



**AJAY BANGA IS UNIQUELY EQUIPPED TO LEAD THE WORLD BANK AT SUCH A CRITICAL MOMENT: US**



Ajay Banga is the only applicant for the position of president of the World Bank, the global financial institution said.

File photo / PTI

APRIL 27, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Indian-American business leader Ajay Banga is an exceptional candidate and he is uniquely equipped to lead the World Bank at such a critical moment, the US has said as the bank plans to formally announce his appointment as its president.

In February, President Joe Biden announced that the US would be nominating Banga to lead the World Bank because he is well equipped to lead the global institution at "this critical moment in history."

On March 31, The World Bank closed a month-long window for nominations for its next president, with no alternatives announced to 63-year-old Banga.

Banga is the only applicant for the position of president of the World Bank, the global financial institution said.

"He (Banga) is uniquely equipped to lead the World Bank at such a critical moment, and he's an exceptional candidate," Vedant Patel, State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson, told reporters at his daily news conference on Friday.

"His leadership skills and management experience, his experience in the financial sector, will help achieve the World's Bank objectives by eliminating extreme

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**'Trump is danger to democracy': US President Biden**

**BIDEN SAYS HE RAN IN 2020 BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A UNIQUE THREAT POSED BY TRUMP**

APRIL 27, 2023

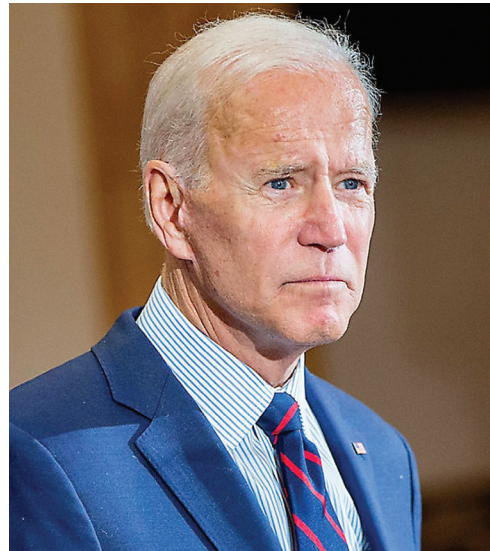
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden suggested on Wednesday, April 26 that he could defeat Donald Trump again in a 2024 rematch, and warned the former Republican president was a threat to the country.

One day after launching his re-election bid, Biden marked the occasion not on the campaign trail but in a Rose Garden news conference following a meeting with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol.

A reporter pressed the Democratic president on whether he was running for re-election because he believed he was the only one who could beat Trump.

"I may not be the only one, but I know him well and I know the danger he

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The president said there is more he needs to do to position the United States so it is "economically and politically secure for a long time."

File photo

**G20 outcome under India's Presidency will be unprecedented: Harsh Shringla**



Harsh Shringla autographs his biography "Not An Accidental Rise" for the former US ambassador to India Kenneth Juster

APRIL 27, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): The G20 outcome under India's Presidency will be unprecedented, veteran diplomat Harsh Vardhan Shringla has said as he underlined that the international community sees India as one country that is up to the challenge of providing solutions to current global problems.?

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**Akali patriarch Badal cremated with state honors, top leaders pay respects**

**BJP CHIEF NADDA, UNION MINISTER PURI, PAWAR VISIT FAMILY**



SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal bids farewell to his father, former Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal, at his funeral in Badal village, Muktsar district, on Thursday.

Photo credit / PTI

APRIL 27, 2023

BADAL, PUNJAB (TIP): Cutting across party lines, thousands bid tearful adieu to former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, who was cremated with full state honors at Badal village in Muktsar district today.

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## COMMENT

REST IN PEACE , DEAR  
DEPARTED BADAL SAHIBBY  
INDRAJIT SALUJA

The legendary politician Parkash Singh Badal has died at 95. In his death, Shiromani Akali Dal has lost its guiding Star; Punjab has lost a Statesman; the Sikh community has lost a powerful leader; and India has lost a sagacious politician.

It is a personal loss to me, too, as I had known him since the 70's and

have had the opportunity to discuss Punjab and national issues with him. I recall him as a man who always talked straight without beating about the bush. Clear in his thoughts, he was extremely communicative. It was always a pleasure speaking with him. It is sad he is gone at a time when India needed him to forcefully pilot his view on the need for communal

harmony, brotherhood and peace.

In the pages that follow, we have carried tribute by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prabhjot Singh, a senior journalist who had been close to the late patriarch of the Shiromani Akali Dal.

We pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.

## GUEST COMMENT

Second innings hopes: On Biden announcement  
and repeat U.S. presidential candidates

## BIDEN NEEDS TO DO MORE THAN PRESENT HIMSELF AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TRUMP

U.S. President Joe Biden, 80, has announced that he will be seeking re-election in the 2024 presidential polls, a goal which, if he succeeds, will ensure that the Democrat breaks his own 2020 record of being the oldest ever U.S. President. With Vice-President Kamala Harris, of joint Indian-African heritage, throwing her hat in the ring again as Mr. Biden's running mate, and with former President, Republican Donald Trump, 76, already in the fray as the frontrunner conservative candidate, it is likely that the contest may revert to a scenario similar to the one seen in 2020. While that would not be an unprecedented outcome in U.S. political history - it happened before with Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland in 1888 and 1892; William Bryan and William McKinley in 1896 and 1900; and with Adlai Stevenson and Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956 - this would only be the fourth such instance of repeat

presidential candidates in the post-Civil War period. Such an eventuality would also raise the question of why, within the Democratic and Republican Parties, there appears to be a paucity of charismatic and capable leaders who could offer a fresh take on the myriad of policy issues that beset the country and have bitterly polarized the electorate.

It is significant that Mr. Biden's campaign announcement video began with visuals of the January 6, 2021 Capitol attack, indicating that the incumbent sees his second bid for the Oval Office as a projection of the alternative to Mr. Trump's MAGA vision and would seek to emphasize the very threat to democracy that the idea of the "stolen election" of 2020 poses. In truth - and this may be a lesson to the Biden campaign that becomes apparent as the coming 18 months before the next election roll by - Mr. Biden may have to do far more than simply be an alternative. Not

only would he have to "finish the job" on matters such as levying higher tax on the wealthiest Americans, stabilizing the social security system, tackling inflationary threats, keeping up the momentum on job creation and providing humane yet practical immigration policy solutions, but he would also have to reckon with the fact that the worst of the pandemic effects have passed and the Russian invasion of Ukraine has moved beyond the one-year mark. In this new reality, for whichever among the 46th and 45th Presidents prevails in 2024, there will be a pressing need for blue-sky thinking on profound questions regarding public health and biosecurity; on NATO's role in Europe and the challenges of coordinating between European powers to eventually end the war in Ukraine; and the eternal question of how to keep America at the forefront of technological innovation and jobs.

(The Hindu)

Amritpal in the dock : Vital to expose agencies  
using him as a pawn

A five-week-long drama came to an end with the surrender and arrest of pro-Khalistan activist Amritpal Singh. He had been on the run ever since the Punjab Police finally launched a crackdown against him and his supporters. Days after he fled, the Punjab and Haryana High Court had rapped the Punjab Government for its failure to nab Amritpal despite having a 80,000-strong police force. Even as questions are still being asked about how he managed to evade the cops for so long, the spotlight is now on his interrogation, which will be aimed at building a watertight case under the stringent National Security Act.

Amritpal faces several criminal charges, including attempt to murder, abduction and extortion. Two months ago, his

loyalists had stormed Ajnala police station to secure his aide's release, even as Amritpal had threatened Home Minister Amit Shah with a fate similar to that of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Despite such brazen disregard for the law, the Punjab Police got going only after being prodded by the Centre.

From the outset, it was apparent that Amritpal had been foisted upon Punjab, which continues to have no takers for Khalistan. Having dressed up like Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, he seems to be pursuing the agenda of anti-national forces out to foment trouble in the border state all over again. The attacks on the Indian High Commission in London and the Indian Consulate in San Francisco in the wake of the police crackdown in

Punjab laid bare the nefarious role of West-based religious radicals. The challenge for Central agencies is to establish Amritpal's links with secessionist groups and Pakistan's ISI. There is no doubt that the people of Punjab have firm faith in the democratic system. This was amply demonstrated by the huge mandate given to the Aam Aadmi Party in last year's Assembly elections. The state witnessed so much bloodshed in the 1980s and 1990s that it no longer has any appetite for more violence. The onus is on the state and Central governments to ensure that the famed land of farmers and soldiers is not held to ransom by Amritpal-like pseudo-preachers with a penchant for religious fancy dress.

(Tribune, India)

# HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATION IS INDELIBLE



BY  
NARENDRA MODI

**DURING THE TURBULENT 1970S AND 1980S IN PUNJAB, BADAL SAHAB PUT 'PUNJAB FIRST' AND 'INDIA FIRST'. HE OPPOSED ANY PLAN THAT WOULD WEAKEN INDIA OR COMPROMISE THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE OF PUNJAB, EVEN IF IT MEANT LOSS OF POWER. HE WAS A MAN DEEPLY COMMITTED TO FULFILLING THE IDEALS OF THE GREAT GURUS. HE ALSO MADE NOTEWORTHY EFFORTS TO PRESERVE AND CELEBRATE SIKH HERITAGE. WHO CAN FORGET HIS ROLE IN ENSURING JUSTICE FOR THE RIOT VICTIMS OF 1984?**

**O**n the evening of April 25, when I received the news of Sardar Parkash Singh Badal ji's demise, I was filled with immense sadness. In his passing away, I have lost a father figure, someone who guided me for decades. In more ways than one, he shaped India's and Punjab's politics, and that can be described as unparalleled.

That Badal Sahab was a big leader is widely accepted. But, more importantly, he was a big-hearted human being. Being a big leader is easier but being a big-hearted person requires a lot more. People across Punjab say - there was something very different about Badal Sahab! ('Badal Sahab ki baat alag thi').

It can be confidently said that Sardar Parkash Singh Badal was among the tallest kisan netas of our times. Agriculture was his real passion. Whenever he spoke on any occasion, his speeches were filled with facts, the latest information and a lot of insight.

I got to closely interact with Badal Sahab in the 1990s when I was involved in party work in North India. Badal Sahab's reputation preceded him - he was a political stalwart who had been Punjab's youngest Chief Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister and someone who held sway over the hearts of crores of Punjabis across the world. I, on the other hand, was an ordinary karyakarta. Yet, true to his nature, he never let this create a gap between us. He was filled with warmth and kindness. These were traits that remained with him till his last breath. Everyone who interacted closely with Badal Sahab would recall his wit and sense of humor.

In the mid and late 1990s, the political climate in Punjab was very different. The state had seen much turmoil and elections were due in 1997. Our parties (SAD and BJP) went to the people together and Badal Sahab was our leader. His credibility was a key reason that the people blessed us with a resounding win. Not only that, our alliance successfully won the municipal elections in Chandigarh and also the Lok Sabha seat in the city. His persona was such that our alliance went on to serve the state for 15 years between 1997 and 2017!

There is an anecdote I can never



Towering figure: Parkash Singh Badal was among the tallest kisan netas of our times.

Photo credit / PTI

forget. After taking oath as CM, Badal Sahab told me that we would go to Amritsar together, where we would halt at night and the next day we would pray and have langar. I was in my room at a guest house but, when he got to know of this, he came there and began to pick up my luggage. I asked him why he was doing this, to which he told me that I would have to come with him to the room meant for the CM and stay there only. I kept telling him that there was no need to do this, but he insisted. Eventually, this is exactly what happened and Badal Sahab stayed in another room. I will always cherish this gesture of his towards a very ordinary karyakarta like me.

Badal Sahab had a very special interest in gaushalas and kept cows of various breeds. During one of our meetings, he told me that he had a desire to breed cows from Gir. I arranged five cows for him and after that, when we would meet, he would talk to me about the cows and also joke that those cows are Gujaratis in every way - they never get angry, agitated or attack anyone, not even when children are playing around. He would also remark that no

wonder the Gujaratis are so gentle... after all they drink the milk of the cows of Gir.

**A**fter 2001, I got to interact with Badal Sahab in a different capacity - we were now Chief Ministers of our respective states.

I was blessed to receive Badal Sahab's guidance on numerous issues, especially those related to agriculture, including water conservation, animal husbandry and dairy farming. He was also someone who believed in tapping the potential of the diaspora, considering that there are so many hardworking Punjabis settled overseas.

Once he told me that he wanted to understand what Alang Shipyard was about. Then he came there and spent the entire day at Alang Shipyard and understood how recycling took place. Punjab is not a coastal state; so, in a way, there was no direct relevance of a shipyard for him but such was his desire to learn new things that he spent the day there and understood different aspects of the sector.

I will always cherish his words of

appreciation for the Gujarat Government's repair and restoration efforts of the holy Lakhpat Gurdwara in Kutch, which was damaged during the 2001 earthquake.

After the NDA government came to power at the Centre in 2014, he once again provided valuable insights based on his rich governmental experience. He strongly supported several reforms, including the historic GST.

I have highlighted just a few aspects of our interaction. At a larger level, his contribution to our nation is indelible. He was among the bravest soldiers for the restoration of democracy during the dark days of the Emergency. He himself suffered the highhandedness of the imperious Congress culture when his governments were dismissed. And, these experiences only made his belief in democracy stronger.

During the turbulent period of the 1970s and 1980s in Punjab, Badal Sahab put 'Punjab First' and 'India First'. He steadfastly opposed any plan that would weaken India or compromise the interests of the people of Punjab, even if it meant loss of power.

