ways to evict all of the extra eight-legged roommates she keeps acquiring in her glam cave. She is best

known for her hilarious commentary and viral videos from her glam cave that has garnered millions of likes on social media. She has worked with brands such as Clorox, Pfizer, Pure Leaf Tea, and many more. You can catch Pinky in a city near you on her much-anticipated 'New Crown Who Dhis Tour.'

"You are more than a mom or a wife. You are more than the labels society places on you, you become whoever you want to be, whatever that looks like," says Patel.

"Pinky Patel is real, a comedian for every-woman. This new wave of comedy strays from the overdone approaches of forced shock and awe, unintelligible vulgarity and inflated egos," says Bridge Magazine.

TICKETS

Tickets to see Pinky Patel can be purchased by visiting NJPAC.org or the NJPAC Box Office or calling 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)

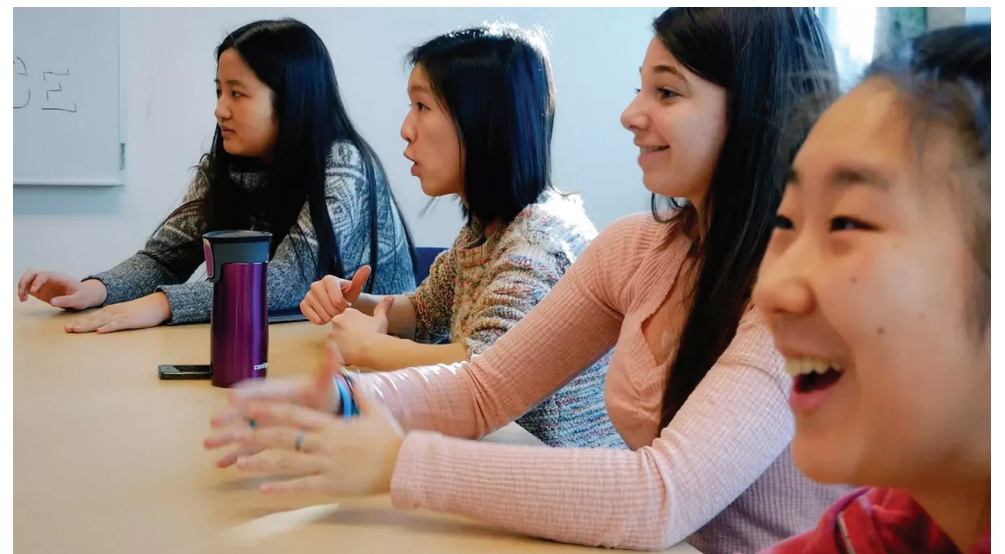
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(Mabel Pais writes on Social Issues, The Arts and Entertainment, Health & Wellness, Cuisine and Spirituality)

WOMEN IN POWER: CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Girl Talk (scene)

Photo / worldchannel.org.

BY MABEL PAIS

'WOMEN BE SEEN, BE HEARD, BE CELEBRATED' is the theme of World Channel's (worldchannel.org) presentation of films for Women's History Month.

Celebrate women - their history and present - appreciating the hard won battles for gender equality and recognizing how much more we all have to work toward.

For too long, women in the United States, and around the globe, have been overlooked and oppressed, their intelligence, talents and opinions suppressed to maintain a patriarchal status quo. Today, through the achievement of trailblazers who fought against inequality, and the many waves of the feminist movement, women of all identities are able to demonstrate their leadership and power in science, politics, the arts

and beyond.

This Women's History Month, watch films that showcase how women are working against deep-rooted gender discrimination and stereotypes while advocating for their stories to be told - from the groundbreakers of the suffrage movement to the high school students amplifying their voices to win championships and parity on a Massachusetts high school debate team in the new Local USA special 'Girl Talk.'

To access the month's film schedule, visit worldchannel.org. The films are also available on other viewing platforms: pbs.org, youtube.com, Apple Podcasts (apple.com/apple-podcasts) and Spotify (spotify.com).

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

ONE EARTH FILM FEST "GETS LOUD"

BY MABEL PAIS

Featuring

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, activist Varshini Prakash and others in 'TO THE END'
Vandana Shiva in 'SEEDS OF VANDANA SHIVA'
Children's Films and many more



One Earth Film Fest, poster

The 12th Annual The 'One Earth' Film Festival of the greater Chicago area presents its 12th annual edition with the theme 'Let's Get Loud!'

The Festival, on February 7, 2023, called on the audience to advocate the 2023 theme and programs which make a call to action to join the climate movement. The 'One Earth' Film Festival returns March 3-12, 2023, for its 12th festival season with its annual launch party and 10 thoughtfully curated film events that will be streamed online, with about a dozen in-person screenings, including 'View & Brew' events, in the greater Chicago area.

The 2023 Festival launches with its annual opening night launch party at Park Tavern on March 3, offering both live and virtual participation. For this year's theme, the Festival chose 'Let's Get Loud!' to equip and empower individuals and communities far and wide to get loud in advocating for the planet. The films reveal what successful grassroots organizing looks like across different continents and cultures and the power of ordinary people getting loud, working together, and changing history.

"Since its inception, One Earth has stressed the importance of taking collective action," One Earth Collective Director Ana Garcia Doyle said. "Film is a powerful way to spur us toward social change and collective action. Much environmental communication heavily depends on data, but that's not going to change hearts. The stories told through film invoke our empathy and spur our will to act. We must pull together - and be loud about it. The moment to make noise is now."

Films screened during the Festival encompass a range of environmental topics and themes that will take viewers around the planet.

Through its streamed programs, One Earth now reaches audiences across the U.S., also attracting participant viewers in other countries. Its in-person programs reflect One Earth's work with a slate of partners across the Chicago region to activate communities around solving the climate emergency.

All One Earth presentations are designed to educate, inspire, and prompt action amid current environmental catastrophes. Screenings are accompanied by an expert panel discussion, offering ideas to equip audiences with ways to take action on the world's most pressing environmental problems.

SCHEDULE OF FILMS

Family + Youth Films

One Earth Film Festival

March 4, 2023



Family & Youth Films, poster

In-person events are being added, so check oneearthfilmfest.org for the latest program details. All films have a virtual viewing option.

2023 Opening Night Launch Party | March 3 | Park Tavern Chicago 6:30 p.m.

Children's (age 3-6+) Short Film Program | March 4 | 10 a.m. | Oak Park Public Library

Children's (age 7 to 12+) Short Film Program | March 4 | 10:30 a.m. | Oak Park Public Library

"The Seeds of Vandana Shiva" | March 4| 6:30 p.m. | First United Methodist at the Chicago Temple

"Devil Put the Coal in the Ground" | March 5| 6:30 p.m.

"Into the Ice" | March 6| 6:30 p.m. | Gorton Community Center, Lake Forest



Vandana Shiva

Photos / One Earth Film Fest 2023

"Wasteland: Iowa" | March 7| 6:30 p.m. | Good Sheppard Lutheran, Oak Park

"No Climate, No Equity, No Deal" | March 7 | 6:30 p.m. | Good Sheppard Lutheran, Oak Park

International Women's Day Selection

"Powerlands" | March 8 |6:30 p.m. | Oak Park Public Library | Pilot Project Brewing, Chicago

"Going Circular" | March 9 | 6:30 p.m. | Waubensee Community College, Aurora | Maine South High School, Park Ridge

"The Falconer" | March 10| 6:30 p.m. | North Park Village Nature Center, Chicago | Euclid Ave. United Methodist Church, Oak Park | Four Rivers Environmental Education Ctr., Channahon

"Mardi and The Whites" | March 10| 6:30 p.m. | North Park Village Nature Center, Chicago| Euclid Ave. United Methodist Church, Oak Park | Four Rivers Environmental Education Ctr., Channahon

"Utama" | March 11| 6:30 p.m. "To The End" | March 12| 11:00 a.m. | Tavern at Haymarket Pub & Brewery, Chicago|The Well Spirituality Center, LaGrange Park

TICKETS

Tickets are available and mostly free, with a suggested donation. For Tickets, Film, and Program information, visit oneearthfilmfest.org.

ONE EARTH FILM FESTIVAL

One Earth Film Festival is the Midwest's premier environmental film festival, creating opportunities for understanding climate change, sustainability and the power of people. It showcases top-issue, thought-provoking environmental films, leads audiences in interactive post-film discussions focused on solutions, and offers concrete actions people can take. One Earth Film Festival is a production of One Earth Collective. For more, visit oneearthfilmfest.org

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

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NJPAC WITH NPL ILLUMINATES NOVELIST PHILIP ROTH LEGACY



"SITTING THERE IN THE PARK, I FELT A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF NEWARK, AN ATTACHMENT SO ROOTED THAT IT COULD NOT HELP BUT BRANCH OUT INTO AFFECTION." - PHILIP ROTH, 'GOODBYE COLUMBUS,' 1959.



"WRITING IS LIKE BASEBALL; YOU FAIL TWO-THIRDS OF THE TIME." - PHILIP ROTH, THE NEW YORK TIMES, 2012.

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), the anchor cultural institution for the city of Newark and the state of New Jersey, in collaboration with the Newark Public Library, presents 'PHILIP ROTH UNBOUND: ILLUMINATING A LITERARY LEGACY,' a weekend-long festival that will celebrate, challenge and explore the life, legacy and work of novelist and Newark-native Philip Roth, on what would have been his 90th birthday weekend.

Beginning Friday, March 17, and concluding Sunday, March 19, 2023 NJPAC will host a three-day series of entertaining and engaging events, featuring over forty of the most prominent writers, actors, artists, journalists and public intellectuals working today. Designed to appeal to audiences of all backgrounds, whatever their level of familiarity with Roth's work, the program will include star-studded readings, conversations, comedy, controversy and debate that will explore the significance and impact of Roth's unique literary legacy, and use his writing as a springboard to explore the broader questions it raises about life in America today.

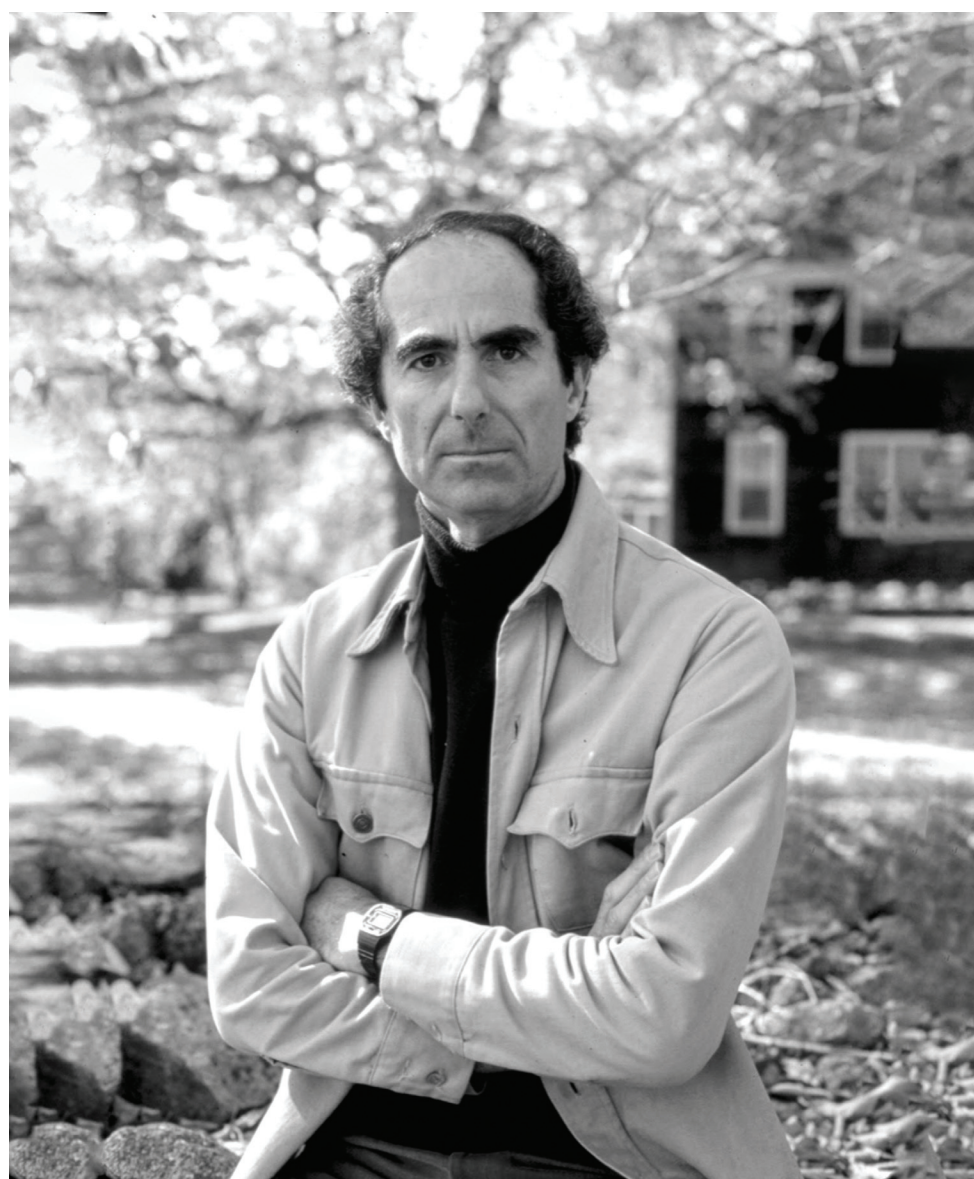
Program highlights include a fully-cast, dramatic reading of Roth's national bestseller 'The Plot Against America'; a preview of John Turturro and Ariel Levy's stage adaptation of Roth's National Book Award-winning novel 'Sabbath's Theater'; and a number of spirited public debates and discussions on censorship, appropriation, identity politics and more.

Participants include actors Mary-Louise Parker, S. Epatha Merkerson, Morgan Spector, John Douglas Thompson, John Turturro, Marjan Neshat, Deirdre O'Connell and Jason Kravits; novelists Ayad Akhtar, Susan Choi, Joshua Cohen, Ottessa Moshfegh and Gary Shteyngart; authors and journalists Taffy Brodesser-Akner, Lauren Michele Jackson, Ariel Levy and Claudia Roth Pierpont; playwrights Chisa Hutchinson and Richard Wesley; comedian Eddie Brill; historians Sean Wilentz and Steven Zipperstein; and more to be announced.

"Not before and not since Philip Roth (fight me!) has there been a writer who is so free at his keyboard - wild and shameless - and who has so much faith in his reader to be as smart and willing as he is," said Taffy Brodesser-Akner, author of 'Fleishman is in Trouble.' "Whenever I want to read like the writer is holding me by the lapels, I always return to Roth."

A towering voice in American letters for more than half a century, Philip Roth delighted, entertained and provoked readers with his complex and often controversial portraits of characters chafing against the constraints of expectation and convention.

