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INDIAN



PANORAMA

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1 Indian American Weekly : Since 2006

VOL 17 ISSUE 13 • NEW YORK / DALLAS • MAR 31 - APR 06, 2023

ENQUIRIES: 646-247-9458 • info@theindianpanorama.com

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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Will bring out a fully illustrated special edition on the occasion of Vaisakhi, April 14, 2023. Articles and advertisements are invited by April 6, 2023.

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Supreme Court slams 'silence of state' on 'vicious circle' of hate against minorities

"THE MOMENT RELIGION IS SEPARATED FROM POLITICS, ALL THIS WILL STOP," SAYS JUSTICE JOSEPH

MARCH 29, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on March 29 slammed the "silence of the state" to spiraling incidents of hate speeches made against minority communities, including Muslims, but the Centre pushed back, asking the court why it did not take suo motu cognizance of a video clip from Kerala showing a child being made to threaten Hindus and even Christians.

When a Bench of Justices K.M. Joseph and B.V. Nagarathna asked the Maharashtra government for an explanation about hate speech incidents in the State, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta asked the court to take a moment and see what was happening in other States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

"A spokesperson of DMK party says that if you want equality you should butcher all the Brahmins... No FIR has been registered. He continues to be a spokesperson of the party... Now, please hear this clip from Kerala. This is



Justice Nagarathna said hate speeches have made cracks in the idea of fraternity. She said hate speeches were made by "fringe elements" of all sides who have "no stuff in them".

shocking. It should shock the conscience of this court. A child has been made to say this. We should be embarrassed. He says, 'Hindus and Christians should prepare for final rites,' Mr. Mehta addressed the court.

"Yes, we know," Justice Joseph responded.

"Then Your Lordships should have

taken suo motu cognizance," Mr. Mehta said.

Justice Joseph said the country was caught in a "vicious circle of hate" and the solution lay in expunging religion from politics.

"The moment religion is separated from politics, all this will stop," Justice Joseph said.

But Mr. Mehta refused to agree that hate had anything to do with politics.

"No, this has everything to do with politics. Politicians make use of religion," Justice Joseph stood firm.

Justice Nagarathna said hate speeches have made cracks in the idea of fraternity. She said hate speeches were made by "fringe elements" of all sides who have "no stuff in them".

"When Vajpayee and Nehru spoke, people came from rural areas to hear them... Unfortunately, now, people with no stuff in them, fringe elements from every side are making these hate

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HAPPY DOCTOR'S DAY

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

CELEBRATES THE SELFLESS AND VALUABLE SERVICES OF DOCTORS AND CONGRATULATES THEM ON THE NATIONAL DOCTORS DAY, MARCH 30TH

Europe gets fourth South Asian origin Prime Minister; Humza Yousaf elected Scotland's next First Minister



Humza Yousaf's grandparents had arrived in Scotland from Pakistan in the 1960s

MARCH 28, 2023

EDINBURGH/ NEW YORK / NEW DELHI (TIP): With Humza Yousaf's election as Scotland's next First Minister, Europe now has four PMs of South Asian heritage. His election will revive the demand for independence.

CONTD ON PAGE 38

Spouses of H-1B visa holders can work in US, says judge; a large number of Indians to benefit



A large number of Indians to benefit from a judge's verdict that spouses of H-1B visa holders can work in US.

Photo for representation only

MARCH 30, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):

A judge has ruled that spouses of H-1B visa holders, a significantly large number of whom are Indians, can work in the country, in a big relief to foreign workers in the American tech sector who have been struggling to make ends meet.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. US District Judge Tanya Chutkan dismissed a lawsuit filed by Save Jobs USA which had approached the court to dismiss the Obama-era regulation

CONTD ON PAGE 38

Punjab Government reaches out to Akal Takht, 'releases' 348 detainees

MARCH 29, 2023

CHANDIGARH (TIP): A day after Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann alleged that Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh was playing into the hands of the "Badals- controlled" Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee over the crackdown on "Waris Punjab De" chief Amritpal Singh, the government, in a bid to reach out to Takht, today reportedly "released" 348 of the 360 detainees.

On March 27, Jathedar had served a 24-hour ultimatum on the state government for the release of the detainees.

Akal Takht Jathedar's personal assistant Jaspal Singh said a government representative called them to inform about the release of the detainees. He claimed that the official concerned also assured that the remaining 12 taken into preventive custody under Section 107/151 of the CrPC would be released soon.

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Detainees being produced before a Baba Bakala court

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GUEST COMMENT

Misuse of probe agencies

OPPOSITION PARTIES' PLEA IN SC RAISES SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A plea by 14 Opposition parties alleging arbitrary arrests and misuse of Central probe agencies against political opponents has been listed for hearing by the Supreme Court on April 5. In asking for framing of pre-arrest and post-arrest bail guidelines, the petition claims that there is a clear pattern of investigative agencies being used to target political rivals and dissenting citizens. It is alleged that cases are registered in quick succession to ensure that the accused stays in custody for a prolonged period. Instances have also been cited of slowing down of probe proceedings or a clean chit being given to politicians who have crossed over to the ruling party at the Centre.

The plea contends that 95 per cent of the cases filed by probe agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate in the recent past were against leaders of Opposition parties. This cannot be a coincidence. It amplifies the allegation that the fight against corruption is increasingly being used as an instrument of vendetta politics. The BJP's counter of zero tolerance for graft is well taken, but the party does not emerge as too different from those it had lambasted when it was in the Opposition for eroding the autonomy of investigative agencies.

The rare convergence of non-BJP parties has some similarity to their

coming together in 2019 to demand the random verification of at least 50 per cent electronic voting machines (EVMs) using the voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) in every Assembly segment of a parliamentary constituency. The Supreme Court had then directed the Election Commission to raise the VVPAT-EVM verification from one EVM to five in each Assembly segment. With several states going to the polls later this year, followed by the 2024 General Election, the outcome of the current case can have a bearing on the Opposition's fortunes.

(Tribune, India)

Action against Rahul

UNDUE HASTE LAYS BARE AGENDA TO PIN HIM DOWN

Lok Sabha officials have acted with undue haste while in first disqualifying convicted Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and then serving a notice on him to vacate his government bungalow by April 22. The fast-tracking of action against Rahul reeks of a political agenda to go for the jugular. Putting on a brave face, the former Congress president has promised that he would abide by the deadline. Considering that it's usually a long-drawn-out process to make MPs give up government premises in Lutyens' Bungalow Zone, the Lok Sabha Secretariat needs to explain its overzealousness as well as sense of urgency.

Prioritizing Rahul's eviction is a lame ploy to divert attention from the key issue: his controversial ouster from the

Lower House. The move has come under political attack and judicial scrutiny. A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court, challenging the 'automatic disqualification' of lawmakers who are convicted and sentenced to a jail term of two years or more, according to provisions of Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act. The fact that the trial court in Surat suspended Rahul's sentence for 30 days to allow him to approach higher courts has cast a cloud on the legality of his disqualification. After all, why was he debarred right away when the two-year sentence was supposed to have come into operation a month hence?

The twists and turns of the trial have been no less questionable. BJP MLA Purnesh Modi, the complainant in the

defamation case against Rahul, approached the High Court last month seeking resumption of the trial - almost a year after he had himself sought a stay on the proceedings. His curious U-turn set into motion a frantic process that culminated in Rahul's conviction and sentencing. With the Congress leader set to challenge the trial court's verdict, the ruling party and the Lok Sabha top brass are well advised not to jump the gun or twist the knife. They should desist from stooping to a new low in vendetta politics. Petty attempts to humiliate a prominent Opposition leader don't behove the rulers who proudly call India the 'mother of democracy'.

(Tribune, India)

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The Indian Panorama Holi & Hola Celebrations receive huge appreciation of the guests



Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal addresses the gathering



Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman addresses the gathering. Seen in the picture, from L to R: Daler Singh, Zahid Ali, Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar, Prof. Saluja, Bruce Blakeman, Ragini Srivastava and Ravi Batra



Senator Kevin Thomas receives a flowery reception from Jaskiran Saluja, a member of the organizing committee



Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar and Ragini Srivastava present proclamation on behalf of Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman to Ambassador Jaiswal who also received a proclamation for Dr. Abha Jaiswal. Also seen in the picture are Prof. Saluja (left) and Ragini Srivastava (right).

MATCH 28, 2023

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): The Indian Panorama organized the fourth Holi & Hola celebrations at Antun's by Minar here on March 19, 2023.

Attended by over a hundred guests, the event exhibited the fraternal bonds between the diverse Indian diaspora. The very idea of celebrating Holi and the Sikh Hola Mohalla together is to promote brotherhood and amity among Indian Americans practicing diverse faiths and cultures.

A display of the rich cultural heritage impressed the guests who included the chief guest Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Consul

General of India at New York, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, New York State Senator Kevin Thomas, New York State Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar, Town of North Hempstead Clerk Ragini Srivastava, Nassau County former Human Rights Commission chairman Zahid Ali, Ravi Batra, Chair, the National Advisory Council on South Asian Affairs, AK Vijaykrishnan, Consul, Community Affairs, among others.

A thrilling display of the Sikh traditional martial art called Gatka by the Akal Gatka Gurmat Group led by Sardar Daler Singh, President of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana

left everyone spell bound Before the Gatka performance. Master Mohinder Singh, a senior leader of the Sikh community, a founder President of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana, spoke about the traditional Sikh martial art.

The Gatka performance evoked from County Executive Bruce Blakeman the comment that he had never ever witnessed such a thrilling performance. He was simply awe-struck.

The other attractive performances included Holi Dance by the dancers from Rhythm Dance Academy, Bollywood Medley Dance by dancers

from RS International group, and a Holi Song by a Florida based celebrated singer Kadambini.

Prachi Makkar's Punjabi songs and Bolian brought many to the dance floor. Surya Makkar on Punjabi Dhol was a great accompanist to his sister Prachi.

Bollywood singer and director Vicky Kohli regaled with his lovely singing.

One of the attractions of the celebrations was the selection of the traditional Holi "Mahamoorkh". Emmy nominated film maker and actor Tirlokh Malik was crowned Mahamoorkh through a draw of lots.

INDIAN-ORIGIN INDERDEEP GOSAL ARRESTED FOR FATALLY STABBING A MAN IN CANADA'S VANCOUVER



Inderdeep Singh Gosal fatally stabbed Paul Stanley Schmidt after a brief altercation between the two men has been arrested and charged with second-degree murder

MARCH 28, 2023

VANCOUVER (TIP): A 32-year-old Indian-origin man has been arrested and charged with second-degree murder of a Canadian in downtown Vancouver, police said.

Inderdeep Singh Gosal fatally stabbed Paul Stanley Schmidt, 37, after a brief altercation between two men outside the Starbucks Cafe at West Pender and Granville Street on Sunday evening. The video of the incident has gone viral on social media.

Footage of the videos shared by bystanders on social media show victim lying in a pool of blood outside the Starbucks Cafe, and Gosal being taken into custody by police.

"We believe this homicide was witnessed by dozens of bystanders, and there may be people with information who have not yet come forward," Sergeant Steve Addison of Vancouver Police Department said.

"We particularly want to hear from anyone who was present in the moments before the stabbing, or anyone who has cell-phone video of the incident."

A constable patrolling in the area was flagged down moments after the stabbing, and arrested Gosal at the crime scene. Additional police officers attempted to save the victim's life by performing first aid, however he succumbed to his injuries after being rushed to hospital.

Investigators do not believe the victim and suspect knew each other, however the circumstances that led up to the fatal stabbing remain under investigation.

Schmidt is Vancouver's sixth homicide victim of 2023.

According to some media reports, Gosal was last seen attending a pro-Khalistan rally outside the Indian High Commission in Canada.

Indian American Sacramento based Sikh community condemns shooting at gurdwara

PARMINDER AUJLA
MARCH 28, 2023

SACRAMENTO (TIP): Sacramento area Sikh leaders have condemned the shooting that wounded two men at a Sikh gurdwara Sunday and marred what had been a weekend of joyous celebration.

Two men were critically wounded in the afternoon shooting at the Gurdwara Sacramento Sikh Society on the 7600 block of Bradshaw Road, in Sacramento County's Vineyard area where thousands had gathered Sunday for the temple's first Nagar Kirtan, a traditional neighborhood celebration and parade.

"There is no honor in causing harm to others including your own community," Bobbie Singh-Allen, Elk Grove mayor and a parishioner of Gurdwara Sacramento Sikh Society told the local media.

She was surrounded by parishioners and temple officials, at a Monday afternoon news conference on the gurdwara's grounds.

"We came to this country for a better life through the sacrifices of our parents and grandparents," she was quoted as saying. "This is not the dream they imagined for their youth."

Two of the men were involved in a fistfight, the pair exchanging punches. A friend of one of the men shot a friend of the other combatant, Sacramento County Sheriff's spokesman Sgt. Amar Gandhi said.

The men, all in their 20s, were not part of the parade, but knew each other, Singh-Allen said Monday. "These displays of violence go against our Sikh faith. It is unfortunate that they brought their issues to a place of worship where everyone should feel safe."

The two men are expected to survive, Sacramento County Sheriff's spokesman Amar Gandhi said. The suspected gunman, 21-year-old Karman Sandhu, was booked into Sacramento County Main Jail on suspicion of attempted murder charges and is being held without bail.



Bobbie Singh-Allen, Elk Grove mayor and a parishioner of Gurdwara Sacramento Sikh Society told the local media that there was "no honor in causing harm to others including your own community".

One of the men who was shot will be booked into Sacramento County custody once he is released from the hospital, sheriff's officials said. Gandhi said the men were of East Indian descent but did not know if they were of the Sikh faith.

Gandhi said another firearm was found Monday on the temple grounds and that investigators were reviewing hundreds of interviews from witnesses who had crowded the festival.

What brought them to the festival remained unclear Monday. "People don't usually come to a place of worship to start trouble," Gandhi said. Private security firm NorCal Security was hired to patrol the event but did not search or find weapons at the temple site.

Organizers envisioned the Sikh Society's first Sikh Parade as a replica of the traditional annual Sikh festival and parade in Yuba City, home to one the nation's oldest Sikh communities.

The festival draws tens of thousands of the faithful each year to agricultural Sutter County to celebrate faith and community. "It was just as beautiful as that," Varinder Singh, a parishioner and one of the festival's organizers said Monday.

Sunday's parade across nearly seven miles of south Sacramento County, was to be a capstone, according to the Bee. Then shots rang out. No one else among the thousands of revelers was hurt.

The parade was halted briefly out of caution but soon resumed. Many of the revelers returned to the grounds for the evening's services, a show, Singh-Allen said, of the community's resilience.

Singh-Allen and others singled out Gandhi, the sheriff's sergeant, who ensured the Sikh holy scripture, carried at the parade, was returned to the gurdwara during an active crime scene.

The Sacramento Sikh Society said it is unbowed. It plans for the weekend festival to be an annual event. March 31, 2024 is already marked for next year's festival.

"This is holy ground. This is a sanctuary. Everyone should feel safe and welcome here at the gurdwara, or any gurdwara," Singh-Allen was quoted as saying.

"This will not deter our community from coming together and openly celebrating our faith. We will work hard to make sure all future events will continue. We will not live in fear."

Indian-origin Sikh student assaulted in Canada, turban ripped off



In an apparent hate crime Gagandeep Singh was assaulted by a group of unidentified men who ripped off his turban and dragged him across the sidewalk by his hair

MARCH 20, 2023

VANCOUVER (TIP): In an apparent hate crime, a 21-year-old Sikh student from India was attacked in Canada's British Columbia province by a group of unidentified men who ripped off his turban and dragged him across the sidewalk by his hair, according to a media report.

Gagandeep Singh was assaulted when he was heading home on Friday night, media reported.

Councilor Mohini Singh said she heard of the attack shortly after it happened and went to visit Gagandeep.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American 5-year old Mya Patel's killer sentenced to 100 years in prison

MARCH 28, 2023

LOUISIANA (TIP): A Louisiana man responsible for the shooting death of Mya Patel, a 5-year-old Indian American girl who was playing in a motel room with her family, will spend the rest of his life in jail.

Joseph Lee Smith, 35, will spend the next 100 years in prison, Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office announced on March 23, local media reported. Smith was found guilty in January 2023.

District Judge John D. Mosely Jr. sentenced Smith to 60 years for the March 2021 death of Patel. Smith will also serve 20 years for obstruction of justice, and another 20 years for aggravated battery. His terms will be served without the benefit of probation, parole or reduction of sentence. And his sentences will be served consecutively, for a total of 100 years.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Joseph Lee Smith, 35, will spend the next 100 years in prison

Indian American Manmeet Colon becomes New Haven's first Sikh assistant police chief

MARCH 27, 2023

NEW HAVEN, CT (TIP): Lt. Manmeet Colon, a Mumbai, India-born Sikh woman has become New Haven, Connecticut's first ever assistant police chief of Indian descent and second ever female assistant chief of color.

Surrounded by dozens of friends, family members, city workers, and police colleagues, Colon, 37, raised her right hand and took the oath of office as the city's third assistant police chief in charge of patrol on Friday, local media reported.

Colon's older daughter Milan joined Colon's brother Prabhjot Singh in pinning Colon's new assistant chief badge on her uniform, as Mayor Justin Elicker then administered the oath of office.

"Your mom has done great things. She will do so many great things" to come, Elicker said through near-tears of his own as he looked over at Milan and her sister, Maya.

Colon, who immigrated to the United States with her family when she was 11 years old, hoped that she inspires others from similar backgrounds to pursue careers in law enforcement.

"I come from a Sikh family. I speak Punjabi. I'm very proud of my heritage," Colon was quoted as saying by the media.

"More important is the mission and the values of the department. To me, it's all about being fair and impartial. My background, my morals, my family values and traditions as I feel like I bring



Manmeet Colon has become New Haven, Connecticut's first ever assistant police chief of Indian descent and second ever female assistant chief of color.

a lot to the table. I'm glad there's a space for me at the table," she added.

Colon thanked her colleagues and her family and friends before closing out Friday's ceremony. She urged her colleagues, especially on bad days, to "remind yourself of how privileged you are to be part of such a rewarding and strong profession."

"With great power comes great responsibility," she said, "and ever greater accountability."

"A trailblazer, AC Colon is the 2nd woman of color & the 1st of Indian descent to serve in the position in the history of the NHPD - and I'm confident she will continue to serve our city w/honor & distinction in this new role,"

Elicker tweeted.

"This is a great day for the City of New Haven, and also for the Indian community and women of color in the city and state; another glass ceiling has been broken," Police Commission Chair Evelise Ribeiro said.

Colon, a 15-year NHPD veteran, has risen through the ranks and served in a wide variety of roles during her tenure with the NHPD, Ribeiro and Police Chief Karl Jacobson noted with praise.

She has worked in patrol, as a detective in the special victim's unit, as a sergeant supervising the robbery and burglary unit, as a lieutenant and district manager for Newhallville and Dixwell, and most recently as the head of the Internal Affairs division.

"She was tough, but she was also very kind," Jacobson said as he recalled working in patrol in the Hill at the same as when Colon joined the force a decade and a half ago. He said they both learned about what community policing truly looks like under the mentorship of Hill's top cop at the time, now-retired Lt. Holly Wasilewski.

Jacobson also noted how he brought his own daughter, who is studying criminal justice at University of New Haven, to Friday's ceremony to be inspired by and take note of such an accomplished female police officer as Colon.

"I brought her here because I want her to look up to you," he said, pushing back tears as he looked over at Colon.

INDIAN AMERICAN RAMESH BHUTADA DONATES \$ 1 MILLION TO HINDU UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA



Ramesh Bhutada Speaks at Friends of HUA Houston Gala

MARCH 26, 2023

HOUSTON (TIP): Ramesh Bhutada, CEO of Star Pipe Products, has donated \$1 million to Hindu University of America. Mr. Bhutada is a successful Houston-based businessman and philanthropist.

Hindu University of America (HUA) in association with Hindus of Greater Houston (HGH) hosted a Friends of HUA Gala evening on 26 March 2023, at VPSS Haveli, Houston. The gala, which was attended by about 500 community members, honored Kiran and Ramesh Bhutada and their family for their generous gift of one million dollars to HUA. Ramesh Bhutada is a successful Houston-based businessman and philanthropist.

In his address, Ramesh Bhutada shared why he chose to support HUA. Despite being born and raised in a traditional Hindu family and a member of several prominent Hindu organizations and traditions, he stated that he "did not really understand the essence of Hindu Dharma." It took him 60 years to recognize the silver spoon that he was born with, that is, to understand the true essence of Hindu Dharma "which teaches us how to live in harmony within ourselves, with our family, friends, colleagues, and with the entire world. Other universities may impart knowledge for students to earn a livelihood. Only an institution like HUA can impart Hindu knowledge that teaches a student how to live their life." Stressing the fact that he did not want the next generation of Hindus to take as long as he did, Ramesh Bhutada urged the attendees to support HUA so that the youth of today and tomorrow can gain the knowledge and understanding of Hinduism much earlier in life, enabling them to live happy, productive lives for themselves and for the benefit of the entire world.

Drawing on his personal experiences as well as narratives from the Hindu American community, Ramesh Bhutada noted that the traditional Hindu upbringing and teachings about Hinduism within the family and home environment alone is not sufficient.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna bows out of Senate race

MARCH 27, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Indian American House of Representative member Ro Khanna, who was considering a bid for the US Senate has announced he will not be running for the upper chamber next year.

Khanna, who represents Silicon Valley in the Congress is instead endorsing fellow Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee and will co-chair her campaign in the competitive race to replace Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

Khanna, who was considering his own bid for the US Senate seat that Feinstein will vacate at the end of her term, told media he decided the House was "the best place" for him at the moment.

"I have concluded that despite a lot of enthusiasm from Bernie [Sanders] folks, the best place, the most exciting place, action place, fit place for me to serve as a progressive is in the House of Representatives, and I'm honored to be co-chairing Barbara Lee's campaign for



Ro Khanna, who was considering a bid for the US Senate has announced he will not be running for the Senate next year.

the Senate and endorsing her today," he said to media.

"We need a strong anti-war senator, and she will play that role," he said. Lee is facing off against fellow Reps. Katie Porter and Adam Schiff, who have each already picked up key endorsements, from Sen. Elizabeth Warren and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, respectively.

As a leader in the House Progressive Caucus, Khanna's endorsement could

help Lee shore up progressive support in what's expected to be a competitive - and expensive - race, according to a report.

"I have respect for them," Khanna said of Porter and Schiff, "but Barbara Lee is a unique voice. She was the lone vote against the endless war in Afghanistan. She stood up so strongly against the war in Iraq. She worked with me and stopping - trying to stop the war in Yemen and the war powers resolution."