**H**e was a man deeply committed to fulfilling the ideals of the great Gurus. He also made noteworthy efforts to preserve and celebrate Sikh heritage. Who can forget his role in ensuring justice for the riot victims of 1984?

Badal Sahab was a person who brought people together. He could work with leaders of all ideologies. He never associated any relationship with political gains or losses. This was particularly useful in furthering a spirit of national unity.

The void left by Badal Sahab's demise will be tough to fill. Here was a statesman whose life witnessed many challenges but he overcame them and rose like a phoenix. He will be missed but he will live on in our hearts and he will also live on through the outstanding work he has done over the decades.

(The author is the Prime Minister of India)

# Indian American Neerja Patel is among 100 Women to Know across America

GLOBAL MEDIA FEMALE MEDIA COMPANY RECOGNIZES 100 WOMEN TO KNOW ACROSS AMERICA

**PHOENIX, AZ (TIP):** Sarah Benken, CEO and Publisher of the KNOW Book, has announced the honorees and honorable mentions of the 2023 100 Women to KNOW in America, an annual award recognizing the top 100 female leaders across North America. Honorees were recognized at the Annual KNOW Women Summit held April 23-25th at The FOUND:RE Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona.

The 100 Women to KNOW Across America Award, presented by JPMorgan Chase is a recognition that showcases the most influential, achieved, and honorable women in our society. Following a nomination and interview process, these women entrepreneurs, executives, creatives, and philanthropists have not only grown their dreams, but have created boundless opportunities for the next generation of female leaders. These women exemplify what it means to be high-achieving and ambitious on the next level and continue



to pour into their communities as they do so.

The 2023 Annual KNOW Women Summit and 100 Women to KNOW in America Award Gala brought together dynamic women leaders and business owners from North America for two full days of workshops, panels, networking opportunities, and awards presentations. The celebration shone the spotlight on honorees, with award presentations at the 100 Women to KNOW in America Award Dinner and Gala, presented by JPMorgan Chase.

**Neerja Patel, one of the winners who is from New York tweeted:**



Neerja Patel, Neerja Public Relations

"Humbled and honored to be recognized as one of the 100 Women To Know In America. Thank you @jpmorgan @chase @theknowwomen for this incredible honor!"

"The 100 Women to KNOW Across America Award, presented by JPMorgan Chase is a recognition that showcases

influential, achieved, and honorable women that have created boundless opportunities for the next generation of female leaders. Women that exemplify what it means to be high-achieving and ambitious on the next level and continue to pour into their communities as they do so"

"Definitely feels a bit surreal to be recognized at this level, but excited and grateful to be sharing this with fellow South Asian honoree, my dear friend and podcast host, @kanikachaddagupta ???"

## WINNERS

Candace Nelson - Sprinkles Cupcakes, Los Angeles, California

Merrilee Kick - BuzzBallz, Carrollton, Texas

Alison Stine, Stine Wealth Management, Scottsdale, Arizona

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

## Indian-origin Lord Indarjit Singh to represent Sikh community on King Charles III coronation



Lord Indarjit Singh

APRIL 24, 2023

**LONDON (TIP):** Lord Indarjit Singh is set to represent the Sikh community during the coronation of King Charles scheduled to be held in the Westminster Abbey near the House of Commons in London on May 6.

Lord Patel will represent the Hindu community, Lord Kamall will represent the Muslim community and Jews will be represented by Baronees Merron.

The House of Lords, also known as the House of Peers, is the upper house of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

Lord Indarjit Singh represented the Sikh community at Queen Elizabeth II's funeral, former Member of Parliament Tarlochan Singh said in the statement. He had also participated in the wedding of the son of the then-Prince of Wales Charles.

King Charles III is also serving as the Head of the Church of England and all the ceremonies are conducted by the archbishop. However, it is reported that King Charles has expressed his desire to be a defender of all faiths while serving as head of the Christian faith in the UK.

It is for the first time that peers from

different faiths - Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish will be part of the procession during the coronation ceremony. The development will be a major break from the centuries-old tradition in the UK.

The Sikh community hailed the decision of King Charles to give equal status to all religions, Tarlochan Singh said in the statement. The UK Government has named 90-year-old Lord Indarjit Singh to represent the Sikh community.

Former MP Tarlochan Singh said that King Charles who was then-Prince of Wales visited Golden Temple in Amritsar during his first visit to India. He also visited Bangla Sahib during his second visit to India.

Tarlochan Singh said, "I may remind all my friends that as Prince of Wales the present King Charles went to Golden Temple Amritsar during his first visit to India and had darshan of Bangla Sahib New Delhi during his second visit. In 1997 Queen Elizabeth came to Golden Temple Amritsar." Earlier this month, the UK's royal family revealed new details, including a new Twitter emoji ahead of the coronation of King Charles III, which is scheduled to take place next month.

Taking to the official Twitter handle, the Royal Family said, "A special emoji for the Coronation has gone live today! The emoji, based on St Edward's Crown, will appear when any of the following hashtags are used: #Coronation #CoronationConcert #TheBigHelpout #CoronationWeekend #CoronationBigLunch".

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

## Indian American Arizona House Democrat member Amish Shah to run for US Congress

APRIL 25, 2023

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** Amish Shah, a Democratic member of the Arizona House of Representatives has announced that he will be running for the US Congress from the state 1st Congressional District, which is presently held by Republican David Schweikert.

An emergency physician for over 15 years, Shah has been a member of Arizona House representing districts in the Phoenix area since 2019.

"I am running for Congress because I have seen the difference a single person can make within government to improve people's lives. Serving in Congress is an opportunity to make an even greater positive impact on issues affecting Arizona," said Shah.

"Giving back is a core value for me. Because of the sacrifices of my parents, who both came to this country from India to pursue a better life, I was able to become a doctor, work on field with the NFL, and be the first Indian American to serve in the Arizona legislature.

"We need to try to understand each other and navigate our differences if we hope to tackle vital issues facing our country such as public education, quality affordable health care, climate change, and voting rights," said Shah. "It would be an honor to address these issues on behalf of Arizonans in the US Congress."

Born and raised in Chicago, Shah's parents were engineering students who immigrated from India in the 1960s. He earned a BA in Economics from Northwestern University in Evanston and graduated from its Medical School as part of the Honors Program in Medical



Amish Shah

Education.

Outside of his medical practice, he founded the first Arizona Vegetarian Food Festival as a philanthropic endeavor to promote healthy eating and eliminate preventable disease.

He was named 2022 Women's Health Care Champion Legislator of the Year by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology for his work protecting reproductive rights.

Last year, Shah also received the Nursing Hero Award from the Arizona Nurses Association, and the President's Award for Mental Health Advocacy from the Arizona Psychiatric Society.

He also contributes to Sounds Academy and the Humane Society of the United States, organizations that focus on children's exposure to the arts and the promotion of a kind society, as well as several other charities. Shah knows how important it is to meet people where they are. He has made a name for himself with his unique brand of door-to-door campaigning, having visited over 15,000 households, according to his campaign announcement.

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

# 8 Indian Americans win Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans

APRIL 26, 2023

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Eight Indian Americans figure among 30 winners of the 2023 Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans, a merit-based graduate school program for immigrants and children of immigrants.

Chosen for their achievements and their potential to make meaningful contributions to the United States across fields of study, they each will receive up to \$90,000 in funding to support their graduate studies at institutions such as Harvard University, MIT, Stanford University, and Yale University.

The eight Indian American winners are: Dhruv Gaur, Jaspreet Kaur, Omair M. Khan, Nathan Mallipeddi, Arjun Menta, Vaibhav Mohanty, Shyamala Ramakrishna and Shomik Verma.

Dhruv Gaur, PhD in economics at MIT. Child of immigrants from India; Brown graduate; won Jeopardy! College Championship tournament; studying the effects of severe marginalization on health.

Jaspreet Kaur, MFA in writing for screen & television at the University of Southern California.

DACA recipient from India; Harvard graduate; Brown Girl Joy Productions co-founder; creating films to uplift intersectional narratives of underrepresented communities.

Omair M. Khan, MD/PhD in stem cell biology & regenerative medicine at Stanford University.

Child of immigrants from India; authored his first scientific publications in high school; Yale graduate; working in policy and venture capital while he pursues a career as a physician-scientist.



Dhruv Gaur, Jaspreet Kaur, Omair M. Khan, Nathan Mallipeddi, Arjun Menta, Vaibhav Mohanty, Shyamala Ramakrishna and Shomik Verma are among 30 winners of the 2023 Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans

Nathan Mallipeddi, MD/MBA at Harvard University and Stanford University.

Child of immigrants from India; UCLA graduate; founded Myspeech to connect people who stutter with critical speech therapy resources; biotechnology investor.

Arjun Menta, MD at Johns Hopkins University.

Child of immigrants from India; UT Austin graduate; holds multiple patents; accomplished researcher leading multiple scientific and translational efforts in neurosurgery.

Vaibhav Mohanty, MD/PhD in chemistry at Harvard University and MIT.

Child of immigrants from India;

Harvard graduate; accomplished composer; theoretical physicist aspiring to develop novel therapeutic approaches to combat evolving diseases.

Shyamala Ramakrishna, JD at Yale University.

Child of Tamil immigrants from India; Yale graduate; focused on workers' rights and future of work policy; lead vocalist in her band, FORAGER.

Shomik Verma, PhD in mechanical engineering at MIT

Child of immigrants from India; Duke graduate; working on improving reliability of renewable energy and on a power plant based on thermophotovoltaic power conversion.

Since the Fellowship's founding 25 years ago, the program has provided

more than \$80 million in funding, and recipients have studied a range of fields from medicine and the arts to law and business, according to a press release.

The alumni network includes US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, who is the first surgeon general of Indian descent and helped lead the national response to Ebola, Zika, and the coronavirus.

"My and Paul's experiences as immigrants informed our desire to give back by investing in the accomplishments of New Americans," said Co-Founder Daisy Soros. "It has been a joy to see how our Fellows leverage their education over the years to make a deep impact across communities."

"Immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees have and continue to make our nation stronger," said Fellowship Director Craig Harwood. "The diverse perspectives and approaches that each Fellow this year, and the many who have come before them, brings to their fields and our society is remarkable and inspiring."

The application for the 2024-25 academic year is now open and is due in October of 2023. Selection criteria focuses on accomplishments that show creativity, originality, and initiative and is open to college seniors, students applying to graduate school, and those who are in the early stages of graduate school.

All applicants must be planning to be enrolled full-time in an accredited graduate program in the US in the 2024-25 academic year. In addition, applicants must be 30 or younger as of the application deadline.

## Indian American Immigration Council Neeli Bendapudi wins Immigrant Achievement Award



The American Immigration Council honored Pennsylvania State University's Indian American President Neeli Bendapudi with its Immigrant Achievement Award at a reception on April 28

APRIL 25, 2023

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** The American Immigration Council honored Pennsylvania State University's Indian American President Neeli Bendapudi

with its Immigrant Achievement Award at a reception on April 28 in Washington, DC.

The award recognizes individuals or organizations that exhibit a commitment and dedication to America's heritage as a nation of immigrants and to the struggle for fair and humane immigration policies in the United States.

"For nearly 30 years, Penn State President Dr. Neeli Bendapudi's career in higher education has been committed to student success, fostering inclusive excellence, and creating opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to thrive," said Jeremy Robbins, executive director of the American Immigration Council.

"She is a values-driven leader who believes strongly in the transformative power of higher education and its impact on individuals and communities."

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

## Indian American Haresh Gurnani to lead Stony Brook College of Business

APRIL 26, 2023

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Haresh Gurnani, an Indian Institute of Technology graduate has been named as the new dean of the College of Business at Stony Brook University in New York. He will assume his new role in July 2023.

Gurnani will join Stony Brook from Wake Forest University, where he holds multiple high-level leadership positions. He currently serves as area chair of Business Analytics, Operations Management, Marketing and Economics areas in the School of Business.

He is Thomas H. Davis Chair in the school, program director of the Mathematical Business Program (joint program between the School of Business and Wake Forest College) and serves on the university's committee on Network for Inclusive Leadership and Engagement.



Haresh Gurnani

"Stony Brook's College of Business is a destination of choice for high-achieving students and leading employers competing to recruit them," said Stony Brook University President Maurie McInnis in a media release.

"Haresh's vision for elevating educational excellence will leverage the interdisciplinary opportunities that a flagship institution uniquely offers to prepare students to succeed in a dynamic global economy."

"Haresh is ideally suited to serve as our next leader, bringing a key set of experiences and skills essential for advancing the upward trajectory of the College, including management of enrollment growth, building industry partnerships, and fundraising," said Carl Lejuez, provost and executive vice president.

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

# GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES \$6 MILLION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

**FUNDING AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AREAS  
LARGEST-EVER COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT OPPORTUNITY SINCE PROGRAM'S CREATION**



Governor Kathy Hochul announced on April 26 that \$6 million in grants is now available to help communities facing environmental justice challenges and address environmental concerns

Photo / Courtesy  
Governor's Press Office

APRIL 26, 2023

**ALBANY, NY (TIP):** Governor Kathy Hochul announced on April 26 that \$6 million in grants is now available to help communities facing environmental justice challenges and address environmental concerns. The latest round of Environmental Justice Community Impact Grants is the largest amount offered to date and is supported by the State's Environmental Protection Fund as part of New York's ongoing efforts to assist communities disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution.

"New York State is committed to

providing communities with the tools and resources necessary to help address the historic and ongoing challenges caused by environmental pollution," Governor Hochul said. "Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant funding, the largest amount the program has made available to date, will enhance the ability of community organizations across the state to address local concerns and develop local solutions to improve quality of life and ensure a cleaner, healthier future."