Throughout his career, Roth meticulously and relentlessly mined his childhood in Newark for the material that would fuel his fiction. Like many young artists, Roth left his family and his hometown to develop an identity and voice of his own. But again and again in his work he returned to Newark - a dynamic, diverse, working-class city whose cultural, political and economic crises and triumphs have in many ways



Philip Roth

Photo /Courtesy NJPAC

tracked the greater national situation over the decades - creating indelible characters and stories as dynamic, determined and distinct as the city's five wards.

Roth remained so devoted to Newark, in fact, that he left his entire personal library of approximately 7,000 volumes - books accumulated by him from 1950 to the present - to the Newark Public Library when he died in 2018. Along with the Newark Public Library, the festival is also sponsoring a city-wide writing contest for Newark high school students called "Your Newark Story," inviting young authors to write about how this city shaped them. Contest winners will read their stories at the festival.

"Newark has a rich artistic history, from jazz legends Sarah Vaughan and Wayne Shorter to poet and

playwright Amiri Baraka, and so many more," said NJPAC CEO John Schreiber. "Over the last 75 years, Philip Roth was one of the most singular and challenging voices in American fiction. And while the Newark of Roth's youth has transformed, its essential qualities remain - innovation, creativity and grit. In presenting 'Philip Roth Unbound' we have the opportunity to invite patrons into a unique and vibrant environment of discussion and examination, not only of a writer's life and work, but of Newark and the nation as well."

"From the vantage point of Roth's 90th, I can't think of a writer who saw our nation more clearly, whose books more vividly embody its haunted, vital, coursing energy," added Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and novelist Ayad Akhtar. "Reading his work is still thrilling to me, its infectious intellectual static, its sublime fusion of the personal and political, and perhaps above all, the whiplash swing and staggering beauty of the American language as it flows into us from its pages. We need him more than ever."

FESTIVAL PROGRAM

For a complete schedule of the weekend-long festival, visit njpac.org/series/philip-roth

Tour of the Philip Roth Personal Library

Visitors are invited to have an intimate look into Philip Roth's mind as both reader and writer by taking an exclusive free audio tour of the Philip Roth Personal Library at the Newark Public Library at (prpl.npl.org/a-tour-of-philip-roth-newark). Bequeathed to the Library when Roth died in 2018, this unique collection houses the 7,000 books Roth collected over a lifetime, many of which include his handwritten notes and underlinings. Created especially for 'Philip Roth Unbound' and narrated by actor and star of HBO's 'Plot Against America,' Morgan Spector, the tour will be made available via QR code throughout the Festival. You can

also access the tour at njpac.org/event/audio-tour-the-philip-roth-personal-library

TICKETS

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit njpac.org/series/philip-roth.

NJPAC

To learn more about The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), visit NJPAC.org.

The Newark Public Library

To learn more, visit npl.org.

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

Pakistan imposes surcharge up to Rs 3.23 per unit on electricity to collect revenue

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The cash-strapped Pakistan government surrendered to another IMF demand when it imposed a surcharge of up to Rs 3.23 per unit on electricity consumers across the country with effect from July 1, according to a media report on March 2.

The government's decision is aimed at generating Rs 335 billion more in revenue over the next fiscal year to finance the power sector's debt and liabilities.

The Dawn newspaper reported that consumers of Karachi-specific company K-Electric would be facing double jeopardy, as the government also gave the Karachi power utility the go-ahead to increase tariff by Rs 1.56 per unit in the current month and then another Rs 6.11 per unit in April and May, to ensure uniform electricity rates at par with other distribution companies in the country.

These decisions were taken on Wednesday at a meeting of the Cabinet's Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) presided by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, which also approved a Rs 5 billion Ramadan relief package for Utility Stores, Rs 3,900 per 40 kg uniform minimum procurement price for wheat, and a waiver of storage charges on cargoes stuck at ports for letters of credit problems.

On top of this, a separate case would be presented to the Cabinet on March 2 to double the electricity rates for commercial consumers during the peak hours (after 8 pm) after the government efforts failed to create a consensus for market closures after sunset for energy



conservation, a senior power division official said.

He said the Centre could not force provincial governments to close businesses through administrative measures but could use higher pricing as a policy tool to discourage consumption in peak hours or at least generate higher funds to meet this additional demand.

The ECC also "approved the proposal (of the power division) regarding the enhancement of surcharge for the financial year 2024 to cover federal government obligations towards power producers", an official statement said.

"Further, these surcharges for FY24 will also be applied to K-Electric consumers to maintain a uniform tariff across the country," it said.

The government has already approved a Rs 3.39 per unit additional surcharge for the remaining four months (March to June) of the ongoing fiscal year and is currently passing through regulatory procedures for notification.

The International Monetary Fund

(IMF) had demanded its continuation throughout the next fiscal year to pay off or service about Rs 800 billion debt parked in the Power Holding Private Limited.

The government had been resisting the IMF demand for continuing this additional surcharge but finally gave in to secure an economic bailout and avoid sovereign default.

Under the Rs 335 billion financing plan for a new surcharge in the 2023-24 fiscal year, there would be a 43-paisa additional cost per unit to protected consumers, using up to 200 units. This surcharge would increase to Rs 3.23 per unit for all other consumers throughout the next year.

Thus, the average national surcharge would work out at Rs 2.63 per unit.

The power division said the government was empowered under the Nepa law to "collect surcharges from the consumers for the fulfillment of any financial obligation of the federal government with respect to electric power services within the bracket of 10 per cent of the aggregate revenue requirement of all electricity suppliers".

This would be applicable across the country, including K-Electric. In addition, the ECC also approved a tariff increase of Rs 1.56 per unit for all KE consumers (except the protected category using fewer than 100 units) with a recovery period of three months (March to May 2023).

Besides, KE consumers would also be charged another average tariff increase of Rs 3.21 per unit for the recovery period of two months (April and May 2023). (PTI)

NEPAL PM PRACHANDA'S PLAN TO RESHUFFLE CABINET & SEEK CONFIDENCE VOTE DEFERRED DUE TO PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS



KATHMANDU (TIP): With the crucial presidential election in Nepal just nine days away, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda will seek a vote of confidence and reshuffle his Cabinet only after the polls, a media report on March 1 quoted officials as saying.

Prachanda is preparing to reshuffle his Cabinet to fill as many as 16 ministries, which fell vacant after three political parties pulled out of his government, as part of his efforts to keep the newly formed fragile coalition together.

Government spokesperson Rekha Sharma said Prachanda will seek a vote of confidence and reshuffle his Cabinet only after the presidential polls on March 9, the Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

"The constitutional and legal provision for the prime minister to seek a vote of confidence will be followed within the given timeframe," Sharma said at the press meeting.

"But we are currently focused on the presidential elections."

With the Election Commission issuing an election code of conduct with effect from Wednesday until March 19, the Cabinet can only be reshuffled after that.

Nepal's second largest party in Parliament - CPN-UML - on Monday withdrew its support to the "Prachanda"-led government following a rift over backing the Nepali Congress' candidate for the presidential poll, plunging the Himalayan nation to another spell of political instability.

The Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) has also quit the government. The Rashtriya Swatantra Party (RSP) has also withdrawn its ministers from the government.

However, it would keep supporting the government from the outside.

With three major parties pulling out of the government, the seven-party ruling coalition has disintegrated.

Prachanda has now joined hands with the Nepali Congress and six other parties and wants a new power-sharing deal at the earliest. (PTI)

Indian state-owned firm sold 20 gun barrels to Myanmar: Activists

BANGKOK (TIP): An Indian state-owned arms manufacturer has shipped artillery barrels to military-ruled Myanmar, an activist group said March 1, warning they could be used by the junta in its crackdown on dissent.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the generals toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government two years ago, ending a brief democratic experiment and sparking mass protests.

The army has used artillery barrages as well as air strikes against opposition groups as it struggles to crush resistance, according to rights organisations, sparking international calls to stop supplying weapons to the junta. In October, state-owned arms manufacturer Yantra India Limited sent 20 gun barrels to Myanmar measuring 122 millimetres, shipping data obtained by activist group Justice for Myanmar shows.

The consignee for the cargo, which was valued at \$330,000, was Innovative

Industrial Technologies Company Limited, based in the commercial hub Yangon, according to the data shared with AFP.

Last year, the same company won a junta tender to install and configure security appliances at a data centre, according to documents seen by AFP.

The barrels were likely used to make artillery for the military, Justice for Myanmar said.

Yantra India Limited has "state-of-the-art steel-making" facilities for gun barrels and "other components of artillery and tank guns", according to its website. Yantra and Innovative Industrial Technologies did not respond to emailed requests for comment.

AFP has contacted India's foreign ministry for comment, but has not yet received a response.

"India is directly supporting the junta's indiscriminate attacks against civilians by allowing the export of barrels," said Justice For Myanmar

spokesperson Yadanar Maung.

More than 3,000 people have been killed in the military's crackdown on dissent, according to a local monitoring group. Diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis have floundered, with the junta shielded at the United Nations by close allies Russia and China.

In December, India abstained -- along with Moscow and Beijing -- from the UN Security Council's first resolution on the crisis, which called for the release of all "arbitrarily detained" prisoners, including Suu Kyi.

Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar has defended New Delhi's ties with the junta, saying India cannot avoid dealing with its neighbour because of cross-border issues such as organised crime. In January, Norway's sovereign wealth fund said it had divested its shares in Indian state-owned company Bharat Electronics over an "unacceptable risk" that it was selling weapons to the Myanmar junta. (AFP)



Akshay Kumar, Emraan Hashmi's 'Selfie' fails to impress

Akshay Kumar and Emraan Hashmi-starrer *Selfie* is struggling at the box office. The film, that released on February 24, became the lowest opener of Akshay in over a decade with just Rs 3 crore. And now, it continues seeing a decline in its box office collections. The film earned less than Rs 2 crore in India on Wednesday, March 1, despite having two big stars in lead roles. *Selfie* is a remake of the Malayalam drama *Driving License*. It starred Prithviraj Sukumaran and Suraj Venjaramoodu in the lead roles, and was a huge hit. However, the same can't be said about *Selfie*.

Selfie brings together Akshay Kumar and Emraan Hashmi in lead roles. The film graced theatres on February 24. It marks Akshay's first film of the year. According to trade estimates, the film is not doing a good business at the box office. On Day 6, March 1, *Selfie* saw a drastic drop and raked in just Rs 1 crore. Hence, its total domestic box office collection would now stand at Rs 13.70 crore. Meanwhile, *Selfie* had an overall 9.70 per cent Hindi occupancy on March 1.

Selfie released in theatres on February 24. The storyline of the film follows a Bollywood superstar Vijay Kumar who needs to get a new driver's license from an RTO officer. However, a misunderstanding leads to a war of words between the two, eventually escalating into a feud which is played out in front of the entire country.

Rajkummar Rao, Bhumi Pednekar to team up again for a partition drama

Rajkummar Rao and Bhumi Pednekar proved to be powerful Jodi in *Badhaai Do*. The talented actors worked together for the first time in the film and it was a treat for the audience. Now, they are all set to share the screen again and dropped some major hints on their social media.

Rajkummar Rao and Bhumi Pednekar's picture-perfect Instagram feeds have taken a monochromatic turn. To everyone's surprise, their respective feeds are teleporting us back to the black-and-white era. However, their captions are hinting at a new project.

Taking to his Instagram, Rajkummar Rao shared a black-and-white picture with the caption, "Uncovering the untold story of partition. Stay tuned! #BlackAndWhite (sic)".

Bhumi also posted something similar. She wrote, "The story of a partition that led many to become strangers in their own land. Stay tuned! #BlackAndWhite (sic)" Here's the post:

The Instagram pictures seem like they are from the time of the partition and it totally looks like they are hinting at a new project. These black and white pictures have caused a storm on the internet & everyone is keen to know what it's about. After *Badhaai Do* and before this project that the duo are hinting at, Rajkummar and Bhumi would be sharing the screen in a film titled *Bheed*. It is directed by Anubhav Sinha, who has earlier helmed films like *Anek*, *Thappad* and *Article 15*. He is also producing the film jointly with Bhushan Kumar.

Rajkummar Rao Wins Best Actor Jury Award For *Monica O My Darling*

The News18 Showsha Reel Awards was a star-studded affair in B-Town. The event took place on February 25,



honouring actors and filmmakers for their contribution in the entertainment industry with films and shows. Rajkummar Rao was presented with the Jury Award in the Best Actor category for his work in *Monica, O My Darling*.

On receiving the award, he shared on stage, "Thank you so much jury. Thank you Vasant (Bala) – the man, the only reason behind *Monica, O My Darling*. The film is because of you. We all keep saying that, and we have to believe it now. Thank you Akansha (Ranjana Kapoor), Huma (Qureshi), Radhika (Apte), Sikander (Kher). It was a very

special film always, but to get an award, I think that has added a lot to it." Monica, O My Darling is a whodunnit with bunch of twists and turns.

The actor also took to his social media handle to share a photo of himself with the award and wrote, "Won the Best Actor award at #News18ReelAwards for #MonicaOMyDarling. Thank you jury. Thank you team #Monica." The actor looked dapper in a blazer and donned one of his brightest smiles as he received the award. The award was presented to him by Ram Madhvani and Divya Dutta.

Kartik Aaryan announces *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*



Actor Kartik Aaryan is all set to revive his role as Rooh Baba as he announced *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* after the success of his last instalment. He took to his social media handles and dropped an announcement post. He also added a small video featuring his popular dialogue from *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, which was a box office hit. The film will be released on the occasion of Diwali 2024.

The video features the abandoned mansion of Bhawanigarh where the storyline of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* takes place. In the video, Kartik is heard saying, "Kya laga kahani khatam ho gayi hai? Darwaje toh bandh hotein hi hai taki ek din phir se khul sake (Did you think the story ended here? Doors are often shut so that they can be opened once more)."

The video follows Kartik dressed up as Rooh Baba as he sings *Ami Je Tomar*. He repeats his dialogue from the previous plot and says, "Mai aatmao se sirf baat hi nahi karta, aatmein meri andar aa bhi jaati hai (I don't only talk to dead but they can also possess me)." Sharing the spooky video, Kartik wrote, "Rooh

Baba Returns Diwali 2024." He also used the hashtag 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3.'

Reacting to the post, fans shared their excitement. One of them wrote, "Yayy another blockbuster on it's way." "This is the most surprising announcement ever from you Kartik," added another one. Someone else also said, "Didn't know the time, looks like just saw *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* and third part of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa* has been announcement."

Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 was directed by Anees Bazmee and produced by Bhushan Kumar-led T-Series and Cine1 Studios. It received positive responses from critics and audiences with a whopping business of ₹230.75 crore worldwide. Besides Kartik, the film also starred Tabu, Rajpal Yadav, Sanjay Mishra and Kiara Advani. Besides this, Kartik has several other projects in the pipeline. He is also a part of filmmaker Hansal Mehta's *Captain India* and an untitled musical love saga with Sameer Vidwans in the works. He was recently seen in *Shehzada*, directed by Rohit Dhawan, which underperformed at the ticket window.