Khanna also noted that there are currently no African American women in the Senate, and Lee would fill that void. "Frankly, Jake, representation matters," Khanna told the media. "The other two are formidable candidates, but I think Barbara Lee is going to be very, very strong."

Feinstein, 89, the longest-serving woman in Senate history, announced her plans to forgo a 2024 bid last month.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

CONTD FROM PAGE 3



Crowning of "Mahamoorkh" Tirllok Malik. Crowning ceremony was performed by Ambassador Jaiswal, Ravi Batra, a former "Mahamoorkh", and members of the organizing committee of Holi & Hola celebrations



County Executive Bruce Blakeman enjoying the Gatka performance



Ambassador Jaiswal watching a performance



Ravi Batra (left) presented a birthday gift to Prof. Saluja. On the right is Ambassador Jaiswal



Ambassador Jaiswal presents a certificate of appreciation to Kadambini. In the picture, from L to R: Prof. Saluja, Senator Kevin Thomas, Ragini Srivastava, Ambassador Jaiswal, Kadambini, Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar



Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman gives a shout out with the Gatka performers



Dance performers from the Rhythm Dance Academy get photographed with their certificates of appreciation

Speaking on the occasion, County Executive Bruce Blakeman said:

"On the occasion of Holi and Hola. I convey my warmest wishes to all our Indian American community members here in Long Island and we are thankful to Professor Indrajit Saluja for organizing a very beautiful function to get everybody together to celebrate our culture and heritage. We celebrate every race and every religion.

"You are such an important part of the fabric of Nassau County. Think about what your contributions have been in medicine, law, business, finance, education, technology. Your contributions make this a better County and a better country."

In an interview to the TV channels Global Punjab and TV Asia Mr. Blakeman said: "I am glad to be here at Antun's in Hicksville celebrating with

all my Indian Sikh friends for The Indian Panorama Holi and Hola festival. We love the Indian Americans that live here in America. They contribute so much to our county and country- medicine, technology, education, business; Indian American community contributes so much. They make us a greater County and I'm so blessed to be here. Thank you all. God bless you and have a wonderful festival."

Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Consul General of India at New York who has always maintained a close contact with the Indian American community and taken keen interest in its various activities was the chief guest. In his brief address, he praised the Indian American community for preserving and promoting Indian culture.

CONTD ON PAGE 7

CONTD FROM PAGE 6



Gatka performance by Akal Gatka Gurmat Group

Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment



A dance performance by students of Rhythm Dance Academy



Surya Makkar on Dhol and Prachi Makkar singing Punjabi songs and bolian



Vicky Kohli receives from Ambassador Jaiswal a certificate of appreciation. Seen in the picture from L to R: MC Gunjan Rastogi, Prof. Saluja, Vicky Kohli, Ambassador Jaiswal & Parveen Chopra



The Indian Panorama Holi & Holi Celebrations Organizing Committee members with the Chief Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Senator Kevin Thomas, Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar and Town of North Hempstead Clerk Ragini Srivastava

Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment

The Consul General said:

"I convey my warmest wishes to all our Indian American community members here in Long Island and we are thankful to Professor Indrajit Saluja for organizing a very beautiful function to get everybody together to celebrate our culture and heritage."

Others who spoke on the occasion included Senator Kevin Thomas, Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar and Town of North Hempstead Clerk

Ragini Srivastava.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, Prof. Indrajit S Saluja said the idea of organizing the Holi and the Holi Mohalla together was prompted by his desire to promote a feeling of togetherness, amity and brotherhood between the two major communities of Indian origin here. He thanked the gathering for their response and support.

The organizing committee which worked real hard for the success of the event included Indu Jaiswal, Jyoti

Gupta, Amita Karwal, Gunjan Rastogi, Shashi Malik, Anu Jain, Jag, Jaskiran Saluja, and Parveen Chopra. "A lot of thanks to the greatest team", Prof. Saluja said.

He also thanked his family for their support and advice always.

The media persons were extremely supportive and deserve all thanks, said Prof. Saluja. TV Asia, PTC TV, ITV, Global Punjab deserve special gratitude for the extensive coverage of the event.

Parminder was a great DJ, as usual,

with excellent sound service.

Anmol Dhawan was a great help with banners and publicity. The Indian Panorama is grateful to the young man who has always been supportive.

Not to forget the great photographer Jay Mandal whose clicks will surely please our readers. Thank you, Mr. Mandal for your support.

The food catered by Mr. Neetoo of Antun's by Minar received approval and praise from all guests who looked forward to another attendance at the place.

The Moscow declaration

CHINA AND RUSSIA AGREE TO STAND TOGETHER ON ISSUES INVOLVING SECURITY INTERESTS



BY
G PARTHASARATHY



"The declaration is a clear signal from Russia and China that they are prepared to stand together on issues involving each other's security interests. While India finds mention on some issues of regional cooperation, there is nothing in the declaration to which it could take objection to. What now emerges is that Russia and China have much in common in dealing with the US and its allies. China prefers to keep out any mention of India. This should not surprise anyone with even a cursory understanding of China's growing hubris, as it moves to attain global recognition of its economic clout and military potential. Moreover, there is considerable focus by China on Sino-Russian cooperation to build a security framework in the oil-rich Gulf region. China and Russia appear more than pleased that thanks to clumsy diplomacy by the Biden administration, they have been able to commence a rapprochement process between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Similar efforts are underway to forge normal ties between Syria and Saudi Arabia. These developments have resulted in a stronger Russian and Chinese presence in the region."



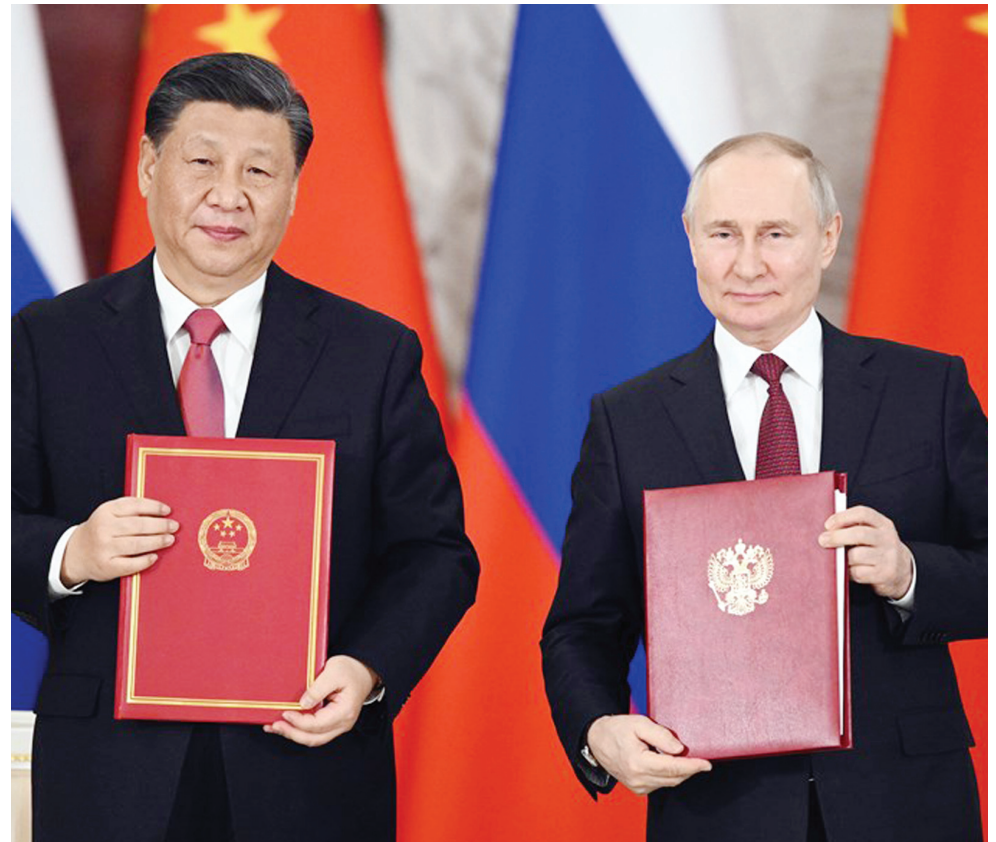
The US and its Western allies were hoping that the Putin-Xi Jinping summit would turn out to be a damp squib. The recent Moscow summit has, however, produced a comprehensive plan by China and Russia to jointly meet the challenges they face from the US-led global order. The US and its allies have been repeatedly calling for sanctions against Russia, following its conflict with Ukraine. Some hope was also unrealistically expressed that China could follow through on its Ukraine plan by joining them in persuading Russia to pull out of Ukraine on Western terms. That hope now lies shattered.

The joint declaration ends any illusion that Western powers may have had about China backing them on how the Ukraine conflict should be ended.

The joint declaration states that the US and its allies would have to respect the legitimate security concerns of all countries, while adding that confrontation must be avoided. Russia and China have emphasized that 'responsible dialogue' is the best way to resolve problems and the international community should support constructive efforts. The declaration, in fact, calls on all parties to stop actions that promote tension to prevent the crisis from further aggravating, and even getting out of control. It concludes that China and Russia are opposed to unilateral sanctions not authorized by the UN Security Council.

The US has, rather unconvincingly, been denying allegations made by one of its best-known investigative journalists, Seymour Hersh, that Washington had a hand in, and indeed organized, the bomb attack that destroyed the undersea Beixi gas pipeline (known also as Nordstream) carrying gas from Russia to Germany. Russia and China have bluntly noted, 'The banner of extremism and the use of terrorist and extremist organizations to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and achieve geopolitical goals.' They have also demanded 'an objective, impartial and professional investigation should be conducted on the Beixi pipeline explosion.' It is going to be difficult for the US, and even Germany, which is reputed for observing high standards of respect for international law, to claim that they do not know who was responsible for blowing up the pipeline.

Expectations in the international community that Russia may be persuaded by China to be more flexible on the withdrawal from Ukraine have been dashed. Russia and China announced that the 'legitimate security concerns of all countries must be respected', and that confrontation between camps, 'adding fuel to the flames', must be avoided. China firmly backs Russia's position on the Ukraine crisis, averring that 'responsible dialogue is the best way to solve problems steadily'. Most importantly, Russia has been assured of Chinese



Both Russia and China are opposed to sanctions not authorized by the UNSC .
Photo credit /Kremlin pool - EPA-EFE

backing in the UN Security Council to ensure that 'parties to the conflict stop all actions that promote tension and delay the end of war.' Putin could not have asked for anything more from his Chinese guest. What remains to be seen is whether China will provide the military supplies that Moscow needs.

The countries that would be most concerned by these developments are the US and its NATO allies. The declaration ends any illusion that Western powers, who speak for the so-called international community, have about China backing them on how the Ukraine conflict should be ended. China and Russia have also signaled that they have no regard for sanctions being imposed by Western powers. President Zelenskyy and the US would also have to think afresh on Russia's concerns about the safety and security of Russians living in south-eastern Ukraine, while facing the reality that Russia intends to stay in Crimea, where it has exercised sovereignty for three centuries now.

The declaration is a clear signal from Russia and China that they are prepared to stand together on issues involving each other's security interests. While India finds mention on some issues of regional cooperation, there is nothing in the declaration to which it could take objection to. What now emerges is that Russia and China have much in common in dealing with the US and its allies. China prefers to keep out any mention of India. This should not surprise anyone with even a cursory understanding of China's growing hubris, as it moves to attain global recognition of its economic clout and military potential. Moreover, there is considerable focus by China on Sino-Russian cooperation to build a

security framework in the oil-rich Gulf region. China and Russia appear more than pleased that thanks to clumsy diplomacy by the Biden administration, they have been able to commence a rapprochement process between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Similar efforts are underway to forge normal ties between Syria and Saudi Arabia. These developments have resulted in a stronger Russian and Chinese presence in the region.

There have sometimes been concerns about the impact of the growing Sino-Russian cooperation on Russia's relations with India. Russia has for long been India's largest supplier of modern weapons systems and has been helpful in India's production of nuclear submarines. India is also manufacturing Russian-designed BrahMos missiles, which it has provided to friendly countries, with prospects of more buyers. Moreover, purchases of petroleum products at very reasonable prices from Russia have been helpful in managing India's balance of payments. Russia, in turn, evidently understands that India's defense cooperation with the US, together with its security links in groupings like Quad and I2U2 across the Indo-Pacific, are set to grow. While Russia is furious with Pakistan for supplying weapons to Ukraine, China would make every effort to get Moscow to assist Pakistan. Strategic autonomy, meanwhile, has been, and should remain, the hallmark of India's defense and foreign policies.

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

Four reasons the Sikhs are hurting. And it's not about the K-word



BY SHEKHAR GUPTA

'CAUSES' OF ANGER ARE DERA THREAT TO SIKHISM, INCARCERATION OF 'BANDI SINGHS', INACTION IN SACRILEGE CASES, & 'IF BJP-RSS WANT HINDU RASHTRA, WHAT'S WRONG WITH SIKH RASHTRA?'

There are two most important similarities between the mood in Punjab today and at the peak of the earlier crisis in the early 1980s.

The first similarity is the good one. If you walk around Punjab and ask a random sample of Sikhs if they believe in creating a state separate from India - or what is loosely called Khalistan - the chances are that a very, very large majority will say no. It will be unanimous unless you run into an oddball.

Many may even ask you to get your head examined. The fact is - although many in these new nationalist times elsewhere in the country might find it difficult to believe it - that's how it was in the Bhindranwale era too.

The second similarity is the tough one. You ask the very same people who laugh at the fantasy of a nation separate from India if they think Sikhs are victims of multiple, serious, and egregious injustices, and the answer - you'd be surprised from how many - will be yes. That's precisely how it was in that past.

The sense of injustice is, and was, righteous and deep. The line you heard then was the same as what you'd hear now: that the Sikhs are victims of dhakka or grave injustice.

The 'causes' of the current anger and alienation are broadly four: sectarian deras (let's say seminaries-cum-permanent congregations) as an existential threat to Sikhism, the continued incarceration of 'Bandi Singhs' (imprisoned Sikhs, as in the nine convicted on terror and assassination charges and held on long jail sentences). Third, that those guilty of sacrilege at Sikh shrines and for alleged desecration haven't been caught or punished. And the fourth is a rhetorical one, that if the BJP and RSS say they're building a Hindu Rashtra, what's wrong with a Sikh Rashtra?

Each one of these has nuances and arguments. And while I know it's easy to respond to these with irritation and anger, it won't serve any purpose. In fact, if we accept that there is a challenge in Punjab today, any realistic progress can only be made if the rest of the country, especially the government and the ruling party, engage with this sense of grievance. This is no call for appeasement. Just that debate and an open mind never hurt anybody.

Two of these four, impunity for perpetrators of sacrilege, and deras, are to be read together. The larger fear, as in the 1980s, is that Sikhism is greatly threatened by 'blasphemers' pretending to be Sikh Gurus. In the past, the target was the Nirankari sect, now it is the heads of the deras. The first targeted attacks in the past were aimed at the leaders of the Nirankari sect, including its chief.

Now the anger is with the various new babas who claim to be religious teachers but are seen by the devout Sikh as packaging themselves as modern-day Gurus. This is blasphemy in Sikhism. They are seen to dress and turn out like the Gurus and attract vast populations of Sikhs into their fold.

The foremost of these is the rape/murder convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim Insan. The last three words of his name were added hurriedly as he faced heat from devout Sikhs for pretending to be a Guru. That's why the suffixes of a Hindu and a Muslim name to assert a secular view, and Insan (human being) to deny any claim to divinity.

On the ground, however, it makes no difference. His followers are increasing, his deras are being run as if he isn't missing. And is he missing at all, in spite of his conviction and sentencing for rape and murder? These are the questions the Sikhs ask with a sense of hurt and



A rally of the Sikhs

Photo for representation only

anger.

If he's guilty of rape and murder, how does he seem to get more time out of jail on parole than inside? How does he get these long spells of parole as any election in the region, especially in Haryana, approaches? And so many political leaders, especially of the BJP, paying obeisance to him.

The widespread belief among the Sikhs is that his followers were responsible for the incidents of 'sacrilege' and his political clout is the reason no government - Akalis, Congress, or AAP - has dared to catch and punish the guilty. He owns transferable vote banks.

You want to know how strong this sentiment is, think about the recent lynchings - including one in the Golden Temple - of people caught by the devotees on mere suspicion of sacrilege. The once formidable Punjab Police have drawn as much of a blank in catching and punishing those guilty of these lynchings as in the earlier 'sacrilege' incidents. Of course, you haven't seen any popular revulsion among devout Sikhs or the clergy at the lynchings.

An added feature of the same insecurity that others are creeping in to convert Sikhs to other faiths and sects is the new wave of Christian evangelism. The most recent fight Amritpal Singh picked was with Christian pastors, who pushed back with protests.

A lot of Sikhs, especially from the Scheduled Castes, patronize these new churches just like many more go to the deras. In each case, it is seen as a threat to traditional Sikhism. Just how popular these churches and pastors are becoming, you can read in this fine story by Chitleen Sethi. What triggers the Sikh conservatives even more is the fact that many of these pastors still dress in traditional Sikh attire.

For any political party or coalition ruling Punjab, it would've been easier to handle these if the state, or more precisely its electorate, was as homogenous as many outsiders think it is. The state is a bit less than 60 per cent Sikh (2011 census). Among the Sikhs also, there are wide divisions.

The most dominant and visible class and caste, Jatt Sikhs, make up barely 20 per cent of the total population. The state also, counterintuitively, has the largest percentage of Dalits of any state in the country, at almost 33 per cent. Or one in three. They are the ones among whom evangelists - whether of the deras or Christianity - find the most purchase.

The third grievance, over what is called the 'Bandi Singh' issue, needs a close look. Again, we might all benefit from reading this story Chitleen had written explaining the problem.

Briefly, however, this is about just nine prisoners, serving time for about 25-32 years after conviction on terror charges. Six of them were convicted for the assassination of then Punjab chief minister Beant Singh on 31 August, 1995. The remaining three were convicted for terror bombings.

These include Beant Singh's assassin Balwant Singh Rajoana, who told journalists outside a dental clinic where he had been taken for treatment that he doesn't even want to be released. Among the bombers, the most prominent is Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar, convicted for the 11 September 1993 bombing in Delhi where the Congress's Maninderjeet Singh Bitta survived, albeit with a battered body, and nine others died. His death sentence was commuted to life by the Supreme Court. A campaign has raged for more than a year now for their release.

While it is true that even the Sikh clergy and the SGPC hailed Beant Singh's assassins, and that the Akali Dal keeps fielding Rajoana's sister as a candidate in elections, Sikhs you speak with won't by and large go into whether what they did was right or wrong. They ask a more searching question.

Rajiv Gandhi, they say, was assassinated at around the same time. His convicted assassins, serving life sentences, have been released on compassionate grounds. Why is this compassion reserved only for non-Sikhs? No political leader in Punjab has the intellect or spine to engage with the protesters on this. On the other hand, they've been trying to set the 'Bandi Singh' protesters against Amritpal Singh's support base. That's some political 'genius', isn't it!

The last point: If Modi, the BJP and the RSS can proudly say that India is a Hindu Rashtra, why can't we have a Sikh nation? It will bring us back to the old point: the deep BJP/RSS belief that the Sikhs are Hindus who look different and follow one of the many ways of prayer and worship in Hinduism, so why should they complain. That's a fundamental misreading, and serious errors of judgement flow from it. Muslims aren't the only fellow Indians triggered by the talk of a Hindu Rashtra.

(Republished from The Print, March 25, 2023)
(The author is Editor-in-Chief and Chairman, The Print)

DUTCH FARMERS' POLL WIN HAS LESSONS FOR INDIA



BY DEVINDER SHARMA

THE DUTCH FARMERS' VICTORY, EMERGING FROM CONTINUED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT POLICES TO CUT DOWN NITRATE POLLUTION ON THE FARM, COMES ALMOST A YEAR AFTER AN ATTEMPT BY FARMERS IN PUNJAB TO CONTEST THE STATE ELECTIONS DREW A BLANK.

The Farmer-Citizen Movement (BoerBurgerBeweging or BBB) has caused political tremors in the Netherlands. Riding the wave of farmers' protest against the environment policies of Prime Minister Mark Rutte's coalition government, the four-year-old party romped home in a provincial election. And expectedly so, after the results were announced on March 16, the Prime Minister said: "This is not the victory we had hoped for."

The Dutch farmers' victory, emerging from continued dissatisfaction with the government polices to cut down nitrate pollution on the farm, comes almost a year after an attempt by farmers in Punjab to contest the state elections drew a blank.

As the Dutch newspapers, a day after the election results, talked of the 'historic lesson' for the four-party ruling coalition that governs the country, there are important lessons to be drawn from the Dutch victory for a coalition of farmer unions that unsuccessfully contested the Punjab elections.

After all, why did the farmer unions fail to tap into popular sentiments that enabled the iconic farmers' protest at the gates of New Delhi to last

for over a year, is a question that will continue to haunt not only the farm leadership but also political analysts and sociologists. But let us first look at why the Dutch farmers' growing disenchantment with environment policies got such a big electoral backing.

In Holland, which is smaller in size than Punjab, the farmers' party got 19 per cent of the total votes. It polled 15 lakh votes in a country where roughly 11,200 arable farms exist. On the other hand, there are an estimated 1.09 lakh farming households in Punjab. And yet, the farmers' political front, the Sanyukt Samaj Morcha, drew a blank.

Although the Netherlands has been hounded by a rise in nitrogen pollution for several years now, last year the government announced plans to cut down nitrogen emissions from the farms by 50 per cent by 2030. Using the climate change argument, it promised to take 3,000 farms out of cultivation and also reduce the dairy cattle number by a third. Offering 100 per cent the value of land to farmers who give up their land voluntarily, the government also made it clear that it had provisioned 24 billion euros for the purpose.

The agitated farmers took to the streets for months.

As their anger spilled over, even going to the extent of dumping animal excreta on the streets, hoisting the Dutch flag upside down in villages became an expression of the widespread resentment. Driving tractors to the cities, farmers said agriculture was being used as a soft target, an alibi to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Accusing the government of not acting against the industry, construction and transport sectors with equal determination, farmers said they were being unfairly targeted.

Backed by the citizens' support, the growing disenchantment with the government policies finally

of the release of my book GATT and India: The Politics of Agriculture, it became a hot-button issue that was debated in Parliament. With questions being raised about how cow manure could be imported by a country that has the largest population of cattle, some civil society groups had even offloaded cartloads of manure in front of Krishi Bhawan.