Since 2006, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has awarded more than \$12 million in Community Impact Grants to community-based organizations for projects engaging their communities around environmental justice issues and deploying community-driven solutions. Community-based organizations can apply to receive up to \$100,000 in funding for projects that address environmental and public health concerns of residents in impacted neighborhoods.

Previous projects awarded by DEC include public participatory science, community-driven water and air quality monitoring, urban farming, habitat restoration, tree plantings, curriculum development, and green infrastructure installation. A list of all previously funded projects and project descriptions is available on Open Data NY.

Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos

said, "Environmental Justice Community Impact Grants have helped bring about significant progress by helping New Yorkers live healthier, more sustainable lives. This funding is one of many ways DEC is working collaboratively with communities and organizations to prioritize environmental justice, advance sustainable solutions, and safeguard local resources."

State Senator Pete Harckham said, "It is important to make these essential grants available to assist environmental justice communities that are unfairly burdened by industrial pollution. We must continue to work hard to help ease this burden by using all available resources."

Assemblymember Deborah Glick said, "These Environmental Justice Community Impact Grants are critical for marginalized communities to address years of overexposure to hazardous waste, pollution, and other toxic environmental impacts. An increase in these important grants is the right direction for New York State, I appreciate Governor Hochul and Commissioner Seggos' continued support for environmental justice funds and projects."

Eligible community-based organizations are located in Potential Environmental Justice Areas, are groups serving the residents of an area equal to or smaller than a county outside of New York City or an area equal to or smaller than one of New York City's five boroughs, and organizations with total

annual revenue less than \$3 million. Further eligibility information is available online at the Grant Opportunity Portal. Projects must address a community's exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks and include a new research component that will be used to expand the knowledge of the affected community.

Applicants are required to register and prequalify in the Grants Gateway before applying. Once registered and prequalified, organizations can apply for the grant in the Grants Gateway. Instructions and application are available online at the Grants Gateway website. The deadline to submit applications is 3 p.m. EST on July 26, 2023. For a complete list of guidelines and more information, contact DEC's Office of Environmental Justice at 518-402-8556, justice@dec.ny.gov, or online at DEC's Environmental Justice webpage.

Funding for this grant program was provided by the State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), a critical resource for environmental programs such as land acquisition, farmland protection, invasive species prevention and eradication, recreation access, water quality improvement, and environmental justice projects. Among the many environmental victories in the enacted 2022-23 State Budget, Governor Kathy Hochul and legislative leaders increased the EPF to \$400 million, the highest-ever level of funding in the program's history.

## STATE HOLDS THE LINE ON NYC CHARTER SCHOOLS: SENATOR LIU

APRIL 27, 2023

**NEW YORK (TIP):** State Senator John Liu stated the following about the tentative agreement to keep the New York City charter cap in place while allowing for the reassignment of 14 previously closed charter schools.

"This tentative agreement holds the line on New York City's charter cap, which exists to strike a balance between giving parents choice and the responsibility to keep public schools open and accessible to all.

"As part of this agreement, 14 'zombie charters' that have previously closed, and are within the existing charter cap, will be reassigned to new operators within the city. It is my sincere hope that these reassignments will go to the many historically underrepresented and



New York State Senator  
John Liu  
File photo

minority-led charter operators, many of which have been waiting years for their turn at the wheel.

"Of particular importance is a commitment by the governor to pay for the space for these 14 charter reassignments, which will alleviate the financial burden on the NYC Education system and remove the incentive for the city to co-locate charters in public schools.

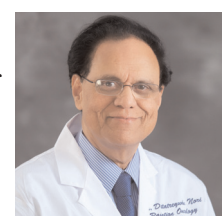
"Finally, this agreement comes with the understanding that additional measures on the accountability, transparency and operations of charter schools are necessary and impending. My colleagues and I have been working on this and will continue to prioritize this effort following the passage of the budget."

## Top Indian American doctor appointed senior advisor to India unit of Sloan Kettering Center

APRIL 27, 2023

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Observing that the opening of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center from New York in India - the first of its kind outside the United States -- "is a big deal," Dr Nori said getting treatment of and consultations on cancer from the world's best cancer institute would not only save a large number of lives but will also help increase awareness in the fight against the deadly disease.

A 2017 Padma Shri awardee for his contribution to the field of medicine, Dr Nori said he wants to bring the best practices of cancer treatment from the United States to India. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center opened its first ever overseas center in Chennai last



Top Indian American  
oncologist Dr Dattatreya  
Nori has been appointed  
senior advisor to the  
Chennai-center of the  
prestigious Memorial Sloan  
Kettering Cancer Center  
from New York.

August, and in March this year Dr Nori was appointed as its senior advisor.

The Indian American doctor, who has just returned from India visiting several states including Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Assam, said in cancer, the first treatment has to be the best treatment.

"First treatment has to be the best treatment. There is no room for patching up. You know, something went wrong, I want to do something else. It won't help. This is my desire, which finally happened. Memorial (Sloan Kettering Cancer Center) opened in 2022. In India, we see about 1.3-1.4 million new cases every year.

(Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

# G20 outcome under India's Presidency will be unprecedented: Harsh Shringla

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

The G20 is the "most significant" international event India has hosted since its independence, Shringla, the Chief Coordinator of India's G20 Presidency and former Foreign Secretary, said here.

He addressed prominent members of the Indian-American and diaspora community on Tuesday, April 25, at the launch event of his biography 'Not An Accidental Rise'.

Former US ambassador to India Kenneth Juster and Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal were among the special guests at the event hosted by Jaipur Foot USA, a subsidiary of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS).

India assumed the year-long presidency of the G20 on December 1 last year and is hosting over 200 meetings and related events in cities across the country that will culminate in a global Leaders' Summit in New Delhi in September.

The summit will be attended by over 40 Heads of State, Heads of Government and international organizations.

A G20 Leaders' Declaration will be adopted at the conclusion of the New Delhi Summit, stating "Leaders'



The book launch: guests display the book. Seen from L to R : Prem Bhandari, Rajiv Bhambri, Ravi Batra, Consul General Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Kenneth Juster, and other guests.



Guests line up for Shringla to autograph the book "Not An Accidental Rise"

commitment towards the priorities discussed and agreed upon during the respective ministerial and working group meetings." "I have no doubt that the Summit that India will host and the outcome that we will deliver at the time of the G20 will be unprecedented," Shringla said. He said the world is currently facing difficult times where the only certainty is uncertainty.

"Many of our partners in the international community feel that if there is one country that is up to the challenge of providing solutions to global situations that have emerged today, it is India," he said.

CONTD ON PAGE 40



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# Karnataka poll narrative : It is back to the familiar game of caste identity politics



BY SUGATA  
SRINIVASARAJU



**SINCE THE BJP CAME TO POWER IN JULY 2019 (AFTER THE FRAGILE JANATA DAL SECULAR-CONGRESS COALITION SUNK), THE TOPMOST QUESTION IS, HOW MUCH OF HINDUTVA WILL ACTUALLY SHAPE THE RESULTS OF THIS POLL? TRUTH BE SAID, IN THE CASE OF KARNATAKA, HINDUTVA HAS MADE MORE NOISE THAN ACTUALLY POLARIZE VOTERS. THE NOISE ALWAYS EMANATES FROM THE COASTAL DISTRICTS OF THE STATE. HOWEVER, THE GENIE AND GENIUS FROM THAT LABORATORY HAVE NOT SPREAD SO MUCH TO THE PLAINS OR THE MOUNTAINS IN THE STATE. AT BEST, THEY HAVE OFFERED AN AIR COVER IN THESE REGIONS BUT HAVE NOT MINGLED TOO MUCH IN THE SOIL. THIS HAS BEEN TRUE WITH THE PREVIOUS ELECTIONS AND IS LIKELY TO BE THE CASE THIS TIME, TOO.**



The BJP has left it to Yediyurappa to manage caste complications

Photo credit / PTI

What will the numbers be? That is the question thrown at you in an election season, and that is precisely what is being asked about the Karnataka Assembly polls slated to take place on May 10. The numbers will be clear on May 13. Anything said before that can either be a reasoned conjecture, an intelligent guess or an astrological prediction. But before the numbers come, there are narratives that will somewhat decide the numbers. Therefore, it may serve us well to look at the narratives that are shaping the Karnataka elections.

Hindutva has made more noise than actually polarize voters. This has been true with the previous elections and is likely to be the case this election, too.

Since the BJP came to power in July 2019 (after the fragile Janata Dal Secular-Congress coalition sunk), the topmost question is, how much of Hindutva will actually shape the results of this poll? Truth be said, in the case of Karnataka, Hindutva has made more noise than actually polarize voters. The noise always emanates from the coastal districts of the state. However, the genie and genius from that laboratory have not spread so much to the plains or the mountains in the state. At best, they have offered an air cover in these regions but have not mingled too much in the soil. This has been true with the previous elections and is likely to be the case this time, too.

A big reason for this seeming equilibrium is BS Yediyurappa, who has been largely responsible for the BJP's success in the state. He has been more a Mandal politician than a Hindutva champion. This is probably because he picked up his political game in the midst of socialists and Lohiaites in Shimoga and Mysore districts. He came of age, electorally speaking, when the undivided Janata

Dal was the real alternative to the smug Congress.

Even a fortnight ago, in an interview to a Delhi newspaper, Yediyurappa said: 'Hijab, halal issues are not necessary. I will not support such things. Hindus and Muslims should live like brothers and sisters. From the beginning, I have taken this stand.' Yediyurappa has been instinctually attuned to caste identity issues. He has skillfully and cunningly arranged the mix-and-match of castes to generate votes for the BJP over the decades.

But the BJP got rid of him in the middle of 2021. His age, other vulnerabilities and his family's alleged corruption aside, the BJP wanted to change the narrative for the state. The caste game was getting too balkanized, and it, after all, did not yield a clear majority to the party in both 2008 and 2018. The majority to form a government, both times, was arranged later through defections that assumed a wry botanical imagery - Operation Lotus. Post-Yediyurappa, the BJP was in search of a more universal (read Hindu) electorate in the state instead of the one aggressively fenced by caste.

Basavaraj Bommai became Yediyurappa's replacement. The BJP's game plan, it appeared, was to get someone from a dominant Lingayat community (which has remained loyal to the BJP ever since Ramakrishna Hegde and JH Patel moved them to the ideological Right in 1999) to introduce aggressive Hindutva. That is when issues related to halal, hijab, Tipu Sultan's barbarity, love jihad, Hanuman janmabhoomi, carbonization of history textbooks, etc., started making headlines every day in the state. The BJP wanted the coastal waves to inundate the rest of the land. But nine months before the polls, the BJP seemed to realize that none of this was getting enough

traction. The big shifts were not happening. The status quo of vote shares that Karnataka had seen since the 1980s was not getting upset or upturned. On the other hand, Hindutva was impacting the revenue pocket of the state - the Bengaluru capital region, which contributes over 60 per cent of the state's revenue. Development branding, something the BJP has always tried to juxtapose with its communal agenda, was getting dented. It tactfully withdrew and went back to the familiar game of caste identity politics.

That is when Yediyurappa was brought back to the center stage, not to lead the campaign from the front but as a patriarchal figure to manage caste complications. The Bommai government even urgently rejigged the caste quotas to cultivate a certain numerically dominant sub-sect among Lingayats, Dalits and the backward classes. The only communal signal it sent out there was to strip the Muslims of their 4 per cent backward class quota that HD Deve Gowda as chief minister had given them in 1995. This return to caste was a default safety measure for the BJP.

When it comes to the Congress, its narrative is rather uncomplicated. It believes that the palpable anti-incumbency against the BJP will automatically put it in the driver's seat. It has been advertising the BJP's scams. It is also trying to snatch unhappy elements among Lingayats (Jagadish Shettar and Laxman Savadi) from the BJP and present a narrative that the Lingayats are moving out of the BJP. It has no clear outreach for minorities (read Muslims) or the more oppressed Dalits (Madigas who have voted for BJP) or the tribes (especially Valmikis). Its backward class messaging is largely confined to Kurubas and Idigas - two of the 100-odd communities on the list.

When it comes to Janata Dal Secular and the Vokkaligas who dominate southern Karnataka, HD Deve Gowda, the patriarch of the Cauvery basin, is guarding his terrain by campaigning at the age of 89. He may retain his 20 per cent vote share. His party has gone to the people with a well-structured development programme. He also sorted out family complications in time. His son HD Kumaraswamy has gone round the state more than any other leader this season. If saffron voters want to teach a lesson to the BJP, but their conscience wouldn't permit them to go with the Congress, the surprise beneficiary may be Kumaraswamy.

( Sugata Srinivasaraju is a senior journalist and author)



# A tribute to PS Badal

## HE PIONEERED COALITION POLITICS IN INDIA



The veteran politician and the patriarch of Shiromani Akali Dal died at 95 on April 25.

If politics was his passion, contesting elections was his pastime. From panchayat to gurdwara elections, state legislature to parliament, he figured prominently in almost every election that took place in Punjab at least since the reorganization of the State in 1966.

His slogan "raaj nahin sewa" met with the same overwhelming popularity as were his "atta-daal" and "free water for farmers" schemes.

He was a master appeaser. He knew people's pulse. Staying in power was his biggest ambition that he successfully achieved by serving this border State as Chief Minister for five times, besides leader of Opposition thrice and Member of Parliament and Union Agriculture Minister in Morarji Desai's government.