Source: HT



Priyanka Chopra to play an elite spy in Citadel

The first-look images of the upcoming action-spy thriller series Citadel were unveiled recently and Priyanka Chopra Jonas can be seen in a deadly gun-toting avatar, which she balances by setting the mercury on fire with her look. Her character is revealed as an elite spy, Nadia Sinh, in the show directed by Anthony Russo and Joseph Russo. Citadel tells the story of the eponymous independent global spy agency that gets destroyed by operatives of Manticore, as the former was tasked to uphold the safety and security of all people. Manticore is a powerful syndicate manipulating the world from the shadows.

The series also stars Lesley Manville as Dahlia Archer, Osy Ikhile as Carter Spence, Ashleigh Cummings as Abby Conroy, Roland Moller as Anders Silje, among others.

The series will premiere on Prime Video on April 28, with two episodes, followed by a new episode released every Friday till May 26. Citadel and its subsequent series traverse the globe with interconnected stories. Each Citadel series is locally created, produced, and filmed in-region, and stars top talent, forming a distinct global franchise.

Selena Gomez says 'she has a hot date' as she gets ready in new reel



Singer Selena Gomez has been catching gimps on social media a lot lately. Ever since news broke out about Selena being trolled by Kylie Jenner and Hailey Bieber, fans took it seriously, which led to their massive loss of Instagram followers.

Which comes as no surprise because Selena has always been people's charmer, as she holds the highest number of follower records on Instagram.

Selena seemed pumped up and joyful as she shot her GRWM reel on Instagram, where the actress-singer looked gorgeous in her pearl white dress and loop earrings. She completed her look with dewy makeup which was subtle and elegant with red lipstick on.

And what fans enjoyed about the reel was that Selena couldn't stop smiling and acting all ordinary while she showcased her excitement for a simple GRWM, which made her fans call her out as someone who is raw and original who gets excited over a simple video like an ordinary person.

While finishing her look, Selena said, "I have a hot date with warm noodles and good movies." And it's for sure that the singer won't enjoy this all by herself after being so beautifully dressed up.

Though she started the video by saying, "Get ready with me to do absolutely nothing," she later dropped a hint that led to many things, and now the fans suspect who "the hot date" could be in Gomez's life.

Selena Gomez regrets not keeping up with her Disney family

Selena Gomez admitted that one of her biggest regrets in life was losing touch with the Disney family whom she closely worked with for several years and had formed what she thought were lifelong bonds and relationships.

To put this into context, Selena became a star through her role as Alex Russo in the Disney's television series, Wizards of Waverly Place, which had a successful run from 2007 until its conclusion in 2012.

She made her film debut with the Warner Bros. movie, Another Cinderella Story and then the Disney film, Wizards of Waverly Place: The Movie in 2009, while she was still a teenager. She also had a recurring role in Hannah Montana, the Disney channel series.

As Courteney Cox gets honoured, Jennifer Aniston, Lisa Kudrow pay tribute to her

There was a special 'Friends' reunion recently as Courteney Cox was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which was unveiled by her co-stars.

Jennifer Aniston and Lisa Kudrow were among the speakers at the ceremony as they came together to pay tribute to 58-year-old Courteney, reports Mirror.co.uk.

The actress was hailed as a "really good human and an extraordinary friend" and credited with creating "one of the closest, most loving and supportive casts in the history of television" during her time on 'Friends'.

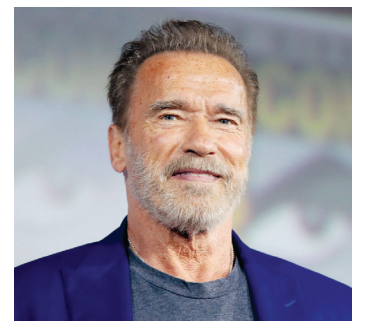
Speaking at the ceremony, Jennifer, 54, said, quoted by Mirror.co.uk: "We're very honoured to be here today to speak on your behalf as your co-workers, your friends, your family, your sisters." She added: "To be friends with Courteney is to be family with Courteney and she is responsible for all of that." "(Courteney) instilled into all of us, into our DNA, to support each other and to love one another, and that actors need to support and love one another, not compete with one another. Those wise, wise words have stayed with me - I learned them as a young 20-something-year-old actor and that really set me on my path as a young woman and being able to create relationships that I cherish to this very day," Jennifer added.

59-year-old Lisa then said: "I really believe that it was that, and Courteney doing that, that really set us up to become one of the closest, most loving and supportive casts in, I'll say it, the history of television." *Source: IANS*



Arnold Schwarzenegger is back in action with 1st TV series Fubar

Hollywood star Arnold Schwarzenegger is returning to the screen with Netflix's upcoming series Fubar. The makers announced the show today, February 27, along with a teaser featuring the Terminator star. The action-comedy series will begin streaming from May 25.



The official Twitter handle of Netflix shared Fubar teaser: "Arnold is back — and starring in his first TV series ever: FUBAR! Everything else is top secret, except for that ice pack he's gonna need (sic)," read the caption.

In the teaser, Arnold Schwarzenegger can be seen puffing on a cigar, shooting bullets and avoiding obstacles, as he announces, "I am back, baby!"

"Everywhere I go, people ask me when I'm going to do another big action comedy like True Lies. Well, here it is. Fubar will kick your ass and make you laugh - and not just for two hours. You get a whole season," said Arnold Schwarzenegger in a statement.

NIGERIA'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PETER OBI TO CHALLENGE RESULT IN COURT



ABUJA (TIP): Nigeria's presidential candidate Peter Obi, who lost a historically tight February 25 election to the ruling party's Bola Tinubu, said March 2 he would challenge the result in court.

"We will explore all legal and peaceful options to reclaim our mandate. We won the election and we will prove it to Nigerians," the Labour Party candidate told reporters in the capital Abuja.

Obi obtained the third largest number of votes, at 6.1 million -- a significant feat for an outsider in a country where two establishment parties dominate.

On March 1, Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) was declared winner with a total of 8.8 million votes and the required number of votes across two-thirds of Nigeria's states -- a rule meant to ensure broad representation.

The former Lagos governor will succeed President Muhammadu Buhari who will step down in May.

Atiku Abubakar of the opposition's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) obtained the second largest number of total votes, at 6.9 million.

The election in Africa's most populous nation was largely peaceful but it was marked by long delays and the slow arrival of online results, angering voters and opposition parties who claim massive vote-rigging.

"It will go down as one of the most controversial elections ever conducted in Nigeria," Obi said.

"The good and hardworking people of Nigeria have again been robbed by our supposed leaders whom they trusted."

Nigerian elections have often been marked by fraud allegations and violence.

Tinubu on March 1 called on his rivals and their supporters to "join hands" with him, urging them to "come in so that we may begin the task of rebuilding our national home together".

Candidates who want to contest the election have 21 days following the announcement of results to bring their case to the courts. (AFP)

Outrage grows as Greece admits 'failures' after deadly train crash

LARISSA (TIP): The Greek government on March 2 acknowledged failures in state management of its rail system, following a train collision that killed 48 and has triggered angry protests.

As crews continued to work in the charred wreckage at the crash site, the local station master admitted negligence in Greece's worst-ever rail disaster and the government has apologised.

An investigation would examine the "chronic delays in implementing railway works, delays caused by chronic public sector malaise and decades of failure," said government spokesman Yiannis Economou.

The crash happened late March 1 when a freight and passenger train were allowed to speed towards each other for several kilometres before colliding near a tunnel outside Larissa in central Greece.

The 59-year-old station manager was arrested after officials determined "human error" was involved in the collision in which two carriages were demolished and a restaurant car caught fire, trapping many victims inside.

"I believe the responsibility, the negligence, the error has been confessed by the station master," Economou told reporters in Athens.

Five years after the state-owned Greek rail operator Trainose was privatised and sold to Italy's Ferrovie Dello Stato Italiane and became Hellenic Train, safety systems on the Athens-Thessaloniki line are still not fully automated.

Train unionists have said safety shortcomings for the Athens-Thessaloniki railway line had been known for years.

The country's transport minister resigned Wednesday amid claims that safety warnings on the line had been neglected for years, and his replacement on Thursday offered his "apologies" to families of the victims and vowed a "complete evaluation of the political system and the state".



"I want to say, while looking these people straight in the eye, that there will be an inquiry and everything will be presented to Greek citizens," Giorgos Gerapetritis said.

A fire department spokeswoman told AFP that rescue crews had worked all night in search for survivors, but chances of finding more were dwindling.

"Time is not on our side," she said.

'Crumpled like paper'

After visiting the site on March 1, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said that "Everything shows that the drama was, sadly, mainly due to a tragic human error".

Passengers described scenes of horror and chaos from the crash, many dodging smashed glass and debris as the train keeled over, and breaking windows to climb out.

The train's restaurant car erupted in flames after the collision, with temperatures inside reaching 1,300 degrees Celsius (2,370 Fahrenheit), the fire department said.

For hours after the crash it was not immediately clear how many people were on board, complicating efforts to determine how many are missing.

Roubini Leontari, the chief coroner at

Larissa's general hospital, told state broadcaster ERT on Thursday that over 10 people were still unaccounted for, including two Cyprus nationals.

TV footage from the wreck site showed a crane lifting the mangled remains of a carriage, under which a body was believed to be trapped.

"It was a student train, full of kids... in their 20s," Costas Bargiotas, a senior orthopaedic doctor at Larissa General Hospital, told Skai TV.

"It was truly shocking... the carriages crumpled like paper," he said.

Many bodies were charred beyond recognition and some victims were being identified only from their remains.

Seventeen biological samples have been collected from remains, and from 23 relatives seeking a match, the police said.

Angry protests

Angry demonstrators rallied outside the Athens office of Hellenic Train on Wednesday evening, as police used tear gas to disperse protesters who threw rocks at the building. Earlier in Larissa, demonstrators held a silent vigil and brought white roses to form the word Tempe, the name of the valley where the accident took place. (AFP)

Egypt reveals 9-meter long chamber inside Great Pyramid

GIZA (TIP): Egypt unveiled the discovery of long corridor inside the Great Pyramid of Giza on March 2, the first to be found on the structure's north side.

The corridor, which measures 9 meters (nearly 30 feet) by 2 meters (more than 6 feet), is perched above the famous structure's main entrance and was detected using a scan, authorities said. The function of the chamber is currently unknown, although such corridors often lead to further archaeological discoveries.

Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass and the country's Minister for Tourism Ahmed Eissa, announced the discovery



at the pyramid's base.

The chamber was discovered by the Scan Pyramids project, an international program that uses scans to look at unexplored sections of the ancient structure.

The pyramid about 11 miles from Cairo's center is also known as Khufu's Pyramid for its builder, a 4th Dynasty

pharaoh who reigned from 2509 to 2483 B.C.

The ancient structure is the last surviving wonder of the ancient world. It has captivated visitors since it was built as a royal burial chamber some 4,500 years ago. Experts are divided over how it and other pyramids were constructed, so even relatively minor discoveries generate great interest.

Egypt often publicly touts ancient discoveries to attract more tourists, a major source of foreign currency for the cash-strapped North African country. The sector suffered a long downturn after the political turmoil and violence that followed a 2011 uprising. (AP)

China turns to consumers to drive economic rebound

BEIJING (TIP): Chinese leader Xi Jinping's agenda for the annual meeting of the ceremonial legislature: Revive the economy by encouraging consumers to spend more now that severe anti-virus controls have ended, and install a government of loyalists to intensify Communist Party control over the economy and society.

Xi, China's most powerful figure in decades, has no formal role in the National People's Congress, which will convene a meeting of its full membership on March 1. But he looms over every event: the 69-year-old awarded himself a third five-year term as party general secretary in October, possibly making himself leader for life.

The two-week gathering of 2,977 NPC members is the year's highest-profile political event, but its lawmaking work is limited to endorsing ruling party decisions. Its more important function is to provide a platform to publicize government plans and give members instructions to take home to cities and provinces.

Xi and other leaders say their priority is to reassure consumers and entrepreneurs it's time to spend and invest after restrictions that kept millions of people at home, temporarily shut down Shanghai and other industrial centers and wiped out jobs were lifted in December.

The economy faces challenges ranging from weak global demand for exports and lingering U.S. tariff hikes in a feud over technology and security to curbs on access to Western processor chips due to security fears. At home, the workforce has been shrinking for more than a



decade, putting pressure on an economy that still relies on labour-intensive industries.

Economic growth fell to 3% in 2022, the second-weakest level since at least the 1970s. The ruling party needs to "fully release consumption potential," Xi said at the party's annual planning meeting, according to a text published on February 16.

Xi gave no details but said Beijing should encourage spending on electric cars and medical and elderly care, home improvement, culture and sports. He warned at the December meeting that work "will be complicated."

A consumer-led rebound might take longer than stimulus spending or igniting a boom in real estate investment. But Chinese leaders are trying to avoid options that would push up debt they worry already is dangerously high.

Forecasters expect Premier Li Keqiang, the top economic official, to

announce a growth target of 5% to 5.5% in a speech Sunday on plans for the year. Li, an advocate of free enterprise, is due to be replaced as premier at the congress after being sidelined as the No. 2 party leader in October.

The International Monetary Fund and some private sector forecasters expect much weaker annual growth, as low as 4.4%.

"It takes time to say whether the economy will turn around," said Song Huimin, a supermarket owner in the northeastern city of Jinzhou. He said sales are better than six months ago but not back to pre-COVID levels.

"People want to consume, but they still don't have enough income," Song said. "Some people still are out of work."

The former owner of a clothing factory in the eastern city of Changzhou said it shut down last year, throwing 20 people out of work. He got a job at another clothing company. Any spare cash goes to pay for his 14-year-old daughter's

education.

"I have no house or car and no plans to travel," said the man, who would give only his surname, Wu.

Since taking power in 2012, Xi has called for the ruling party to return to its "original mission" as China's economic, social and cultural leader and carry out the "rejuvenation of the great Chinese nation."

Entrepreneurs who generate China's new jobs and wealth have been rattled by tighter political controls and anti-virus curbs. Business groups say global companies were shifting investment to India, Vietnam and other countries last year because China's travel curbs blocked executives from visiting the country.

The party has indicated it is winding down anti-monopoly and data security crackdowns on tech companies that wiped hundreds of billions of dollars off the stock market value of Alibaba, Tencent and other industry leaders. But it shows no sign of backing off a campaign to tighten political control over them.

The industry was shaken anew in mid-February when Bao Fan, a star banker involved in some of the biggest tech deals, disappeared. His company announced Bao was "cooperating in an investigation" but gave no details.

Companies still are "expected to prioritize party instructions," Neil Thomas of Eurasia Group said in a report. He said measures announced during the NPC might give the ruling party "more direct oversight over policymaking" in technology and innovation. (AFP)

Rapist UK trans woman Isla Bryson jailed for eight years



LONDON (TIP) : A transgender woman in Scotland convicted of raping two women before beginning to transition was on March 1 given eight years' jail, in a case that has stoked political controversy in the United Kingdom.

According to The Straits Times, Isla Bryson was handed the prison sentence at the High Court in Edinburgh, and will

also spend a further three years on license.