According to the plan, the aim was to export 5 million tons of manure to India, which would be offloaded in the Kutch region, dried in the sun and mixed with additional nutrients and then marketed by a private company in India. Since the cow dung in western

countries is in a semi-liquid form, Holland was to collect it through a network of pipes converging at a port, make biogas which would be supplied to a private company there, and the slurry exported to India. Subsidized by the European Commission, the exports were to be doubled in five years' time.

Not until Parliament was informed that the import of cow dung had been brought under the negative list (meaning approval from the government required before the import) did the



Farmers rallied against the Dutch government's plans to rein in nitrogen emissions.

Photo / Twitter

hit the ballot box. "Our worries are not yet over, but, at least, we can fly the flag the right side up again," Eric Stegink, the party chairman, tweeted after the victory.

Following an intensive farming model for several decades, the Netherlands is the world's second-biggest agricultural exporter. Using 277.8 kg of fertilizer per hectare, its fertilizer consumption is also among the highest in the world. Engaging with the latest technologies, the Dutch innovations in farming have been widely acclaimed. These impressive gains are reflected through the export statistics. But with four times, by weight, the number of cattle on the farms, it is also the world's biggest exporter of manure and the biggest exporter of meat in Europe. However, continuous leaching of harmful chemicals into the groundwater had been a political issue in the tiny country. Some people had even lost elections. Desperate to get over the problem, some years ago, Holland had even tried to export cow dung and piggery droppings to India.

When I disclosed that the Netherlands was trying to export cow dung to India, and it was in 1994 at the time

Opposition relent.

The stakes are, therefore, high. Nearly 45 per cent of the nitrogen emissions in Holland come from agriculture. But the answer does not lie in forcing farmers off the land. To be fair, farmers need to be given some more time to bring about the environmental changes required. This will also require a change in research paradigm for agricultural research and development, moving towards environmentally-safe farming practices.

This also has lessons for India. Blindly borrowing the high-tech production techniques and using more chemical inputs will necessitate drastically cutting down on increasing emissions from Indian agriculture in the years to come, which means forcing farmers off the land.

Let us, therefore, not repeat this mistake but, instead, focus on our own inherent strengths. Bring in economic viability on the farm and promote the agro-ecological farming system.

(The author is Food & Agriculture Specialist)

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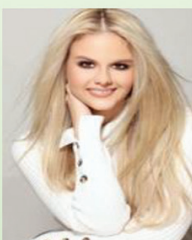
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H-1B VISA CAP FOR FY 2024 REACHED, SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS INFORMED: USCIS



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

The H-1B visa cap for the financial year 2024, beginning October 1, has been reached and all successful applicants have been informed about it, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services has said.

MARCH 28, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): In a statement on Monday, March 27, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services said it has received enough electronic registrations during the initial period to reach the fiscal year 2024 H-1B numerical allocations (H-1B cap), including the advanced degree exemption -- the master's cap.

"We have randomly selected from the registrations properly submitted to reach the cap and have notified all prospective petitioners with selected registrations that they are eligible to file an H-1B cap-subject petition for the beneficiary named in the applicable selected registration," it said.

H-1B cap-subject petitions for the financial year 2024, including those petitions eligible for the advanced degree exemption, may be filed with the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) from April 1, 2023, if based on a valid, selected registration.

Only petitioners with selected registrations may file H-1B cap-subject petitions for 2024 fiscal and only for the beneficiary named in the applicable selected registration notice, the USCIS said.

The US Congress has set the current annual regular cap for the H-1B category at 65,000.

Of this, 6,800 visas are set aside under the terms of the legislation implementing the US-Chile and U.S.-Singapore free trade agreements. Unused visas in this group become available for H-1B use for the next fiscal year's regular H-1B cap.

(Source: PTI)

US watching Rahul Gandhi's case in Indian courts: US Official

MARCH 28, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The United States is watching the court case of Congress party leader Rahul Gandhi, an official has said while observing that Washington continues to engage with India on the shared commitment towards democratic principles and the protection of human rights, including freedom of expression.

Gandhi was on March 23 sentenced to two years in jail by a Surat court in a 2019 criminal defamation case over his "why all thieves have Modi surname" remark. A day later, he was disqualified from the Lok Sabha from the date of his conviction in the case.

"Respect for the rule of law and judicial independence is a cornerstone of any democracy. We are watching Mr. Gandhi's case in Indian courts and we engage with the Government of India on our shared commitment to democratic values, including, freedom of expression," the State Department's Deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters at a news conference on



"Respect for the rule of law and judicial independence is a cornerstone of any democracy. We are watching Mr. Gandhi's case in Indian courts and we engage with the Government of India on our shared commitment to democratic values, including, freedom of expression," the State Department's Deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters at a news conference on Monday, March 27.

File photo

Monday, March 27.

"In our engagements with our Indian partners, we continue to highlight the importance of democratic principles and the protection of human rights, including freedom of expression, as a key to strengthening both our democracies," he said.

Responding to a question, Patel said it is normal and standard for the United States to engage with members of opposition parties in any country where it has bilateral relationships.

Opposition parties in India stepped up their offensive against the Narendra Modi government and observed a "black day for democracy" on Monday, three days after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was disqualified from the Lok Sabha.

The BJP condemned the ruckus created by the Opposition in Parliament and accused the Congress of resorting to "low-level politics" in its bid to justify Gandhi's remarks against the OBC community. (Source: PTI)

Wait time for US visitor's visa interview in India cut by 60 pc this year, says official

MARCH 29, 2023



The goal of the State Department is to get to 1 million visas issued this year, which would be above the pre-pandemic number, said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Visa Services Julie Stufft

"We have increased the number of officers going to India. We have set up arrangements, which is unprecedented, with other embassies in the world like Bangkok to take Indians who are seeking visas. We are opening a new consulate in Hyderabad... and we're just focused on making sure that we can bring the wait time down in India," she said.

Stufft noted that Frankfurt, London and Abu Dhabi have taken a lot of Indian citizens who are seeking visas.

"We have asked these missions to take Indians as if they were from their own host country. Especially in places like Bangkok where there is no visa required for Indians and it is a relatively short flight.

"Obviously this is not ideal. We want Indians to be able to apply in India, and that's where we'll get to," she said.

More than 100 US diplomatic missions have been issuing visas to Indians.

"As a result of all of these efforts, the visitor visa interview wait time has decreased by 60 per cent just in the last couple of months. This is a result of all the work that we've put into making sure that Indians who wish to travel to the US can do so."

Stufft said that currently, "visa production in India is 40 per cent higher than it was before the pandemic" and asserted that the State Department was working hard to bring down the wait time.

In February, the US had the highest on-record production of visas in India. "Our team there is working very hard and they're well on their way to accomplishing the 1 million visa goal," Stufft said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

INDUSTRIALIST NAVEEN JINDAL CONFERRED LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD BY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS



The University of Texas at Dallas has conferred Indian industrialist Naveen Jindal with a lifetime achievement award

MARCH 29, 2023

DALLAS, TX (TIP): The University of Texas at Dallas has conferred Indian industrialist Naveen Jindal with a lifetime achievement award in recognition of his accomplishments in industry, politics and education.

An alumnus of the University of Texas at Dallas' 1992 batch, Jindal received the award in a ceremony held on March 25.

Jindal is the second person to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Texas at Dallas after Nobel Laureate Aziz Sanjar, according to a media release.

As a student at the university, Jindal served as both Student Government vice president and president and earned the Student Leader of the Year Award. He was recognized with the University's Distinguished Alumni award in 2010.

To celebrate the success of their distinguished alumni, the University of Texas at Dallas honored him by rechristening their School of Management as the Naveen Jindal School of Management in 2011.

The lifetime achievement award is the highest honor that the University of Texas Dallas bestows on alumni, to recognize a graduate whose extraordinary contributions have bettered society, transformed the university and inspired others to reach new heights of excellence, the release said. (Source: PTI)

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Judge rules Mike Pence must testify before grand jury: sources

MARCH 28, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A federal judge has ruled that former Vice-President Mike Pence will have to testify before a grand jury after he was subpoenaed by the special counsel investigating efforts by former President Donald Trump and his allies to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

That's according to two people familiar with the ruling, who spoke on condition of anonymity because it remains under seal.

The people said, however, that Mr. Pence would not have to answer questions about his actions on January 6, 2021, when a violent mob of Mr. Trump's supporters stormed the building as Mr. Pence was presiding over



Former Vice-President Mike Pence
Official portrait / White House

a joint session of Congress to certify the

vote.

Mr. Pence had argued that, because he was serving in his capacity as president of the Senate that day, he was protected from being forced to testify under the Constitution's "speech or debate" clause, which is intended to protect members of the Congress from questioning about official legislative acts.

The extraordinary scenario of a former Vice-President potentially testifying against his former boss in a criminal investigation comes as Mr. Pence has been weighing challenging Mr. Trump for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.

Mr. Pence's team is discussing whether it will appeal.

(Source: PTI)

'Attack me...not freedom fighters,' says US Congressman Ro Khanna as late grandfather criticized for supporting Emergency in India



Ro Khanna has come out in support of his late maternal grandfather Amarnath Vidyalankar, who drew flak on social media recently for supporting former prime minister Indira Gandhi during the Emergency, asserting, "Attack me. Don't attack India's freedom fighters."

MARCH 29, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US Congressman Ro Khanna has come out in support of his late maternal grandfather Amarnath Vidyalankar, who drew flak on social media recently for supporting former prime minister Indira Gandhi during the Emergency, asserting, "Attack me. Don't attack India's freedom fighters."

Last week, Khanna, a Democrat, termed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's disqualification from the Lok Sabha as a "deep betrayal" of Gandhian philosophy.

Gandhi, the former Congress president, was disqualified from the Lok Sabha last week, after a court in Surat in the state of Gujarat convicted him in a defamation case. "The expulsion of Rahul Gandhi from parliament is a deep betrayal of Gandhian philosophy and India's deepest values," Khanna said in a recent tweet. "This is not what my grandfather sacrificed years in jail for," the 46-year-old Indian-American politician added.

After his post in support of Gandhi, Khanna was reminded on social media that his late grandfather Vidyalankar, a Gandhian, was a supporter of former prime minister Indira Gandhi during the time of Emergency. "Though it seems as if Ro has forgotten that Amarnath Vidyalankar (his grandfather), an INC loyalist, was part of Indira Gandhi's govt during the harsh period of emergency in India. He did not oppose the brutal atrocities on Indian masses during the Emergency," according to a post by The Pamphlet on Twitter.

In response, Khanna tweeted: "It's sad to see people maligning my grandfather who worked for Lala Lajpat Rai, was jailed in 31-32 and 41-45, and wrote two letters to Indira Gandhi opposing the Emergency, leaving parliament right after. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)"

US committed to protecting diplomatic missions, diplomats, says senior official



The United States is committed to taking all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic missions and diplomats in the country: Vedant Patel

MARCH 29, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): At a news conference on Tuesday, US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel condemned the incidents of violence at Indian diplomatic facilities in the United States, saying violence is never an acceptable form of protest.

"Consistent with our Vienna Convention obligations, the department is committed to taking all appropriate steps, including coordination with federal, state, and local law enforcement authorities, to protect the safety and security of these facilities and the diplomatic individuals who work within them as well," he said.

He was responding to a question on violent protests outside the Indian Embassy in Washington DC and vandalism of the Indian consulate in San Francisco.

Last week, a group of Khalistan supporters held a protest in front of the Indian Embassy here and tried to incite violence and even threatened the country's envoy, but timely intervention by law enforcement agencies prevented them from vandalizing the property.

A few days earlier, pro-Khalistan protesters attacked the Indian consulate in San Francisco. India registered its "strong protest" with the US Charge d'Affaires in New Delhi over the incident and asked the American government to take appropriate measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

"We condemn the recent violent incidents that have taken place during protests at Indian diplomatic facilities in the United States.

We support the First Amendment rights of protesters and engagement in free speech activities. However, violence or the threat of violence is never an acceptable form of protest," Patel said.

"Attacks against journalists are never acceptable and we condemn any incidents of violence against a member of the media just doing their job and any act of violence or vandalism against a diplomatic facility as well," he said.

(Source: PTI)

Bill to reform H-1B and L-1 visa programme introduced in US Senate



Two influential Senators - Dick Durbin and Chuck Grassley - have introduced a bipartisan legislation in the US Senate to comprehensively overhaul the H-1B and L-1 visa programs
NBC Screenshot

MARCH 29, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A group of influential lawmakers have introduced a bipartisan legislation in the US Senate to comprehensively overhaul the H-1B and L-1 visa programs and usher in more transparency in the recruitment of foreign workers.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. The L-1 is the other type of work visa the US issues to professionals looking to work in the country. Unlike the H-1B, where an individual is looking to join an American company, the L-1 visa is issued to those who are already employed by the company in another country, and who are merely relocating to an American office. Two influential Senators - Dick Durbin and Chuck Grassley - have introduced this legislation in the US Senate.

The co-sponsors include Senators Tommy Tuberville, Bernie Sanders, Sherrod Brown, and Richard Blumenthal.

The H-1B and L-1 Visa Reform Act will reduce fraud and abuse in the immigration system, provide protections for American workers and visa holders, and require more transparency in the recruitment of foreign workers, a media release said on Tuesday.

The legislation proposes to place new wage, recruitment and attestation requirements on employers looking to hire L-1 and H-1B workers, and employers seeking to hire H-1B employees to post those jobs on the Department of Labor (DOL) website, it said.

It also proposes to give DOL the authority to place a fee on labor condition applications and use it to hire an additional 200 DOL employees and make reforms to the H-1B programme by prioritizing the H-1B visa issuance for workers with higher levels of education in STEM and amending the definition of a "specialty occupation" to require a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the release.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

AFSPA to be extended in 8 Assam districts

The Assam government will extend the 'disturbed area' tag under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) for another six months in eight districts of the state from April 1.

It will be extended for Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Charaideo, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao, according to a notification issued by the state home and political department.

The tag, however, would be lifted from Lakhimpur sub-division of Cachar district from April 1, following a review of the law and order scenario in the state.

The Centre had earlier announced removal of AFSPA from April 1, 2022 from the entire state of Assam barring nine districts and a sub-division of Cachar district.

The state was declared a 'disturbed area' under AFSPA during the intervening night of November 27-28, 1990, and this has been extended every six months since then.



NSA Doval to raise London HC violence with UK counterpart

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is expected to raise the incident at the Indian High Commission in London during a protest and the pulling down of Indian National Flag by extremists with his UK counterpart Tim Barrow today during the India-UK strategic dialogue meeting in the Capital.

While the national security establishment is tight-lipped about the dialogue, HT learns that NSA Doval will take up the issue forcefully with his counterpart and ask the Rishi Sunak government to take strong action against separatists who are trying to polarize the Indian diaspora in Britain. While the Indian High Commission in London has filed a complaint with UK Home office and police for the March 19 incident, which followed the crackdown on separatist leader Amritpal Singh's outfit in India, the Delhi Police has also registered an FIR (number 80/23, dated March 23, 2023) on the basis of a complaint made by an Indian national. The FIR has been registered by Special Cell under sections 109/147/148/149/120-B/448/452/325 of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Section 3(1) of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act (as the Indian HC is sovereign territory of India) and section 2 of the Prevention of insults to National Honour Act.



On the basis of FIR registered and the demarche to the British Government, NSA Doval is expected to ask the Rishi Sunak government to take immediate action against the chief perpetrator of the protest and the breach of Indian HC, Avtar Singhj Purba aka Khanda and his sponsor Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, a proscribed leader of UAPA designated Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) separatist organization. HT also learns that Indian intelligence agencies asked the British police and British intelligence including MI-5 and MI-6 to act against Khanda at least three times in the past, but to no avail. The names of Khanda and some of his associated have been shared by Indian intelligence in the past but the British Intelligence and the Foreign Office have been indifferent to the Modi government's concerns, Indian officials

said.

People familiar with the matter said the Narendra Modi government is waiting for the British Government to act. While India's QUAD partners US and Australia have taken action against the extremist followers of Pannu and Amritpal Singh, the UK and Canada governments have been more tardy in their approach, the officials cited above added, and said that this could affect bilateral relations.

Prime accused Avtar Khanda, who has been named in the Delhi Police FIR along with others, comes from a family of radicals - his father was involved in the so-called Khalistan movement and his mother is related to Gurjant Singh Budhsinghwal, a KLF leader with strong links to Pakistani deep state. He took the "student visa" route to enter the UK and then managed to get political asylum in that country. Subsequently, he became a presenter in UK-based separatist channel KTV along with Jagjeet Singh Jeeta, and continued to push his separatist agenda. The KTV was shut down by British Telecom Regulator Ofcom after the Indian diaspora filed thousands of complaints against the radical agenda promoted by the separatist channel.

Khanda claims association with SAD (Amritsar), headed by Simarjit Singh Mann, but in the UK, the officials cited above added, the lines between the Pakistani deep state, separatist organisations seeking a Sikh state in India, and others, often blurred.

Source: HT

Unfinished work along LAC; military, diplomacy at work: Jaishankar

NEW DELHI (TIP)

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday, March 29, said there was "unfinished work" along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China and that the militaries and diplomats on both sides were working to find a solution to the issue.

Jaishankar, speaking at Network18's 'Rising India Summit', deplored attempts by Rahul Gandhi to draw parallels between the situation along the LAC with China and the Ukraine conflict.

"What is today happening in Ukraine, if you follow the two sides, is one would say that they are threatened by the expansion of NATO and the character of the regime in Ukraine," he said.

"The West would say that Russians have expansionist designs. What is the analogy between that and India-China? There is no NATO in play here, there is no regime character in play here. I just don't see the comparison," he said.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar deplores attempts by Rahul Gandhi to draw parallels between the situation along the LAC with China and the Ukraine conflict.

Jaishankar also said "canards" were floated about buffer zones being created in India's patrolling areas.

He said since the Galwan clash of 2020, the combination of military and diplomacy has made progress, but admitted that the two sides have not been able to "sort everything out".

"Whatever has been done is mutual and negotiated. But this is still unfinished work," Jaishankar said about the present situation along the LAC.

He said to understand the relationship with China, one has to understand the nature of the problem between the two countries.

"The nature of the problem between India and China is that two militaries, which were not deployed at or on or very near the LAC, have done so to a great degree after May 2020. Pre-May 2020, both militaries were primarily located in the depth areas where they had permanent bases and then they would patrol out into the LAC," he said.

"In 2020, the Chinese breached that in violation of the 1993-96 agreement and brought forces to the LAC. Obviously we countered it. As a result, you have a very, very intricate situation of very multiple close deployments which, by military assessments, is a very dangerous situation to be in," Jaishankar said.

Source: PTI

Powerful blast creates crater in ground near India-Pakistan border in J-K's Kathua

JAMMU (TIP)

Sources said it appears to be an IED blast. It is suspected that the IED might have been carried by a drone and dropped at the wrong site close to the border, they said.

A powerful blast has occurred at a hamlet near the India-Pakistan border in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, creating a huge crater in the ground and triggering fear among the locals, officials said on Thursday, March 30.

Sources said it appears to be an IED blast. It is suspected that the IED might have been carried by a drone and dropped at the wrong site close to the border, they said.

Information about the explosion was received around 9.30 pm on Wednesday, Kathua SSP Shivdeep Singh Jamwal told PTI.

"We have also launched a search operation on Thursday morning. The bomb squad has collected the samples from the site and sent them for tests," the SSP said. Block Development Committee (BDC) chairman Ram Lal Kaliya, a resident of Saniyal village which is just 300 metres from the border post, said, "Around 9.30 pm on Wednesday we heard an explosion. I informed the post incharge who also confirmed the sound of the blast." The blast site was located after one-and-half hours, he said, adding that a big crater was found in an agriculture field.

Source: PTI

Lalit Modi says will take Rahul Gandhi to court

IPL founder and ex-chairman Lalit Modi on Thursday, March 30, in a series of acerbic tweets lashed out at Rahul Gandhi stating that he will take the Congress leader to court in the United Kingdom over allegations made by the "bag men" of the disqualified MP that he is a "fugitive of justice".

Rahul Gandhi earlier on March 23 was convicted by a Surat district court and sentenced to two years imprisonment in a defamation case over his 'Modi surname' remark made in 2019 during an election rally in Karnataka.

In a series of tweets, Lalit Modi wrote that the opposition leaders are "either ill-informed or just vendetta prone" and he looks forward to Rahul Gandhi "make a complete fool of himself" in court.

"i see just about every Tom dick and gandhi associates again and again saying i ama fugitive of justice. why?How?and when was i to date ever convicted of same. unlike #Papu aka @RahulGandhi now an ordinary citizen saying it and it seems one and all oposition leaders have nothing else to do so they too are either ill informed or just vendetta prone. i have decided to take the @RahulGandhi at least him to court in uk right away. i am sure he will have to come-up with some solid evidence. i look forward to seeing him make a complete #fool of himself. #rkdhawan #sitaramkesri #motilalvohra #satissharna all bag men of #gandhi family. not to forget #narainduttewari. how do u all have overseas assets.

Gurugram man shoots colleague in fight over chair in office

An employee of a financial firm was shot at by his co-worker near the Ramada hotel here following an argument over a chair in their office, police said.

The victim was critically injured and is being treated at a private hospital here, they said on Wednesday, March 29, adding that an FIR has been lodged against the accused, who is a native of Hisar in Haryana.

The victim has been identified as Vishal (23), a resident of Firoz Gandhi colony in sector 9 here.

After receiving information about the incident, police reached the spot and rushed Vishal to a hospital. Vishal's family members were informed and based on the complaint of the victim's brother, a case was lodged under section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code and sections 25-54-59 of the Arms Act, police said.

In his statement, Vishal said he had an argument with his colleague Aman Jangra regarding a chair in the office on Tuesday. On Wednesday, they again had an argument over the same issue following which he walked out of the office, police said.

Vishal alleged that when he was walking on the road, Aman came from behind, took out a pistol and shot at him before escaping from the spot, police said.

Plea challenging Rahul Gandhi's conviction ready, to be moved soon

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A petition challenging Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's conviction and sentencing by a trial court in Surat in a defamation case is ready and is likely to be filed very soon, sources said on Wednesday, March 29.

The party's top legal advisers are working on the review petition which will be filed before the Surat sessions court in a day or two, they added.

Gandhi was convicted and was given a two-year sentence in the 2019 defamation case over his remarks on Modi surname, following which he was disqualified as MP of Lok Sabha.

The Congress has said that it will fight the matter both politically and legally and will take the issue to the public.

Congress Whip in Lok Sabha Manickam Tagore said the government has deliberately disqualified Rahul Gandhi under a well-planned conspiracy to not allow him to attend Parliament during this budget session.