His demise at the age of 95 will make a huge difference not just to Punjab or Akali politics but also to national polity and coalition politics. He scripted the success of coalition politics in the country, first with the Jana Sangh, then during JP's movement Janata Party and later with the Bharatiya Janata Party. Though subjects like center-state relations were dear to his heart, he died seeing Centre becoming more powerful than what it was at the early stages of his political career. The decision to walk out of the SAD-BJP coalition was not by choice but by compulsion. And the defeat in the 2022 assembly elections to an unknown political entity of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) marked an end to a glorious political career that shaped the destiny of present Punjab.

He was no different than most of other Akali stalwarts or "Taksali" leaders. He, too, started his political career as a Congressman. He, however, quickly moved to the Shiromani Akali Dal fairly early, but always remained a "moderate" without allowing himself to be swayed by the demand for a separate Sikh State or Khalistan.

Though the Shiromani Akali Dal came out with the Anandpur Sahib resolution in 1973 for more rights to States, he was one leader who refused to give in to separatists. If the Shiromani Akali Dal, the oldest regional party in the country, witnessed divisions and partitions as the State of its influence, Punjab, did, he

always stood for cordial center-state relations.

Various initiatives of the Centre, including Indira Gandhi award, Shah Commission report and even the Rajeev-Longowal accord saw the moderates confronted both in Punjab and SGPC politics, he remained steadfast and was the last to get into politics of confrontations. It is why lots of criticism was heaped on him for not getting any of the long-standing demands of the State conceded by the center.

He always believed that the Akali Dal was the political face of one of the most affluent, patriotic and hardworking minority communities that made more than 80 percent of total sacrifices in the freedom struggle and was not only left without a capital but also lost some of its prestigious projects it built after independence.

As a staunch supporter of peaceful negotiations for resolving the long-standing demands, he was successful in carrying not only the Sikh community but also the Hindu community in the State as well. With the center dilly dallying on conceding any of the demands, he had the difficult job of representing the interests of a minority community that had at times the growing influence of hardcore elements demanding separate Sikh state without being in opposition to the majority community, or seeking to mobilize its own support in hostility to the majority community. This was a herculean task that not many Akali Dal leaders, including only other Akali Chief Minister in last more than four decades, Surjit Singh Barnala, tried to handle with tact while performing this balancing act.

The demand for a separate Sikh state, Khalistan, even after more than 75 years of independence, has refused to die down. Governments of the time may have tried to dismiss it as an extremist slogan but none has ever tried to resolve it amicably. Sikh leaders, especially those representing the Shiromani Akali Dal, have never lent any support to the demand but also did nothing to get the other long-standing demands of the State, including transfer of Chandigarh and water works to Punjab.

Parkash Singh Badal always played safe and subscribed to the philosophy of peaceful coexistence maintaining universal brotherhood, tranquility and peace after more than two decades of bloodshed that ravaged the State. Intriguingly, his name remained associated with some of the major controversies, including the start of Sikh-Nirankari clashes on Baisakhi day that ultimately pushed the State into militancy as the demand for the acceptance of Sri Anandpur Sahib resolution grew louder and clearer.

He always believed that peace and progress would put behind the demand for Khalistan. He needed the center's support that came at times but

conditionally.

Punjab is the only state in the country that has witnessed two partitions in the last 75 years.

First of these came with the Independence, and second followed Sikhs' continuous demand for a separate Punjabi speaking or lingual State.

The Akalis, who in coalition with Congress were generally ruling the State between the first and the second partition in 1966, had their political aspirations upped and parted ways with Congress before an interim government was stalled in the State. As a sequel to that clarion call, many Sikh leaders came out of the Congress government and Parkash Singh Badal was one of them.

After non-Congress governments took over from where Congress left before the 1966 reorganization, Akali's started gaining political ground. After initial reluctance, the Centre too was forced to reorganize some states on a linguistic basis. The Centre, however, played a game by drawing a long list of concurrent subjects, in which the Centre and the states both have the right to legislate, and the automatic right of the Centre to prevail over a state in any concurrent legislation.

Some of the demands Punjab subsequently raised were at the core of the 1973 Anandpur Sahib resolution. There was a lot of hue and cry after the resolution hit the public domain. It had several additional points that sought to placate more extreme elements which wanted to combine regional autonomy with religious exclusivity. In 1978, fresh resolutions that proclaimed themselves to be based on the Anandpur Sahib resolution were passed, but they eschewed ambiguous language that could lend itself to separatist interpretations. The Akalis became champions of states' rights, and it was during this time that the baton passed into the hands of Badal.

Events elsewhere in the country set in motion a debate over center-state relations. A few non-Congress governments supported the federal structure before various Opposition-led states came together to demand restructuring of Centre-state relations. This led to the appointment of the Sarkaria Commission. The recommendations were just shelved in the cold store. The only positive, though theoretical, was the creation of the Inter-State Council. Badal had been a votary of implementation of the Sarkaria Commission recommendations, especially with regard to the consultative appointment of a state's Governor. But then his efforts bore no success and he continued to enjoy power.

Badal's alliance, first with the Jan Sangh, and later with its successor party, the BJP, stood at odds with his championing of states' rights. Still, until last year, continued to stand by his alliance partners.



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

Badal as a man had a multi-faceted personality. Reading newspapers was his very priority every morning. Clips of news reports were regularly filed and maintained at his instance.

I used to interact with him regularly. He was not averse to criticism but at times insisted on getting his version played prominently. Sukhbir Singh Badal, after a brief stint in central politics wanted to make a flashy arrival in State politics. Those days, lots of stories were planted and played prominently about his imminent elevation as Chief Minister. He started calling meetings of bureaucrats and even Ministers and legislators. The old man stood cool and calm and made certain decisions that made it obvious who was the boss. Besides, it also cleared all speculations of his making room for his son. I did a special story saying that Badal remains firmly saddled. To my pleasant surprise I got a couple of calls early in the morning from CM's house. Since I used to go for my morning game, and there were still no cell phones, I got a message that he wants to talk to me.

I called and he quickly came on line to acknowledge my story saying that factual position has been highlighted.

Otherwise, there were only a couple of other occasions when I got calls from him. One such occasion was when I was doing my story on how politicians were holding the public transport system to ransom. He called to say that he would love his version to go as prominently as parts of my serialized stories were going. Afterwards, the government went with full page ads in support of its transport policy rather than seeking a rejoinder to my series. Our relationship, as always, remained truly professional and criticism, if any, was taken sportingly.

One of his programs, Sangat Darshan, though popular with the masses, provided a lever to opposition parties to criticize him for diverting public funds to serve the political constituencies of his party members. Since, some parties, including Congress, also held him responsible for accepting money for the controversial SYL canal, he tried to silence his critics by notifying the acquired land and returning it to original owners. It, however, did not end the ongoing dispute between Punjab and Haryana.

Staunch supporter of ideology and commitment to public services, he always denounced vendetta politics.

Whatever his critics may have to say, he was not one of but the tallest of all politicians the State has produced in the post-independence era. It is one reason he commanded respect from leaders of all opposition parties for his secular and national outlook.

Tailpiece: He always held he was doing "sewa" and not "raaj". Interestingly, this "sewa" mostly came when he was in "satta" (raaj).

(The author is a senior journalist)

# Not by 'Vande Bharat' alone

**THE NATION CAN ILL-AFFORD TO LET THE PERFORMANCE OF ITS PRIME TRANSPORTER AND ITS LARGEST PUBLIC UNDERTAKING TO BE JUDGED MERELY ON THE BASIS OF THE NUMBER OF VANDE BHARAT TRAINS INTRODUCED, THE GLITZ AND OPULENCE OF ITS REMODELED STATIONS OR THE RECORD-BREAKING LENGTH OF ITS RAILWAY STATION PLATFORMS.**



BY  
**K BALAKESARI**



Amid the publicity blitz and euphoria surrounding the successive introduction of Vande Bharat trains, almost on a weekly basis in various parts of the country, it is easy to lose sight of the larger picture and the serious issues confronting the Indian Railways. Photo Credit / The Hindu

There is a touch of wry irony in the fact that today most of the news about the Indian Railways concerns Vande Bharat trains, and more particularly the fact that every new Vande Bharat train is being personally flagged off by the Prime Minister. For, a little over four years ago, the launch of Train 18, the precursor to the Vande Bharat train, was heralded by the initiation of vigilance investigations against some of the top architects of the project on wholly specious grounds.

The Train 18 project was one that was wholly conceived, planned and executed with élan in record time, by a team of inspired, talented and committed Railway professionals of the Integral Coach Factory, Perambur, Chennai, with minimum official support. Thankfully, the witch hunt came to naught. Today it seems it is raining Vande Bharat trains all over the country, a unique example of the success of a purely local initiative driving policy at the highest level.

Amid the publicity blitz and euphoria surrounding the successive introduction of Vande Bharat trains, almost on a weekly basis in various parts of the country, it is easy to lose sight of the larger picture and the serious issues confronting the Indian Railways.

With the elimination of a separate Railway Budget and its merger with the General Budget from 2017 onwards, there has been a welcome shift towards

ramping up investments in the Indian Railways, both through increased budgetary support from the General Exchequer and through institutional borrowings, aimed at creating additional rail transport capacity ahead of demand.

## NEEDED, MORE RELEVANT METRICS

Accordingly, the Annual Plan outlay of the Indian Railways which was ₹1,09,935 crore in 2016-17 in the last separate Railway Budget has ballooned to ₹2,60,200 crore in the Budget for 2023-24, an increase of 137%. While unprecedented levels of investment to build rail infrastructure are a welcome development, unless these investments translate into concrete progress towards capacity building, highlighting only the inputs without looking at the outcomes serves no purpose. Therefore, the performance of the Indian Railways needs to be evaluated using more relevant metrics.

This article will look at two areas (one each on the freight and the passenger fronts). The National Rail Plan 2030 (NRP) envisages raising the rail share in freight traffic vis-à-vis roadways from 27% to 45% by 2050 and the raising of the average speed of goods trains to 50 kilometers per hour from the present 25 kmph and concurrent reduction in tariff rates for freight by up to 30%. It may be mentioned that the rail share of freight carried reduced from 51.5% in 2008-09 to 32.4% in 2018-19 for leads

over 300 km.

Further, almost the entire increase in volume of traffic carried by rail over the decade 2008-09 to 2018-19 has been in short lead traffic (leads up to 300 km) and 55% of the increase was through the transport of just one commodity, viz. coal. As yet, there is no evidence of higher levels of traffic being achieved concurrently with diversification of commodities carried or an increase in rail share vis-à-vis road transport. In other words, in the race towards achieving the targets set in NRP 2030, the Indian Railways is at or near the starting block.

## THE SUBJECT OF PUNCTUALITY, OTHER CORE ISSUES

On the passenger front, perhaps the single most important operational index is punctuality. Here, a radical shift in emphasis is called for. If stations in the Indian Railways network can be remodeled to 'international standards', perhaps it is time to aim for international standards in punctuality of trains as well. Japanese Railways reckon the punctuality of their high-speed trains in seconds. The Indian Railways should aim to be at least within five minutes (without any adjustment) of the scheduled time. While published statistics of punctuality usually are above 90%, these figures are arrived at with a dose of adjustment and only the destination arrival time is considered irrespective of the fact that a train

might have been off schedule en route at all the important intermediate stations.

More than a decade ago, when an exercise was undertaken to plot the status of all passenger trains on the move in the Indian Railways network on real time basis, the punctuality of all passenger-carrying trains at any given time hovered around 60%.

It is high time to move away from the traditional concept of destination punctuality and evolve an index of punctuality that will also reflect the punctuality at select intermediate stations, at least for all mail/express trains. With developments in IT and data analytics, this should be possible. Real time punctuality of 90% should be a challenging target to aim for. The focus should be to improve overall passenger experience, not merely statistics.

These are only two examples. There is a vast range of issues such as financial performance, physical performance, safety, organizational/human resource issues, project execution, customer relations, effect of the dedicated freight corridors on the Indian Railways system capacity and so on that need to be critically analyzed/reviewed and the necessary course corrections effected.

## HAVE AN ANNUAL REPORT

Seven years ago, in the wake of the elimination of a separate Rail Budget, an article by this writer (Railway Budget - a vanishing trick, September 22, 2016) had suggested that the government should consider tabling an annual report on the performance of the Railways in Parliament - on the lines of the annual Economic Survey prepared by the Finance Ministry ahead of the General Budget. This report, unlike a publicity pamphlet like the Indian Railways Yearbook, should be an internal performance audit that should serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, serious students and also researchers in the field of rail transport.

No government or organization would willingly submit itself to such a self-analysis in the public domain. But with the huge sums already invested and proposed to be invested in the future in the rail sector, the nation can ill-afford to let the performance of its prime transporter and its largest public undertaking to be judged merely on the basis of the number of Vande Bharat trains introduced, the glitz and opulence of its remodeled stations or the record-breaking length of its railway station platforms.

(The author, belonging to the Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers, was Member Staff, Railway Board)

# Doing Iftar hopping I learned about growing communal amity



BY PARVEEN  
CHOPRA



To mingle with the Muslims today, you don't have to wear a skull cap and sport Solzhenitsyn type of facial hair. Just get invited to an Iftar, the fast-breaking evening meal during the month of Ramadan! I did precisely that and attended four Iftar parties on Long Island in New York. As a bonus, I can tell a happy story of increasing communal amity.



At the Town of Hempstead Iftar (from left), Prof Indrajit Singh Saluja, an honoree, Supervisor Don Clavin, and Zahid Syed, Community Affairs Executive Director.