THE 31-YEAR-OLD WAS CONVICTED IN JANUARY OF RAPING TWO WOMEN IN 2016 AND IN 2019 WHEN SHE WAS A MAN KNOWN AS ADAM GRAHAM, THE REPORT SAID.

The case garnered widespread attention and a public outcry after Bryson was initially held in a women's prison before the Scottish government reversed course and removed the rapist from the facility, The Straits Times noted.

After details of the contentious case emerged last month, the Scottish Prison Service decided transgender women with a history of violence against women would no longer be sent to all-female prisons, the report added. (AP)

Flurry of drone strikes hits Russia as TV, radio are hacked

KYIV (TIP): Regional officials in southern and western Russia reported a string of drone attacks near the border with Ukraine and deep inside the country that caused no casualties, but provoked a security stir on March 1, as the war with Kyiv stretched into its second year.

The hacking of Russian television channels and radio stations, and the temporary closure of airspace around St. Petersburg's airport, fed suspicion that Kyiv could be behind the disruption.

Ukrainian officials didn't immediately claim responsibility for the attacks, but they similarly avoided directly acknowledging responsibility for previous strikes and sabotage while emphasizing Ukraine's right to hit any target in Russia following the full-scale invasion that began last year.

A flurry of drone attacks on Monday night and Tuesday morning targeted regions inside Russia along the border with Ukraine and deeper into the

country, with one drone crashing just 100 kilometres (60 miles) away from Moscow, according to local Russian authorities.

A drone fell near the village of Gubastovo, roughly 100 kilometres (60 miles) southeast of Moscow, Andrei Vorobyov, governor of the region surrounding the Russian capital, said in an online statement.

The drone didn't inflict any damage, Vorobyov said. He didn't specifically describe the drone as Ukrainian, but said that it likely targeted "a civilian infrastructure object."

Pictures of the drone showed it was a Ukrainian-made type. It reportedly has a range of up to 800 kilometres (nearly 500 miles) but isn't capable of carrying a large load of explosives.

Russian forces early Tuesday shot down a Ukrainian drone over the Bryansk region, local Gov. Aleksandr Bogomaz said in a Telegram post. He said there were no casualties. (PTI)

Weekly hair care routine every woman should follow

There's more to hair care than just oiling and washing. While we all have different hair textures and concerns, following a weekly hair care routine is for everyone. Ultimately, we're all aiming at healthier, stronger and luscious mane.

However, to retain the moisture and to add more shine to your strands, it is important that you know how to properly care for your mane. Hair care mistakes such as over-washing your hair, overusing heat-styling tools and not masking or scrubbing regularly can bring your hair game down drastically.

Oiling

Does oil champi transport you back to the good old times when your mom and grand mom pampered your tresses every other night and helped you get a good night's sleep?

Here's a gentle reminder that oiling your hair a night before wash day or even an hour before washing can seriously improve the health of your locks. Oiling not only helps add moisture to your mane but also provides it with the essential nutrients it needs for stronger hair follicles and healthier hair growth.

Oiling regularly will help maintain regular volume and a healthy scalp.

Washing

Washing your hair every day is a strict no-no! Over-washing can strip your scalp of natural oils, make it drier and more prone to breakage.

Ideally, you should wash your hair twice or thrice a week depending on how greasy your hair gets, but not more than thrice.

While shampooing helps you get rid of dirt, debris and grime, conditioning makes your hair softer, smoother and more manageable.

Post-wash care

This is something most of us take for granted but post-wash care is extremely crucial. Applying a hydrating hair cream or a frizz-controlling serum can do wonders to your hair. It will not only make hairstyling easier but also add shine and softness to your hair.

Hair mask

The best way to care for dry, damaged locks is to walk to your kitchen, collect a few hydrating ingredients, mix them together and apply it to your hair. Yes, your hair will thank you.

Apart from regular oiling, washing and conditioning, your locks need an added dose of nourishment. Just like your skin,



HACK TO ACHIEVE SOFT WAVES OVERNIGHT

- Step 01: Smoothen your hair by getting rid of any knots or tangles. Use a wide-tooth comb to de-tangle gently.
- Step 02: Part your hair down the middle. Take help of a rat-tail comb so you make the parting look as even as possible.
- Step 03: Take one side of your hair and start by twisting all of it together away from your face. Secure with a clear elastic.
- Step 04: Repeat the same on the other side.
- Step 05: Once you've twisted both the sides and secured them separately, bring the ends of both the twists together in front of your chin. Now, secure the two sections together with an elastic. Yes, you may look a little funny, but just sleep on it.
- Step 06: When you untie your hair in the morning, you'll have beautiful, soft waves that need no extra heat-styling.



your hair too is exposed to environmental aggressors that can damage the texture and worsen the condition of your strands.

Once a week, it is ideal to treat your tresses to the goodness of natural ingredients such as mayonnaise, curd, aloe vera or eggs. A DIY hair mask will revitalize your hair, repair damage and bring it back to life.

Dry massage

You don't need to assign a special day for a dry scalp massage. The

benefits of massaging your scalp every night before hitting the bed will leave you amused.

Scalp massage boosts blood circulation, strengthens the roots, evenly distributes the natural oils, softens hair, reduces stress, promotes sound sleep and nourishes your hair for healthier hair growth.

Therefore, if you haven't been massaging your scalp regularly, it's time you include this technique in your hair care routine.

Source: Bbebeautiful.in

Darbari Kebab

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup hung curd
- 2 tablespoon ghee
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon garam masala powder
- 1 cup water
- 400 gm soaked green moong dal
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic paste

METHOD

- To make this yummy kebab recipe, drain the previously soaked green moong dal and keep aside.
- Heat the 2 tablespoon ghee in a kadahi, and add the cumin.
- When they splutter add the dal and the salt and saute over medium heat till tender but whole. Takes about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool.
- Grind the lentils in a food processor or a stone to a fine consistency without adding water. This becomes like a dough. Mix the salt, chilli powder, garam masala and garlic into the ground dal.
- Add the yoghurt and make into a soft pliable dough.
- Divide this into about 12 portions and shape them into round balls, and then flatten them.
- Heat enough ghee in a heavy based frying pan to form a thin layer.
- Fry over low heat, first on one side then the other, till crisp and brown.
- Serve it hot with tomato-garlic sauce and coriander chutney.



Basic skincare routine to defy ageing

- Cleansing: Cleansing is the first step in any skincare regime – start by using a mild cleansing and then pat drying the face.
- Toning: Once clean, use a toner to balance the skin – take some in a cotton ball and then apply on the face. Toner helps regulate the pH level of the skin and nourishes it with some extra minerals as well.
- Hyaluronic acid serum: Usually, a vitamin C-based serum is advised for dry skin prone to acne. Hyaluronic acid is a key ingredient in vitamin C-based serums and works for all skin types, even in case of sensitive skin prone to breakouts.
- Eye cream: A lot of signs of ageing appear around the eyes – under eye bags, crow's feet, dark circles and more. Therefore, it is advised to starting using a vitamin C, retinol (vitamin A meant for healthy skin) peptides and vitamin K for healthy skin.
- Moisturiser: The key to healthier skin free of signs of ageing is hydration. Doctors advise using the right kind of it to prevent acne, breakouts and even dryness.
- Sunscreen: Sunscreen is also an essential element of the skincare routine. Try to use a good sun protection formula (SPF), strong enough to keep the ultraviolet rays of the sun at bay. Apply it 30 minutes before stepping out and apply regularly even on cloudy, rainy days.

Source: Times Now

Best habits for stronger bones at every age

Choose calcium-rich foods to keep your bones strong

Calcium is the building-block of bones. You can find calcium in foods like: Milk, Yogurt, Cheese, Kefir, Fortified plant-based beverages, like fortified soy beverage, Beans, tofu, nuts, fish and leafy green vegetables like collards and spinach

Get enough vitamin D to keep your bones strong

Vitamin D helps you absorb calcium in foods. You can find vitamin D in Milk, Fortified soy and other fortified plant-based beverages, Fatty fish like salmon and sardines, Margarine, Egg yolks, Fortified yogurts.

Some people have trouble getting enough vitamin D. Health Canada recommends that all adults over the age of 50 take a supplement with 400 IU of vitamin D each day. Speak to a dietitian or health care provider if you do not drink milk or fortified plant-based beverages. They can help you decide if you need a vitamin D supplement in addition to eating other vitamin D-rich foods, like this breakfast burrito. Perfect for an on-the-go breakfast.

Get enough nutrients to keep your bones strong

Potassium, vitamin K and magnesium help your body absorb and use calcium. Get these important nutrients by eating a variety of healthy foods like vegetables and fruit, legumes (beans, peas, lentils), nuts, seeds, whole grains, and fish. Protein helps to build muscle, which helps keep bones strong. Choose protein-rich foods such as meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, legumes (beans, peas, lentils), eggs, tofu, nuts, and seeds.

Stay active to keep your bones strong

Aim to be active for at least 150 minutes each week. Here are some ideas to help keep your bones strong.



Try: Weight-bearing exercises like running, walking, hiking, low impact aerobics, dancing, tennis and golf.

Resistance activities like lifting weights or push-ups to help build muscle, which keeps your bones strong.

Stretching exercises like yoga and tai chi to help improve balance and coordination, which will lower your risk of falling and breaking bones.

Limit caffeine to keep your bones strong

Having too much caffeine can decrease the amount of calcium you absorb. Aim for no more than 400mg of caffeine per day for adults - about 3 cups of coffee per day (1 cup = 8oz or 237mL). Pregnant and breastfeeding women should have no more than 300 mg caffeine per day (about 2 cups per day). *Source: UnlockFood*



Human antibodies found that can block multiple coronaviruses: Study

Scientists have found antibodies in the blood of certain Covid-19 donors that can block infection from a broad set of coronaviruses, specifically in people who have recovered from the SARS-CoV-2 virus and were then vaccinated.

The researchers from Scripps Research and the University of North Carolina (UNC), US, found this includes not only the Covid -19-causing SARS-CoV-2, but also SARS-CoV-1 and MERS-CoV.

The study, published in the journal *Immunity*, could lead to the development of a broad coronavirus vaccine and related antibody therapeutics. Both could be used against future coronavirus pandemics as well as any future variants of SARS-CoV-2.

"We show here that there are individual human monoclonal antibodies that can be found that protect against all three recent deadly coronaviruses: SARS-CoV-1, SARS-CoV-2 and MERS-CoV," said study co-senior author Raiees Andrabi, institute investigator at Scripps Research.

SARS-CoV-2, along with SARS-CoV-1 — the cause of the 2002-04 SARS outbreak — and MERS-CoV, the cause of deadly Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, belong to a broad grouping of coronaviruses known as betacoronaviruses.

These viruses mutate at a modestly high rate, creating a significant challenge for the development of vaccines and antibody therapies against them.

In the case of SARS-CoV-2, although existing vaccines have been very helpful in limiting the toll of disease and death from the pandemic, new SARS-CoV-2 variants have emerged that can spread even among vaccine recipients.

However, over the past two years, the team has been finding evidence that SARS-CoV-2 and other betacoronaviruses have a vulnerable site that does not mutate much. This site, which is in the S2 region (or base) of the viral spike protein, is relatively conserved on betacoronaviruses that infect a variety of animal species.

By contrast, current SARS-CoV-2 vaccines mainly target the viral spike protein's relatively mutable S1 region, with which the virus binds to host-cell receptors.

The S2 site plays a key role in how betacoronaviruses progress from receptor-binding to the membrane fusion that enables entry into host cells in the respiratory tract.

Common artificial sweetener linked to increased heart attack, stroke risk: Study

Consumption of popular artificial sweetener, erythritol, is associated with an increased risk of heart attack and stroke, according to a study which calls for further safety research to examine the long-term effects of such products.

Researchers at Cleveland Clinic studied over 4,000 people in the US and Europe and found those with higher blood erythritol levels were at elevated risk of experiencing a major adverse cardiac event such as heart attack, stroke or death.

They also examined the effects of adding erythritol to either whole blood or isolated platelets, which are cell fragments that clump together to stop bleeding and contribute to blood clots.

The study, published in the journal *Nature Medicine*, found that erythritol made platelets easier to activate and form a clot. Pre-clinical studies confirmed ingestion of erythritol heightened clot formation.

Artificial sweeteners are present in thousands of food and beverage brands worldwide, however they remain a controversial topic and are currently being re-evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority, the World Health Organization, and other health agencies.

The findings from a large-scale study published in the *British Medical Journal* in September last year found a potential direct association between higher artificial sweetener consumption, especially aspartame, acesulfame potassium, and sucralose, and increased cardiovascular disease risk.

"Sweeteners like erythritol have rapidly increased in popularity in recent years but there needs to be more



in-depth research into their long-term effects," said senior study author Stanley Hazen, co-section head of Preventive Cardiology at Cleveland Clinic.

"Cardiovascular disease builds over time, and heart disease is the leading cause of death globally. We need to make sure the foods we eat aren't hidden contributors," Hazen said in a statement.

Artificial sweeteners, such as erythritol, are common replacements for table sugar in low-calorie, low-carbohydrate and "keto" products. Sugar-free products containing erythritol are often recommended for people who have obesity, diabetes or metabolic syndrome and are looking for options to help manage their sugar or calorie intake. *Source: PTI*

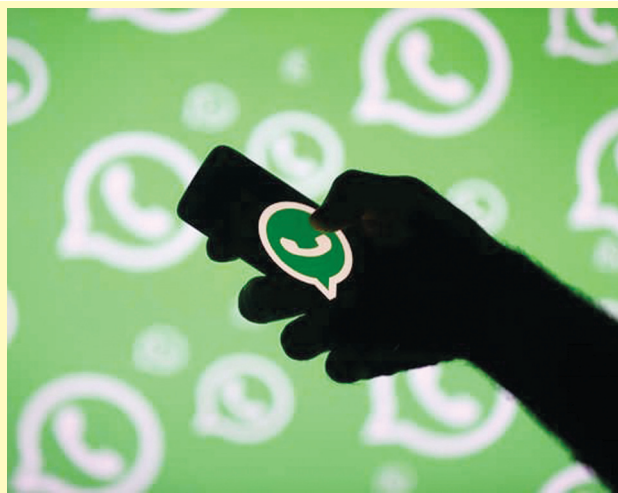
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WhatsApp rolling out 'Report status updates' feature on Android beta

Meta-owned messaging platform WhatsApp is rolling out a new feature, which will allow users to report status updates, on Android beta.

Beta testers will see a new "report" action within the status options, reports WABetaInfo.

With the new feature, users can report any status update that might violate the Terms of Service, which will then be sent to the company's moderation team.

Also, the feature makes sure that the messages, media, location sharing, calls and status updates are all protected by end-to-end encryption on all devices.

This means that no one else, not even WhatsApp, Meta and a proxy provider, can read the users' personal messages and listen to their private calls.

The new feature is useful as it will make the platform safe and secure for all users.

The ability to report status updates is available for some beta testers after installing the latest update of WhatsApp beta for Android on the Play Store, and is expected to roll out to more users over the coming days, the report said.