"This is a totally false case and his disqualification has come to keep him away from Parliament. But, we will fight it both legally and politically," he told reporters outside Parliament.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission said it was in no hurry to announce bye-election to Wayanad constituency as the trial court has given Gandhi one month to appeal against the court order.

"There is no hurry, we will wait. There is not hurry to do it before exhausting that particular remedy which the trial court had accorded. We will take a call after that," Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said at a press conference.

He said the vacancy in the Wayanad parliamentary party was notified on March 23 this year and as per the law, a bypoll has to be conducted within six months.

Kumar said the law also states that if the remainder of the term was less than one year, then the election will not be held.

The CEC said that in the case of Wayanad, the remainder of the term is more than a year.

NCP leader Faizal's LS membership restored

NCP leader and Lakshadweep MP Mohammed Faizal on Wednesday attended Parliament after the Lok Sabha Secretariat issued a notification restoring his membership of the House.



Following this development, the Supreme Court disposed of Faizal's petition seeking reinstatement as an MP after the Kerala High Court stayed his conviction in an attempt to murder case.

A Bench led by Justice KM Joseph took on record the notification issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat restoring the membership of Faizal, who was disqualified as a Lok Sabha MP in January following his conviction in an attempt to murder case and sentenced to a 10-year prison term. The Bench, however, left open the legal question regarding maintainability of his petition. The Bench, however, made it clear that the appeal filed by the UT of Lakshadweep against the HC's January 25 order staying a Kavaratti Sessions Court survived and would be heard.

Faizal's case is being keenly observed as it could work as a precedent in the case of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who was disqualified as a Lok Sabha MP on Friday, a day after a Gujarat court convicted him in a defamation case and sentenced him to a two-year imprisonment. Producing the notification before the top court on behalf of Faizal, senior counsel AM Singhvi nothing survived in the matter as his Lok Sabha membership has been restored.

India reports 40% jump in new Covid cases, Delhi govt calls emergency meeting

NEW DELHI (TIP)

At 3,016 cases, India registered a 40 per cent jump in the new Covid cases in the last 24 hours, said the Union Health Ministry on Thursday, March 30. In view of the rising cases, the Delhi government has called an emergency meeting.

The daily positivity rate has been recorded at 2.7 per cent and the weekly positivity rate stands at 1.71 per cent.

There were 1,396 recoveries in the last 24 hours and active caseload stood at 13,509.

The Delhi government has called an emergency meeting after the Covid cases spiked on Wednesday. A total of 300 new Covid infections in the last 24 hours were recorded in the national capital, which is a rise over Tuesday's 214 cases, as per the Delhi government health bulletin.

Meanwhile, two Covid-19 related deaths have also been reported in the same time span.

The positivity rate of the national capital city has risen to 13.79 per cent. The number of active cases stands at 806 out of which 452 patients are being treated in home isolation.

With 163 patients recovering in the last 24 hours, the total number of recoveries so far has gone to 19,82,029, while Delhi's total caseload is 20,09,361 and the death toll in the



city has risen at 26,526.

A total of 2,160 new tests -- 1490 RT-PCR and 670 Rapid Antigen - were conducted in the last 24 hours, taking the total to 4,07,85,433 while 141 vaccines were administered - 27 first doses, 34 second doses, and 80 precaution doses.

The total number of cumulative beneficiaries vaccinated so far stands at 3,74,04,636 according to the health bulletin.

India in history this Week

MARCH 31, 2023, TO APRIL 6, 2023

31 MARCH



1959 The Buddhist leader Dalai Lama was granted asylum in India after his exile from Tibet.

1964 Electric tram last run in Bombay.

1774 The first post of the Postal Service opened in India in 1774.

1867 Praya Samaj was established in 1867 in Mumbai.

2011 According to census data, India's population has increased to 121 crore (1 billion 21 crore) in 2011. This is 17.64% more than what was calculated ten years ago.

1504 The second Sikh Guru Guru Angad Dev was born.

1865 India's first female doctor Anandi Gopal Joshi was born.

01 APRIL



1935 The Reserve Bank of India started functioning from 1 April 1935. For this, the British made the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 law.

1839 Kolkata Medical College and Hospital was started in 1839.

1878 The new museum building in Kolkata was opened to the public in 1878.

1912 Delhi was declared the capital and a province of India.

1936 Odisha was carved out of Bihar and created a new state in 1936.

1969 India's first nuclear power station started in the Tarapur region of Maharashtra in 1969. c.

1973 The 'Tiger Bachao' campaign was launched in 1973 to save cheetahs in India's Corbett National Park.

1976 Doordarshan Corporation was established in 1976 by separating Doordarshan from radio.

1992 The Eighth Five Year Plan started in 1992.

1621 Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, was born in 1621.

02 APRIL

1849 British Punjab was established in 1849.

1942 The Congress rejected the proposal of the

Cripps Mission in 1942.



1984 Astronaut Rakesh Sharma became the first Indian astronaut to go to space under the Mission Soyuz T-11 in 1984.

1997 Sumita Sinha set a record in 1997 by allowing her to cross over 3200 kg of trucks.

1983 India won the World Cup for the second time on the same day in 2011, after winning the first World Cup in 1983.

2017 In 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the country's longest, Chenani-Nashri road tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir to the nation.

1902 Classical singer Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was born in 1902.

03 APRIL



1680 Death of Chhatrapati Shivaji, who laid the foundation of Maratha empire in western India, in Raigarh.

2007 14th SAARC Conference begins in New Delhi.

1933 The plane first flew in 1933 over Mount Everest, the world's highest peak.

1999 India launched the first global telecommunications satellite INSAT 1E in 1999.

2016 West Indies won the ICC Twenty20 World Cup by defeating England in 2016 at the Eden Gardens ground in Kolkata.

2017 The 19th Commonwealth Forestry Conference started in 2017 at the Forest Research Institute of Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand.

1903 Birth of freedom fighter and social reformer Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay in 1903.

04 APRIL

1905 Earthquake in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh kills about twenty thousand people.

1889 Famous Hindi poet, writer, playwright and journalist Makhanlal Chaturvedi is born in Madhya Pradesh.

1910 Philosopher Sri Aurobindo arrives at Pondicherry (now Puducherry) where he opens a Yoga

and spiritual center.

05 APRIL



1957 For the first time in the country and for the first time in the world after the democratically held elections in Kerala, the Communist Party came to power and EMS Namboodiripad took oath as Chief Minister.

1979 The country's first Naval Museum opened in Bombay (now Mumbai).

1949 Bharat Scout and Guide was established in 1949.

1961 The first Indian drugs and pharmaceutical limited company sponsored by the Government of India was established in 1961.

1964 The Navy celebrated National Maritime Day for the first time in 1964.

2002 India, Myanmar and Thailand agree to complete More-Kalawa-Mandalay road project in 2002.

2017 The Footwear Design and Development Institute Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha in 2017.

06 APRIL

1664 Sikh Guru Har Kishan died on 6 April 1664.

1606 Prince Khusro revolted against his father, the Mughal ruler Jahangir, in 1606.

1919 Mahatma Gandhi called for the first All India strike in 1919 as part of the Civil Disobedience Movement launched against the Rowlatt Act.

1966 Indian swimmer Mihir Sen swam across the Palk Strait in 1966.



1980 The Bharatiya Janata Party, the political party of India, was established on this day in 1980.

2010 India's Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee and US Finance Minister Timothy Geithner signed an economic partnership agreement.

Bihar Foundation (East Coast Chapter) Celebrated 'Bihar Diwas 2023' at Consulate General of India New York

MARCH 22, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Bihar Foundation of USA (East Coast) hosted the "Bihar Diwas Celebration" on Tuesday, March 21, igniting memories of home for the diaspora and members of the Indian American community gathered here.

On the occasion, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar sent a special congratulatory message. CM lauded the efforts of Bihar Foundation USA in promoting the state's heritage and traditions in America and for supporting a wide range of voluntary and philanthropic activities.

Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal appreciated the contributions of the diaspora from the state in the US as well for their philanthropic activities. He said through their determination and eagerness to work for the betterment of their home state, the aim of Bihar 2.0 will be achieved and fulfilled in 2023.

From the famous 'Litti Chokha' to the popular 'Jhijhiya' song and dance, traditional dialects, and textiles, the celebration was seeped in colors and vibrant traditions of Bihar and invoked among those present memories of their homes and childhood.

Bihar Foundation of US (East Coast Chapter) Chairman and former President of the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) Alok Kumar said the foundation aims to act as a bridge to support and guide members of the diaspora who wish to take up development and social projects in their state. It also seeks to offer assistance to those coming from Bihar, including students, as they navigate in the US.

Vice Chairman Ranjeet Kumar congratulated and thanked Chandan Trivedi-Secretary, Alok Kashyap - Treasurer and Anand Gupta Joint Treasurer for their efforts in organizing this event successfully.



Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Consul General of India addresses the gathering



Consul General Jaiswal honors senior journalist Lalit K Jha

Chandan Trivedi, Secretary of Bihar Foundation thanked executive committee members Mr. Santa Mishra, Mr. Rajnish Ojha, and Mr. Manish Kumar who drove from the enharbouring states to participate in the events. He conveyed special thanks to Mr. Sanjeev Jha and Mr. Pramod



Performances depicting Bihar culture



Alok Kumar addresses the gathering



The Bihar Foundation officials

Kumar who drove all the way from Boston to attend the event.

On the occasion, three persons hailing from the state were honored with the 'Bihar Vishwa Gaurav' award for their achievements and contributions.

The honorees were Padma Bhushan awardee renowned sociologist and social entrepreneur, founder of Sulabh International Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak; entrepreneur Ajay Singh who leads the Pokhrama Foundation and is the founder and CEO of Slayback Pharma and Washington-based journalist and member of the White House Press Pool Lalit Jha.

In a special video message for the occasion, Super 30 founder Anand Kumar congratulated the honorees.

TUBMAN MONUMENT HONORS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

BY MABEL PAIS



Harriet Tubman

"SHADOW OF A FACE," a new monument honoring abolitionist Harriet Tubman and paying homage to the city's role in the Underground Railroad along with the Black liberation movement's rich history in the Newark, NJ area has been unveiled.

The monument - named "Shadow of a Face"- was unveiled on March 9 in Newark's newly renamed Harriet Tubman Square, at the intersection of Washington and Broad Streets, in downtown Newark. Mayor Ras J. Baraka was joined at the unveiling by First Lady Tammy Murphy, State Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, and numerous other dignitaries including Newark Municipal Council members, New Jersey artist and architect Nina Cooke John; Director of Arts & Cultural Affairs Fayemi Shakur; Audible Founder Don Katz; Audible CEO Bob Carrigan; The Newark Museum of Art Director and CEO Linda C. Harrison; Queen Latifah; and Michele Jones Galvin, who is a descendant of Harriet Tubman and co-author of the book, 'Beyond the Underground: Aunt Harriet, Moses of Her People,' a historical novel on the life of her ancestor.

Harriet Tubman Square is a historic public space in downtown Newark, New Jersey, on land that was once part of the territory of the Munsee-speaking Lunaape (Lenape) people.

The park dates back to 1667, when Puritan settlers set aside the land as a commons, where Newarkers grazed their sheep and marketed their goods. The space was commonly referred to as "North Common" or "Upper Green".

In 1795, the town voted unanimously to turn the commons into a park and named it after George Washington.

Over the next two centuries, cultural and civic institutions began to spring up around the edges of the park, such as The Newark Museum of Art, the Newark Public Library, the Ballantine Mansion and Rutgers Business School. The park and its surrounding neighborhood were designated the Historic James St. Commons in 1978 and added to the National Register of

Historical Places, becoming the city's first historic district.

The park has been the site of numerous public statues installed during different time periods. In 1926, representatives of Newark's Italian American community gifted a statue of Christopher Columbus to the city and installed it in the park the following year. In June 2020, the Columbus statue was removed and relocated to St. Lucy's Church, Newark.

In 2022, in celebration of Juneteenth holiday also known as "Emancipation Day", the park was renamed Harriet Tubman Square, acknowledging the under-recognized histories of African Americans and abolitionists who played a role in the quest of liberation and justice in the United States. New Jersey was the last Northern state to legally abolish slavery in 1866. Though the park is triangular, the name Harriet Tubman Square is intended to signify its historic role as a town gathering place. It stands as a touchstone of Newark history, culture, and community engagement.

SHADOW OF A FACE

The statue of Harriet Tubman portrays her as a larger-than-life figure, while also making her bravery and strength of character accessible.

A NEW MONUMENT - HONORING HARRIET TUBMAN

In June 2020, amid calls for racial justice and by order of the Honorable Mayor Ras J. Baraka, the City of Newark commissioned artist and architect Nina Cooke John to design a monument to honor the legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. This network of abolitionists and safe houses assisted enslaved people on their journeys north to freedom and had many "stations" in New Jersey, at least one of which was in Newark.

Cooke John's statue portrays Harriet Tubman in two perspectives: as a larger-than-life figure rising over two stories tall, and at eye-level, where her face emerges, putting her bravery and strength of character within reach. The title of the monument, 'Shadow of a Face,' refers to a 1962 Robert Hayden poem, entitled 'Runagate Runagate.'

*Hoot-owl calling in the ghosted air,
five times calling to the hants in the air.
Shadow of a face in the scary leaves,
shadow of a voice in the talking leaves ...*

As you walk around the monument, explore the tiles created by local residents and hear Newark's own Queen Latifah and others narrate stories about Tubman and the city's history of Black liberation. Audio is produced by Audible, headquartered here in Newark. The company shares in the mission to elevate underrepresented voices, bring people together through diverse storytelling, and advance racial justice and equity in the city and beyond.

Local historians, Dr. James Amemasor, Noelle Lorraine Williams, and Dr. Linda Caldwell Epps, were commissioned to provide historical research for the project.

This monument is a Design for Freedom by Grace Farms Pilot Project, which is dedicated to eliminating forced labor in the building materials supply chain.

HARRIET TUBMAN, CA. 1820-1913

Known as the "Moses of her people," Harriet Tubman was enslaved, escaped, and helped others gain their freedom as a "conductor" of the Underground Railroad. Tubman also served as a scout, spy, guerrilla soldier, and nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War. She is considered the first African



Harriet Tubman: 'Shadow Of A Face' monument.

Photo Credit/ Dreamplay, Cesar Melgar

American woman to serve in the military.

Tubman's exact birth date is unknown, but estimates place it between 1820 and 1822 in Dorchester County, Maryland. Born Araminta Ross, the daughter of Harriet Green and Benjamin Ross, Tubman had eight siblings. By age five, Tubman's owners rented her out to neighbors as a domestic servant. Early signs of her resistance to slavery and its abuses came at age twelve when she intervened to keep her master from beating an enslaved man who tried to escape. She was hit in the head with a two-pound weight, leaving her with a lifetime of severe headaches and narcolepsy.

Although slaves were not legally allowed to marry, Tubman entered a marital union with John Tubman, a free black man, in 1844. She took his last name and her mother's first name.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was a network of people, African American as well as white, offering shelter and aid to escaped enslaved people from the South. It developed as a convergence of several different clandestine efforts. The exact dates of its existence are not known, but it operated from the late 18th century to the Civil War, at which point its efforts continued to undermine the Confederacy in a less-secretive fashion.

The earliest mention of the Underground Railroad came in 1831 when enslaved man Tice Davids escaped from Kentucky into Ohio and his owner blamed an "underground railroad" for helping Davids to freedom.

In 1839, a Washington newspaper reported an escaped enslaved man named Jim had revealed, under torture, his plan to go north following an "underground railroad to Boston."

Vigilance Committees - created to protect escaped enslaved people from bounty hunters in New York in 1835 and Philadelphia in 1838 - soon expanded their activities to guide enslaved people on the run. By the 1840s, the term Underground Railroad was part of the American vernacular included private homes, churches and schoolhouses.

HOW THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD WORKED

People known as "conductors" guided the fugitive enslaved people. Hiding places. These were called "stations," "safe houses," and "depots." The people operating them were called "stationmasters."

There were many well-used routes stretching west through Ohio to Indiana and Iowa. Others headed north through Pennsylvania and into New England or through Detroit on their way to Canada.

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



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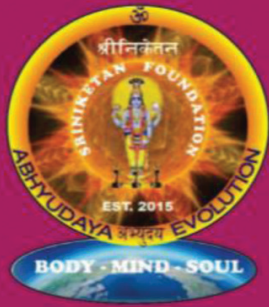
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WORKSHOP	DATE & TIME	VENUE	CONTRIBUTION
Personal Consultation, Pastlife & Healing Sessions	18 May (Thurs) 19 May (Fri) 22 May (Mon) 23 May (Tue)	The Community Center, Lakshmi Hall, 143-09, Holly Ave, Flushing, New York 11355 (9 am - 1 pm & 4 pm - 9 pm)	CONTRIBUTION
The Awakening (Basic)	20 May (Sat) 11 am - 4 pm	The Community Center, Lakshmi Hall, 143-09, Holly Ave, Flushing, New York 11355	FREE ENTRY
The Awakening (Advance)	21 May (Sun) 4 pm - 9 pm	The Community Center, Lakshmi Hall, 143-09, Holly Ave, Flushing, New York 11355	CONTRIBUTION
Group PASTLIFE SESSION for all	21 May (Sun) 9 am - 12 noon	Saraswati Hall, 45-52 Bowne Street, Flushing, New York 11355	CONTRIBUTION

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Tisca Chopra joins cast of Sara Ali Khan, Karisma Kapoor starrer 'Murder Mubarak'

Actor Tisca Chopra is the new addition to the star cast of producer Dinesh Vijan's upcoming film 'Murder Mubarak'.

Taking to Instagram, on Tuesday, Tisca shared announced the news with a picture which she captioned, "And it starts .. a new story, a new life to live and many new friends ..Wish us luck lobsters." In the picture, the 'Taare Zameen Par' actor could be seen holding the clapboard of the film.

Helmed by Homi Adajania, the film stars Sara Ali Khan and Karisma Kapoor in the lead roles.

Soon after Tisca shared the picture, fans swamped the comment section with red heart emoticons and congratulatory messages for the actor.

"Best of luck Tisca jee," a user wrote.

Another user wrote, "Good luck Tisca. Looking forward" "Very nice. All the best," a fan wrote.

Tisca's post indicates that the film also stars Kunal Kemmu, Pankaj Tripathi, Dimple Kapadia, Sanjay Kapoor and Vijay Varma in pivotal roles. *Source: ANI*

Priyanka Chopra says was being pushed into a corner in Bollywood

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas has revealed the reason she left Bollywood and moved to working in the US. She said that she had "beef with people" and was pushed into a corner.

She also revealed that she was not the happiest with the work she was getting from the Hindi film industry.

Priyanka was speaking to Dax Shepherd on his podcast Armchair Expert and said that for the first time as she was feeling "safe" during their conversation.

Talking about her music career, Priyanka said Anjula Acharia of Desi Hits spotted her in a music video and called her up when she was shooting for 'Saat Khoon Maaf'. She asked if she would be interested in a music career in US.

"I was being pushed into a corner in the industry (Bollywood). I had people not casting me, I had beef with people, I am not good at playing that game so I kind of was tired of the politics and I said I needed a break," she said.

"This music thing gave me an opportunity to go into another part of the world, not crave for the movies I didn't want to get but I would require to schmooze certain clubs and cliques of people. It would require grovelling and I had worked a long time by then that I didn't feel like I wanted to do it," she added.

"So when this music thing came I was like 'fu** it I'm going to America'," she said.

She talked about all the stars she worked with from Pitbull, Will.I.Am to Pharell Williams and even met JayZ. However, when the music career did not work out, she quickly realised she was 'much better at my day job'.

She then shared that someone



suggested that she try out for acting roles in the US as well. Which she did and eventually landed herself the lead role in 'Quantico' in 2015.

After that, Priyanka has been seen

in big budget Hollywood releases such as 'Baywatch', 'Matrix: Revolutions', 'The White Tiger' and will be seen in 'Citadel' and 'Love Again'.

Source: IANS

Raghav Chadha, Parineeti get congratulatory message amid dating rumors



Bollywood actor Parineeti Chopra has been in the headlines for her rumoured relationship with Aam Aadmi Party leader Raghav Chadha. The two were recently spotted together outside a Mumbai hotel after a lunch date.

Earlier, they met for a dinner date at Westin hotel in the Goregaon area of Mumbai.

As their videos and pictures from these meetings took social media by storm, the latest on their relationship has built curiosity among netizens like never before.

Aam Aadmi Party leader Sanjeev Arora, on Tuesday, took to his Twitter account and congratulated Raghav and Parineeti for their "union". Along with a picture of the two, he wrote, "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to @raghav_chadha and @ParineetiChopra. May their union be blessed with an abundance of love, joy, and companionship. My best wishes!!!"

In no time his fans were ready with their questions. A Twitter user commented, "Getting married or what?." Another wrote, "Congratulations @raghav_chadha&

@ParineetiChopra for getting married. May god bless you!"

There have been rumours that the couple has been dating for some months now and have decided to take their relationship to the next level. According to a Times of India report, Parineeti and Raghav will get married soon and their roka ceremony likely to happen in a few days.

The report says, "There has been no formal ceremony yet, but the families are discussing it and there will be some ceremony soon. Both families are happy about the two being together, but fixing a date for any ceremony is difficult considering the two are busy with their respective schedules. The ceremony will be a small, intimate affair with close family members."

There are reports that suggest that the two have known each other since their time in the UK. While Parineeti studied at Manchester Business School, Raghav is a London School of Economics passout. Both Parineeti and Raghav attended the first India UK Outstanding Achievers award in London in January. *Source: TNS*



Reese Witherspoon divorces husband Jim Toth

Reese Witherspoon announced her separation with husband Jim Toth after 11 years of marriage. The Academy Award-winner took to her Instagram to share a joint statement on Friday, announcing that they have made the 'difficult decision' after a 'great deal of care and consideration' and would want privacy at this time.

The statement read: "We have some personal news to share... It is with a great deal of care and consideration that we have made the difficult decision to divorce. We have enjoyed so many wonderful years together and are moving forward with deep love, kindness and mutual respect for everything we have created together. Our biggest priority is our son and our entire family as we navigate this next chapter. These matters are never easy and are extremely personal. We truly appreciate everyone's respect for our family's privacy at this time. - Reese and Jim." The actor turned off the comments on her post.

Liv Tyler set to return to Marvel Cinematic Universe after 16 years

Hollywood actress Liv Tyler is returning to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, 16 years after her last appearance.

She will appear in 2024's 'Captain America: New World Order' reprising her role from 2008's 'The Incredible Hulk' as scientist Betty Ross, the daughter of General Thaddeus 'Thunderbolt' Ross, reports 'Variety'.