My last Iftar on April 18 was hosted by the Town of Hempstead, presided by Supervisor Don Clavin. According to Zahid Syed, the Town's Community Affairs Executive Director, as many as 800 people showed up. They included non-Muslims like me, a Hindu, and fellow editor Prof Indrajit Singh Saluja, a Sikh, all mainly hailing from the Indian subcontinent. Zahid claims that the first Iftar in New York held 25 years ago in City Hall was at his behest. This year, he has noticed quite a few first Iftars, including at the Town of North Hempstead, and the District Attorney's

office in Suffolk County.

Zahid Syed, who is organizing a Vaisakhi event next, is heartened to see people celebrating other communities' festivals, signifying interfaith harmony. "The participation by politicians of all stripes is a recognition of the demographic changes," he states

Before the Iftar meal, Imam Kashif Aziz, associated with the mosques in Valley Stream and Elmont, explained the significance of Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar when the Quran began revealing to Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). Believers are told to do charity work and feed the hungry this month. Fasting is to practice self-control and earn taqwa (piety/God consciousness).

My Iftar hopping started because having founded ALotusInTheMud.com a few months ago, I noticed that my Rolodex - even Facebook friends list - was not diverse enough. To make amends, I approached Arvind Vora who has been active in the interfaith movement for over 30 years. He took me along to many events and got me invited to Iftars.

My first Iftar was at the Amityville mosque of Ahmadiyyas, a sect of Islam. Rizwan Ahmad Alladin, its President, graciously invited me to introduce my Lotus magazine to the assembled men (women were in the partitioned section of the hall). The buffet was typical for South Asian gatherings (except for the alcohol, the prohibition of which is followed strictly by an overwhelming majority of Muslims till today). There was chicken biryani, goat meat, and even matter paneer, especially added to the menu for Mr Vora, a Jain.

The Iftar I enjoyed the most was hosted by Yavuz Girdap at his home in Saint James, NY. He is from Turkey and a franchisee of Moda Foods, importer of Turkish delicacies like baklava, which is going mainstream. The meal planned by his wife, Hafza, followed to the T what a doctor would have ordered.



A diverse group of guests at the Iftar hosted by Sadri Altinok (second from right), President of the Turkish Cultural Center Long Island. (Photo by Parveen Chopra)

Lentil soup and salad, followed by brown rice, pasta, lean meat, and baklavas for dessert. All at a leisurely pace as conversation flowed and we had our laughter therapy thanks mainly to guest Nora Saleem's cascade of cat stories.

One guest at Yavuz's was Sadri Altinok, President of the Turkish Cultural Center in Ronkonkoma. So, I promptly got invited to their upcoming Iftar. No segregation of the sexes there. Sadri Altinok honored some of those who donated to Turkey earthquake relief and Suffolk County officers for their service. Mr Vora told me later that for decades the Turkish community in the US has been at the forefront of soft diplomacy of outreach to other communities and lawmakers.

A guest I met at the Turkish Cultural Center was Azra Dhar, President of Pacoli (Pakistani American Community of Long Island). She said that earlier when the Muslim community was smaller, people hosted Iftar parties at home with friends and family or went to the mosque. Now with a growing community and acceptance of diversity, you see Iftar gatherings at the official seats of government. "After years of tightness, I am happy to see this acceptance," she commented.

While Azra Dhar attended over a dozen Iftars this Ramadan, Tahira Sharif, a fellow Pacolian who started Ali Hasnain Foundation for philanthropic work in Pakistan, has also attended as many. Feeding a fasting person brings Sadaqa from God, she says, and that is how arose the tradition of people, organizations, mosques, and the community holding Iftars. While Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) is said to break his fast only with a few dates and water, Tahira says it is difficult to resist good food after the rozas from dawn to dusk without even a drop of water.

My neighbor, Rehana Siddiqui, who recently went to do her first Umra pilgrimage in Mecca, has followed prayers more devoutly this Ramadan and watched what she was eating to break the fast. She reports losing six pounds - and looks it.

Religious fasting, however good for your spiritual well-being, should not turn into feasting in these times of sedentary lifestyles when we all have to watch our diet. Done right, Ramadan can detox your body as well, not just the mind and soul. Dr Irfan Ahmad Alladin, a pain management expert, quotes Prophet Muhammed (Peace Be Upon Him) no less: "We should consume only to the point that one-third of the stomach is occupied with solid, one-third is occupied with liquid, and one-third is left empty." Link to his article: <https://alotusinthemud.com/moderation-the-right-way-to-ramadan-fasting/>

(Parveen Chopra is the founder and editor of ALotusInTheMud.com, a wellness and spirituality web magazine based in New York)

## Bollywood's Neelam Kothari Soni to Amplify the Voice of Children at CRY 2023 New York Gala

APRIL 24, 2023

**NEW YORK (TIP):** For three bingeable seasons of Netflix' "The Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives," Neelam Kothari Soni has brought her big-screen fame to streaming devices worldwide. The veteran actress and fine-jewelry magnate is set to share some of that "24-karat" Bollywood elegance with area fans as the featured celebrity guest at CRY America's 2023 New York - New Jersey Gala, set for 6:30 PM, Friday, May

19 at The Taj Pierre Hotel, 2 East 61st St, New York.

Child Rights and You (CRY) America is a US nonprofit that supports projects in India and the U.S. that ensure access to education and healthcare for underprivileged children, as well as protection from child labor, early marriage and trafficking. Since 2004, with the support of over 25,000 donors and over 2,000 volunteers, CRY America has impacted the lives of 752,172 children

living across 4,027 villages and slums through support to 90 projects in India and the US.

Themed "YOU Put the 'Y' in CRY," the gala will honor CRY America's donors, volunteers, media partners and supporters. The New York-New Jersey gala is one in a series including events in Seattle, San Diego, Houston and the San Francisco Bay Area. .

(Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))



Star of Netflix' 'The Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives' and '80s Hit Films Lends Celebrity to Child Rights Fundraisers

# US on track to issue more than a million visas to Indians this year: Donald Lu

APRIL 22, 2023

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** The US is on track to issue more than a million visas to Indians this year, a senior official has said, assuring that the Biden administration is committed this summer to make sure it processes all of the student visas for Indians whose school starts this fall.

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu also told PTI in an interview this week that they are also prioritizing work visas: H-1B's and L visas, the most sought-after by IT professionals from India.

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.

We are on track to issue more than a million visas this year. This is a record for us along with a record number of student visas and immigrant visas, Lu said.

Lu said the US is committed this summer to make sure it processes all of the student visas for Indians whose school starts this fall.

There have been growing concerns in India over the long waiting period for first-time visa applicants, especially for those applying under B1 (business) and B2 (tourist) categories.

India is now number two in the world in terms of international students coming to the United States.

We've also been prioritizing work visas: H-1B's and L visas. Wait times at some of our consular sections in India, for these visas are now below 60 days. We will continue to make sure that we prioritize visas for workers, as this is vital for both the American and the Indian economy, Lu said.

For certain petition-based nonimmigrant work of visa categories, we plan to restart domestic visa renewal for applicants who meet certain requirements, including being physically present in the United States. We plan to have a pilot up and running later this year. This would eliminate the need for these applicants to travel

abroad to renew their visas, he said.

Responding to a question on those Indian IT professionals who are on H-1B visas and have lost their jobs, Lu noted that the Department of Homeland Security recently put out some new information specifically on the point of what these workers ought to do who want to readjust their status.

India-US relationship enjoys bipartisan support in the US, he said.

I think part of the answer you can find in a really strong diaspora community in the US. For 30 years or more, our relationship is in part driven by Indian Americans who have lived here for decades, but still keep a very strong tie with India, he said. Over a million people fly back and forth between the two countries.

That's an amazing number given that we're not close at all. It's very expensive to fly back and forth. But those ties of people who moved here or maybe their parents come from India, those ties remain. They haven't been cut by immigration, he said.

In fact, we now know that over 100,000 Americans are living in India as



US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu said the US Photo / courtesy US Department of State

well. This relationship is very much to weigh and benefits both of us. Yeah. So, I think that's true for political parties as it is for families in the US. Growing up I had many Indian American friends. I think that's just part of the fabric of the United States, Lu said. (Source: PTI)

## California Senate committee passes bill to end caste discrimination



Photo for representation only

APRIL 26, 2023

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** A bill seeking to explicitly ban caste discrimination in California has been unanimously passed by the state's Senate Judiciary Committee, amidst strong opposition from Indian-American business and temple organizations.

The California Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, April 25 unanimously voted 'Yes' to move the anti-caste discrimination bill forward to the Senate. This is the first time that a US State legislature would consider legislation on caste.

If passed, the bill could make America's most populous state also the country's first to make caste bias illegal by adding it as a protected category in the state's anti-discrimination laws.

"Today, I proudly stand in solidarity with my caste-oppressed community members, caste equity movement

organizers, and allies to say that caste-oppressed Californians are now one step closer to attaining the protections they deserve and are entitled to," said Thenmozhi Soundararajan, Equality Labs and author of 'The Trauma of Caste'.

Earlier at a news conference, she said the bill was a result of 15 years of hard-won organizing in the state by caste-oppressed people.

"The need for this bill is urgent. We have then some of the highest rates of discrimination of any Asian American community in the state. That is why we are here to stand in our truth to organize for our freedom," she had said.

Equality Labs, the brain behind the anti-caste discrimination resolution in Seattle, has been spearheading a nationwide campaign. Seattle became the first US city to outlaw caste discrimination in February. (Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

## Expand legal pathways for immigration including by raising the cap for H-1B visas: Congressman Thanedar

APRIL 27, 2023

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** Indian-American Congressman Shri Thanedar has asked US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to expand the legal pathways for immigration, including by raising the cap for H-1B visas - the most sought-after by IT professionals from India.

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.

"We must expand legal pathways for immigration, including by raising the cap for H-1B visas," Thanedar told Mayorkas during a Congressional hearing by the House Committee on Homeland Security on the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security. The H-1B visa allocations are capped at 85,000 visas per year, with 20,000 of those set aside for workers holding advanced degrees from US institutions.

Thanedar, a Democrat, said that the fact is that the US border security challenges are a symptom of the broader failure to overhaul the immigration system of the country. During the hearing, he was the only lawmaker to raise the issue of H-1B before the



US Congressman Shri Thanedar

Homeland Security Secretary.

Thanedar said the Department of Homeland Security has a broad range of missions beyond the border that are critical to securing the homeland that deserves our attention.

"For example, we must make sure the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is able to carry out its mission to secure all modes of transportation. For far too long, TSA employees have labored under unfair working conditions while frontline officers are receiving 30 per cent less pay and inferior labor protection when compared to other federal employees doing similar work," he said.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

# Pence Testifies before Grand Jury Probing Trump

**"Mike Pence's testimony is some of the most sharply incriminating evidence any witness can offer against Donald Trump," legal analyst Glenn Kirschner.**

APRIL 28, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Former Vice President Mike Pence testified behind closed doors for more than five hours Thursday, April 27 before the grand jury investigating ex-President Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election results, according to reports from Reuters and other media outlets. Pence was subpoenaed by Special Counsel Jack Smith in February following months of negotiations between prosecutors and the former vice president's legal team.

Smith is leading two criminal probes by the Department of Justice (DOJ) into Trump, including the former president's efforts to remain in office after losing to President Joe Biden. Smith is also heading the DOJ's investigation of the classified documents found in Trump's Florida estate in August. Trump



Former Vice President Mike Pence  
Official portrait

previously attempted to block his former vice president from testifying in the special counsel's probe, arguing that the information being sought was

protected by executive privilege. According to a report from CNN on Wednesday, however, a federal judge denied Trump's request to halt the subpoena.

What happens now? Pence is exploring a challenge to his former running mate in the 2024 presidential election. Trump is the front-runner for the GOP nomination in several hypothetical matchups, including after he was dealt a 34-felony count indictment in Manhattan court last month. His testimony could play a huge potential role in Trump's undoing, said legal analyst Glenn Kirschner, a former federal prosecutor. "...Indisputably this moves matters one giant step closer to a Donald Trump indictment for his democracy-busting crimes on and around January 6, and that is a damn good thing," Kirschner said. (Agencies)

## Products from scores of districts on display at Indian Embassy in US

APRIL 27, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Products from scores of Indian districts were on display at the Indian Embassy here on Saturday, April 15 at an event organized to celebrate the country's diversity and togetherness.

US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, along with visiting Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, had a glimpse of these exhibits during the event that was attended by several hundred Indian Americans from across the country at the India House here, which is the official residence of India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

Raimondo expressed keen interest in the diversity of these products from India, which ranged from Madhubani painting and wooden coasters to Darjeeling, Nilgiri, Assam Tea, Kanchipuram Saree, to Kashmiri Scarf, and tea light holders.

This is for the first time that such a variety of Indian products have been on display here in the US.

Prominent among those who attended the event included White House Indo Pacific Coordinator, Kurt Campbell; White House National Drug Control Czar, Dr. Rahul Gupta; Secretary of State of Maryland, Susan Lee; Treasury Secretary of Missouri, Vivek Malek; State Legislators from different States Kevin Thomas, Niraj Antani, Jennifer Rajkumar, Latha Mangipudi; 2023 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardees, Raj Subramaniam and Darshan Singh Dhaliwal; Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the US, Mahinda Samarasinghe, members of Diplomatic Corps, and president of National Black Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NBCCI) Charles DeBow.

## Indian-American FedEx CEO Raj Subramaniam presented with Pravasi Bharatiya Samman



Raj Subramaniam

Photo credit / IANS

APRIL 27, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Raj Subramaniam, the Indian-American CEO of global transportation giant FedEx, has been presented with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the highest civilian award given by India to persons of Indian origin and Indian diaspora.