In January, it was reported that the messaging platform was working on this feature for Android beta.

Source: IANS

Snap introduces AI chatbot powered by OpenAI's GPT tech

Snap, the parent company of Snapchat, has introduced its new artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot for Snapchat. It is powered by the latest version of OpenAI's GPT technology.

The "My AI" chatbot is available as an experimental feature for Snapchat+ subscribers and will be rolling out this week, the company said in a blogpost.

"My AI can recommend birthday gift ideas for your BFF, plan a hiking trip for a long weekend, suggest a recipe for dinner, or even write a haiku about cheese for your cheddar-obsessed pal." Users can also name the chatbot and customise the wallpaper for their Chat.

My AI, like other AI-powered chatbots, is prone to hallucinations and can be tricked to say almost anything.

While My AI is built to avoid any sort of biased, inaccurate, dangerous or misleading content, mistakes might however happen.

Also, users can press and hold any message from My AI to provide feedback.

"Please be aware of its many deficiencies and sorry in advance! All conversations with My AI will be stored and may be reviewed to improve the product experience," the company said.

"Please do not share any secrets with My AI and do not rely on it for advice," it added.

How iPhone passcode is helping thieves steal your money and data

The passcode in iPhones that helps people unlock their devices is now giving thieves easy access to steal their money and data at public places.

According to Wall Street Journal, using a remarkably low-tech trick, thieves watch iPhone owners tap their passcodes, then steal their targets' phones and their digital lives. A 31-year-old senior economist at a workforce intelligence startup lost all photos, contacts and notes in her iPhone 13 Pro Max which was snatched at a bar in Midtown Manhattan and about \$10,000 vanished from her bank account in just 24 hours.

"With only the iPhone and its passcode, an interloper can within seconds change the password associated with the iPhone owner's Apple ID," said the report.

This would lock the victim out of their account, which includes anything stored in iCloud.

"The thief can also often loot the phone's financial apps since the passcode can unlock access to all the device's stored passwords," it added.

When the password change is complete, the software offers an option to force other Apple devices, such as Macs or iPads, to sign out of the Apple account, so a victim couldn't turn to those devices to regain access.



The Apple software never requires the user to enter an older password before setting a new one.

With the new password, the thief can disable Find My iPhone. Disabling Find My iPhone feature also allows the thief to resell the iPhone.

As Apple spokesperson said that iPhone is the most secure consumer mobile device, and "we work tirelessly every day to protect all our users from new and emerging threats". "We sympathise with users who have had this experience and we take all attacks on our users very seriously, no matter how rare," the spokesperson was quoted as saying.

"We will continue to advance the protections to help keep user accounts secure." Nearly all of the

victims had their iPhones stolen while they were out at night socialising at public places, pubs and bars.

In all cases, the iPhone owners were locked out of their Apple accounts.

"They then discovered thousands of dollars in financial thefts, including some combination of Apple Pay charges, drained bank accounts linked to phone apps and money taken from PayPal's Venmo and other money-sending apps," the report elaborated.

The same vulnerability is there in Google's Android mobile operating system but the "higher resale value of iPhones makes them a far more common target", according to law enforcement officials.

Companies begin replacing human employees with ChatGPT

Microsoft-owned ChatGPT has started replacing humans at workplaces as some companies have implemented the AI chatbot to perform the work being done earlier by employees, saving thousands of dollars.

Companies that use ChatGPT said they saved money using the AI tool, with 48 per cent saved over \$50,000 and 11 per cent saved over \$100,000, according to a report in Fortune.

Job advice platform Resumebuilder.com surveyed 1,000 business leaders who either use or plan to use ChatGPT.

It found that about half of their companies have implemented chatbots. And nearly half of this group say that "ChatGPT has already converted employees at their companies".

"As this new technology is growing in the workplace right now, workers definitely need to think about how it may affect their current job responsibilities," Stacey Haller, chief career advisor at



Resume Builder was quoted as saying in the report.

Companies are using ChatGPT to write codes, copywriting and content creation, customer support and preparing meeting summaries.

About 77 per cent of firms using ChatGPT said they use it to help write job descriptions and 66 per cent said the AI chatbot is drafting interview solicitations.

In a survey, Resume Builder found that job seekers are also utilising AI chatbot ChatGPT for resumes and cover letters.

Almost 1 in 2 current and recent job seekers have used ChatGPT to write their resumes and/or cover letters.

Of the 1,000 respondents who admitted to using ChatGPT for their application materials, 72 per cent said they used the tool to write cover letters, and 51 per cent say they used it to write resumes.

Most respondents were satisfied with the results from ChatGPT, as 76 per cent of respondents said the quality of application materials written by ChatGPT is 'high' or 'very high'.

Additionally, 28 per cent said they only had to do 'a little bit' or 'no' editing to resumes and/or cover letters written by ChatGPT.

Microsoft recently introduced AI-powered Bing search engine, Edge web browser, and integrated Chat.

The company is testing it with a select set of people in over 169 countries to get real-world feedback to learn and improve.

Source: IANS

Adani sells stake in four group companies for Rs 15,446 crore

The embattled Adani Group has sold minority stakes in four of its listed companies to US-based GQG Partners for Rs 15,446 crore as the apple-to-airport conglomerate, recovering from a sell-off triggered by a short-seller report, looks to shore up liquidity ahead of the \$2 billion debt repayment due in the coming months.

It sold shares in flagship incubating firm Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL), port company Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ), electricity transmitting firm Adani Transmission Ltd (AEL) and renewable energy firm Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL).

"GQG is investing in Adani portfolio companies which own and operate the largest airport and port platform in India, largest private sector transmission and distribution platform in India and that will generate about 9% of India's renewable energy capacity by 2030," it said on Thursday.

The deal happened through secondary market block deals.

"The investment has made GQG a key investor in the development and growth of critical Indian infrastructure," it added.

The share sale is part of the Gautam Adani-led Group's comeback strategy after a damning report from an American short seller wiped out more than \$140 billion off the conglomerate's market value.

Source: PTI

Singapore Airlines to get 25.1% stake in Air India Group

Singapore Airlines' (SIA) deal with Tata Sons will inject a further \$267 million into Air India. It will give SIA a 25.1% stake in the Air India Group following its takeover by Tata and merger with Vistara Airlines.

The November 2022 deal between SIA and Tata Sons to further inject \$267 million into Air India is one of the key strategic initiatives for future growth mentioned in the quarterly financial report.

SIA said, "The merged entity will be four to five times larger compared to Vistara. The proposed merger will bolster SIA's presence in India, strengthen its multi-hub strategy, and allow it to continue participating directly in this large and fast-growing aviation market." The airline further said, "Deeper collaboration with like-minded airlines is an integral part of the SIA Group's partnerships strategy. This enables SIA and its partners to drive more traffic to their hubs, offer more options to customers, and increase the Group's global footprint."

IMF flags debt restructuring hurdles, says banning crypto should be an option

Group of 20 (G20) nations have some disagreements over restructuring debt for distressed economies, the chief of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Saturday, adding that banning private cryptocurrencies should be an option.

India's G20 presidency comes as its South Asian neighbours Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan are seeking urgent IMF funds due to an economic slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war.

China, the world's largest bilateral creditor, urged the group of big economies on Friday to conduct a fair, objective and in-depth analysis of the causes of global debt issues as clamour grows for lenders to take a large haircut, or accept losses, on loans.

"On debt restructuring, while there are still some disagreements, we now have the global sovereign debt roundtable with consideration of all public and private creditors," IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva told reporters after chairing the roundtable with Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

"We just finished a session in which it was clear that there is a commitment to bridge differences for the benefit of countries."

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said there were no "deliverables" from the meeting, which was mostly organisational.

Further discussions of the panel, which includes major bilateral creditors including China, India and the G7 countries, several debtor countries, are planned around the time of the IMF and World Bank spring meetings in April.

"We certainly had that agreement that this is a useful forum," Yellen told Reuters in an interview. "We look forward to participating in it."

CRYPTO RESTRICTIONS

Apart from restructuring debt, regulating cryptocurrencies is another priority area for India, which Georgieva agreed with.

"We have to differentiate between central bank digital currencies that are backed by the state and stable coins, and crypto assets that are privately issued," Georgieva said.

"There has to be a very strong push for regulation... if regulation fails, if you're slow to do it, then we should not take off the table banning those assets, because they may create financial stability risks."



Yellen said she had not suggested the "outright banning of crypto activities, but it was critical to put in place a strong regulatory framework."

Source: Reuters

IMF urges central banks to 'stay the course' till prices tamed

Central banks globally must remain vigilant until inflation is firmly under control, according to International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva.

"I want to be clear we are not yet seeing inflation going down to target fast enough," Georgieva told Bloomberg Television's Haslinda Amin on the sidelines of the Group of 20 finance chiefs' meetings in Bengaluru, India. "Central banks need to stay the course until we are comfortable that price stability is returning."

As many central bankers begin to slow their policy tightening, inflation prints across the world remain sticky. With China reopening at a pace that's exceeded expectations, Georgieva remained hopeful that domestic consumption there remains a growth driver for the world with little risk for an additional inflation flare-up.

In the US, the personal consumption expenditures price index rose 5.4% in January from a year earlier and the core metric was up 4.7%, both marking pickups after several months of declines. In Europe, underlying inflation is forecast to stay at a record 5.3% and in many parts of Asia, including India and Australia, core inflation has remained sticky.

Source: Bloomberg

World's richest lost a combined \$10 trillion in 2022: Report

The world's richest people, dubbed as 'ultra-high net worth individuals' (UHNWIs) have shed a cumulative wealth of \$10 trillion or 10% from their net worth in 2022, due to global economic uncertainty, energy crisis and, geopolitical situations, a report by a London-based real estate consultancy firm Knight Frank has revealed.

The wealthy people in Europe were at the centre of the crisis, losing an average of 17% from their fortunes, Knight Frank in its The Wealth Report 2023 said on Wednesday, while the Australia region recorded 11% drop and the America shed 10%. In comparison, Africa witnessed the smallest decline with 5%, followed by Asia and the Middle East at 7%, the report added.

According to Knight Frank, UHNWIs are those who possess a net worth of \$30 million or more, including assets.

"The fall in wealth is unsurprising given the dramatic pivot in monetary



policy that culminated in the worst performance for the traditional blended portfolio since the 1930s," said Liam Bailey, Knight Frank's head of research.

Global economic uncertainty — compounded by the Russia-Ukraine war and high inflation has stoked buoyancy

globally.

"The Ukraine crisis fuelled the European energy crunch and supercharged already surging inflation. As a result, 2022 saw one of the sharpest upward movements in global interest rates in history, leading to economic conditions that Collins English dictionary neatly dubbed the 'permacrisis'," added Bailey.

Although 40% of the UHNWIs recorded an increase in their net worth in 2022, the overwhelming trend was negative for the world's super-rich, driven by a change in residential and commercial property values, fixed income, investments of passion and other assets.

However, one interesting development was highlighted in the report. It found that the ultra-luxury properties changed hands much more frequently. Houses above \$25 million changed hands 43 times in London and New York.

Source: HT

Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MARCH 6 TO MARCH 12, 2023



ARIES : Ganesha says, your colleagues and managers will appreciate your effort. Your ability to communicate will be commended. Those who are considering shifting careers should wait till later. Due to divergent viewpoints, there can be minor problems within the household, but all will be Alright shortly. Love for you will be where it should be just now. Your partner may really turn out to be a fantastic friend. Make an effort to understand how people believe regarding you prior to making judgments. Now, you may take the next step in your romantic life. You can discuss the subject with your companion to find out their opinion. This week, your wellness will be terrific. This week, you may concentrate on eating regularly.



TAURUS : Ganesha says, this week, the odds will be on the side of those placed underneath this sign because they'll be at the height of their power to seize and will receive the required wealth. Individuals who have been hoping to quit their boring employment and start their own business will find this week to be a terrific week. Individuals who have previously launched a business will be allowed to instantly make up their damages. This week, your spouse may try to modify aspects of you that you may not appreciate, but you must realize that those adjustments are being made for your own benefit. Another of your greatest tendencies is to create compromises when it involves your well-being. This week, resolve to go above and beyond to maintain your fitness.



GEMINI : Ganesha says this week is the time for you to regain squandered focus on your organization. There may be times when you and your friend dispute, but this time maintaining your cool down can help. It's best to reserve making significant decisions this week since you could feel a bit pompous. Your mentors must have eagerly waited for you to finish the assignments they have given you, and this week is it. Your spouse will be working and unable to visit you; try not to let this affect your connection. There is anything to stress about with regards to your wellness.



CANCER : Ganesha says, this week, you'll defend your strict schedules and tactics from rivals while also having an important conversation about development. You'll be able to create compelling professional defenses this week. In order to be honest with them and assist them realize their advantages and weaknesses, your spouse will request your assistance and counsel about their job or employment. If maintaining your health is the last thing on your

checklist, stop treating your physique like a computer and adjust your training program.



LEO : Ganesha says, it's an excellent week to start a corporation this week. This week will be prosperous for people in the agriculture industry. Aside from just that, this week's youngster will undoubtedly see a change in fortunes; while it may feel that your hard work is futile at the start of each week, by the conclusion of this week, you will still have made substantial progress. This week, you will be able to provide for your companion as well, which will make them happy. Maintain a secure atmosphere as your cardiovascular troubles are likely to annoy you somewhat during the latter part of the week.



VIRGO : Ganesha says, you're going to have a fantastic time this week. Perform all tasks with diligence. Bright colors should be present to boost confidence. Tints have a notoriety for drawing in the wrong crowd and leaving you feeling helpless. They have to be capable of functioning in various environments and with various types of individuals. Don't take your possessions too seriously. Since anything can sever the relationship between you and your lover since you were intended to be together, you must resolve this week to combat this negative time together. You should enjoy a calm time outdoors since your body occasionally needs to rest.



LIBRA : Ganesha says, your week will begin just how you had hoped, but it will develop progressively. You will be forced to choose between two significant professional duties, but you will most likely make the correct decision. After everything, trust your instincts. The individual you are drawn to will consider asking you out. Taking matters slowly with them and refrain from inquiring about their prior romances. This week, your wellness requires consideration. If you don't already have a routine, make an appointment for a scheduled check-up this week if you forget to go to one this week.



SCORPIO : Ganesha says your business will thrive this week, I promise. You'll devise fresh solutions for dealing with your issues. For people new to the field, this week is a great one to unwind. On an individual basis, issues with your close family members will be addressed. Your kids will be capable of both creativity and cognition this week. This week, you should astonish your lover. Do not even delay significant events to show someone you care about by giving them a present or making them experience something amazing; if you two get along, every week should count. You'll be in good condition. This week, you need to be vigilant and advised against drinking too much water.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says, someone could try to influence your decisions and persuade you to make a choice a different path, but you have to decide what feels best for you. This week, expenditures for your business are probably going to be high and earnings are probably going to be down, but don't worry-you'll soon be back on track. Now that you can, consider getting married. You should discuss it with your company's family this week. Becoming authentic rather than portraying a false character would be helpful. Take good care of yourself this week if you have problems with your blood glucose or hypertension. Try to stay away from sugary foods and go for a stroll.