That role was originated by the late William Hurt, who reappeared several times for Marvel Studios, starting with 2016's 'Captain America: Civil War', in which Ross had become Secretary of State. Harrison Ford is stepping into the role of Thaddeus Ross for 'New World Order', in which the character has become President of the United States.

'Variety' further states that in 'The Incredible Hulk', Tyler's Betty Ross was the love interest for Edward Norton's Bruce Banner; after Norton was replaced by Mark Ruffalo, Tyler's character was mentioned in passing, but the actor had not returned in the role.

'New World Order' stars Anthony Mackie as Sam Wilson, who took on the mantle of Captain America in Marvel's 2021 Disney+ series 'The Falcon and the Winter Soldier' with the blessing - and the supposed off-screen death - of Chris Evans' Steve Rogers. Carl Lumbly, Danny Ramirez, Shira Haas and Tim Blake Nelson fill out the rest of the cast.

Julius Onah is directing from a script by Malcolm Spellman and Dalan Musson. Kevin Feige and Nate Moore are producing. Tyler most recently appeared on the first season of the Fox series '9-1-1: Lone Star' and opposite Brad Pitt in the 2019 sci-fi drama 'Ad Astra'.

Source: IANS



Michael Jackson 'lied' about being in a relationship with Brooke Shields

Actress Brooke Shields opened up about her friendship with King of Pop Michael Jackson and said the star once lied that she was his girlfriend.

Back when she was 28 years old, Jackson told a live TV interview with Oprah Winfrey that she was his girlfriend but he was reportedly in a relationship with someone else, reports mirror.co.uk.

Now 57, Shields said: "I called him up and I think I said, 'This is kind of pathetic that you need to do this. I am having a shot at a normal life - you cannot drag me into crazy town.'" She claims Jackson laughed it off and despite their closeness as friends, the pair never kissed or dated.

She added: "There was one moment when we were in the car and the cameras were there and he grabbed me to kiss me and I said, 'No! Stop! We are just friends and you need me as a friend'. I remember the early days when other actresses were after him and he was kind of cute, before the shift. But it

never even crossed my mind," she told The Times.

Brooke Shields also shared the cover page of The Sunday Times magazine on her Instagram:

In her upcoming documentary titled Pretty Baby, Brooke is overcome with emotion as she sits at her dining table with her two daughters, Rowan and Grier Henchy as they discuss the 1978 film of the same name.

She said she doesn't understand why her mother didn't help her when filming the kissing scene and claims director Louis Malle snapped at her for making a repulsed face.

Her co-star Keith tried to reassure her, saying the kiss "doesn't count. It's pretend. It's all make-believe".

Rowan says she will never watch the movie before asking her mother: "Would you have let us (do that) at the age of 11?" "No," Brooke replies instinctively and her shoulders collapse. Source: IANS

PAUL O'GRADY MBE AKA 'LILY SAVAGE', UK STAR WHO MADE DRAG MAINSTREAM, DIES AT 67

LONDON (TIP): The British royal family and lawmakers led tributes Wednesday to comedian and entertainer Paul O'Grady, who made drag culture mainstream with his alter ego Lily Savage.

O'Grady, who died on Tuesday at the age of 67, went on to become a fixture on hit television shows as well as a campaigner for LGBTQ rights.

Born in the northwestern English town of Birkenhead in 1955, O'Grady began his Lily Savage act in the 1970s while holding down a day job for a London council.

He took the acerbic, wig-wearing Savage on the nightclub circuit and the act later took off with TV and radio appearances in character.

"It's impossible to overestimate what a trailblazer he was," said ITV breakfast show television presenter Richard Arnold.

"You idolised him as a gay man actually... and then of course he broke into the mainstream broadcasting landscape," he said on Good Morning Britain.

A devoted animal lover, O'Grady also presented the long-running reality television series "For the Love of Dogs" set in London's Battersea Dogs & Cats Home for stray and unwanted animals.

Queen Consort Camilla appeared in a special episode of the programme in December.

"Deeply saddened to hear of the death of Paul O'Grady, who worked closely with Her Majesty in support of Battersea, providing lots of laughter and many waggy-tailed memories," the British Royal Family twitter account tweeted along with a picture of Camilla and the star.

'National treasure'

Human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell said O'Grady "wasn't just a brilliant comedian and broadcast personality but a much-admired campaigner for LGBT+ equality and animal rights".

Tatchell added O'Grady had been due to lead a forthcoming campaign for his foundation seeking an apology from UK police for "their historic persecution of the LGBT+ community".

He also recalled the police raiding a London LGBTQ venue in the 1980s at the height of fearmongering about the AIDS virus.

The officers were wearing rubber gloves, Tatchell said, due to misconceptions at the time that you could catch HIV by touching someone.

Their appearance prompted O'Grady, who was on stage as Savage, to quip: "Oh good, have you come to do the washing up?"

O'Grady died "unexpectedly but peacefully" on Tuesday evening, his partner Andre Portasio said. (AFP)

Russian man whose teen daughter drew anti-war picture flees house arrest

MOSCOW (TIP): A single father, who was separated from his daughter and sentenced on March 28 to two years in prison over "discrediting" the Russian army, has fled house arrest, officials said.

Alexei Moskalyov, 54, first came to the authorities' attention last year after his daughter Maria drew a picture at school showing missiles next to a Russian flag heading towards a woman and child standing by a Ukrainian flag.

A criminal case was later opened against him for allegedly criticising Russia's assault on Ukraine and on Tuesday he was handed a two-year jail sentence over comments on social media.

But in a dramatic turn of events, court officials said Moskalyov had fled house arrest.

Moskalyov has been separated from his 13-year-old daughter as punishment for his criticism of Kremlin policies, a first in Russia, experts say.

"The verdict was read out in the absence of the defendant, because he disappeared and did not appear at the hearing," Elena Mikhailovskaya, a spokeswoman for the Yefremov district court south of Moscow, told AFP.

Moskalyov's lawyer Vladimir Biliyenko said he was in a "state of shock".

"His disappearance is a total surprise for me. This has happened for the first time in my career," he told AFP.

He said that Moskalyov's daughter Maria could be sent to an orphanage "within a month".

SCHOOL DRAWING : Russia's top human rights organisation Memorial,



which has been shuttered by Russian authorities, said on Facebook it considered Moskalyov a "political prisoner".

It added that separation from his daughter was a "repressive act and an attempt to intimidate all opponents of the war not only with prison terms but also the destruction of their families and pressure on children".

The Moskalyovs' case has garnered national attention and led to an online petition calling for the girl to be reunited with her father.

The pair hail from Yefremov, a small town of around 37,000 people some 300 kilometres (180 miles) south of Moscow.

The case against Moskalyov was opened after Maria's headmistress contacted the police about her picture with the flags and the missiles.

Police said an online search uncovered comments criticising Moscow's action in Ukraine on the social media profiles of the girl's father.

In early March, authorities placed Maria in a "rehabilitation centre" for minors, while Moskalyov was put under house arrest.

On Monday, prosecutors demanded a two-year prison term for the father.

Since President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine over a year ago public criticism of Moscow's offensive in the pro-Western country has been outlawed.

During the height of Stalin-era purges in the late 1930s thousands of children were taken away from their parents.

In modern Russia, the first recorded attempts to strip activists of parental rights were in Moscow in 2019. Prosecutors' attempts to punish two families for taking their children to political protests were not successful at the time, however.

Even Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner paramilitary force spearheading Russia's assault in eastern Ukraine, has voiced support for Maria and criticised the local authorities. (AFP)

38 dead in Mexico detention centre fire after guards didn't let migrants out

CIUDAD JUAREZ (TIP): When smoke began billowing out of a migrant detention center in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez, Venezuelan migrant Viangly Infante Padrón was terrified because she knew her husband was still inside.

The father of her three children had been picked up by immigration agents earlier in the day, part of a recent crackdown that netted 67 other migrants, many of whom were asking for handouts or washing car windows at stoplights in this city across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas. In moments of shock and horror, Infante Padrón recounted how she saw immigration agents rush out of the building after fire started late Monday. Later came the migrants' bodies carried out on stretchers, wrapped in foil blankets. The toll: 38 dead in all and 28 seriously injured, victims of a blaze apparently set in protest by the detainees themselves. "I was desperate because I



saw a dead body, a body, a body, and I didn't see him anywhere," Infante Padrón said of her husband, Eduard Caraballo López, who in the end survived with only light injuries, perhaps because he was scheduled for release and was near a door.

But what she saw in those first minutes

has become the center of a question much of Mexico is asking itself: Why didn't authorities attempt to release the men — almost all from Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela and El Salvador — before smoke filled the room and killed so many? (AP)

Prince Harry accuses UK royals of hiding phone hacking from him

LONDON (TIP) : Britain's Prince Harry has accused his family of withholding information about phone hacking from him to avoid sitting in the witness box and opening "a can of worms", a witness statement released on March 28 said.

The Duke of Sussex made the claim in submissions for a privacy claim he and other celebrities have filed against the publisher of the Daily Mail, Associated Newspapers (ANL).

Lawyers for the group, which also includes pop superstar Elton John, claim ANL commissioned the breaking and entry into private property, illegally intercepted voicemail messages and obtained medical records.

The alleged wrong doing dates from 1993-2011, but some went on as late as 2018, according to their lawyer David Sherborne.

In his partially redacted statement, Harry stated he "became aware that I had a claim that I could bring" only in 2018, in part due to the royal family -- which he refers to as "the Institution".

"The Institution was without a doubt withholding information from me for a long time about... phone hacking," he added.

"That has only become clear in recent years as I have pursued my own claim with different legal advice and representation."

The prince went on to state: "The Institution made it clear that we did not need to know anything about phone hacking and it was made clear to me that the Royal Family did not sit in the witness box because that could open up a can of worms."



The prince, who lives in California, made a surprise appearance at London's High Court on the first two of four days of hearings this week, on Monday alongside John and other figures involved.

"The bubble burst"

ANL has described the allegations as "preposterous smears" and an attempt "to drag the Mail titles into the phone-hacking scandal".

It is trying to end the legal claims by arguing they are "stale" and "based on no credible evidence", so should not go to trial.

A spokesperson for ANL said that Harry "has become a serial litigant against Mail newspapers with whom he seems obsessed".

Britain's phone-hacking scandal, which first blew up in 2006, saw journalists at the Rupert Murdoch-owned News of the World hack into the voicemails of royals, celebrities and murder victims.

It triggered the closure of the mass-selling Sunday tabloid, a mammoth police investigation, a judge-led inquiry and criminal charges that gripped Britain for years.

Harry, the younger son of Britain's King Charles III, has long had a difficult relationship with the media.

In his statement, he said leaving the UK had proved pivotal in bringing the lawsuit.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that the bubble burst in terms of what I knew in 2020 when I moved out of the United Kingdom," the prince stated.

He concluded by arguing he was bringing the claim "because I love my country and I remain deeply concerned by the unchecked power, influence and criminality" of the publisher.

"The British public deserves to know the full extent of this cover up and I feel it is my duty to expose it," he added.

Buckingham Palace declined to comment. (AFP)

FRANCE SEES NEW PENSION PROTESTS, POLICE BRACE FOR VIOLENCE

PARIS (TIP): Protests and strikes against unpopular pension reforms kicked off again on March 28 across France, with police security ramped up amid government warnings that radical demonstrators intended "to destroy, to injure and to kill."

Concerns that violence could mar the demonstrations prompted what Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin described as an unprecedented deployment of 13,000 officers, nearly half of them concentrated in the French capital. After months of upheaval, an exit from the firestorm of protest triggered by President Emmanuel Macron's changes to France's retirement system looked as far away as ever.

Despite fresh union pleas that the government pause its hotly contested push to raise France's legal retirement age from 62 to 64, Macron seemingly remained wedded to it. The French leader previously used a special constitutional power to ram the reform past legislators without allowing them a vote. His move this month further galvanized the protest movement.

Violence has since flared and thousands of tons of stinking garbage have piled up on Paris' streets as sanitation workers strike. "Everybody is getting madder," said Clément Saïd, a train passenger at Paris' Gare de Lyon railway station, where tracks were temporarily invaded and blocked Tuesday by protesting workers. He said he supports the strikes despite their impact on transportation and other services. (AP)

China threatens retaliation if Taiwanese President Tsai, US House speaker McCarthy meet

BEIJING (TIP): China has threatened "resolute countermeasures" over a planned meeting between Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen and Speaker of the United States House Kevin McCarthy during an upcoming visit to Los Angeles by the head of the self-governing island democracy.

Diplomatic pressure against Taiwan has ramped up recently, with Beijing poaching its dwindling number of diplomatic allies while also sending military fighter jets flying toward the island on a near daily basis. Earlier this month, Honduras established diplomatic relations with China, leaving Taiwan with only 13 countries that recognize it as a sovereign state.

Tsai is scheduled to transit through New York on March 30 before heading to Guatemala and Belize. On April 5, she's expected to stop in Los Angeles on her way back to Taiwan, at which time the meeting with McCarthy is tentatively scheduled.

A spokesperson for the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office Zhu Fenglian at a news conference Wednesday denounced Tsai's stopover on her way to diplomatic allies in Central America and demanded that no U.S. officials meet with her. "We firmly oppose this and will take resolute



countermeasures," Zhu said. The U.S. should "refrain from arranging Tsai Ing-wen's transit visits and even contact with American officials, and take concrete actions to fulfill its solemn commitment not to support Taiwan independence," she said.

Transit visits through the United States during broader international travel by the Taiwanese president have been routine over the years, senior U.S. officials in Washington and Beijing have underscored to their Chinese counterparts.

In such unofficial visits in recent years, Tsai has met with members of Congress and the Taiwanese diaspora

and has been welcomed by the chairperson of the American Institute in Taiwan, the U.S. government-run nonprofit that carries out unofficial relations with Taiwan.

Tsai transited through the United States six times between 2016 and 2019 before slowing international travel with the coronavirus pandemic. In reaction to those visits, China lashed out rhetorically against the U.S. and Taiwan.

However, the planned meeting with McCarthy has triggered fears of a heavy-handed Chinese reaction amid heightened frictions between Beijing and Washington over U.S. support for Taiwan, trade and human rights issues. Following a visit by then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan in 2022, Beijing launched missiles over the area, deployed warships across the median line of the Taiwan Strait and carried out military exercises in a simulated blockade of the island. Beijing also suspended climate talks with the U.S. and restricted military-to-military communication with the Pentagon.

McCarthy, R-Calif., has said he would meet with Tsai when she is in the U.S. and has not ruled out the possibility of traveling to Taiwan in a show of support. (AP)

SRI LANKA, INDIA TO BEGIN PASSENGER FERRY SERVICE BY APRIL END

COLOMBO (TIP): The much-delayed passenger ferry service between Sri Lanka and India is set to start by the end of April, Civil Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva said on March 26.

"On April 29, the ferry service between Karaikal and Kankesanthurai in port in Jaffna district would begin. Each passenger would be allowed a 100 kg baggage allowance at a very concessionary rate," the minister said.

De Silva said the opportunity would be open to any passenger ferry operator of both countries to run the service.

A passenger terminal is being built by the Sri Lanka Navy at Kankesanthurai.

The service would be a four-hour-long voyage, the Aviation Ministry here said. (PTI)

AIR INDIA AND NEPAL AIRLINES AIRCRAFT NEAR-COLLISION MID-AIR; 2 AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS SUSPENDED

KATHMANDU (TIP): A major tragedy was averted on March 25 when an Air India and a Nepal Airlines aircraft came close to collision mid-air but the warning systems alerted the pilots whose timely action prevented the disaster, authorities said here on Sunday.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has suspended two employees of the air traffic controller department for "carelessness", according to CAAN spokesperson Jagannath Niroula.

ON MARCH 25 MORNING, A NEPAL AIRLINES PLANE COMING TO KATHMANDU FROM KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA AND AN AIR INDIA PLANE COMING TO KATHMANDU FROM NEW DELHI ALMOST COLLIDED.

The Air India aircraft was descending from 19,000 ft while the Nepal Airlines aircraft was flying at an altitude of 15,000 ft at the same location, Niroula said.

After it was shown on the radar that the two aircraft were in proximity, the Nepal Airlines aircraft descended to 7,000 ft, the spokesperson said.

The Civil Aviation Authority has formed a three-member probe committee to investigate the matter.

The CAAN has suspended the two officers, who were in charge of the control room at the time of the incident.

There was no immediate comment from Air India. (PTI)

No talks with Imran Khan unless he apologises: Pakistan PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has ruled out any talks between the government and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan unless the former premier admits his wrongdoings and issues a public apology.

While addressing the National Assembly on March 28, prime minister Sharif criticised Khan by calling him a "fraud" and said it is impossible to talk to someone who "looted the country, attacked the judiciary and did not believe in the Constitution and justice", Geo News reported.

The joint session of parliament was summoned last week to discuss the key issues confronting Pakistan and provide guidelines to deal with those issues.

"I believe no discussions can be held with a person who consistently and condescendingly rejects invitations for talks on everything - be it COVID-19, the state of terrorism in the country, the apex committee meeting, or the Kashmir conference," Sharif was quoted as saying.

Referring to the recent fiasco witnessed during the court proceeding of the PTI chief, Sharif said that a certain "favourite" does not appear before any court, no matter how many notices have been issued to him, it said.



"He gets an extension in different courts in the dark of the night and makes a mockery of the judiciary," Sharif said, criticising Khan for his remarks against a sitting woman judge and the fact that no action has been taken in this case so far.

"Khan made false cases against the opposition when he was in government and signed an agreement with the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and violated it," the premier said while listing the wrongdoings of the former PTI government.

Calling out Khan for pushing the country towards bankruptcy, the prime

minister reiterated that the current coalition headed by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government "saved the country."

"Today, the IMF is taking guarantees from us at every step. We have fulfilled all the conditions of the IMF. Congratulations to the finance minister who finalised the terms of the deal with the Fund," Sharif said.

Cash-strapped Pakistan is awaiting a much-needed USD 1.1 billion tranche of funding from the Washington-based global money lender, which was originally due to be disbursed in November last year. (PTI)

Six civilians killed in Afghanistan suicide bomb attack, second blast in 3 months

KABUL (TIP): A suicide attack on March 27 near Afghanistan's foreign ministry killed six civilians and wounded several others, the interior ministry said.

Security has dramatically improved since the Taliban stormed back to power in August 2021, ousting the US-backed government and ending their two-decade insurgency, but the Islamic State group has proved an increasing threat.

The attacker was identified by Afghan forces who shot at him in front of a business centre near the foreign ministry, interior ministry spokesman Abdul Nafy Takor tweeted.

"With his killing, the explosives carried by the attacker also exploded which killed six civilians and wounded a number of others," he said.

Italian NGO Emergency, which operates a hospital in the capital, confirmed it had received two dead and 12 wounded, including a child.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Monday's blast was the second attack near the foreign ministry in Kabul in less than three months, and the first since the Muslim holy month of Ramadan began on Thursday in Afghanistan.

On January 11, a suicide bomber blew



himself up near the foreign ministry, killing 10 and wounding 53 people, according to the United Nations.

The Taliban authorities, who have often tried to play down attacks challenging their rule, had said that five people were killed in that attack, claimed by IS. The group has increasingly become a major challenge, killing and wounding hundreds of people in several attacks, some targeting foreigners or foreign interests in a bid to undermine the Taliban government.

At least five Chinese nationals were wounded in December when gunmen stormed a hotel popular with

businesspeople in Kabul.

That raid was claimed by IS, as was an attack on Pakistan's embassy in Kabul also in December that Islamabad denounced as an "assassination attempt" against its ambassador.

Two Russian embassy staff members were killed in a suicide bombing outside their mission in September in another attack claimed by IS.

The Taliban and IS share an austere Sunni Islamist ideology, but the latter are fighting to establish a global "caliphate" instead of the Taliban's more inward-looking aim of ruling an independent Afghanistan. (AFP)

Sikh History This Week

MARCH 31, 2023, TO APRIL 6, 2023

31st March



1621 Ninth Patshah, Guru Tegh Bahadur came to this planet. He was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind and Mata Nanaki, born in Guru's place at Amritsar. He had four brothers, Baba Gurditta, Baba Suraj Mal, Baba Ani Rai, and Baba Atal and a sister Bibi Viro. Guru Hargobind visited the new born child in the palace and prophesied that he would be very brave, fearless and a champion for the cause of truth. The child was named Tiaag Mal and subsequently, upon his show of bravery during Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's battles, was renamed Tegh Bahadur (Tegh — for sword, power of justice and Bahadur – brave). Today is the actual date of birth, although it is observed by Guru Khalsa Panth on a different date.

killed 8 Sikhs.

4th April

1914 Under the leadership of Bhagat Baba Gurdit Singh (Sarhali), Guru Nanak Jahaz (Koma Gata Maru) sailed out from Hongkong to Canada.



1946 Master Tara Singh and Mohammad Ali Jinnah discussed the Sikh-Muslim union.

1949 A huge conference of Sikh intellectuals condemned the arrest of Master Tara Singh.

1983 26 more Sikhs Killed by police during "Rasta Roke" agitation.

5th April



1846 Treaty signed between the British Government in India and Maharaja Dalip Singh of Punjab.

1849 Punjab was annexed by the British.

Dalhousie was clear about annexing Punjab. Henry Lawrence told the Council of Regency not to protest. They were assured of their Jagirs! They persuaded the 11yr old Maharaja to follow suit. He was granted pension of half a million rupees per annum if he remained loyal.

1982 Negotiation talks on Sikh demands broke down. Negotiation talks on sikh demands that were initiated on October 16, 1981, between the Akali dal and the Indian Central Government fell apart.

6th April

1849 Maharani Jinda moved to maximum security facilities at Chunar Fort.



1504: Second Patshah, Guru Angad Dev Ji came to this earth. He was born at matae di saran, Mukatsar, district Ferozepur in the house of Pheru Mal and Matta Sabrai. His given name prior to Guruship was "Lehna." Today is the actual date of birth even though Guru Khalsa Panth observes it on a different date. Guru ANGAD DEV (1504-1552): The mantle of the First Master fell on Angad, the second Sikh Guru, in 1539, and he graced the exalted position till 1552.

1519: Lehna, Guru Angad Dev Ji, got married to Mata Khivi, daughter of Devi Chand of village Sangar.

1785: Sikhs signed a treaty with Maharathas.



1973: The regular Kar Sewa of Amritsar sarowar, sacred pool of water, at Darbar Sahib, was performed.