Subramaniam, 55, was presented with the award by India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu at a ceremony at the India House on Saturday, April 15 since he could not travel to India early this year to receive the award.

The other awardee, Darshan Singh Dhaliwal, was also present at the event.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo along with senior officials of the Biden Administration and several hundred Indian Americans were present at the event. Subramaniam is the president and CEO of FedEx Corporation, one of the world's largest transportation companies. His international leadership experience and keen business insights have contributed immensely to the success of FedEx. (Source: PTI)

## House passes GOP debt ceiling bill, as U.S. inches toward fiscal crisis

**The vote came despite a veto threat from Biden, and overwhelming disapproval from Democrats in the House and Senate, who maintain that Congress should raise the debt limit without spending cuts or other conditions**



Photo for representation only/ istock

APRIL 27, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): House Republicans on Wednesday, April 26, approved a bill that would raise the debt ceiling, slash federal spending and repeal President Biden's programs to combat climate change and reduce student debt, defying Democratic objections in a move that inched the United States closer to a fiscal crisis.

Ignoring repeated warnings that the GOP's brinkmanship could unleash vast economic turmoil, Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) muscled his narrow, quarrelsome majority toward a 217-215 vote, accelerating a high-stakes clash with the White House with as few as six weeks remaining before the government could default.

(Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

## SIKHISM TO BE TAUGHT IN VIRGINIA SCHOOLS



Virginia is now the 17th in a growing list of US states that have worked with the Sikh Coalition to include accurate information about Sikhs in their public-school social studies standards, according to a statement.

Photo for representation only

APRIL 20, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Over a million students in Virginia can now learn about Sikhism as the US State voted in favor of new social studies standards on Thursday that will include Sikhi, or the Sikh faith, in the school curriculum for the first time ever.

The Virginia State Board of Education voted in favor of the new History and Social Science Standards of Learning.

The new standards will give more than a million students in Virginia an opportunity to learn about the Sikh community, the Sikh Coalition said.

Virginia is now the 17th in a growing list of US states that have worked with the Sikh Coalition to include accurate information about Sikhs in their public-school social studies standards, according to a statement.

Utah and Mississippi were the 15th and 16th States in the US to include information about Sikhism, Sikh practices, and traditions in their social studies syllabi.

"After more than two years of engagement alongside the local 'sangat', this change will help to ensure that Sikhi can be taught in classrooms across the Commonwealth of Virginia," said Harman Singh, Sikh Coalition senior education manager.

"Inclusive and accurate standards are an important first step to combat bigotry and to reduce bullying, and they benefit all students by increasing cultural competency," he said.

In its statement, the Sikh Coalition noted that the new social studies standards come with serious and well-documented flaws, and there are many communities that are not represented as they should be.

"We continue to fight for not just the Sikh community, but all groups whose histories should be taught accurately," said the statement.

Sikhism is one of the largest religions in the world and the members of the community have contributed to American society for over 125 years in the fields of civil rights, politics, agriculture, engineering, and medicine.

(Source: PTI)

## India logs 7,533 new Covid cases, active infections above 53,000-mark

India recorded 7,533 new coronavirus cases, raising the tally to 4.49 crore, while the active cases decreased to 53,852, the Union Health Ministry said on Friday, April 28.

The death toll has increased to 5,31,468 with 44 deaths, which included 16 fatalities reconciled by Kerala, data updated by the ministry at 8 am stated.

The active cases now comprise 0.12 per cent of the total infections, it said.

The national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.69 per cent, according to the data shared on the ministry's website.

The number of people who have recovered from the disease surged to 4,43,47,024, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.18 per cent.

India has so far recorded a total of 4.49 crore Covid cases.

According to the ministry's website, a total of 220.66 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 inoculation drive.

## Cheetah Deaths Were 'Expected' In 'Risky' Relocation To India: South Africa

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) South Africa on Thursday said the deaths of two cheetahs in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park are within expected mortality rates for a project of this nature.

In a statement issued by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) South Africa said, "The cheetah joined eight of the mammals relocated to India's Kuno National Park from Namibia in September 2022. The two cheetah deaths (one from Namibia and one from South Africa) observed to date are within expected mortality rates for a project of this nature." The cheetahs were relocated to Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh as part of an initiative to expand the cheetah meta-population and to reintroduce cheetahs to a former range state. The statement further said, "Large carnivore reintroductions are extremely complex and inherently risky operations. This is a critical phase of the project, with cheetahs being released into larger environments where there is increasingly less control over their day-to-day wellbeing." According to the statement, the risks for injury and mortality will be increasing, and these risks are factored into the reintroduction plan. "The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) awaits a diagnosis (an autopsy) for the death of the cheetah, but there is no indication that it is any form of infectious disease or that there is a similar threat to any of the other cheetahs", the government of South Africa said in a statement.

# Same-sex couples need measures for welfare, social security: SC to govt

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Stressing that social cohabitation between same-sex couples must find some "recognition" in law, the Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Union government how far it is willing to go in taking "administrative" steps to ensure social security and welfare benefits for such couples even in absence of a legal recognition of marriage.

A Constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, said that when the government concedes that same-sex couples have a fundamental right to cohabit and celebrate their unions, a mere statement of denying them legal recognition of marriage will not augur well with a welfare State.

"Once you accept the fact that same-sex couples have a right to cohabit, there is a corresponding duty on the State to at least recognise that cohabitation...all the social incidents of that cohabitation must find recognition in the law...As a welfare State, as a democratic State, these are aspirations of the people that there has to be some recognition. So, what can the State do?" the bench, which also included justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, S Ravindra Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha, asked solicitor general (SG) Tushar Mehta.

"Why we are trying to push you to this is because we take your point that if the court were to accept the petitioners' arguments, the court will be legislating and that it's not the remit of the court.



It's for Parliament or state legislature. But short of that, our law has gone so far now, what will the government want to do to ensure that these cohabitory relationships or relationships based on cohabitation or association must be recognised in the terms of creating the same sense of security, social welfare? By doing that we also ensure that for the future, these relationships cease to be ostracised in society," it added.

The bench clarified that when it uses the term "recognition", it does not mean "marriage", and that the Centre may think of some other "semantics" like "partners" to identify such unions that make them entitled to certain benefits. "You may not give them a particular recognition of marriage but at the same time there is a need to bring down some barriers," it emphasised.

Asking the SG to come back with a response on May 3 when the case will be heard next, the bench gave examples of certain basic social functions such as

joint bank accounts, joint guardianships and pensionary benefits, to point out that these are "human issues" of "day-to-day life" which the same-sex couples face due to lack of recognition by the State and its institutions.

While the Constitution bench is yet to accept the government's position that the issue of legal recognition of marriage is beyond judicial determination, it opened a completely new dimension to the case on Tuesday proposing a middle path. However, it is still to be seen how the petitioners respond to this course of action before the court.

Urging the SG to take a "non-adversarial stand" on the issue, the bench said: "From that point of view, we would be more than willing to have the government make that statement before us because the government has ministries dedicated to these purposes...This should come from you because ultimately, we want some elements of a broad sense of a coalition. We are also conscious of the fact that so much a representative democracy should achieve in our country."

While Mehta submitted that he would have a consultation with the competent authorities in the government about possible solutions to these "sociological" problems, the top court was categorical that there is a lot that the Centre can do even without granting legal recognition of marriage to same-sex unions. *Source: HT*

## LAC actions have eroded basis of ties, Rajnath Singh tells his Chinese counterpart

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh On April 27 told his Chinese counterpart that Beijing's actions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) of violating existing agreements had "eroded the entire basis of bilateral relations".

Rajnath Singh led a team of senior Defence Ministry officials for a bilateral meeting with State Councillor and Minister of National Defence of China, Gen Li Shangfu, in New Delhi today. This is the first visit by a Chinese Defence Minister to India after the armies of the two countries have been locked in a stand-off along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh since April 2020.

General Shangfu is here for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting to be held tomorrow. "The two ministers had frank discussions on the developments in the India-China border areas as well as bilateral relations," a Defence Ministry statement said.

Rajnath Singh categorically conveyed that "development of relations between India and China is premised on prevalence of peace and tranquillity at the borders". "All issues at the LAC need to be resolved in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and commitments. Violation of existing agreements has eroded the entire basis of bilateral relations".

On the present situation along the LAC, Rajnath Singh said disengagement of troops at the border would logically be followed with de-escalation. Rajnath Singh held separate



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at a bilateral with his Chinese counterpart Gen Li Shangfu in New Delhi. Photo: PTI

bilateral meetings with the Minister of Defence of Kazakhstan, Col Gen Ruslan Zhaxylykov, and the Minister of Defence of Tajikistan, Col Gen Sherali Mirzo, today. The Indian delegation had a bilateral meeting with Iran's Minister of Defence, Brig Gen Mohammed Reza Gharaei Ashtiyani.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will be on a two-day India visit from May 4 for the SCO Foreign Ministers' meet in Goa. He will also hold a bilateral with EAM. *Source: TNS*



## 10th batch of Indians departs from Sudan as Operation Kaveri intensifies

As India intensifies Operation Kaveri to rescue stranded Indians from crisis-hit Sudan, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday, April 28, said the eighth, ninth and tenth batches of stranded Indians left Sudan for Jeddah. The fighting broke out in Sudan on April 15 as the result of a bitter power struggle between the regular army and RSF, which has left more than 500 people dead.

The 10th batch with 135 Indian citizens, who were stranded in conflict-ridden Sudan, have successfully departed from Port Sudan on an IAF C 130J flight, the MEA spokesperson Arindam said. "INS Tarkash bolsters #OperationKaveri efforts! 9th batch of Indians leaves Port Sudan for Jeddah with 326 passengers onboard," Arindam Bagchi said in an earlier tweet.

Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan took to his Twitter and wrote, "Port Sudan to Jeddah. 9th batch 135 Indians IAF C 130 J Welcome to the safe hands #OperationKaveri."

## Karnataka polls: Slugfest after Cong vows to increase quota limit to 75%

The Congress' proposal is seen as a counter to the BJP's decision to increase reservations for Lingayats, Vokkaligas, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes, while removing the four per cent reservation for Muslims, which they, in turn, deem "unconstitutional." The reservation policy in Karnataka has become a heated political issue, with the Congress party proposing to increase the reservation for deprived classes to 75% if voted to power in the upcoming state assembly elections. In response, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has said that such an increase is not possible constitutionally. The Congress' proposal is seen as a counter to the BJP's decision to increase reservations for Lingayats, Vokkaligas, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes, while removing the four per cent reservation for Muslims, which they, in turn, deem "unconstitutional." On Thursday, former chief minister and Congress leader Siddaramaiah said that his party would increase the reservation limit in Karnataka from 50% to 75% if voted to power in the upcoming Assembly elections. However, former chief minister BS Yediyurappa said it would never be met as the Opposition party in the state "was headed for defeat".

# India, UK begin two-week joint military exercise 'Ajeya Warrior'

JHANSI (TIP)

Military troops of India and the United Kingdom (UK) kick-started the seventh edition of 'Ajeya Warrior 2023', a two-week joint military exercise on Thursday at UK's Salisbury Plains, as part of efforts to consolidate the overall military ties. The soldiers of the 2 Royal Gorkha Rifles from the UK and Indian Army troops from the Bihar Regiment are participating in the military exercise. The Indian Army contingent arrived at Brize Norton on Wednesday, April 26, in an Indian Air Force C-17 aircraft with indigenous weapons and equipment.

Ajeya Warrior is a biennial training event with the UK which is conducted alternatively in both countries. The last edition was held at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand in October 2021.

During the exercise, both armies will engage in various activities testing their operational acumen in various simulated situations and refining tactical drills which would help in developing interoperability between the two armies. According to the ministry of defence, the aim of the military exercise is to "build positive military relations, imbibe each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together while undertaking company-level sub-conventional operations in urban and semi-urban environments under UN mandate".

"The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the battalion level and company level field training exercise (FTX)," it added.

The exercise is yet another significant milestone in defence cooperation between India and the UK and will further foster the bilateral relations, the statement added.

The military exercise will be conducted from April 27 to May 11.

### 'Army raising new units to counter China, Pak in cyber warfare'

Amid the rising activities of adversaries China and Pakistan in the online domain to target India, the Indian



Indian army troops arrived to participate in the seventh edition of the bilateral training exercise Ajeya Warrior 2023 with UK Army on April 27.

Photo: ANI

Army has operationalised new specialist units to counter these threats and challenges under its cyber warfare initiatives.

The decision was taken during the Army Commanders Conference held in the third week of this month headed by Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande.

"To safeguard the communication networks and increase preparedness levels in this niche domain, Command Cyber Operations and Support Wings (CCOSW) are being raised in Indian Army," government sources said here.

They said that Cyberspace has emerged as an important component of the military domain both in grey zone warfare as well as conventional operations.

Highlighting the importance and requirement of such specialist units, the sources said the expansion of cyber warfare capabilities by our adversaries has made the cyber domain more competitive and contested than ever before.

"The Indian Army today is rapidly migrating towards net centricity, which entails an increased reliance on modern communication systems at all levels," they said.

# Tension in Manipur's Churachandpur as miscreants set ablaze venue of CM's meeting

IMPHAL (TIP)

The situation remained tense in southern Manipur's Churachandpur as "miscreants" set ablaze the venue where Chief Minister N. Biren Singh is scheduled to address a meeting on Friday, April 28.

A police official said late on Thursday (April 27) night that the Chief Minister is scheduled to visit the hill district on Friday and arson took place in the venue with chairs and other materials set on fire.

Senior police officials with reinforcement have rushed to the place to control the situation.