CAPRICORN : Ganesha says, you'll have many opportunities to take advantage of as well. You'll follow your emotions, and they'll help you make the right choices. In the first half of the week, your work will leave you appear depressed and worn out, your endeavors will be appreciated, and you will benefit from them. The income you thought you'd squandered by lending will be given back to you this week. A husband and wife must rebuild their marriage. This week, they ought to meet together. For couples, a date is on the agenda. Good mental and physical well-being are the foundation of your wellness; thus, you must maintain both while being informed regarding each.



AQUARIUS : Ganesha says, this week, you're destined to display a lot of bravery. You'll take a few risky decisions. This week, unpleasant thoughts that have bothered you for a while will go. You will be employed for a lot greater than usual thanks to your job. They will glance up to you as an example among your coworkers. This week, be careful to steer clear of the stock market. You're frustrated because your romantic life is moving too slowly. This week, your spouse has scheduled a talk with you, and you need to participate actively in it. Due to your propensity for colds and coughs, use caution.



PISCES : Ganesha says, you will utilize your skills and knowledge to the fullest extent this week. Anything you were a beginner at before, you'll be an expert at. Your superiors will be aware of you. Also, you'll receive certain advantages. Resist overspending if you're in business since you won't be capable of managing your money well. Your connection is about to develop. Both of you will be capable of seeing deeper into the prospective if you maintain your endurance and have faith in your relationship. Your wellness will be good, but you'll need to give the little ones and the aged in the family additional attention. This week don't let them rely on housekeepers or caregivers.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MARCH 6 TO MARCH 12, 2023 BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

MARCH 6 : Ganesha says although you are a nice and outgoing person, you need to check your tendency to occasionally act restless. Changes in your profession or career could be the result of certain uncontrollable situations. Although many factors would not be in your favor, support and assistance from friends and family members would give you new energy and make things more comfortable than they otherwise might be. Profits from sales of real estate, investments, and gifts cannot be completely ruled out. Today's spiritual progress gives solace and comfort.

MARCH 7 : Ganesha says you naturally have the ability to lift the spirits of others who are down and depressed, but you need to learn to curb your tendency to seem shy, and spendthrift at times. Your personality and self-assurance will grow, and your career will advance significantly. Your talents and knowledge will be valued by your employer. The selling of a piece of

property, the collection of rent, dividends, or interest will all result in extra financial gains for you. A wonderful time to purchase pricey artwork and decorations is now.

MARCH 8 : Ganesha says at work, you'll see significant progress. Your relationships with coworkers and clients will improve, but managing your superiors will be challenging. The property-related issue that has been bothering you will be resolved to your satisfaction. As your partner expresses more trust in you than ever before, your romantic relationship will grow stronger. There will be jealous people around you as you receive gifts and presents and experience a blossoming romance. The family's elders and young ones will need a lot of your attention.

MARCH 9 : Ganesha says as a result of your increased business travel, your personal life may experience some stress. The pace of previously sluggish projects will pick up. Although romance will

thrive, avoid pressuring your partner to change his or her behavior and be ready for conflicts. Today will bring considerably lower financial gains than you anticipate, despite the fact that your competitive attitude will keep you ahead of the competition. You should take care of your health today as it may give you some irritation, so take care.

MARCH 10 : Ganesha says throughout this time, you will learn new things, gather information, and create enduring connections. You'll become more efficient and handle your money a lot better, which will enhance your gains. The likelihood of businessmen entering the service sector or anything related to computers is high and advantageous. Yoga and meditation should be practiced for both physical and spiritual benefits. Your children will likely have some exciting news to share.

MARCH 11 : Ganesha says you'll feel energized and ready to take on any challenge. For individuals wishing to shift careers today appears to be

particularly favorable since they will receive a great employment offer. There will be frequent and successful travel. At this time, you will also strengthen your connections with significant others. Youngsters will surpass their parents' expectations and receive awards in school. Family members will assemble around you and show you love and affection.

MARCH 12 : Ganesha says you need to manage your propensity to act more tense and restless at trying moments. You'll be incredibly receptive to innovative workplace strategies. Gains in finances are a given, and you'll spend more on items to enhance your lifestyle and living comforts. Businesspeople will make crucial connections. Travelling and participating in clubs and other social activities will be beneficial to you. While being supportive, a spouse and kids may occasionally act in a demanding manner. Pregnant women must take extra care to maintain their health.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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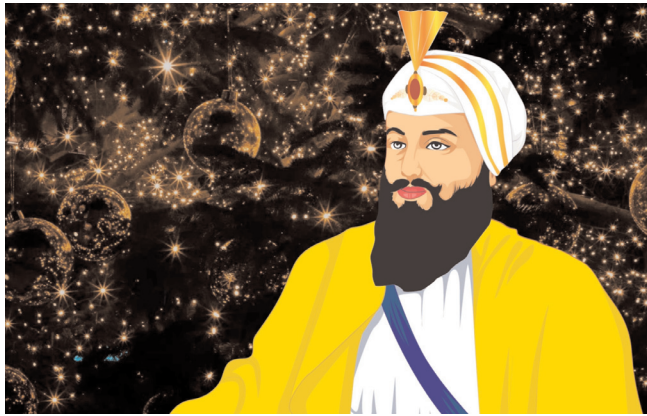


Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Sikh History This Week

MARCH 3, 2023, TO MARCH 9, 2023

3rd March



1644 Sixth Patshah, Guru Hargobind Ji departed from this planet at Kirtapur. This is the actual date of Joti Jot, although it is observed on a different date by Guru Khalsa Panth.

1762 Ahmad Shah Abdali, upon reaching Lahore, displays the heads of Sikhs by hanging them on doors and walls.

1921 Speaking at Shaheedi Diwan, Gandhi sought to integrate the Gurudwara reform movement into the national movement against colonialism. He wanted them "to dedicate their martyrdom to Bharat mata and believe that the Khalsa can remain free only in a free India." With this event Gandhi, in his immitable style took politics into religion which the Central Sikh League, a political organisation, had carefully avoided by leaving the reform movement to the SGPC. Gandhi was a "Hindu holy man with political cloak" in quest for power. Sikhs weren't immediately taken in. However, the damage had been done. Gandhi had sown the seeds of division in the Tat Khalsa which sprouted only a few months later.

1923 Dacoity at Jamsar railway station ius committed by the Babbar Akalis.

1924 3rd Shahidi Jatha of 500 valiant Akali Satyagrahies, led by Sardar Santa Singh of Chuck No. 133, Sargodha, courted arrest at Jaito.

1947 Muslim League asked to form government in the Punjab. Sikh leaders met in the chamber of Assembly, Lahore. A mammoth crowd raised provocative slogans. At this point, Master Tara Singh came out, unleashed his sword and said "we shall lay down our lives but won't concede Pakistan." With this, it became famous that Master Tara Singh had cut off the Pakistan Flag. In actuality, Master Tara Singh did not tear any flag. However, being a fiery speaker, it was perceived that he did.

4th March

1716 Marked the killing of Sikhs in Delhi, under the protection of Sarabrah Khan. 100 Sikhs were killed on the first day.

1953 Akali led government of PEPSU province dismissed without any ground.

1988 Jasbir Singh Rode, a nephew of Jarnail Singh Bhindrawalae, who had been nominated as the Chief Granthi of Sri Akal Takhat, was won over by Rajiv Gandhi, while he was in jail. Under a secret agreement he was released on this day. He tried to confuse the Sikh masses as planned but the Sikh nation rejected him in the same manner as Ragi Darshan Singh. He called a meeting of Sarbat Khalsa at Talwandi Sabo on April 13, 1988. Even this congregation declared that the Sikh nation would not compromise its freedom.

5th March



1716 Marks the begining of systematic execution of 740 Sikh soliders. After their surrender at the fort of Gurdas Nangal, Banda Singh Bahadhur, the valiant Sikh General and his 740 solidiers were taken to Delhi. From Mar. 5 through Mar. 11, these solidiers along with Banda Bahadhur were executed in groups of 100. They were given the option to adopt Islam and escape execution. However, each one of these solidiers refused the offer and instead willingly accepted shahadet with unflinching faith and fortitude.

1748 Khalsa Panth gathered at Anandpur Sahib for Holla Mehla observations and resolved to gather in Amritsar for Vaisakhi celebrations.

1892 The foundation stone for Khalsa College, a Shiromani education institution for Sikhs, was laid in Amritsar by J.B. Loyal. Prof. Gurmukh Singh was instrumental its establishment after more than a decade of tireless efforts. The College Council was controlled by its Vice-President Sit Attar Singh Bhadaur with Jawahar Singh serving as General Secretary.

1921 Gurudwara Sach Khand (Chuharkana) Sahib was forcibly taken over and brought under the control of SGPC.

1948 Khalsa Panth gathered at Anandpur Sahib for Holla Mehla observations and resolved to gather in Amritsar for Vaisakhi celebrations.

1955 Punjabi Suba Conference was held at Patiala.

1971 Elections to Indian Lower House were held. Akali Dal won 1 of the 13 Punjab seats.

6th March

1752 The cooperation between Sikhs and Mir Mannu snapped as a result of Kaura Mal's death. This was evident from action during Abdali's third invasion. The Sikhs under the patronage of Diwan Kaura Mal, a Khulasa Sikhs, had cooperated with Mir Mannu. henceforth, Mir Mannu as a nominee of Afghans pursued the policy of extirpating Sikhs. If nothing else, their women and children were taken to Nakhas, Lahore, in hundreds, and were subjected to gruesome torture and martyred. In 18 months, he killed about 30,000 Sikhs. The peasantry crushed, because of the Afghan depredations and roving provincial troops in search of the Sikh families, joined the Khalsa fold in large numbers who offered them protection.

1752 Diwan Kodha Mal, also known as Mitha Mal, died while fighting in Lahore.

1834 Peshawar occupied by Sikhs. Ranjit Singh sent a force under Hari Singh Nalwa, Ventura and Court under nominal command of Prince Nau Nihal Singh. Pathan chiefs sent their families away as they were aware of the duplicity Of Shah Shujah and Ranjit Singh's intention to occupy Peshawar. They agreed to enhance the tribute but the Sikh army occupied Peshawar on the pretext that the Prince wanted to see the town and the Pathan chiefs left the city. Hari Singh Nalwa was appointed Governor of Peshawar along with the Governorship Of Hazara. British did not appreciate Sikh occupation of Peshawar. Sikh coins struck from Peshawar.



1921 Gurudwara Manak Sahib was forcibly taken over and brought under the control of SGPC.

7th March

1921 Gurudwara Tham Sahib was forcibly taken over and brought under the control of SGPC.

1959 SGPC at its general meeting accepted the announcement of Sri Damdama Sahib as Guru Khalsa Panth's fifth Takhat.

1966 The formation of Punjabi Suba was declared.



1966 On the occasion of Hola Mohalla festival at Takhat Sri Kesgarh, Sri Anandpur Sahib, Khalsa Panth declared that all Hindi letters from the official boards, signs, and milestones be obliterated throughout the state and the Sikhs removed all those.

8th March

1644 Patshahi Seventh, Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji, ascended to Guruship. Guru Hargobind had five sons, three of whom had died during his life time. Of the two who had survived him, SURaj Mal, born in 1617, was a worldly man, with only a moderate interest in religion, and Tegh Bahadhur, born in 1621, was a recluse. So by the command of Guru hargobind, the young Har Rai, grandson of the Guru, who was fourteen years old, was anointed as the seventh Guru of the Sikhs. The ceremony was performed by Baba Bhana, son of Baba Budha. Just before his death, Guru Hargobind put five paisas and a coconut before Har Rai, bowed to him and Baba Bhana put on his forehead the saffron mark and declared him to be the seventh Guru of the Sikhs.

1758 Sikhs attacked Lahore. Taemur escaped to Kabul. Adina Begh became the new Governor and initiated atrocities against Sikhs.



1853 Maharaja Dalip Singh coverted to Christianity. Christian missionaries had spread their network to Lahore, Amritsar and other parts of the Punjab after its annexation. They saw hopeful signs of conversion of the Sikhs and made them a special target.

9th March

1783 Sikh forces, under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Baghel Singh attacked Delhi and ransacked Houz Khaas after breaking the Mori Gate. Sabzi Mandi, Malkagunj and Pahari Dhiraj areas were plundered. Sikhs set up their headquarters at Majnu Tilla, out-skirts of Delhi. During this attack the Sikh forces captured Delhi. Sardar Baghel Singh returned to Punjab only after getting some major concessions for the Sikhs, raising Kesri Flag on Red Fort and constructing seven historical Gurudwaras connected with Sikh Gurus, including Sis Ganj and Rakab Ganj as memorials to the martyrdom of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadhur.

Phalguni Purnima falls on the full moon day in the month of Phalguni, which typically falls between February and March. It is a significant day in the Hindu calendar as many Devotees observe fast and perform certain religious rituals for good luck and fortune.

There are various other festivals which are also celebrated in the month of Phalguna such as Holi, Vasant Panchami, etc.

Devotees usually keep a fast on this particular day and worship Moon God and Lord Vishnu.

Phalgun Purnima is also associated with other important events in Hindu mythology, such as Holika Dahan, which is believed to have taken place on this day.

So, let's get to know more about the Date, Rituals and Significance of Phalgun Purnima 2023.

This year, Phalgun Purnima will be observed on Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

Purnima Tithi Starts: 04:17 p.m on March 06, 2023

Purnima Tithi Ends: 06:09 p.m on March 07, 2023

Significance of Phalgun Purnima

According to the Hindu calendar, Phalgun Purnima is regarded as the last Purnima of the Hindu Calendar. It usually falls in February or March of the Gregorian calendar. Also, the festival of Holi or Holika Dahan falls on this day.

Moreover, on this particular day, at numerous places, people also celebrate Lakshmi Jayanti, which is the birth anniversary of Goddess Lakshmi, the deity of abundance and wealth. According to Hindu scriptures, people who observe Phalgun Purnima vrat and worship Lord Vishnu and God Moon on this day are bestowed with the divine blessings of the Lord and also their present and past sins are resolved.

Here are some of the key beliefs and practices associated with Phalgun Purnima

Celebration of the Arrival of Spring

Phalgun Purnima marks the arrival of spring, which is celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy. The festival is a time for people to come together, play with colours and enjoy the beauty of nature.

Victory of Good Over Evil

The festival is also associated with the legend of Holika and Prahlad. According to the legend, Prahlad was a devotee of Lord Vishnu, while his father Hiranyakashipu was a demon who wanted to kill Prahlad for his devotion. Hiranyakashipu's sister, Holika, was given a boon that she could not be harmed by fire. She attempted to kill Prahlad by sitting on a pyre with him, but Lord Vishnu protected Prahlad and Holika was burned to death. The festival is a celebration of the victory of good over evil.

Social Harmony

Phalgun Purnima is also a time when people forget their differences and come together to celebrate. The festival is a time for forgiveness, renewal of relationships, and spreading love and happiness.