1979: Elections to the SGPC were held. During these elections, the Badal government used government machinery to defeat Amrik Singh, then President of the Sikhs Students Federation. Numerous bogus votes were polled in favor of Jiwan Singh Umranangal.

1st April



2nd April

1757 Timur Shah (son of Ahmad Shah) and Jahan Khan (Governor of Lahore) attacked Sri Harmandir Sahib, destroyed Sri Darbar Sahib and completely filled sarowar with debris. During the 4th invasion of Ahmad Shah in 1756-7, he reached Delhi and systematically plundered the city. But he was forced to return back due to outbreak of cholera epidemic in his troops. During this invasion, Sirhind was annexed to his empire. Ala Singh of Patiala submitted to Ahmad Shah. But the Sikhs attacked Timur Shah at Sunam and relieved him of half of his treasure. Sikhs also attacked the rear of Afghan troops and relieved them of a lot of their loot. As a result, the infuriated Ahmad Shah sent an expedition against the Sikhs that destroyed Sri Harmandir Sahib and filled the holy tank with debris.

1809 Treaty of Amritsar signed between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the British. Maharaja Ranjit Singh desired to be the overlord of all Sikh States. The British gave protection to Cis-Sutlej States and confined Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Sutlej and thus came very close to Lahore. After quite a bit of sabre rattling Maharaja Ranjit Singh succumbed to British pressure. This treaty was a major defeat for Maharaja Ranjit Singh at the hands of the British. Maharaja Ranjit Singh withdrew his forces from Faridkot and Malerkotla.



1850 The Sikh forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh were disbanded, approximately a year after the East Indian Company gained control of Punjab on Mar. 29, 1849.

3rd April

1775 Foundation stone of Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar laid for 2nd time.

1923 First attempt is made by the Babbar to murder Lambardars and Chaukidars of Pindori Nijjaran.

1944 Harbans Singh babbar of Sirhala was sent to the scaffold.

1947 Patel announced the formation of Sikhstan after independence.

1984 Sikhs attacked during Harbans Lal Khan's funeral procession. Central Reserve Police of India

Beat bedroom boredom: Ways to spice things up

While it might be a bit scary to realize you're feeling bored in the bedroom, if you're in a long-term relationship, it's totally normal. Never fear, though; there are some easy ways to keep things interesting. Read on for our tips on keeping things interesting with your long-term love.

Share your fantasies

People's preferences are always changing, so what might have once worked for you or your partner in the beginning of your relationship might be completely different now. Talking about what turns you both on now will make sex more pleasurable and more exciting for both of you.

Change the scenery

If you only have sex in the bedroom, try changing up the location of your nooky to spice things up. Explore a new room in the house, or, if finances allow, book a room at a nearby hotel. The change in venue will add novelty and freshness to the experience, making it more enjoyable for both of you.

Share your feelings

When you first fall in love, you probably told your partner that you loved him or her all the time. But as relationships continue, people often forget to show their partners love and appreciation in the same ways they did early on in the relationship, which can lead to feelings of under-appreciation and dissatisfaction that translate into a lack-luster bedroom experience. Make a point of telling your partner how much you want and appreciate them and detail the reasons why you love them. This will deepen



your emotional connection and steam things up in the bedroom.

Have some distance

The saying goes that absence makes the heart grow fonder, and it also helps to heat things up in the bedroom. Studies have shown that people feel most attracted to their partners when they aren't there. This doesn't mean you need to move to the far corners of the earth to create some space. Even spending time apart socially helps to increase the anticipation and the erotic imagination, making your reunion

all the more sexy.

Try a different kind of sexual intimacy

If you find yourself getting bored with even the most exciting positions in traditional penis-in-vagina sex, trying taking a break and focusing on pleasuring each other through touch and taste. Doing so allows you both to slow down and focus on each other's pleasure, increasing intimacy and giving you a chance to rediscover the magic of being aroused by each other.

Source: Popculture

FOOD

Chicken Achari

Ingredients

- Chicken (with bone or without) - 400 to 500 gms, skinned, chopped, Onion - 1, small, finely chopped, Ginger Garlic Paste - 3 to 4 tsp, Plain Yogurt - 1/4 cup, lightly beaten, Turmeric Powder - 1/4 tsp, Red Chilli Powder - 3/4 to 1 tsp, Tomato Puree - 3/4 to 1 tsp, Dry Red Chillies - 2, Black Mustard Seeds - 1/2 tsp, Fenugreek Seeds - 1/2 tsp, Cumin Seeds - 1/2 tsp, Fennel Seeds - 1/2 tsp, Kalonji (Nigella Seeds) - 1/2 tsp, Lemon Juice - 1/2 tsp, Oil - 4 to 5 tsp, Salt as per taste, Coriander Leaves - handful, chopped

Method

- Heat oil in a pan over medium flame.
- Add the dry red chillies, black mustard seeds, fenugreek seeds, cumin seeds, fennel seeds and kalonji. Fry for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Add the onions and saute until light brown. Add the ginger garlic paste and stir well. Now add the red chilli powder, turmeric powder and stir for 10-20 seconds.
- Add a splash of water if it starts sticking to the bottom. Add the tomato puree and cook for a minute or two.
- Add the chicken pieces, stir well and cook for 5 minutes. Ensure the chicken pieces are well coated in the masala. Pour 1/4 cup of water and cover the pan with a lid.
- Simmer on low flame for 15 to 20 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through. Add the yogurt, stir well and cook for 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the flame. Add the lemon juice and salt.
- Stir again to mix well. Garnish with coriander leaves. Serve with naan or roti.



Take care of your feet



Constant exposure to dirt, grime and sun can wreak your feet. Wearing open sandals in this weather can not only make your feet to crack but also cause tanning. Here are a few ways you can take care of them -

Wash your feet when you get back home and apply a moisturising lotion

Right after you get into your house, make sure that you wash your feet and apply a thick layer of moisturising cream to protect it from getting cracked. Further, the cream will also take care of the cracks that you have already developed on your feet.

Apply a layer of nourishing gel on your feet before you go off to bed.

For those who have cracked heels, it is recommended to use a nourishing gel before you go off to bed every night. Once you apply the gel on your feet, you should ideally wear socks to protect it from bacteria present in the air.

A pedicure in two weeks is a must. If you thought that pedicure is a treatment that should be done only once in a month, then you're wrong. If you already suffer from cracked feet, it is recommended that you get a hydrating pedicure done at least once in every two weeks. A moisturising pedicure with aloe vera or chocolate is great for your feet.

Get hold of a feet balm. There are plenty of products available in the market that ensure that your feet is free from bacteria and dead skin cells. One of them is a nourishing feet balm which protects your heels from getting cracked.

Hormonal birth control pills linked with small breast cancer risk: Study

Use of all hormonal contraceptives is associated with a small increase in the risk of breast cancer, according to a new study. The research, published in the journal PLOS Medicine, found a relative increase of 20 to 30 per cent in breast cancer risk associated with both combined and progestogen-only contraceptives, whatever the mode of delivery.

The researchers at the University of Oxford, UK, and colleagues found that a 15-year absolute excess incidence is at most 265 cases per 100,000 users.

Use of combined oral contraceptives, containing both estrogen and progestogen hormones, has previously been associated with a small increase in breast cancer risk but there is limited data about the effect of progestogen-only contraceptives, the researchers said.

However, the use of progestogen-only contraceptives has increased substantially in recent years, with almost as many prescriptions in England for oral progestogen-only contraceptives as for combined oral contraceptives in 2020, they said.

The researchers analysed data from a UK primary care database, the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD), on 9,498 women under the age of 50 with invasive breast cancer diagnosed in 1996–2017, as well as data on 18,171 closely matched controls.

On average, 44 per cent of women with breast cancer and 39 per cent of matched controls had a hormonal contraceptive prescription, with about half the prescriptions being for progestogen-only preparations.

With five years use of either oral combined or progestogen-only contraceptives, the associated 15-year absolute excess incidence of breast cancer was estimated at 8 cases per 100,000 hormonal contraceptive users at age 16–20 years and 265 cases per 100,000 users at age 35–39 years.

The odds of breast cancer were similarly and significantly raised, regardless of whether the contraceptive used was a combined (estrogen and progestogen) oral preparation, a progestogen-only oral preparation, an injected progestogen, or a progestogen releasing intra-uterine device.



These results were combined with those from previous studies from high income countries, which included women from a wider age range.

"These findings suggest that current or recent use of all types of progestogen-only contraceptives is associated with a slight increase in breast cancer risk, similar to that associated with use of combined oral contraceptives," said Kirstin Pirie of University of Oxford.

"Given that the underlying risk of breast cancer increases with advancing age, the absolute excess risk associated with use of either type of oral contraceptive will be smaller in women who use it at younger rather than at older ages," Pirie said.

However, the researchers said these excess risks must be viewed in the context of the well-established benefits of contraceptive use in women's reproductive years.

Source: PTI



Sniffing other people's body odor may help treat mental health issues: Study

Exposure to human odours, collected from other people's sweat, may be used to boost treatment for some mental health issues, a new study has shown.

According to the study by European Psychiatric Association (EPA), the researchers demonstrated that social anxiety was reduced when patients were exposed to human 'chemo-signals', or what they typically refer to as body smell, derived from volunteers' underarm sweat.

"The results of our preliminary study show that combining these chemo-signals with mindfulness therapy seems to produce better results in treating social anxiety than can be achieved by mindfulness therapy alone," said lead researcher Elisa Vigna of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

The study involves collecting sweat samples from volunteers and then exposing patients to chemo-signals extracted from these sweat samples while they were receiving social anxiety treatment.

The researchers recruited 48 women (aged between 15 and 35), all of whom suffered from social anxiety, and divided them into three groups each of 16 people.

Each group was exposed to a different odour, obtained from the sweat samples of people who had seen different types of video clips, plus a control group, which was exposed to clean air.

"We found that the women in the group exposed to sweat from people who had been watching funny or fearful movies responded better to mindfulness therapy than those who hadn't been exposed. We were a little surprised to find that the emotional state of the person producing the sweat didn't differ in treatment outcomes -- sweat produced while someone was happy had the same effect as someone who had been scared by a movie clip," Vigna said.

She added: "We found that individuals who undertook one treatment session of mindfulness therapy together with being exposed to human body odours showed about 39 per cent reduction in anxiety scores. For comparison, in the group receiving only mindfulness (i.e., the control group) we saw a 17 per cent reduction in anxiety scores after one treatment session."

Source: IANS

Obesity risk may be passed on from moms to daughters

According to a recent study published in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism of the Endocrine Society, mothers with obesity may share the disease's risk with their daughters but not with their sons.

Obesity is a common, serious and costly disease affecting nearly half of the adults and 20 percent of children in the United States. It costs an estimated \$173 billion in medical care costs. People with obesity are at higher risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, heart issues, and many other conditions.

"These findings highlight that girls born to mothers who have obesity or have high amounts of body fat may be at higher risk of gaining excess body fat themselves," said Rebecca J. Moon, B.M., Ph.D., M.R.C.P.C.H., of the MRC Lifecourse Epidemiology Centre, University of Southampton in Southampton, U.K. "Further studies are needed to understand why this is happening, but our findings suggest that approaches to addressing body weight and composition should start very early in life, particularly in girls born to mothers with obesity and overweight." The researchers measured body fat and muscle in 240 children (9 years old or younger) and their parents in early childhood. They used this data to determine whether the body mass index (BMI)--a screening tool for overweight and obesity--and the amount of body fat and muscle in the child was related



to that of their parents.

They found the girls had similar BMI and fat mass to their mothers, suggesting that girls born to mothers who have obesity or have high fat mass are at high risk of also developing obesity or overweight. The researchers did not find the same association between boys and their mothers or either girls or boys and their fathers.

Source: ANI

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Studying continental movement over 'hotspot' reveals internal workings of volcanoes

Scientists have learned about the internal workings of volcanoes by studying the northward movement of the Australian continent over a 'hotspot' inside the Earth during the last 35 million years, which left behind volcanic relics across its landscape.

The researchers from University of Queensland (UQ), Australia, said these relics revealed that the inner structure of the Australian volcanoes became increasingly complex as the hotspot's magma output decreased. Their research is published in *Nature Geoscience*. The hotspot was incredibly strong in its early stages, generating some of eastern Australia's most beloved natural attractions, according to one of the researchers, Al-Tamini Tapu.

"These large volcanoes were active for up to seven million years," Tapu said.

"The volcanoes formed as the continent moved over a stationary hotspot inside the planet, melting the land above it so magma could ooze upward.

"This left a treasure trove of volcanic landmarks in its wake, forming the longest chain of continental 'hotspot' volcanoes on Earth -- along Australia's eastern side," said Tapu.

Enormous, long-lived lava outpourings in Tweed volcano, one of the 'shield volcanoes' and a popular tourist spot, may have weakened the hotspot, and caused the younger volcanoes to the south to become smaller and shorter-lived, the researchers said.

Associate Professor Teresa Ubide said that as the magma production waned, the volcanoes became internally more complicated, erupting lavas full of complex crystals.

"As these cooled down and became more viscous, it became more difficult to generate eruptions, which may have been more explosive.

"We found that the arrival of new, hotter, and gas-rich magma acts like a shaken bottle of fizzy drink, causing a build-up of pressure in the magma, and, eventually, an eruption," said Ubide. *Source: PTI*

iPhone 15 Pro Max to have world's thinnest display?

If the reports are to be believed, then the upcoming Apple iPhone 15 Pro Max might be having the world's thinnest display. According to Mashable, the front display of the iPhone 15 Pro Max may have bezels that are only 1.55mm thick (or 0.06 inches), making it the smartphone with the tiniest bezels ever created.

Mashable quoted Ice Universe, a tipster, which recently tweeted that the iPhone 15 Pro Max would shatter Xiaomi 13's record for the narrowest black bezel (1.81 mm), as measured by its cover plate. S23 and iS22 - 1.95mmCE Apple iPhone 14 Pro, 2.17mm.

The front glass films of the iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max smartphones leaked online this week, showing their ultra-thin bezels surrounding the displays. The future iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max smartphone models are also anticipated to be the only ones to offer Apple's display features, Always-On and ProMotion.

According to rumours, the iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max would have upgraded RAM, a titanium frame, solid-state buttons with haptic feedback, and other new features, reported Mashable. *Source: ANI*

A supermassive blackhole is directly facing Earth: Scientists

A team of scientists at the Royal Astronomical Society has reclassified a galaxy after they discovered that a supermassive blackhole has changed its direction and is directly facing toward the Earth.

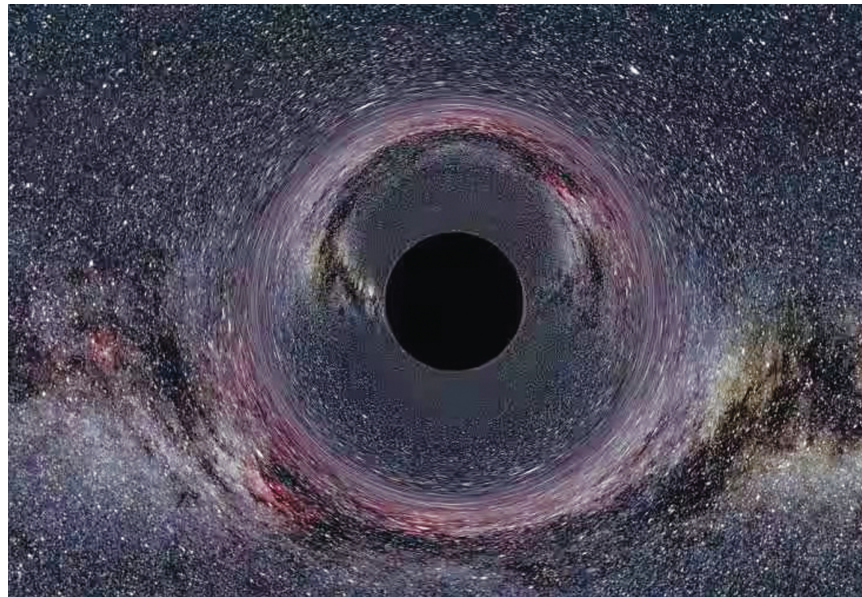
The galaxy, 657 million light-years away from the Earth has been named as PBC J2333.9-2343.

The research published on March 21 has revealed that the galaxy has now been classified as a giant radio galaxy that is four million light years across, nearly 40 times the size of the Milky Way. The galaxy happens to have a blazar, an active galactic nucleus, with a relativistic jet (also called as supermassive blackhole) in its core.

Blazars are very high-energy objects and are considered to be one of the most powerful phenomena in the Universe. The research also revealed that the galaxy has changed its direction by 90 degrees, pointing directly towards the blue planet.

Dr Lorena Hernandez-Garcia, spokesperson of the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS), said, "We started to study this galaxy as it showed peculiar properties. Our hypothesis was that the relativistic jet of its supermassive black hole had changed its direction, and to confirm that idea we had to carry out a lot of observations".

"The fact that we see the nucleus is not feeding the lobes anymore means that they are very old. They are the relics of past activity,



whereas the structures located closer to the nucleus represent younger and active jets", she added.

Scientists do not yet know what caused the drastic change in direction of the galaxy, though they speculate that PBC J2333.9-2343 might have collided with another galaxy. It is also not clear how the direction of the black hole will affect our galaxy.

Waves from a once-in-10,000-Year explosion hit Earth

When a star reaches its end of life, it goes through a supernova, which is one of the biggest explosions in the universe, and turns into a black hole. In October 2022 waves from one of those

explosions swept through our Solar System, hitting Earth and triggering sensors across the world.

Scientists have now analyzed it and revealed that it was the brightest Gamma Ray Burst (GRB) to occur since human civilization began. The burst triggered detectors on numerous spacecraft, and observatories around the globe followed up on the event on October 22, 2022.

Nasa said that the burst was so bright it effectively blinded most gamma-ray instruments in space, which means they could not directly record the real intensity of the emission.

Source: HT and India Today

Scientists find 'reservoir' containing substantial quantities of water on moon

Researchers have discovered water trapped in tiny beads spread across the surface only the Moon, according to a study published in *Nature Geoscience*. It is based on samples of the lunar surface brought back by China's Chang'e 5 mission. The beads embedded in the surface contained "substantial quantities" of water, the scientists said.

The samples were collected in December 2020 and researchers saw microscopic droplets trapped in minerals in them. They said the discovery may help in better understanding of the Earth's neighbour and space missions that could use it as a habitat.

According to scientists, the beads are crucial to the lunar surface's water cycle.

For years, it was believed that Moon is dry but space missions in the last few decades found water trapped inside the surface.

However, it is still unclear exactly how water will behave once it reaches the Moon. Some research has shown that the water in vapourised form fluctuates throughout the day and disappears into space, which implies that the soil should contain some kind of storage.

According to experts, the beads are made when an asteroid strikes the moon's surface and produces molten droplets. These droplets then freeze and mix with the soil and dust. As per their calculations, the impact beads that are dispersed around the surface of



the moon may be storing up to 270 billion tonnes of water, which they call a huge "reservoir".

The paper said, "The impact glass beads preserve hydration signatures and display water abundance profiles consistent with the inward diffusion of solar wind-derived water." *Source: NDTV*



Contagion risks loom over Adani Transmission and Adani Ports, says Fitch

Rating agency Fitch has said that two Adani Group subsidiaries are exposed to heightened contagion risks as a result of governance weakness at the conglomerate's sponsor level. Adani Transmission Limited and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone are prone to risks which could affect financial flexibility, said Fitch. The report further added that this could affect financial flexibility, if not addressed properly.

At 9:47 am, Adani Transmission was quoting at Rs 965 on the BSE, lower by 5 percent. Meanwhile, Adani Ports was trading higher by nearly 2 percent at Rs 609.

The Adani Group is back in fire-fighting mode after media reports called into question the Indian conglomerate's ability to repay debt, reviving a selloff in its stock.

Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd. fell 5.7% to close at 593.40 rupees on Tuesday — lower than the price investor GQG Partners paid to buy a stake earlier this month. It plummeted more than 9% at one point in the session. The sharp selloff in all Adani stocks erased about \$6.2 billion from their combined market value, the biggest decline since early February.

Economic slow-down in China likely to drag global growth down: World Bank

An anticipated economic slow-down in China is likely to drag global growth down to its lowest level this century, the World Bank said Monday, proposing measures to prevent a "lost decade" of growth.

The world's potential growth -- its maximum long-term growth rate without sparking inflation -- will slow to an average annual rate of just 2.2 percent this decade, the World Bank said in a statement.

A confluence of factors, including the lingering impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the ongoing risks to the financial sector in Europe and the United States, are all acting to slow the global economy, which the bank expects to expand by just 1.7 percent this year.

The Washington-based multilateral lender predicts that China's economy will help keep the global economy from entering a recession due to an annual growth rate of five percent this year.

Source: AFP

First Citizens acquires Silicon Valley Bank

WASHINGTON (TIP)

U.S. regulators said they would backstop a deal for regional lender First Citizens BancShares to acquire failed Silicon Valley Bank, triggering an estimated \$20 billion hit to a government-run insurance fund.

The deal comes after the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) took over Silicon Valley Bank on March 10 after depositors rushed to pull out their money in a bank run that also brought down Signature Bank and wiped out more than half the market value of several other U.S. regional lenders.

The deal was "momentous" for First Citizens, CEO Frank Holding told investors on a conference call Monday. "We believe this transaction is a great outcome for depositors."

The Raleigh, North Carolina-based lender has completed 21 such government-assisted deals, including 14 since 2009 when CEO Holding was made chairman, according to a Piper Sandler note on Monday.

The FDIC fund does not take U.S. taxpayer money and is instead replenished by a levy on member banks.

"The FDIC's sale of SVB helps show business can go on as usual for the banking industry," a team of Wells Fargo analysts led by Mike Mayo said in a note on Monday.

First Citizens will not pay cash upfront for the deal. Instead, it said it granted equity appreciation rights in its stock to the FDIC that could be worth up to \$500 million -- a fraction of what Silicon Valley Bank was worth before it failed.

The FDIC will be able to exercise these rights between March 27 and April 14. How much cash it receives will depend on the value of First Citizens' stock.

First Citizens shares jumped 50%.

First Citizens will assume Silicon Valley Bank's assets of \$110 billion, deposits of \$56 billion and loans of \$72 billion as part of the deal.

The FDIC said the \$72-billion purchase of SVB's assets came at a discount of \$16.5 billion.

SVB Private, which the FDIC was trying last week to sell separately and that Citizens Financial Corp had expressed interest in, was acquired by First Citizens as well.

First Citizens said SVB's Private wealth business "is a



natural fit for our high-touch and sophisticated level of high-net-worth customer service and approach."