Meanwhile, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) has called for an eight-hour shutdown in Churachandpur district on Friday from 8 a.m. to protest the state government's eviction drive from the protected and reserve forests.

The ITLF in a statement said that they had submitted several memoranda to the state government expressing their grievances and apprehensions about the survey carried out by the government pertaining to reserve forests and protected forest, wetlands and wildlife, and the eviction of villagers.

On March 10, tribals organised protest rallies against the state government on this count in three districts that were also allegedly backed by Kuki militants.

A peaceful protest turned violent in three districts -- Churachandpur, Kangpokpi and Tengnoupal in which five people were injured in these incidents.

The protests were organised against the state government's crackdown on poppy cultivation and encroachment of forest land.



Senior police officials with reinforcement have rushed to the place to control the situation. @ANI

The state government earlier this month demolished three churches in Manipur, claiming that the churches were "illegal constructions".

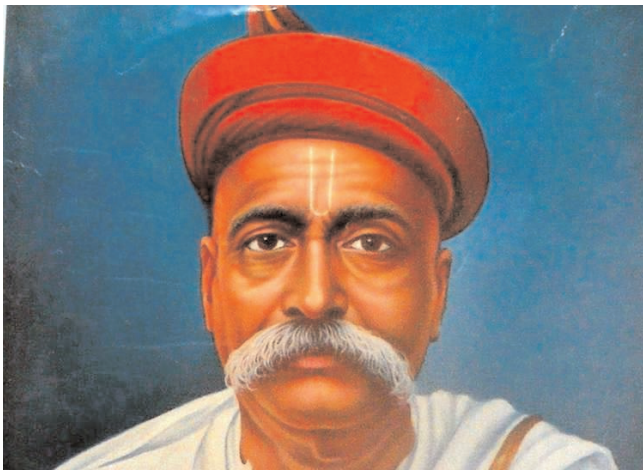
After the March 10 incidents, the Manipur government unilaterally pulled out from the tripartite talks and suspension of operation (SoO) signed with three Kuki militant outfits -- the Kuki National Army (KNA), Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) and Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA) -- even though the Union Home Ministry is yet to give its approval to the state government's decision.

Source: IANS

# India in history this Week

APRIL 28, 2023, TO MAY 4, 2023

## 28 APRIL



1916 Bal Gangadhar Tilak founded the Indian Home Rule League in 1916.

1932 The development of yellow fever vaccine for humans was announced in 1932.

2003 Employee Safety and Health Day was observed around the world in 2003.

2008 The Indian Space Research Organization created a new history in 2008 with PSLV-C9.



1791 Hari Singh Nalwa, the Chief of Army Staff of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was born.

## 29 APRIL



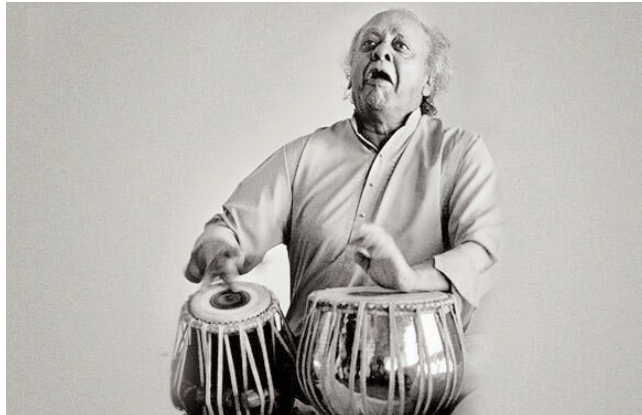
1848 Birth of well-known painter Raja Ravi Varma.

1939 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose resigned from the Congress.

1639 The foundation of the Red Fort was laid in Delhi.

1997 The ban on chemical weapons has been in force since 1997.

1547 Bhamashah, a friend, colleague and trusted advisor of Maharana Pratap of Mewar was born on this day in 1547.



1919 Birth of Indian tabla player Alla Rakha in 1919.

## 30 APRIL

1908 Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki threw a bomb to kill the Kingsford magistrate in Muzaffarpur, but two were killed by innocent bombs.

1863 The Indian naval of the East India Company was sent to the British Navy.

2006 The Indian subcontinent hosted the 2011 Cricket World Cup in 2006.

2008 The driverless aircraft "Lakshya" was successfully tested in 2008 from Chandipur beach in Balasore district of Odisha.



2010 Dev Anand, an evergreen actor of Hindi films, was honored with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2010 and Franco "Phalke Icon" in Mumbai.

1870 The birth of Dadasaheb Phalke, the famous film producer-director and screenwriter of India.

## 01 MAY



1897 Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission.

1908 Prafulla Chaki shot himself after executing the Muzaffarpur bombings.

1914 Carmaker Ford became the first company to implement an eight-hour rule for its employees.

1923 Start of celebrating May Day in India.

1960 Maharashtra and Gujarat became separate states.

1972 Nationalization of the country's coal mines.  
1914 Carmaker Ford became the first company to

implement an eight-hour rule for its employees.

## 02 MAY

1926 Hindu women had the right to take elected office.

1968 The Public Provident Fund Act was approved in the Lok Sabha.

1996 The famous Guru Chandraswami was sentenced to Tihar Jail on charges of cheating.

1998 10.5 kg of Charas was captured by the Indian Army from Bandipura market.

1921 Birth of filmmaker, director and writer Satyajit Ray, ornamented with Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan, Bharat Ratna, and Oscar Award.

1922 Birth of India's professional billiards player Wilson Jones.

1929 Birth of Indian politician and litterateur Vishnu Kant Shastri.

1949 Trial of Mahatma Gandhi murder case begins.

1985 Banarsidas Chaturvedi passed away. He was a famous journalist and litterateur.

2003 India announced to re-establish diplomatic relations with Pakistan. The relationship was severed following the December 2001 terrorist attack on Parliament.

## 03 MAY

1764 Nawab Mir Qasim of Bengal was defeated by the British.

1896 India's nationalist, politician, diplomat and former Defense Minister of India V.K. Birth of Krishna Menon

1913 The first Indian feature film Raja Harishchandra was released.

1919 The invasion of British India by Amanullah Khan which led to the Anglo-Afghan War.

1930 Birth of famous woman politician Sumitra Singh of Rajasthan.

1969 Third President of India Zakir Hussain passed away.

1977 The birth of the first female mathematician Maryam Mirzakhani to receive the 'Fields Medal', a prestigious world mathematics award.

1981 Indian cine actress Nargis died.

1989 Launch of country's first 50 kW solar power plant in Haryana.

2008 Tata Steel Limited got its first coal mining license in the UK.

1939 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose established the All India Forward Block.

## 04 MAY

1980 Cole Mines Day was announced.



1799 Tipu Sultan died during a war.

1854 The country's first postage stamp was released in Kolkata.

1923 Renowned filmmaker Mrinal Sen was born.

1959 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru refused the treaty between India and Pakistan.

1980 Mazdoor Day was observed for the laborers working in the coal mines.



# KidsChaupal Empowers Young Authors with a Spectacular Book Launch Event



BY  
MURTAZA ALI KHAN

APRIL 27, 2023

**NEW DELHI/NEW YORK (TIP):** Devendra Jaiswal and KidsChaupal recently hosted a literary event in Delhi.



KidsChaupal cofounders Devendra Jaiswal and Dhiraj Singh Patel with Tisya Singh

The three young authors were the brand ambassador of KidsChaupal - 17-year-old Tisya Singh from Bengaluru with her debut dystopian novel '4264: Rising from Ruins,' 11-year-old world's youngest professor and a child prodigy from USA - Soborno Issac Bari with his novel 'Manish,' and a budding 13-year-old author from Varanasi - Ishit Vats with his debut novel 'Chills & Thrills - The Curse of the Evil Sorcerer.' The authors showcased their novels, which the audience received with great enthusiasm. The novels covered a range of genres from mystery, current world reality and adventure, each offering a unique perspective and storytelling style.



KidsChaupal team

KidsChaupal recently hosted a literary extravaganza at their recent event, Tarang, which featured three young authors in the presence of esteemed chief guests, Dr Sachidanand Joshi - Member Secretary, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ministry of Culture. This event constructed a momentum for the Young Author's Conference happening in the city on April 12th as it generated buzz and excitement among attendees and helped to build connections and a sense of community among participants.



Tarang\_Young Author's Conference: \_Soborno unveiling his debut book

The three young authors were the brand ambassador of KidsChaupal - 17-year-old Tisya Singh from Bengaluru with her debut dystopian novel '4264: Rising from Ruins,' 11-year-old world's youngest professor and a child prodigy from USA - Soborno Issac Bari with his novel 'Manish,' and a budding 13-year-old author from Varanasi - Ishit Vats with his debut novel 'Chills & Thrills - The Curse of the Evil Sorcerer.' The authors showcased their novels, which the audience received with great enthusiasm. The novels covered a range of genres from mystery, current world reality and adventure, each offering a unique perspective and storytelling style.

KidsChaupal is committed to supporting young talent in the literary world and providing opportunities for them to showcase their work with 'Authorpreneur', an initiative to encourage and promote young writers who have a passion for writing and storytelling. This event was the first step towards the organization's goal of launching 100 child authors in 2023. The organization



Tarang\_Young Author's Conference : \_Ishit Vats unveiling his debut book

firmly believes that young people are the future of our society, and their voices and perspectives are vital in shaping the world we live in. By supporting and promoting young authors, they aim to foster creativity, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, and empathy in young people.

The event was graced by the presence of renowned guests including Dr Mukesh Batra (Founder, Dr. Batra's), Dr. Oscar Pujol (Director, Instituto Cervantes), Dr Amit Nagpal (Author and Coach), Vikram Nayak, and Dr N.K. Sahu.

"We are thrilled to have played a role in bringing these young talented authors to the forefront," said Dhiraj Singh Patel & Devendra Vishal Jaiswal, co-founders of KidsChaupal. "As an organization, our mission is to empower the next generation, and this event was a testament to the success of that mission."

The event attracted a diverse and enthusiastic crowd of esteemed principals and teachers from eminent schools, literary world professionals, prominent international dignitaries and young book readers. With the successful launch of these authors at such a spectacular event, the organization looks forward to bringing more talented authors to the forefront in the future from all over the country.

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

## Keshub Mahindra, Chairman Emeritus, Mahindra Group Passes Away at 99

APRIL 27, 2023

**MUMBAI / NEW YORK (TIP):** A late report says Mr. Keshub Mahindra, Chairman Emeritus, Mahindra Group passed away peacefully on April 12 morning. The 99-year-old, nonagenarian, was a well-known philanthropist who redefined good corporate governance in India. He was an exemplary statesman and an irreplaceable figure in Indian industry, revered for his vision, his business acumen, his leadership by example, and above all, for his uncompromising professional integrity.

Born on October 9, 1923, in Shimla, Mr. Keshub Mahindra was an alumnus of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, USA. He joined Mahindra & Mahindra in 1947 and took on the role of Chairman in 1963. Under his stewardship, the company was transformed from its beginnings as a steel trading company to a diversified federation of companies.

Mr. Keshub Mahindra has contributed significantly to the industry had been appointed by the Government of India to serve on many

committees including the Sachar Commission on Company Law & MRTP and the Central Advisory Council of Industries. From 2004 to 2010, Mr. Mahindra was a Member of the Prime Minister's Council on Trade & Industry, New Delhi. He was also a member of the Apex Advisory Council of ASSOCHAM and was serving as the President Emeritus of the Employers' Federation of India. He was an Honorary Fellow of the All India Management Association, New Delhi and a member of the Council of the United World Colleges (International) in the United Kingdom. In 1987, he was awarded the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'honneur by the French Government.

Speaking about Mr. Keshub Mahindra, Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group, said,

"Mr. Keshub Mahindra was and will always remain a source of inspiration for me and the entire Mahindra Group. He was a man of principles and led from the front to preserve the legacy of our founders which has ensured that the organization has remained rooted in ethics,

values, and good corporate governance. Mr. Keshub Mahindra was known for his astute business acumen that helped in transforming Mahindra into a diversified federation of companies. His compassion, and people-centric approach made him a global business icon, who was much loved and respected".

Mr. Keshub Mahindra has also served on several Boards and Councils in both the private and public domain, including SAIL, Tata Steel, Tata Chemicals, Indian Hotels, IFC and ICICI. He was also the Founder Chairman of HUDCO (Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited); Vice-Chairman of Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd; Chairman Mahindra Ugine Steel Co. Ltd; Director of Bombay Dyeing & Manufacturing Co. Ltd. and Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation Limited.

About Mahindra

Founded in 1945, the Mahindra Group is one of the largest and most admired multinational federation of companies with 260,000 employees in over 100 countries. It enjoys a leadership



Mr. Keshub Mahindra  
Photo / Courtesy Mahindra

position in farm equipment, utility vehicles, information technology and financial services in India and is the world's largest tractor company by volume. It has a strong presence in renewable energy, agriculture, logistics, hospitality, and real estate.

The Mahindra Group has a clear focus on leading ESG globally, enabling rural prosperity and enhancing urban living, with a goal to drive positive change in the lives of communities and stakeholders to enable them to Rise.

Learn more about Mahindra on [www.mahindra.com](http://www.mahindra.com) / Twitter and Facebook: @MahindraRise/ For updates subscribe to <https://www.mahindra.com/news-room>

(Press release)

DECEMBER 8, 1927 TO APRIL 25, 2023

# Parkash Singh Badal: End of an era



Sarpanch of Badal village at 20, legislator at 30, chief minister at 43, and the last surviving member of a political generation that saw Independence, survived the Emergency, and saw Punjab politics take a surprising turn in 2022, Parkash Singh Badal, 95, a five-time chief minister of Punjab, died on Tuesday, April 25.