Agricultural Significance

The festival also has agricultural significance, as it marks the end of the winter crop season and the beginning of the spring crop season.

Overall, Phalgun Purnima is a festival that celebrates the beauty of nature, the victory of good over evil, and the importance of social harmony and relationships.

Phalgun Purnima 2023 Vrat Puja Vidhi

Phalgun Purnima holds greater significance for performing Satyanarayan puja to please Lord Satyanarayan and Maa Lakshmi to attract fortune and success. So, let's find the religious rituals to be performed on Chaitra Purnima.

On the day of Phalgun Purnima, wake up early morning and take a holy bath in the sacred rivers or water reservoirs as it is regarded as highly auspicious and fortunate to do so.

After taking a holy bath, you must perform Lord Vishnu puja either in the temple or at the workshop or at home.

Recite the Satyanarayan Katha after performing the ritual of Vishnu puja.

Then visit any nearby temple of Lord Vishnu and worship and offer prayers to the deity.

Also, chanting the Gayatri mantra and 'Om Nam

Phalgun Purnima



Narayana' mantra 1008 times in a row is termed as highly auspicious.

Make as many donations as possible on the eve of Phalgun Purnima.

Donate food, clothes, and money to the needy.

Mythological Legends Behind Phalgun Purnima

There are several mythological legends associated with this festival. So, let's find out in detail.

Legend of Holika and Prahlad

According to Hindu mythology, there was a demon king named Hiranyakashipu who was granted a boon that he could not be killed by any human or animal, neither indoors nor outdoors, neither during the day nor at night, neither on land nor in the air nor in water. However, his son Prahlad was an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu and refused to worship his father as a god. Hiranyakashipu tried to kill Prahlad several times, but Lord Vishnu always saved him. Finally, Hiranyakashipu's sister Holika, who was immune to fire, tricked Prahlad into sitting on her lap on a burning pyre. However, Lord Vishnu saved Prahlad, and Holika was burned to death. This event is celebrated on the night before Phalgun Purnima as Holika Dahan.

Legend of Mata Lakshmi

According to mythology, when the churning of the ocean took place between the gods and the demons, fourteen gems came out one by one from the churning of the ocean. Mother Lakshmi was one of these fourteen gems. Mata Lakshmi had a Kalash in one hand and the other hand was in a groom pose. After being born from the churning of the ocean, Goddess Lakshmi chose Lord Shri Hari Vishnu as her husband. According to beliefs, Goddess Lakshmi was born during the churning of the ocean on the full moon day of Phalgun month. For this reason, every Falgun Purnima day is celebrated as Lakshmi Jayanti, the birthday of Goddess Lakshmi.

Legend of Radha and Krishna

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna was fond of playing pranks and throwing colours on the

gopis (cowherd girls) of Vrindavan. One of these gopis was Radha Rani, who is considered to be Lord Krishna's beloved. The festival of Holi is celebrated to commemorate the playful and romantic relationship between Radha and Lord Krishna.

Legend of Kamadeva

According to Hindu mythology, Kamadeva, the god of love, was once burned to ashes by Lord Shiva's third eye when he was trying to awaken the Lord from his meditation. However, Kamadeva's wife Rati pleaded with Lord Shiva to bring him back to life. Lord Shiva granted her wish and brought Kamadeva back to life on the day of Phalgun Purnima. Therefore, this day is considered to be auspicious for love and relationships.

Overall, Phalgun Purnima is a festival that celebrates the triumph of good over evil, the power of love, and the onset of spring.

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Romantic getaway to Udaipur

With the majestic city palace looming over the old city, a lake studded with palaces in the middle and romantic restaurants interspersed in every nook and corner, couples will never run out of things to do in Udaipur. As the backdrop of countless romantic movies, Udaipur charms with its regal splendour and stately aura. Pretend to be king and queen for a day, slow down on a romantic boat ride, stay near the glistening waters of Lake Pichola and walk hand-in-hand through Dudh Talai—here is your guide to discovering Udaipur's most romantic spots.

Spend an evening around at Dudh Talai

The perfect place to catch stunning sunset views of Jag Mandir and City Palace, Dudh Talai sits along the south-eastern part of Udaipur's Lake Pichola. Home to two verdant parks—the M.L Verma Garden and the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Park—Dudh Talai offers the ideal escape from the rigours of city life. Carved out of a rugged rock, the M.L Verma Garden is a rock garden that has panoramic views of the twinkling Lake Pichola. The Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Park, often known as the Dudh Talai Musical Garden, houses a spectacular music fountain—one of its kind in the entire state of Rajasthan. Adventure lovers can also hop onto the Karni Mata Ropeway to take in unbeatable views of the city below.

Take a boat ride on Lake Pichola

This picturesque lake lies at the heart of Udaipur. It is believed that it was constructed by a local gypsy in the 14th century, and later consolidated by the ruler of Mewar, Rana Udai Singh II in the 16th century. Its coast is lined with the City Palace, ghats, havelis and hills, while the lake itself is dotted with numerous island palaces. To see these, you can take the hour-long boat ride from City Palace.

Its centrepiece is the Lake Palace on Jag Niwas Island. Made entirely of white marble, it is one of Udaipur's most iconic sights. It has appeared in several films, most famously in the 1983 James Bond movie, 'Octopussy'. Now a luxury hotel managed by the Taj group, it was originally built as a summer retreat by Rana Jagat Singh II in 1740. Even if you aren't staying here, you can drop in for a meal at one of its restaurants.

The Jagmandir Island Palace was built during the 16th and 17th centuries, and used as a pleasure palace. It served as a hideout for as Prince Khurram (before he became the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan), when he revolted against his father Jahangir. During the 1857 revolt, it again provided refuge to European women and children. It has beautiful carvings, a pretty green marble chhatra, a small museum, and a restaurant offering scenic views. There's also a permanent exhibition of photographs, maps, paintings and architectural drawings. Other smaller buildings include Mohan Mandir which was used by the king to watch the annual Gangaur festival celebrations, and Arsvilas which was built in the 18th century and served as an ammunition depot and later, a small palace



Catch a spectacular sunset at Sajjan Garh

This hilltop palace was built in the 19th century by Sajjan Singh as a Monsoon Palace. It's short drive up the Banswara hill through the densely forested Sajjan Garh Wildlife Sanctuary. While there isn't much to see inside the actual palace, it's an ideal vantage point to take in breathtaking views of Udaipur city as well as the surrounding countryside at sunset. You can also stop at the charming garden café for coffee and snacks

Discover the regal splendour of City Palace

This sprawling complex is the largest palace in Rajasthan. It was first built by Maharana Udai Singh, the founder of Udaipur in the 16th century, and expanded by successive rulers. Today, the palace is divided into several museums for which you can get a package rate at the City Palace's entrance in Badi Pol. The City Palace museum is the first of these, and comprises of a series of mahals, courtyards and private chambers, connected by narrow passages. You'll find traditional Mewari paintings, colourful mosaics, stained glass windows and beautiful mirror-work everywhere, with occasional breathtaking glimpses of the city and the lake outside.

In the Fateh Prakash Palace next door, the Crystal Gallery provides proof of the ruling dynasty's love for luxury. It exhibits an array of crystal objects such as glasses, dinner sets, and even furniture pieces such as beds. These were made by the British manufacturer FC Osler & Co. and commissioned by Maharana Sajjan Singh between 1878 and 1881. The palace's opulent Durbar Hall has glittering chandeliers, royal portraits and arms. Your ticket also entitles you to a cup of coffee and snacks in this palace hotel's restaurant. Further away from the City Palace, the Vintage and Classic Car Collection exhibits vintage cars from the royal family's collection. Highlights include a 1939 Cadillac convertible and a 1934 Rolls Royce Phantom II. These are housed in the former Mewar State Motor Garage. The tour also includes a boat ride and visit to the Jagmandir Island Palace, which has a heritage exhibition and an all-day café.



Spend a night at 18th-century fort-palace

Surrounded by Aravali hills, this heritage hotel lies 28 kilometers away from the city of Udaipur. Considered to be among the most stylish and romantic resorts in the country, it is housed in an 18th-century hill-top fort palace in the village of Delwara. Its rich heritage is complimented by a contemporary landscape design, with the interiors have been refurbished in a minimalist

style, using local raw materials, white marble and semi-precious stones. It has 39 luxury suites, including 17 garden suites, 16 palace suites, 5 Aravali suites and the plushiest accommodation of them all, the Devi Garh Suite. Devi Garh also houses India's first la Terre Spa by L'Occitane, which offers Swedish, Hawaiian, Lomi Lomi, Balinese, Ayurvedic and Shiatsu treatments.

contd from page 1

President to appoint CEC, ECs on...

The judgment has now brought the appointment process of Chief Election Commissioners and Election Commissioners on par with that of the CBI Director.

Justice K.M. Joseph, who authored the unanimous judgment for the five-member Bench, said what the Election Commission of India requires are "honest, independent" commissioners who could distinguish right from wrong, those who can "ordinarily and unrelentingly take on the high and mighty and persevere in the righteous path".

In a concurring opinion, Justice Ajay Rastogi added that the procedural safeguards in place for effecting the removal of a Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) should be extended to the Election Commissioners under the first proviso to Article 324(5) of the Constitution. A CEC, like Supreme Court judges, can be removed from office only by way of a parliamentary process. However, no such protection of tenure is available to the Election Commissioners.

In his judgment, Justice Joseph said the fate of political parties and democracy rests in the hands of the Election Commission and "the buck stops at the table of the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners". In a substantive democracy, the power to vote is "more potent than the most powerful gun". People depend on an honest Election Commissioner, blessed with extraordinary powers, to guard the purity of the electoral process.

"The people of the country look up to the Election Commissioners... A person who is weak-kneed before the powers that be cannot be appointed as an Election Commissioner. A person who is in a state of obligation or feels indebted to the one who appointed him, fails the nation. Such a person cannot have a place in the conduct of elections which forms the foundation of democracy... An Election Commissioner should be one who holds the scale evenly in the stormiest of times by not being servile to the powerful and by coming to the rescue of the weak and the wronged. This would qualify as true independence," Justice Joseph wrote.

The court noted that 75 years have passed since Independence, yet successive political dispensations which have come to power so far have not lifted a finger to frame a law guiding the appointments to the Election Commission. "Political parties betray a special interest in not forthcoming with a law. The reasons are not far to seek... There is a crucial link between the independence of the Election Commission and the pursuit of power by parties, their consolidation and perpetuation... An insatiable quest to continue in the saddle requires a pliable Election Commission who functions as an unfair and biased overseer of the electoral process which lies at the very heart of democracy... An Election Commissioner who obliges the powers that be, perhaps even offers an assured gateway to the acquisition of power," Justice Joseph observed.

The court further made a "fervent appeal" to the Parliament and the Union Government to set up a permanent secretariat which draws its expenses directly from the Consolidated Fund of India and not the government.

"One of the ways the Executive can bring the Election Commission to its knees is by starving it off requisite finances much needed for its independent functioning... A vulnerable Commission, faced with the prospects of lack of funds, may kneel to the pressure of the Executive, and that would result in an insidious conquest of an otherwise defiant and independent Election Commission," Justice Joseph said.

In his opinion, Justice Rastogi noted that the Election Commission has been a multi-member body since 1993. The CEC and the Election Commissioners have "equal participation in transacting the business of the Election Commission" which includes

superintendence, direction and control of electoral rolls and conduct of elections to the Parliament, State legislatures, offices of the President and the Vice-President of India.

"It is the need of the hour and advisable to extend the protection available to the CEC under the first proviso to Article 324(5) to other Election Commissioners as well until a law is framed by the Parliament... It is desirable that the grounds of removal of the Election Commissioners shall be the same as those of the CEC and Supreme Court judges," Justice Rastogi said.

CECs and apex court judges can be removed only by an order of the President passed after an address in each House of Parliament supported by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of members present and voting, and presented to the President in the same session. The grounds of removal are limited to "proved misbehaviors or incapacity".

The judge noted that the conditions of service of Election Commissioners, after appointment, should not be "varied to their disadvantage". These directions hold that the tenures of the Election Commissioners should not be disturbed in any way. The Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 requires that the CEC and Election Commissioners must hold the post for a period of six years.

Lately, the Election Commission has seen appointments who have not been able to serve the full six-year period. (Source: The Hindu)

Antony Blinken says Russia can end...

negotiations for the START treaty, end the war and return to the path of peace. "I spoke briefly with Lavrov today. I urged Him to return to negotiate the Start treaty. I raised the wrongful detention of American prisoner in Russia," he said.

When asked about the democratic backslide in India, Mr. Blinken answered that India and U.S. are two democracies and they have to hold themselves accountable to the core values of democracy. "We regularly engage with our Indian counterparts on the issue, as I did with Jaishankar today," the U.S. Secretary of state said. Talking about the restrictions being placed on NGOs in India, he said, "When it comes to restrictions on NGOs, we raise with our Indian counterparts the necessity of allowing all NGOs to do their work without restrictions, and this comes up in our conversations regularly."

Issuing a stern warning to China, Mr. Blinken said that if China were to assist Russia militarily or subvert sanctions imposed on Russia, it would be a serious problem and 'there would be consequences'.

Replying to a question from The Hindu on the future of G20, he said that as long as there's a consensus that includes all the members of the G20 minus two, the process can still go ahead, even if there is no joint communique at the leaders' summit in September.

(Source: The Hindu)

Hindenburg: SC sets up six-member...

"To protect Indian investors against volatility (in the securities market) of the kind that has been witnessed in the recent past, we are of the view that it is appropriate to constitute an expert committee for the assessment of the regulatory framework and for making recommendations to strengthen it," said the Bench, which had earlier refused to accept the names suggested by the Centre for the expert committee. Other members of the committee are former SBI chairman OP Bhatt, former Bombay High Court judge JP Devadhar, Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani, former chief of New Development Bank of BRICS KV Kamath and advocate Somasekhar Sundaresan, who was recently recommended for appointment as a judge of the Bombay High Court.

The Bench, which included Justice PS Narasimha

and Justice JB Pardiwala, asked the expert committee to submit its report in a sealed cover to it in two months.

The top court also directed market regulator SEBI to investigate if there was any manipulation of stock prices in contravention of existing laws. It took note of the fact that SEBI was already investigating the allegations made in the January 24 Hindenburg Research report. On February 20, it had said it couldn't start with the presumption of a regulatory failure.

"The above directions shall not be construed to limit the contours of the ongoing investigation. SEBI shall expeditiously conclude the investigation within two months and file a status report," the Bench clarified.

"Further, SEBI shall apprise the expert committee of the action taken in furtherance of the directions of this court as well as steps taken in furtherance of its ongoing investigation. The constitution of the expert committee does not divest SEBI of its powers or responsibilities in continuing with its investigation into the recent volatility in the securities market," it further clarified.

Quad to sharpen focus on counter...

and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities.

In a broadside at Pakistan, the joint statement denounced the use of terrorist proxies and committed to promote accountability for terrorist attacks including 26/11 Mumbai, "which claimed lives of citizens from all Quad countries".