LINE OF CREDIT

First Citizens will also receive a line of credit from the FDIC for contingent liquidity purposes and will have an agreement with the regulator to share some losses on commercial loans to protect it against potential credit losses.

"First Citizens Bank's acquisition of the SVB loan book and deposits does not add much to solve the number one issue that the U.S. banking system is now facing: deposits leaving smaller banks for larger banks or money market funds," said Redmond Wong, greater China market strategist at Saxo Markets.

Based in Santa Clara, Silicon Valley Bank was the 16th biggest lender in the U.S. at the end of last year, with about \$209 billion in assets.

SVB's collapse triggered the worst banking crisis since 2008, pummeling banking stocks globally. Shares in European lenders fell sharply, led by Germany's Deutsche Bank, raising concern among authorities about a potential credit crunch.

Source: Reuters

SoftBank shares surge after Alibaba unveils six-way split of its businesses

TOKYO (TIP)

SoftBank Group Corp. surged in Tokyo trading after Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. announced a six-way split of its businesses, fueling optimism for a recovery at one of the Japanese company's most important holdings.

The Tokyo-based company's stock rose as much as 6.2% in early trading, the biggest intraday move since October.

"There had been anxiety over the global banking system, but that has started to subside. And now we have this Alibaba news, which is clearly a positive for SoftBank," said Naoki Fujiwara, chief fund manager at Shinkin Asset Management. "The expectation is for the spinoff units to have their businesses properly valued, which will boost Alibaba's overall corporate value."

SoftBank founder Masayoshi Son has relied on his Alibaba stake in recent years to generate cash for other startup investments and to compensate for losses in his portfolio. Alibaba's market capitalization slid with the Chinese government's crackdown on tech giants though, falling from a peak of more than \$850 billion in 2020 to about \$220 billion before the breakup announcement.

Alibaba shares rose 14% in New York trading after the split announcement, pushing its market value to about \$255 billion. Still, SoftBank is working through other challenges among its portfolio companies, which may moderate any stock gains.

"It's going to be a slow recovery from here," said Fujiwara.



"The upside for the stock price will be capped until we see an overall turn around in sentiment for Nasdaq and technology firms."

Source: Bloomberg

Shree Ganeshaya Namah



Horoscope for the month of April 2023

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

**Aries**

Ganesha says this month; you'll feel like a superhero, ready to take on any challenge that comes your way. With the sun in your sign, your natural confidence and energy will be amplified, giving you the courage to tackle anything that comes your way. Just make sure you're not so busy saving the world that you forget to take care of yourself. Remember, even superheroes need a day off once in a while. Take some time to recharge your batteries and enjoy the simple pleasures in life. This is also a great time to set new goals and start taking action towards making your dreams a reality. You've got this, Aries!

**Taurus**

Ganesha says your stubborn nature can sometimes get in the way of your progress, but this month you'll find that a little flexibility can go a long way. With the influence of Venus, the planet of love and harmony, you'll be more open to compromise and finding common ground with others. Keep an open mind and be willing to try new things and you'll be amazed at what you can achieve. This is also a good time to focus on your relationships, whether it's strengthening existing bonds or forming new connections. Don't be afraid to show your vulnerable side and let others in.

**Gemini**

Ganesha says communication is key this month, so make sure you're speaking your truth and listening to others as well. With Mercury, your ruling planet, in your sign, your wit and intellect will be at an all-time high. Use this to your advantage by engaging in meaningful conversations and sharing your ideas with the world. Don't be afraid to ask for what you want but be prepared to compromise and find a middle ground. This is also a great time to focus on learning and expanding your knowledge. Take a class, read a book, or explore a new topic that interests you.

**Cancer**

Ganesha says your emotions may be running high this month, but don't let them get the best of you. With the influence of the moon, your ruling planet, you'll be more in tune with your intuition and emotions. Use this to your advantage by connecting with others on a deeper level and expressing your feelings in a healthy way. This is also a good time to focus on self-care and nurturing yourself. Take a relaxing bath, meditate, or do something that makes you feel good. Remember, it's okay to take a step back and take care of yourself first.

**Leo**

Ganesha says you'll be feeling the love this month, Leo! Whether it's from a romantic partner, friends, or family, bask in the warmth of the relationships you've built. With the sun in your friendship sector, you'll be more social and outgoing than usual. This is a great time to reconnect with old friends or make new ones. And don't forget to spread that love around by doing something kind for others. This is also a good time to focus on your personal goals and aspirations. Take the first step towards making your dreams a reality and trust that the universe has your back.

**Virgo**

Ganesha says this month, focus on the details. Your attention to minutiae will pay off in a big way, whether it's in your work or personal life. With the influence of Mercury, your ruling planet, you'll be more analytical and precise than ever. Use this to your advantage by tackling projects that require a meticulous eye and a steady hand. Just make sure you're not getting so caught up in the details that you lose sight of the big picture. This is also a good time to focus on your health and well-being. Take care of your body and mind by eating healthy, exercising, and getting enough rest.

**Libra**

Ganesha says balance is your middle name, Libra, and this month you'll be putting that skill to good use. With the influence of Venus, your ruling planet, you'll be more focused on finding harmony and equilibrium in all areas of your life. This is a great time to reassess your priorities and make sure you're allocating your time and energy in a way that feels balanced and fulfilling. Don't be afraid to say no to things that don't align with your values or goals. This is also a good time to focus on your creativity and self-expression. Allow yourself to indulge in activities that bring you joy and let your unique voice be heard.

**Scorpio**

Ganesha says this month, it's all about transformation. With the influence of Pluto, your ruling planet, you'll be feeling the urge to shed your old skin and embrace a new, more authentic version of yourself. This can be an intense process, but trust that it will lead to growth and positive change. Don't be afraid to let go of things that no longer serve you, whether it's a toxic relationship or a limiting belief about yourself. This is also a good time to focus on your finances and career. Take steps towards achieving your long-term goals and trust in your ability to succeed.

**Sagittarius**

Ganesha says adventure awaits, Sagittarius! With the influence of Jupiter, your ruling planet, you'll be feeling the urge to explore new horizons and push your boundaries. Whether it's a literal trip or a metaphorical one, embrace the

spirit of adventure and let you be open to new experiences. This is also a good time to focus on your relationships, both romantic and platonic. Nurture the connections you have and don't be afraid to put yourself out there and make new friends.

**Capricorn**

Ganesha says this month it's all about balance between work and play. With the influence of Saturn, your ruling planet, you'll be feeling the pressure to succeed and make progress in your career. But don't forget to take breaks and enjoy the simple pleasures in life. Allow yourself to have fun and indulge in hobbies or activities that bring you joy. This is also a good time to focus on your home and family life. Make sure you're nurturing those relationships and creating a space that feels comfortable and welcoming.

**Aquarius**

Ganesha says your innovative and creative side will be on full display this month, Aquarius. With the influence of Uranus, your ruling planet, you'll be more focused on pushing the boundaries and thinking outside the box. This is a great time to explore new ideas and experiment with different approaches. Don't be afraid to take risks and trust in your unique vision. This is also a good time to focus on your personal growth and spirituality. Take time for self-reflection and connect with your inner self.

**Pisces**

Ganesha says this month, it's all about connection and communication. With the influence of Neptune, your ruling planet, you'll be more attuned to the emotions and needs of those around you. Use this to your advantage by strengthening your relationships. Use this to your advantage by connecting with your inner self and exploring new spiritual practices or philosophies. This is also a good time to focus on your relationships. Use your compassion and empathy to connect with others on a deeper level and strengthen your bonds with those you love.

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations.

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - APRIL 3 TO APRIL 9, 2023



ARIES : Ganesha says, this week, you could opt to spend time with the children or friends. Children will be therapeutically beneficial. You'll squandering your own pace this week if you do any pointless job. You'll feel as though you've been raised. Even while working for a large corporation could be fun, your expenses will surely increase. Somebody who lives with you could become irritated and angry due to your unintentional and unexpected behavior. You might receive this blessing. For workers in the medical field, this week will be challenging professionally. The coming week will be fantastic for businesses and retailers.

TAURUS : Ganesha says, utilizing your bravery this week, you might assist anybody in difficulty. There are a lot of modern happenings that you may observe that you have no idea around and are outside your grasp. You could be required to cover the cost of your partner's professional care, which could be an expenditure. But be assured that your beloved will soon make a full recovery. The requirements of your loved ones may be challenging and hard to manage. Attractive commercial chances will present themselves in the upcoming days. Students should get started studying immediately away if they have a difficult exam or a new topic. Retailers and advertising professionals will both enjoy a fantastic week.

GEMINI : Ganesha says this week's recreational and social commitments are going to keep you content and at ease. But this week, you'll hear a couple of good developments. It's possible that you aren't as advantageous as you are at work. Make all possible attempts to safeguard the money you've invested. This week more than any other, your coworkers will understand you. You may finally recuperate and partake in your favorite hobby after a demanding workweek. You could have planned a romantic trip for this week with the person you love, but you are hesitant to travel due to a deadline at business.

CANCER : Ganesha says, it can be a worthwhile endeavor to make promises for the family or children this week. You will come to understand this week that acquiring knowledge ought not to cease. Practically, individuals who made investments based on a stranger's counsel are more inclined to reap the rewards now. Be sensitive to your partner's psychological requirements and react properly. To spend the entire week with the one you love could be a terrific option. This week, you and your friend will go over old, unpleasant experiences. Your obsessive devotion to sweet foods may cause you to get unwell this week.



LEO : Ganesha says, you could decide to adopt an intellectual frame of thinking this week. This will help you to maintain a consistent level of energy throughout the week. Jewelry and antique goods are good investments that will pay out in the long run. A fantastic week overall, but you'll be disappointed by someone on whom you relied. This week, it's suitable to express romantic sentiments. Your committed companion could give you a favorable reaction. Go forward and hunt for fresh chances rather than waiting for anything to happen. You might opt to isolate yourself from other people more often. During your free time this week, you can clean your residence. For the benefit of your health, you may require to avoid poisons and filth.

VIRGO : Ganesha says, this week may be a nice one for self-reflection and relaxation. You'll only feel more uneasy this week as a result of your rage. Effectively, people working in the industrial sector now have the opportunity to make money. Formal titles and financial prizes will be given out by lower-level officials. Positive comments from family or a romantic partner can render your week more passionate. Now, individuals who are close to you will strive to get closer to you, but you'll prefer to remain alone for your own mental well-being. To maintain your health, limit your time abroad. You run the risk of getting a headache or feeling pain in your body.

LIBRA : Ganesha says, given that you may experience a bit distant in the first part of the week, things may not go well for you. During this week, your true companion may disappear from your life. Eternity will bring you closer together even if you are not with your partner or loved. With the help of this week's revenue records, you can get out from under a lot of financial restraints. Professionals and weekly contractors will experience a busy week at the office. sales will increase and stay that way for the remainder of the week. . You have to get them to a doctor.

SCORPIO : Ganesha says, your current state of misery may be brought on by a rapid recovery from a healthcare ailment. It would be ideal if you could resolve issues as quickly as possible to bring back joy for you and your loved ones. Now that you know how to manage your funds and save capital, you may approach the seniors in your family for advice and put their advice into practice on a weekly basis. Academically, this week is a fantastic time to invest in the stock industry and the property market. At work, you could attract someone's attention. regardless of what, your partner will support you emotionally. It will be a week of wellbeing for you and your family.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says your week is full of opportunities to develop individually and learn how to deal with challenging situations. Additionally, this week will see the conclusion of ongoing concerns from your intimate life. This week, there will be a threat to you. Although it is feasible to date while working, it is best to maintain your personal and professional lives separate as doing so will throw both of them out of equilibrium. Now is the ideal moment to make private as well as stock portfolios. Remain calm and avoid basing your decisions on other people's opinions. This week, avoid taking long travels far from home. Your celestial bodies are not in a good position; thus, you will suffer damage. Don't participate in any risky activities.

CAPRICORN : Ganesha says, you'll experience an unexpected gain or reward. This is the ideal moment to get past the past and focus on the present moment. You'll meet an individual who can aid in your own development. The moon changes this week will cause you to feel unstable and disoriented. This week, you'll have to present both of your viewpoints to them on a number of crucial issues. If you're single, it's not an excellent choice to start a new relationship this week. You could be anticipating a raise or an assessment. You will be happy to watch how your company is growing. It is not advisable to start an extended family business since it could result in problems within it. This week, pay extra attention to how you're doing.

AQUARIUS : Ganesha says, this week, you'll focus your efforts on making purchases of material items. Some of your former coworkers will also be there. You will have occasions when you grow conscientious, which will bring forth your best qualities. This week, use caution while speaking since conflicts with your spouse are more likely. Furthermore, this week somebody will try to harm your reputation at work, but don't worry-those around you will respect their efforts. You're more likely to make a poor financial decision if you're really anxious. Before making any decisions, get your colleagues' opinions and thoroughly consider your options.

PISCES : Ganesha says, your week will be exciting, and all that you wish could come true. It's conceivable that you'll learn valuable knowledge that appeals to everyone in your home, not just you. This week, you can come across individuals who will attempt to persuade you and use you to their own gain. Watch out for individuals like this. Additionally, you need to be very watchful with your money. Wedded people may experience interpersonal problems. Establishing a new business or purchasing any assets this week is not a good idea because the benefits may not last long.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : APRIL 3 TO APRIL 9 , 2023

BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

APRIL 3 : Ganesha says you are natural communicators. You have a gift for words and can articulate your thoughts and feelings with ease. You are also highly social and enjoy being around others. However, you can sometimes be superficial in your relationships and may need to work on developing deeper connections. Your assertiveness and confidence will be at an all-time high, making it an excellent day to make decisions and take action. Use your gift of gab to negotiate a deal or express your feelings to someone you care about.

APRIL 4: Ganesha says you have a strong sense of family and community. You are highly empathetic and compassionate, which makes you a natural caretaker. You also have a deep love of tradition and may value stability and routine in your life. However, you may sometimes struggle with change and need to work on being more adaptable. Your determination will be rewarded with success, but be

mindful of others' feelings along the way. Take advantage of this energy and focus on your goals.

APRIL 5: Ganesha says you are adventurous and free-spirited. You have a natural curiosity and thirst for exploration, which can lead you to new and exciting experiences. You also have a gift for adapting to new situations and can quickly make friends wherever you go. However, you may sometimes struggle with commitment and may need to work on developing deeper, more meaningful relationships. Your enthusiasm is contagious, and you'll attract others who share your zest for life. Just be careful not to let your impulsive nature get the best of you.

APRIL 6 : Ganesha says you have a natural talent for nurturing others. You are highly empathetic and caring, which makes you a natural caregiver. You also have a strong sense of justice and may feel called to fight for the underdog. However,

you may sometimes struggle with setting boundaries and need to work on taking care of your own needs as well. Trust your gut and don't be afraid to speak up if something doesn't feel right. Your honesty and sincerity will be appreciated by those around you.

APRIL 7 : Ganesha says you have a natural talent for intuition and spirituality. You are highly perceptive and can sense things that others may miss. You also have a gift for introspection and may enjoy spending time alone in contemplation. However, you may sometimes struggle with connecting with others on a deeper level and need to work on being more open and vulnerable. Your ability to connect with others on an emotional level will be heightened, so don't be afraid to share your ideas and feelings with those you trust.

APRIL 8 : Ganesha says you have a natural talent for business and finance. You understand how money

works and have a knack for making wise investments. You may also be highly ambitious and driven to succeed. However, you may sometimes struggle with balancing your work life with your personal life and need to work on cultivating fulfilling relationships outside of work. Just be sure to balance your assertiveness with compassion and understanding for those around you.

APRIL 9 : 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.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAHI ||



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Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Hanuman Jayanti is celebrated on the 15th day of the Shukla Paksha, during the month of Chaitra (the Chaitra Pournimaa).

Hanuman, who is also known as Vanara God, was born on this day and Hanuman Jayanti is celebrated to commemorate the birth of Lord Hanuman.

Hanuman avatar is considered as the 11th Rudra manifestation of the Lord Siva with great devotion, strength, knowledge, divine power, bravery, intelligence, spirit for selfless service and etc. He has devoted his life only for his Lord Rama and Mata Sita and never shows his bravery and intelligence without any purpose. Hanuman Jayanti is an important festival of Hindus and widely celebrated all over India. Lord Varuna is another name given to Lord Hanuman.

Hanuman Jayanti is an occasion to remember Lord Hanuman's unbridled devotion to Lord Rama and his feats of daring. In the epic tale of Ramayana, the extraordinary role of Lord Hanuman, an exemplary devotee of Lord Rama, is very well detailed out in situations requiring strength, will-power and courage. Lord Hanuman is considered a symbol of power and energy. The line 'Bhoot Pisaach Nikat Nahi Aawe, Mahabir Jab Naam Sunave' mentioned in Hanuman Chalisa, symbolizes that Mahavira takes away all the negativity from the life of his devotees. It is believed that a person is supposed to get rid of all negativity or ghosts; should worship Lord Hanuman.

There is a popular belief that worshipping Lord Hanuman will help in removing the hardship caused by Lord Shani or Saturn in astrology. When Lord Hanuman broke the boasting of Lord Shani then he apologized to Hanumanji and promised that he never ever create obstacles in Shri Ram and Hanuman work. To make Hanuman Jayanti, a fruitful day, you can visit Maruti's temple and worship the deity. As a part of the tradition, red tilak (vermillion mark) is applied on the forehead of Lord Hanuman idol and Ladoos (sweet) are offered. Some of the important puja rituals include offering red vermillion with ghee to the idol of Hanuman. People are seen observing fast (Vrat) on this day. Worshipping Rudra (Bajrangbali) with these rituals will bestow you with blessings and glory of Hanuman or Anjaneya on Hanuman Jayanti. Thus, he will always stand by his sincere devotees.

Significance of Hanuman Jayanti

Hanuman Jayanti has immense significance for Brahmacharis, wrestlers, and bodybuilders. They consider Hanuman an ideal role model for physical strength and discipline due to his immense physical prowess. Special prayers, devotional songs, and the chanting of Hanuman Chalisa, a hymn dedicated to Lord Hanuman, mark the festival of Hanuman Jayanti.

Devotees offer sweets, fruits, and flowers to the deity on this day. Some even fast to express their devotion and also to seek his blessings. As the 11th Rudra avatar of Lord Shiva, Hanuman dedicated his life to Lord Rama and Sita. His devotion and selflessness toward them inspire millions of Hindus worldwide.

Moreover, people pray to Lord Hanuman for their bright future and widely regard him as a symbol of hope and optimism. Hanuman's teachings and example of selflessness and devotion continue to inspire and guide people in their spiritual and personal lives. This also makes him a revered and beloved figure in Hinduism.

Connection between Lord Hanuman and Rudraksha

Hinduism considers Rudraksha beads sacred in Hinduism and believes them to possess divine powers. The seeds of the Rudraksha tree are the tears of Lord Shiva, which he shed while meditating for the welfare of mankind. Using Rudraksha beads during Hanuman Jayanti brings peace, harmony, and good health to the devotees.

Additionally, as Hanuman is an avatar of Lord Shiva, using Rudraksha beads helps enhance the power and effectiveness of Hanuman worship. Many people wear Rudraksha beads as a necklace or bracelet while performing Hanuman puja. While some even use them to make a mala for chanting Hanuman mantras. Overall, using Rudraksha beads during Hanuman Jayanti is a way for devotees to connect with the divine energy and seek the blessings of Lord Hanuman.

Hanuman Jayanti Vrat importance

Fasting is an important tradition associated with Hanuman Jayanti among devotees. The belief is that by

Hanuman Jayanti



observing a fast on this day, one can purify their mind, body, and soul and seek blessings from Lord Hanuman. Devotees see fasting as a way to express their gratitude and devotion to the deity. While some people observe a complete fast, others consume only fruits or a simple sattvic meal.

Fasting additionally helps develop self-discipline and control the senses. By observing Hanuman Jayanti Vrat, one can gain strength, courage, and wisdom. These are the qualities devotees associate with Lord Hanuman. In summary, fasting on Hanuman Jayanti is a way to strengthen the spiritual connection with the deity and seek his divine blessings.

Astrological importance of Hanuman Jayanti

Hanuman Jayanti is an important day in astrology, as it ought to significantly impact the planetary positions and the energy levels of the universe. Astrologers consider the recitation of Hanuman Chalisa during Hanuman Jayanti to be very powerful from an astrological perspective.

The hymn can appease the planet Mars (Mangal), which associates with strength, courage, and victory. Chanting the Hanuman Chalisa reduces the negative effects of Mars in one's horoscope and brings positive life changes.

Many people perform pujas and rituals on Hanuman Jayanti, which has astrological benefits. The puja helps to connect with the divine energies of Lord Hanuman and seek his blessings. It brings positive changes in life, such as success in endeavors, good health, and protection from negative energies.

How to perform Puja on Hanuman Jayanti?

Hanuman Puja is a powerful way to connect with Lord Hanuman and seek his blessings for success, good health, and happiness. Devotees consider it one of the most sacred rituals to seek Lord Hanuman's blessings and their gratitude towards him.

Wake up early and take a bath: It is essential to wake up early and take a bath to purify your body and mind before starting the puja.

Meditate and pledge to perform the puja sincerely:

Before starting the puja, sit in silence and meditate for a few minutes to calm your mind. Take a pledge to perform the puja with devotion and sincerity.

Place the idol or image of Lord Hanuman: Place the idol or image of Lord Hanuman on a wooden chowki covered with a fresh yellow cloth facing east. You can also use a picture of Lord Hanuman if you do not have an idol.

Light an oil or ghee lamp and place it near the idol of Lord Hanuman. Seek blessings from Lord Ganesha for a hurdle-free puja.

Sprinkle water on the idol or image of Lord Hanuman

Sprinkle some water on the image of Lord Hanuman to purify it. Moreover, if the idol is of metal, use water, raw milk, honey, curd, ghee, etc., for doing the Abhishek.

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

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

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

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Wayanad: Nature's abode

Replete with waterfalls, historical caves, comfortable resorts and homestays, Wayanad in Kerala is famous for its spice plantations and wildlife. Walking through the sprawling spice plantations, trekking to the pre-historic caves and experiencing a resort holiday are one of the many things you can do to get a taste of Wayanad.

Wayanad is best known for the wildlife reserves - Wayanad wildlife reserve which is home to an exquisite variety of flora and fauna. Wayanad wildlife reserve is an integral part of the Nilgiri biosphere reserve peacefully located amidst the serene hills of Western Ghats. Wayanad homes a wide variety of wildlife like elephants, leopards, and bears. Wayanad is a perfect weekend idea from the cities of South India. If taking a road trip from Bangalore, you will drive through three national parks: Nagarhole, Bandipur and Mudumalai.