At the Raisina Dialogue shortly after their Quad meeting, Foreign Ministers S Jaishankar, Penny Wong, Anthony Blinken and Hayashi Yoshimasa were unanimous in stating that the Quad is not a military grouping. Their disclaimer came weeks before all the four will participate in their fourth successive joint naval exercise, this time off the Australian coast for the first time. A meeting of the Quad Maritime Security Working Group will also be hosted by the US this month.

The same line-up of Quad Foreign Ministers which had met last September in New York, reiterated their backing for reforms of the UN Security Council and support for the general principles of freedom, rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes without resorting to threat or use of force.

It noted that terrorism has become increasingly diffuse and adapted to technologies such as drones and the internet to commit and finance terrorist acts. Discussions at the Quad Counter-Terrorism Policy Meeting and tabletop exercise in Australia has led to the establishment of the Quad Working Group on Counter-Terrorism which will hold its first meeting in the US this year.

It will have an open architecture and will also explore cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners with the purpose of countering new and emerging forms of terrorism, radicalization to violence and violent extremism. The Quad also took a step forward in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance with the first tabletop exercise held here. The next step is to finalize the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for a coordinated response mechanism.

With India and Japan acting as the brakes, the Quad did not condemn the Myanmar junta but sought an end to violence and detentions.

On Ukraine, the joint statement said they "continued to discuss our responses to the conflict in Ukraine and the immense human suffering it is causing and concurred that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible".

"We underscored the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter. We emphasized that the rules-based international order must respect sovereignty, territorial integrity, transparency and peaceful resolution of disputes," it added. (Source: TNS)



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History This Week

MARCH 03 - 09, 2023

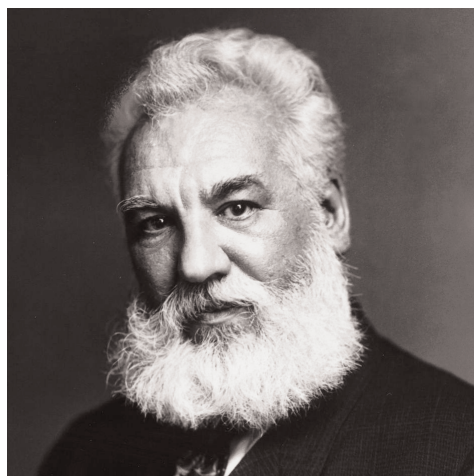
MARCH 3

March 3, 1913 - A women's suffrage march in Washington D.C. was attacked by angry onlookers while police stood by. The march occurred the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Many of the 5,000 women participating were spat upon and struck in the face as a near riot ensued. Secretary of War Henry Stimson then ordered soldiers from Fort Myer to restore order.



George Pullman

Birthday - Railroad car builder George Pullman (1831-1897) was born in Brocton, New York. He improved railroad sleeping accommodations, developing the folding upper berth and lower berth designs. His company went on to become the biggest railroad car building organization in the world.



Alexander Graham Bell

Birthday - Telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Bell and his father were involved in teaching deaf persons to speak. Bell developed an interest in the vibrating membrane as a method of electrically transmitting sounds. His very first sentence spoken on the newly invented telephone on March 10, 1876, was to his assistant, "Mister Watson, come here, I want you."

MARCH 4

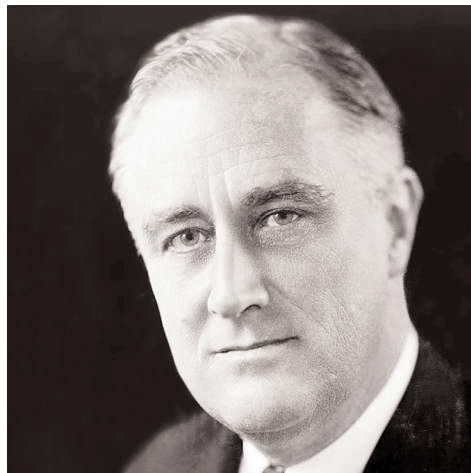
March 4, 1681 - King Charles II of England granted a huge tract of land in the New World to William Penn to settle an outstanding debt. The area later became Pennsylvania.

March 4, 1789 - The first meeting of the new Congress under the new U.S. Constitution took place in New York City.



John Quincy Adams

March 4, 1830 - Former President John Quincy Adams returned to Congress as a representative from Massachusetts. He was the first ex-president ever to return to the House and served eight consecutive terms.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

March 4, 1933 - Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office and delivered his first inaugural address attempting to restore public confidence during the Great Depression, stating, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." His cabinet appointments included the first woman to a Cabinet post, Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins.



Casimir Pulaski

Birthday - Revolutionary war hero Casimir Pulaski (1747-1779) was born in Poland. Before aiding in the American Revolution, he was a military leader in Poland's struggle against Imperial Russia. He joined the Americans in 1777 and fought alongside General Washington at Brandywine, then served at Germantown and Valley Forge. He was

mortally wounded during a heroic charge in the Siege of Savannah, Georgia.



Knute Rockne

Birthday - American football legend Knute Rockne (1888-1931) was born in Voss, Norway. He coached the Notre Dame Football team for 13 seasons, amassing an overall record of 105 wins, 12 losses and 5 ties. He became famous for his locker room pep talks and the saying, "Win one for the Gipper." He was killed in an airplane crash on March 31, 1931, in Kansas.

MARCH 5

March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre occurred as a group of rowdy Americans harassed British soldiers who then opened fire, killing five and injuring six. The first man killed was Crispus Attucks, an African American. British Captain Thomas Preston and eight of his men were arrested and charged with murder. Their trial took place in October, with colonial lawyer John Adams defending the British. Captain Preston and six of his men were acquitted. Two others were found guilty of manslaughter, branded, then released.

March 5, 1868 - The U.S. Senate convened as a court to hear charges against President Andrew Johnson during impeachment proceedings. The House of Representatives had already voted to impeach the President. The vote followed bitter opposition by the Radical Republicans in Congress to Johnson's reconstruction policies in the South. However, the effort to remove him failed in the Senate by just one vote and he remained in office.

March 5, 1946 - The "Iron Curtain" speech was delivered by Winston Churchill at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Churchill used the term to describe the boundary in Europe between free countries of the West and nations of Eastern Europe under Soviet Russia's control.

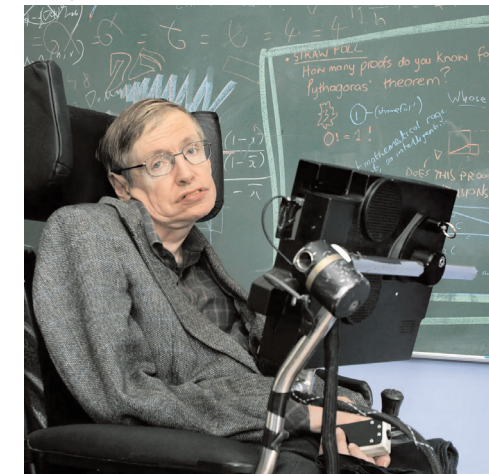
MARCH 6

March 6, 1836 - Fort Alamo fell to Mexican troops led by General Santa Anna. The Mexicans had begun the siege of the Texas fort on February 23rd, ending it with the killing of the last defender. "Remember the Alamo" became a rallying cry for Texans who went on to defeat Santa Anna in the Battle of San

Jacinto in April.

Birthday - Renaissance genius Michelangelo (1475-1564) was born in Caprese, Italy. He was a painter, sculptor, architect, poet and visionary best known for his fresco on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and his sculptures David and The Pieta.

MARCH 7



Stephen Hopkins

Birthday - Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was born in Providence, Rhode Island. He was the state's colonial governor and was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

MARCH 8

March 8, 1863 - During the American Civil War, Confederate Colonel John Mosby, leader of Mosby's Rangers, captured Union General E.H. Stoughton at his headquarters in Fairfax County Courthouse, Virginia.

MARCH 9



Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci

Birthday - Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci (1451-1512) was born in Florence, Italy. He explored South America and the Amazon River, believing he had discovered a new continent. In 1507, a German mapmaker first referred to the lands discovered in the New World as America.

Birthday - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (1934-1968) was born in Gzhatsk, Russia. On April 12, 1961, he became the first human in space, orbiting in a capsule 187 miles above the Earth's surface in a flight lasting 108 minutes. His space flight caused a worldwide sensation and marked the beginning of the space race as the U.S. worked to catch up to the Russians and launch an American into space. President John F. Kennedy later asserted the U.S. would land a man on the moon before the end of the 1960's.



Copa del Rey: Barcelona earn gutsy 1-0 win at Real Madrid in semi-final first leg

A tenacious Barcelona frustrated Real Madrid to secure a 1-0 win over their bitter rivals in an ill-tempered Copa del Rey semi-final first leg on March 2.

The visitors defended superbly after Real centre back Eder Militao scored an own goal in the first half, managing to overcome the loss of key players like Robert Lewandowski, Pedri and Ousmane Dembele who missed the game due to injuries.

Barca earned a much-needed win after arriving in the Spanish capital under pressure having been knocked out of the Europa League and losing at lowly Almeria to halt a seven-game winning streak in LaLiga.

"We would have liked to have the ball more, to control de game a little more but we fought hard and competed in a high level. They had the ball but didn't create many chances. We got the advantage for the second leg and that's really important," Barcelona captain Sergio Busquets told TVE.

Real Madrid started better and dominated the first 15 minutes, but Barcelona started to turn things around as they took control the midfield and their defensive game plan worked brilliantly.

Barca centre back Ronald Araujo did a great job at right back to neutralise the threat of the dangerous Vinicius Jr. and Karim Benzema was left alone up front. *Source: Reuters*

Rabada takes 6, S Africa beat West Indies in 1st Test

South Africa beat West Indies by 87 runs in the first Test as the home bowlers saved the game after both teams' batting collapsed on the third day March 2.

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada spearheaded South Africa's three-day victory at Centurion with 6/50 in the final innings as the West Indians were all out for 159 while chasing 247 for victory.

Jermaine Blackwood's 79 was in vain for West Indies, and he was one of Rabada's haul when he tried to fend off a short ball and edged to Aiden Markram in the slips.

That was Rabada's fifth wicket and the ninth to go down for West Indies, and all but wrapped up the game.

Rabada removed Kemar Roach lbw in the same over to clinch the win and a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

The fast bowlers ruled on a typical pace-friendly Centurion pitch, which offered the additional challenge of unpredictable bounce. In all, 16 wickets fell on the third day after 11 went down in the final session on day two.

Alzarri Joseph and Roach took five-wicket hauls for the West Indies — one in each innings — and Anrich Nortje and Rabada did the same for South Africa.

Lyon stars as Australia beat India by 9 wickets

INDORE (TIP)

Chasing 76 on Day 3, Australia started on a dreadful note losing Usman Khawaja for 0. However, following the dismissal Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne kept things moving, before going all blaze and stitching a 50-plus stand for the second wicket. India's red-ball specialist batter Cheteshwar Pujara put up a fight on Day 2 although his batting heroics could only lift India to 163 in 60.3 overs. Nathan Lyon registered dream figures of eight for 64 to put the visitors in the driving seat of the 3rd Test at Indore. Australia spin spearhead Nathan Lyon claimed 8/64 on a turning wicket in the third Test against India.

India have retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-0 lead in the four-Test series but a victory tomorrow would secure Australia's place in the final of the World Test Championship in June. India have been on the back foot in the match since being skittled out for 109 in their first innings and they did marginally better in the second when they were all out for 163 when stumps were drawn. Only Cheteshwar Pujara (59) put up a brave fight against Australia's three-pronged spin attack led superbly by Lyon.

"It's a difficult pitch to bat on. I hope we'll be able to bowl them out," Pujara said. "I know it's not enough. Seventy five may look like it's not too many, but still, there is a chance."

The action-packed second day began with Australia resuming on



Australia spin spearhead Nathan Lyon claimed 8/64 on a turning wicket to put the tourists on the verge of victory inside three days in the third Test against India here on March 2.

156/4 and after an hour's lull, it rained wickets at the Holkar Cricket Stadium. Australia looked in cruise control at 186/4 but once overnight batsmen Cameron Green (21) and Peter Handscomb (19) departed, the wheels came off their innings.

The tourists lost their last six wickets for 11 runs to fold for 197 with India seamer Umesh Yadav's reverse-swing skills earning him 3/12. It still left Australia in possession of a sizeable lead of 88 and Lyon wrecked India's top order before the home side could erase their deficit.

The off-spinner removed both the India openers, Shubman Gill and Rohit Sharma, and foiled Ravindra Jadeja's bid to survive by blocking endlessly.

Matt Kuhnemann claimed the

prized wicket of Virat Kohli (13) but Pujara mixed caution with calculated aggression to keep India alive. Shreyas Iyer smacked a six off Kuhnemann to put India in the lead as the low-scoring match changed course again adding another layer of drama. Iyer unleashed a flurry of boundaries to put the pressure back on Australia but there were more twists to come.

Usman Khawaja, who missed much of the day's action with a sore calf, returned to pluck a stunning catch to end Iyer's run-a-ball 26. Steve Smith, leading Australia after regular captain Pat Cummins flew home to be with his ailing mother, also held a spectacular one-handed catch at leg slip to end Pujara's stand. *Source: Reuters*

Dubai Tennis Championships: Novak Djokovic survives thriller against Tomas Machac

DUBAI (TIP)

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic battled past Tomas Machac in a thrilling first-round match at the Dubai Tennis Championships to continue his unbeaten run in the 2023 season.

The Serbian held off a ferocious challenge from Czech player for a 6-3, 3-6, 7-6(1) win on Tuesday. He will next face the World No. 39 Dutch Tallon Griekspoor.

Machac showcased some top-class shotmaking, particularly off the backhand wing, to roar back into contention after a fast start from Djokovic at the ATP 500. The World No. 1 was at times visibly frustrated at struggling to find his best level, but composed himself in trademark fashion in the deciding-set tie-break to ward off the upset and take a hard-earned two-hour and 28-minute victory.

Having finished his 2022 season by going unbeaten at the ATP Finals, Djokovic's current winning



streak now stands at 18.

Djokovic's thrilling win came a day after he overtook Stefanie Graf's record for most weeks by a men's or women's tennis player as World No. 1. A small presentation noting the 35-year-old's achievement was held post-match at the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Stadium, according to ATP Tour

website.

"It is very special. As a young boy growing up in Serbia, I dreamt of two things - winning Wimbledon and being No. 1 in the world. I've been blessed to achieve both of my childhood dreams, several times, and I guess when that happened, I had to set new goals, new ambitions," Djokovic said.

"I'm extremely grateful that I'm able to play at this level after many years. Obviously, It's a team effort, it's a family effort, regardless of the fact that this is an individual sport... A lot of hours go into preparing me to be able to perform... I'm flattered and thrilled to be amongst the biggest names this sport has ever had, Steffi Graf being one of them." The 22-time Grand Slam winner was making his first appearance since winning the Australian Open and is chasing his sixth title in Dubai, where he triumphed in 2009-2011, 2013 and 2020. *Source: IANS*



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