Banasura Dam

Lying in the lap of the Banasura hills in the Wayanad district is the picturesque Banasura Sagar dam. Banasura Dam is the largest earthen dam in the country and the second-largest in Asia. The view of the sprawling reservoir from the top of the dam is breathtaking. Adventures like speed boating are readily available, and a trek up to the Banasura Peak is filled with streams, diverse flora, fauna, lush tropical green and majestic waterfalls. An earthen dam, also known as an embankment dam is created by placing mounds of clay, sand, rock or soil. The view of Banasura Lake from the top of the hill is mesmerising.

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is the second largest wildlife sanctuary in Kerala and comprises of rare as well as endangered species of both flora and fauna. It is surrounded by the protected areas of Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu as well as Nagarhole and Bandipur in Karnataka. Founded in the year 1973, the wildlife sanctuary is an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve which was the first biosphere out of the 14 present in India. The sanctuary is spread over an area of 345 square km and comprises of two parts namely Upper Wayanad and Lower Wayanad. Eucalyptus, as well as bamboo trees, are grown in the region.

Chembra Peak

Located close to Meppady and just 8 km south of Kalpetta, stands the highest peak of the Wayanad Hill Range- the Chembra Peak at an altitude of 2000 meters above sea level. The Chembra peak offers a panoramic view of not only the entire Wayanad district but also a large chunk of Kozhikode, Malappuram and Nilgiri districts. The peak, its surrounding lush greenery and the famed heart-shaped lake make it a paradise for travellers to explore.

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sprawling reservoir from the top of the dam is breathtaking. Adventures like speed boating are readily available, and a trek up to the Banasura Peak is filled with streams, diverse flora, fauna, lush tropical green and majestic waterfalls. An earthen dam, also known as an embankment dam is created by placing mounds of clay, sand, rock or soil. The view of Banasura Lake from the top of the hill is mesmerising.

Edakkal Caves

Famous for its exquisite rock and wall carvings, the pre-historic Edakkal Caves are two naturally occurring alcoves located in the Wayanad district of Kerala. The caves measure at a massive length and width of 96 and 22 feet respectively and lie 1200 metres above the sea level. Owing to its precarious location, one needs to trek for one and half hour (around 4000 ft) to hit the cave entrance, and another 45 minutes to reach the mouth of the cave. The Edakkal caves are of historical and archaeological significance as it has carvings that date back to the Neolithic era, the late Stone Age. The stonework in the interior of the cave is estimated to be as old as 5000 BC to 1000 BC.

Edikkal literally means 'a stone in between' and aptly describes its formation. A smaller rock has wedged in between 2 bigger ones to form a natural cave. In the truest sense of the word, it is not a cave but a natural fissure in the rock which has a heavy boulder on top. The cave thus has 2 levels. The first level of the cave can be explored through a small opening. Just opposite this is a passage that leads to another opening, this time in the roof. Here you come to the second level which is much bigger in size. To explore the caves visitors have to pass uneven boulders, an iron ladder and rock walls covered with fungi. The walls



are covered with carvings of animal and human figures, some of which are hazy but are clear for the most part. The clarity of the carvings is even more surprising given the duration they have survived.

Soochipara Falls

Also known as Sentinel Rock Waterfalls, Soochipara Falls is a three-tiered waterfall situated in Vellarimala, Wayanad. Surrounded by deciduous, evergreen and montane forests, this waterfall is regarded as one of the best waterfalls. The drive from Meppadi to Sentinel Rock Waterfalls provides visitors with scenic views of some of the best tea estates in Wayanad.

This enchanting waterfall is 200

meters high that also offer a cliff face, ideal for rock climbing. Also, since the water falling from the waterfall forms a large pool, one can enjoy swimming and bathing in it. The water falling from Soochipara later joins Chulika River aka Chaliyar River after hills from Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Stay in a Treehouse

One of the best things to do in Kerala is to stay in a treehouse. And there is no better place in the state than Wayanad. You can find several packages in the city where you can stay in the pretty wooden house and as part of the package, you can also enjoy a bonfire and indulge in activities like rock climbing, rappelling, nature walks etc. *Source: Holidify*

contd from page 1

Supreme Court slams 'silence of state' on 'vicious circle' of hate against minorities

speeches... where are you taking India? Now are we going to start taking contempt action against every person in India... where are we taking this court... is there no restraint on freedom of speech... If there is intellectual deprivation, you can never take this country to the number one position in the world. Intellectual deprivation comes only when there is intolerance, lack of knowledge and lack of education. That is where we should concentrate first... We should as a society take a pledge to restrain ourselves from saying these things," Justice Nagarathna said.

Justice Joseph said "before we think of trying to be a superpower, we should first follow the rule of law".

The court said hate speech strikes a mortal blow to dignity.

"The most important thing is dignity. If it is demolished on a regular basis... look at the statements being made 'Go to Pakistan'... They are people who chose this country. They are like your brothers and sisters. Remember what you pledged in school 'All Indians are my brothers and sisters... Maybe I am too old-fashioned... I am retiring in four months, turning 65... Seventy-five years ago we as a nation started a journey. Our objective was to be a country that will follow the rule of law... We should never go down to that level of hate," Justice Joseph said.

To this, advocate P.V. Yogeshwaran, appearing for a Hindu party, assured "it will never be as long as my client is the majority in this country".

Europe gets fourth South Asian origin Prime Minister; Humza Yousaf elected Scotland's next First Minister

"The people of Scotland need independence now more than ever," he said.

"From Punjab to our Parliament, this is a journey for our generations," he tweeted.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Portugal's PM Antonio Costa and Ireland's PM Leo Varadkar have their roots in India.

Humza's election will revive the demand for independence. "I will ensure our drive for independence is in fifth gear. The people of Scotland need independence now more than ever," he said. Scotland voted against independence by 55 per cent to 45 per cent in 2014. In 2016, most of Scotland had voted against leaving the European Union and gaining its membership was also one of Yousaf's major election plank.

"From the Punjab to our Parliament, this is a journey for our generations. From Punjab to Pollok, people from across the world and here at home have been offering

me their good wishes, grateful for all the kind messages I have received," he tweeted.

UK PM Rishi Sunak's parents are of Indian origin, Portugal's Socialist Prime Minister Antonio Costa is also of Indian descent and Goan-descent Leo Varadkar is back for a second term as Ireland's PM. Varadkar had returned as the Taoiseach (Prime Minister of Ireland) in December last year. He was first elected as Ireland's youngest PM in 2017 at the age of 38. Antonio Costa, Portugal's PM since 2015, holds an OCI card which he had displayed along with his Portuguese passport at an India-EU meeting.

Yousaf's grandparents had arrived in Scotland from Pakistan in the 1960s and is the first Muslim leader of a major UK political party and also the first Muslim to lead a country in Western Europe. His mother was born into a South Asian family in Kenya. The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan is also of South Asian origin.

Spouses of H-1B visa holders can work in US, says judge; a large number of Indians to benefit

that gave employment authorization cards to spouses of certain categories of H-1B visa holders.

Save Jobs USA is an organization comprising IT workers who claim they lost their jobs to H-1B workers. Tech companies such as Amazon, Apple, Google and Microsoft had opposed the lawsuit. The US has so far issued nearly 1,00,000 work authorizations to spouses of H-1B workers.

In her order, Judge Chutkan said the primary contention of Save Jobs USA is that Congress has never granted the Department of Homeland Security authority to allow foreign nationals, like H-4 visa-holders, to work during their stay in the United States.

But that contention runs headlong into the text of the Immigration and Nationality Act, decades of executive-branch practice and both explicit and implicit congressional ratification of that practice, she wrote.

The judge wrote that Congress has expressly and knowingly empowered the US government to authorize employment as a permissible condition of an H-4 spouse's stay in the United States.

The fact that the federal government has had longstanding and open responsibility for authorizing employment for similar visa classes further manifests Congress' approval of it exercising that authority, she said.

The Department of Homeland Security and its predecessors have authorized employment not just for students, but also for their spouses and dependents, Judge Chutkan wrote in the ruling.

Also, the Department of Homeland Security has long extended work authorization to spouses of foreign government officials and spouses of employees or officers of international organizations, the judge wrote as she dismissed the lawsuit filed by Save Jobs USA. (Source: PTI)



Punjab Government reaches out to Akal Takht, 'releases' 348 detainees

The phone call reportedly took place hours before a Twitter post of Akal Takht Jathedar asking the Sikh Sangat to participate in the Panthic congregation was withheld in India.

Yesterday, the CM tweeted, "History shows that the Badals have abused the position of Jathedars for their personal benefit. The Jathedar should have issued the ultimatum for acting on cases relating to sacrilege or disappearance of 'swaroops' of Guru Granth Sahib."

Minutes later, the Jathedar responded to the tweet and asked the CM to save Punjab and reunite innocent youth with their mothers.

The current move may defuse the "tense situation" between the government and Akal Takht as the latter had also asked to withdraw cases registered under the National Security Act. On March 25, the Jathedar had asked Amritpal to surrender before the police and join the probe. (Source: TNS)



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Scott McTominay scored twice as Scotland upset Spain. Reuters

Scotland take Spain scalp, Croatia win

Scott McTominay scored twice as Scotland upset Spain 2-0 in qualifying for the European Championship, their first win in 39 years over one of the football's biggest heavyweights.

McTominay's goals came after he also scored two in a 3-0 win over Cyprus on Saturday and ended Spain's 19-game unbeaten run in European qualifiers. The result also puts Scotland top of Group A with six points from two games.

Mateo Kovacic also scored twice as Croatia defeated Turkey 2-0 away for their first win in Group D. Romania and Switzerland both won in Group I, continuing their perfect starts.

Spain's players were warned after McTominay scored two late goals in Scotland's opening win over Cyprus in a Group A match. But few expected him to do it again Tuesday against a team that had not lost a European qualifying game since a 2-1 loss to Slovakia ahead of the 2016 tournament. Spain had not lost to Scotland since Maurice Johnston scored two and Kenny Dalglish added another in a 3-1 World Cup qualifier in November 1984.

In Group D, Croatia were forced to rely on goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic to deny Turkey's Cengiz Under and Kerem Akturkoglu early on in Bursa. Kovacic opened the scoring in the 20th and nabbed the second just before the break.

Milestone Messi hits century for Argentina



Lionel Messi scored a hat-trick and surpassed 100 career goals for Argentina with three in the first half of Tuesday's international friendly against Curacao. The World Cup winners beat the Caribbean side 7-0 in their second match since clinching the trophy in December. The 35-year-old Messi opened the scoring against Curacao in the 20th minute with a right-foot shot from the edge of the box to reach the 100-goal milestone. Nico Gonzalez added another three minutes later with a header from close range. Messi then scored his 101st for Argentina in the 33rd minute with a crossed shot to the right of the goalkeeper and his 102nd in the 37th after an easy run to score. Two minutes earlier he had assisted Enzo Fernandez' blast from the edge of the box.

Source: AP

Fantastic 4 sparkle at World Championships, but Indian boxers have a long way to go

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The indomitable Nikhat Zareen continued to shine bright while Lovlina Borgohain rediscovered her winning touch as hosts India capped off a memorable campaign in the Women's Boxing World Championships with four gold medals.

With the Paris Olympics approaching, it augurs well that the Indian contingent matched its best performance in terms of gold medals.

The highlight of the tournament was Nikhat becoming only the second Indian to win the world title twice after the legendary MC Mary Kom, who has an unprecedented six titles.

The emergence of three new champions in Lovlina (75kg), Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) and Saweety Boora (81kg) and some promising performances from the likes of Preeti Pawar (54kg) were also key takeaways from the tournament.

Nikhat had to battle through six exhausting bouts, including playing back-to-back pre-quarters, quarterfinals and semifinals. The 50kg field was one of the toughest with 35 boxers vying for the top honours. Several pugilists had either gained or cut down their weight to make the cut for the light flyweight class as it is an Olympics category.

"These World Championships were tougher than last time as I had to manage my weight, and follow a strict diet," Nikhat, who won the 52kg title last year in Istanbul, said. "I didn't get seeding so I had to fight six bouts. I had back-to-back matches and my body was a bit slow in some matches. I will learn from these experiences and



Nitu Ghanghas, Saweety Boora, Lovlina Borgohain and Nikhat Zareen won gold in the Women's Boxing World Championships. PTI

try to become stronger," she added.

Lovlina's triumph is also an encouraging sign. For one, Lovlina has broken the 'bronze jinx' that she admitted ahead of the tournament was affecting her psychologically. The 25-year-old had three bronze — two at the World Championships and one at the Tokyo Olympics — coming into the event.

The win at home following a series of underwhelming results, including the 2022 Commonwealth Games, will do a world of good to Lovlina's confidence. However, both Nikhat and Lovlina are still adapting to their new weight categories and have several aspects to work on.

Another boxer who impressed despite making a pre-quarterfinal exit was young Preeti. Competing in the 54kg category, the 19-year-old packed a punch in her three rounds as she

topped top seed and last edition's silver medallist Lacramioara Perijoc of Romania before going down to two-time medallist Jitpong Jutamas of Thailand in a fiercely-contested bout.

The performances of last edition's bronze medallist Manisha Moun (57kg), Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine Lamboria (60kg) and Manju Bamboriya, all competing in Olympics categories, however, left a lot to be desired.

Overall, India topped the medals tally, but it should be noted that the field was depleted. More than 10 countries boycotted the event after the International Boxing Association (IBA) went against the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) recommendations and allowed Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete under their own flags.

Source: PTI

Plan is to stage entire 2023 ODI World Cup in India: ICC source

MUMBAI (TIP)

While the formal announcement of the dates and venues for this year's ODI World Cup in India is awaited, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has denied media reports that Pakistan will play their matches at a neutral venue.

"As far as we are concerned, everything is full speed for a full event in India later this year," an ICC official said.

A final word may yet be heard on the matter.

BCCI has had talks with the Pakistan board (PCB) over adopting a "hybrid model" for the Asia Cup in September — staging the tournament in Pakistan but holding the India games in neutral venues. Reports in the Pakistan media say the same model will apply for the World Cup and Pakistan's matches will be



relocated to a neutral venue. Bangladesh is being spoken of as a possible host nation for these matches.

Some media reports have even quoted Wasim Khan, ICC GM and ex-CEO of PCB, as saying that Pakistan's World Cup matches will be played at a neutral venue. ICC has

distanced itself from any such comments.

While negotiations may be on for the Asia Cup to stay in Pakistan with only the India games and the final to be moved out, BCCI are unwilling to let PCB use it to bargain for moving World Cup matches out of India.

The World Cup will be played in the same format as the last edition in England in 2019. All 10 teams played against the other once before the semi-finalists were decided. That would mean nine Pakistan matches are to be hosted in India.

BCCI's long-standing position has been that they won't be able to play cricket in Pakistan without government permission. Pakistan is known to be putting forth the same argument at the ICC forum.

Source: HT



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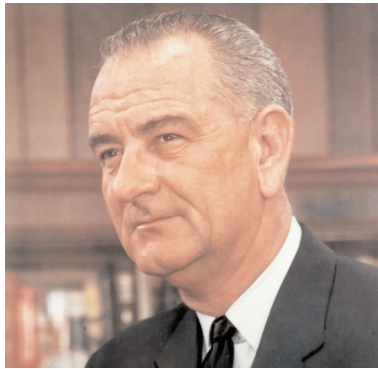
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History This Week

MARCH 31 - APRIL 06, 2023

MARCH 31

March 31, 1933 - The Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC, was founded. Unemployed men and youths were organized into quasi-military formations and worked outdoors in national parks and forests.



March 31, 1968 - President Lyndon Johnson made a surprise announcement that he would not seek re-election as a result of the Vietnam conflict.

March 31, 1991 - The Soviet Republic of Georgia, birthplace of Josef Stalin, voted to declare its independence from Soviet Russia, after similar votes by Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. Following the vote in Georgia, Russian troops were dispatched from Moscow under a state of emergency.

Birthday - Boxing champion Jack Johnson (1878-1946) was born in Galveston, Texas. He was the first African American to win the heavyweight boxing title.

APRIL 1

April 1, 1865 - During the American Civil War, Confederate troops of General George Pickett were defeated and cut off at Five Forks, Virginia. This sealed the fate of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's armies at Petersburg and Richmond and hastened the end of the war.

April 1, 1998 - A federal judge in Little Rock, Arkansas, dismissed a sexual harassment case against President Bill Clinton, stating the case had no "genuine issues" worthy of trial. Although President Clinton had denied any wrongdoing, a unanimous ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in May 1997 allowed the case to proceed, thereby establishing a precedent allowing sitting presidents to be sued for personal conduct that allegedly occurred before taking office.

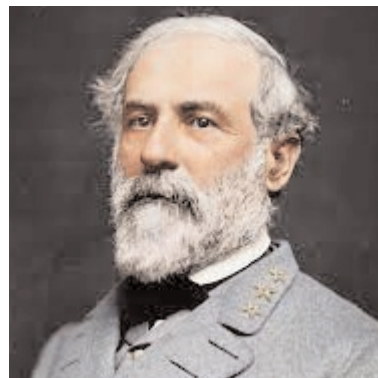
APRIL 2

April 2, 1513 - Spanish explorer Ponce De Leon sighted Florida and claimed it for the Spanish Crown after landing at the site of present day St.

Augustine, now the oldest city in the continental U.S.

April 2, 1792 - Congress established the first U.S. Mint at Philadelphia.

April 2, 1863 - A bread riot occurred in the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, as angry people demanded bread from a bakery wagon then wrecked nearby shops. The mob dispersed only after Confederate President Jefferson Davis made a personal plea and threatened to use force.



April 2, 1865 - General Robert E. Lee informed Confederate President Jefferson Davis that he must evacuate the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. Davis and his cabinet then fled by train.

April 2, 1982 - The beginning of the Falkland Islands War as troops from Argentina invaded and occupied the British colony located near the tip of South America. The British retaliated and defeated the Argentinians on June 15, 1982, after ten weeks of combat, with about 1,000 lives lost.

Birthday - Fairy tale author Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) was born in Odense, Denmark. He created 168 fairy tales for children including the classics *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Snow Queen* and *The Nightingale*.

Birthday - French writer Emile Zola (1840-1902) was born in Paris. His works included a series of 20 books known as the *Rougon-Macquart Novels* in which he defined men and women as products of heredity and environment, portraying them as victims of their own passions and circumstances of birth. In his later years, he became involved in resolving the Dreyfus affair, a political-military scandal in which Captain Alfred Dreyfus had been wrongly accused of selling military secrets to the Germans was sent to Devil's Island.

APRIL 3

April 3, 1860 - In the American West, the Pony Express service began as the first rider departed St. Joseph, Missouri. For \$5 an

ounce, letters were delivered 2,000 miles to California within ten days. The famed Pony Express riders each rode from 75 to 100 miles before handing the letters off to the next rider. A total of 190 way stations were located about 15 miles apart. The service lasted less than two years, ending upon the completion of the overland telegraph.

April 3, 1865 - The Confederate capital of Richmond surrendered to Union forces after the withdrawal of General Robert E. Lee's troops.

April 3, 1944 - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 8 to 1 that African Americans can not be barred from voting in the Texas Democratic primaries. The Court stated that discrimination against blacks violates the 15th Amendment and that political parties are not private associations.



April 3, 1948 - President Harry S. Truman signed the European Recovery Program, better known as the Marshall Plan, intended to stop the spread of Communism and restore the economies of European countries devastated by World War II. Over four years, the program distributed \$12 billion to the nations of Western Europe. The program was first proposed by Secretary of State George C. Marshall during a historic speech at Harvard University on June 5, 1947.

April 3, 1995 - Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman to preside over the Court, sitting in for Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist who was out of town.

Birthday - American writer Washington Irving (1783-1859) was born in New York City. His works include; *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and historical biographies such as *The Life of Washington*.

Birthday - Tammany Hall 'Boss' William M. Tweed (1823-1878) was born in New York City. From 1851 to 1871, his 'Tweed Ring' of political corruption looted millions from New York City, bringing the city to the verge of bankruptcy. Methods

included padding city bills by 85 percent and writing checks to non-existent persons and companies. His power was broken after a series of critical editorial cartoons by Thomas Nast were published in Harper's Weekly magazine. Tweed was arrested and convicted on charges of larceny and forgery. He died in prison.

APRIL 4



April 4, 1887 - The first woman mayor was elected in the U.S. as Susanna M. Salter became mayor of Argonia, Kansas.

April 4, 1949 - Twelve nations signed the treaty creating NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The nations united for common military defense against the threat of expansion by Soviet Russia into Western Europe.

April 4, 1968 - Civil Rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was shot and killed by a sniper in Memphis, Tennessee. As head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, he had championed non-violent resistance to end racial oppression and had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. He is best remembered for his *I Have a Dream* speech delivered at the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington. That march and King's other efforts helped the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In 1986, Congress established the third Monday in January as a national holiday in his honor.

Birthday - American social reformer Dorothea Dix (1802-1887) was born in Hampden, Maine. She founded a home for girls in Boston while only in her teens and later crusaded for humane conditions in jails and insane asylums. During the American Civil War, she was superintendent of women nurses.

Birthday - Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto (1884-1943) was born in Nagaoko, Honshu. He was the main strategist behind the failed Japanese attack on Midway Island in June of 1942, which turned the course of the war against

Japan. He was killed on April 18, 1943, after Americans intercepted radio reports of his whereabouts and shot down his plane.

APRIL 5

April 5, 1986 - A bomb exploded at a popular discotheque frequented by American military personnel in West Berlin, killing two U.S. soldiers and a Turkish woman. American intelligence analysts attributed the attack to Muammar Qaddafi of Libya. Nine days later, President Ronald Reagan ordered a retaliatory air strike against Libya.



Birthday - African American educator Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was born a slave in Franklin County, Virginia. Freed by the Civil War, he taught himself the alphabet and eventually graduated from an agricultural institute. In June of 1881, he was asked to become the principal of a new training school for blacks at Tuskegee, Alabama. The Tuskegee Institute began in single building with 30 students but through his efforts grew into a modern university.

APRIL 6

April 6, 1917 - Following a vote by Congress approving a declaration of war, the U.S. entered World War I in Europe.

April 6, 1994 - The beginning of genocide in Rwanda as a plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down. They had been meeting to discuss ways of ending ethnic rivalries between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes. After their deaths, Rwanda descended into chaos, resulting in genocidal conflict between the tribes. Over 500,000 persons were killed with two million fleeing the country.

Birthday - Renaissance artist Raphael (1483-1520) was born in Urbino, Italy. He created some of the world's greatest masterpieces including 300 pictures with a Madonna theme. He died on his 37th birthday in Rome.



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