He was admitted to Mohali's Fortis Hospital after he complained of uneasiness in breathing.

"Mr Badal passed away at around 8 pm on April 25," hospital director Abhijeet Singh said.

The hospital issued a medical bulletin shortly afterwards in which it detailed his health issues.

"S Parkash Singh Badal, Former Chief Minister of Punjab, was admitted at Fortis Hospital Mohali on 16th April 2023 with acute exacerbation of bronchial asthma. He was shifted to the medical ICU on 18th April as his respiratory condition worsened.

"He had been on NIV (non-invasive ventilation) and HFNC (high-flow nasal cannula) support along with medical management. He was being managed under Prof (Dr) Digambar Behera along with the Pulmonology and critical care team supported by Cardiology," it said.

"Despite appropriate medical management S Parkash Singh Badal succumbed to his illness. Fortis Hospital Mohali deeply condoles the death of S Parkash Singh Badal," the bulletin said.

Badal had been in the intensive care unit of the hospital and doctors were closely monitoring his health condition. Hospital sources said his health condition suddenly deteriorated during the day on Tuesday, April 25.

The former chief minister was also hospitalised in June last year following complaints related to gastritis and bronchial asthma.

In February 2022, he was taken to a private hospital in Mohali for a post-Covid health examination during which he underwent cardiac and pulmonary check-ups.

He had tested positive for COVID-19 in January last year and was admitted to a hospital in Ludhiana.



In the tumultuous terrain of a front-line Sikh majority state, Parkash Singh Badal was the quintessential moderate, a pragmatic practitioner of communal harmony, a liberal and secular man, and an avowed protagonist of and a fierce fighter for Punjab's interests.

He was deeply religious, but not dogmatic. Hindu-Sikh amity, to him, was not a mere political slogan but an article of faith – an abiding quality that endeared him to Punjab's Hindus.

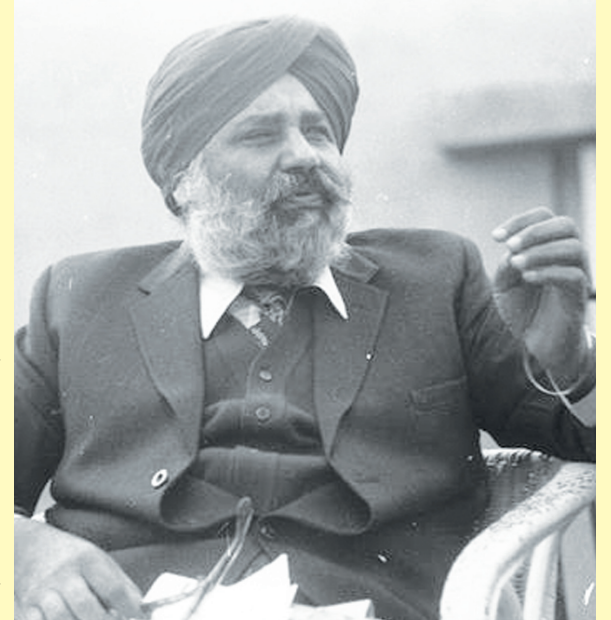
In its 100-year-old history, Shiromani Akali Dal, one of the oldest regional parties, has not seen a figure as towering as Badal. He was the state's longest serving chief minister, at 17 years across five terms. And he was president of Akali Dal from 1995 till 2017 when he handed over the mantle to his son and heir apparent Sukhbir Singh Badal.

Badal went to jail multiple times during and after the Emergency in the mid-70s and the 80s as a leading light of the Akalis' agitational politics, faced death threats from Sikh extremists, and was imprisoned in corruption cases in 2004 by his colleague-turned-rival Capt Amarinder Singh. But the Akali stalwart unfailingly bounced back. On the morning of the day he died, the Punjab police filed charges against him in the 2015 Kokatpura firing case when two protesters agitating against the mutilation of the Sikh holy book died in police firing.

The secret of Badal's extraordinarily long political life lay in his tremendous

## THE LIFE OF A POLITICAL GIANT

Five-time former Punjab chief minister Parkash Singh Badal passed away at 95 on Tuesday, April 25. He was admitted to Mohali's Fortis Hospital over a week ago after he complained of uneasiness in breathing. Here are some lesser-known facts about him.



### The youngest and oldest CM

- Parkash Singh Badal became the Chief Minister for the first time in 1970, he was the youngest Chief Minister of any state in the country i.e. 43 years.

- Meanwhile, when he became the Chief Minister for the fifth time in the year 2012, he was the oldest CM of the country. This time he was the oldest candidate in the 2022 assembly elections.

### Wife, daughter, son

- Born on December 8, 1927, in a village named Abul Khurana (now in Pakistan), he hailed from a Jat Sikh family.

- Prakash Singh Badal and his wife Surinder Kaur have two children Sukhbir Singh Badal and Preneet Kaur.

- His wife Surinder Kaur died in 2011 due to illness. Son- Sukhbir Singh Badal is an MLA from Fazilka constituency of Punjab and has also been the Deputy Chief Minister of Punjab.

- Badal's daughter is married to the son of former Punjab Chief Minister Pratap Singh Kairon.

### Parkash Singh Badal: Education

- He received his education at the Christian College in Lahore. Badal began his political career in 1947.

- In 1957, he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly for the first time from the Congress. He became a legislator a total of 10 times.

- In 1961, Parkash Singh Badal was included in the cabinet. He was the leader of the opposition in 1972, 1980 and 2002. He became the Chief Minister of Punjab for the first time in March 1970. Parkash Singh Badal is the eighth Chief Minister of Punjab.

- But amid allegations and counter-allegations, he had to relinquish the post of Chief Minister and after being elected to the Lok Sabha in 1977, he became the Agriculture and Irrigation Minister at the Centre. In 1977 itself, Badal once again got the opportunity to become the Chief Minister of Punjab. He completed his term as the Chief Minister of Punjab only once from 1997 to 2002. In 2012, he became the Chief Minister of Punjab for the 5th time.

### Parkash Singh Badal: Contribution

- Parkash Singh Badal has spent almost seventeen years of his life in jail for protecting Punjab, Punjabiyat and Punjabis and raising voice for their interests. Parkash Singh Badal has also been raising his voice against corruption.

### Parkash Singh Badal: Achievements

- In 2015, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award by the Government of India. In 2011, the Akal Takht conferred on him the title of Panth Ratan Fakhr-e-Kaum

- The Shiromani Akal Dal fielded the patriarch again from home turf Lambi in Punjab's Muktsar district for the assembly elections last year. He lost but entered the record books for being the oldest person to fight an election in the country.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying last respects to Parkash Singh Badal in Chandigarh on April 26; Parkash Singh Badal with Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Madan Lal Khurana in 1996; Modi seeking blessings from Badal before filing his nomination papers from Varanasi on April 26, 2019.

grassroots connect. His staff diligently kept a diary of deaths of even ordinary Akali workers across Punjab. And, Badal would later visit their households to express his condolences – a simple but emotion-imbued gesture that people never forgot and that over the decades cemented his credentials as a truly mass leader

In his moments of reflection, Badal often casually called himself an accidental politician. He revelled in regaling his supporters by narrating the delicious story of his political debut. It went like this: After graduation from Lahore's Forman Christian College, Pash, as Parkash Singh was addressed in his family, prodded by his father, a landlord, met his uncle Teja Singh who then was a minister in Punjab with a request for direct appointment as tehsildar (a mid-level revenue official). A few days later, Teja Singh called him to Chandigarh and handed him an appointment letter to the post. An elated Badal finished reading the letter and profusely thanked his uncle who then asked Badal to return the letter and tore it, much to Badal's shock. "Pash, I want you to be someone who will appoint tehsildars," he told Badal.

In 1947, Badal was barely twenty years old when elected sarpanch of his ancestral village in the politically crucial Malwa region. That was a stepping stone to the assembly which he entered for the first time as a Congress MLA in 1957. He later joined the Shiromani Akali Dal and emerged as a trenchant critic of the Congress, as he remained for the rest of his life. He suffered a setback when he shifted his base to the Gidderbaha assembly segment and lost to the Congress's Harcharan Singh Brar in 1967, the first election after the reorganisation of Punjab a year before. Then on, his career saw a steady climb and never looked back. He went on to become the youngest chief minister of the state in 1970, at 43

(a record that still stands).

He would become chief minister again in 1977, 1997, and then, for two successive five-year terms, in 2007 and 2012. When he was sworn-in in 2007, he was almost 80, but such was his hold on the state's Panthic pitch, that there was no talk of his son replacing him -- not then, and not in 2017.

People attributed his longevity to his mastery of the art of consensual politics that helped him tide over challenges. "He was a people's politician and dedicated himself to the cause of peasantry and rural society," said political observer Pramod Kumar. "He was the main architect of peace building and communal harmony in the 90s".

It was this approach that saw the SAD become an ally of the BJP in 1996, a partnership that would last a few years short of a quarter of a century. A pre-poll alliance with the BJP proved to be a formidable combination that changed the political and social dynamics of Punjab for next two decades. It stemmed as much from Badal's pragmatism as from his chemistry with BJP stalwarts Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani. More than a political pact, it was a social coalition of power sharing between two principal communities of the state.

In 2021, the alliance broke after the SAD walked out citing the farm laws and the farmers' protest -- and Badal returned the Padma Vibhushan, the country's second highest award that he was given in 2015. But the damage was done. His party lost the 2022 election, and he himself, then 94, lost his Lambi seat. Battered by two successive defeats in assembly polls in 2017 and 2022, Badal in his last years saw his once-powerful party struggling with an unprecedented crisis of political survival, ironically in its 100th year. By then, after being wracked by Covid, he was a shadow of his former self.

## What next for Akali Dal?



SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal breaks down while paying last respects to his father Parkash Singh Badal before cremation at Badal village in Muktsar district of Punjab on April 27.

**W**hat does the future hold for the Akali Dal after Parkash Singh Badal's demise?

Sukhbir Badal still wields a lot of control over the organisation. It is unlikely that there will be a change in leadership. Sukhbir may not have inherited Parkash Singh Badal's humble and affable demeanour but he has inherited a great deal of political guile from his father.

He's known to be a master at electoral micromanagement and this may help the party with Punjab's political landscape getting more fragmented. However, it is likely that Sukhbir Badal will be forced to concede some influence to other leaders and at least give a semblance of a collective leadership.

### Sikh bodies may assert more autonomy

Though still controlled a great deal by the Badals, top Sikh bodies like the Akal Takht and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee have been working with a degree of autonomy of late. In doing so they have actually prepared the ground for a revival in the Akali space, even without the SAD doing

anything.

This may be an indication of what lies ahead - a change in power relations between Sikh bodies and the Badals in favour of the former. Sukhbir Badal also may not mind letting the Akal Takht and SGPC take the lead, as their initiatives may inspire more credibility.

### Where does Akali Dal align nationally?

This question will assume importance in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Currently, the Akali Dal is facing isolation nationally, except for its alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party.

Its main challengers in Punjab - Congress and Aam Aadmi Party - are dominating discussions around anti-BJP coalitions at the national level.

Therefore sooner or later, Badal may feel the pressure to rekindle the alliance with the BJP.

There is a very real dilemma for Sukhbir Badal. On one hand, there is no doubt that the Congress and AAP are the main electoral adversaries of the Akali Dal, not the BJP. On the other hand, it is the BJP that seems to be trying to finish off the Akali Dal.

**Extremely saddened by the passing away of Shri Parkash Singh Badal Ji. He was a colossal figure of Indian politics, and a remarkable statesman who contributed greatly to our nation.**

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

**Shri Parkash Singh Badal was one of the tallest political stalwarts since Independence. His demise leaves a void. My heartfelt condolences to his family and admirers.**

Droupadi Murmu, President

**Received the sad news of the demise of Parkash Singh Badal... May Waheguru give place to the departed soul in his feet and give strength to the family to bear the loss.**

Bhagwant Mann, chief minister, Punjab

**Badal Sahab was the son of soil who remained connected to his roots, all his life. I fondly remember my interactions with him on several issues. I'm deeply anguished by his demise.**

Rajnath Singh, Defense Minister

**Sardar Badal was a towering leader who commanded respect across the states and party lines. His absence will be felt for a long time and the void created will be difficult to be filled**

Capt Amarinder Singh, Former Punjab CM

**It's an end of an era for Punjab and India has lost tallest statesman. Badal Saab was a symbol of Hindu-Sikh amity and secularism and nation is poorer in his passing away**

Naresh Gujral, SAD leader

# YOGA FEST 10TH ANNIVERSARY “EMERGES TO IMAGINE”

BY MABEL PAIS



Yoga class

Photo Credit / sedonayogafestival.com



Chair Yoga

Photo Credit / sedonayogafestival.com



Yoga in Nature

Photo Credit / sedonayogafestival.com

The Sedona Yoga Festival (SYF) celebrates its tenth anniversary with the theme, "EMERGE TO IMAGINE" leading the way to seek solutions that the yoga community can envision a peaceful, abundant, liberated, and equitable future for all. It aims at "true transformation." The Fest takes place at Sedona, Arizona (SYF2023 -SedonaYogaFestival.com), April 27-30, 2023.

**KIRTAN | KIDS YOGA | CEUS | EXCURSIONS | METAPHYSICS | ASTROLOGY | CONSCIOUS CONVERSATION | VENDORS | TRAUMA CONSCIOUS YOGA TRAINING | MEDITATION | MINDFULNESS | YOGA PHILOSOPHY | KRIYA | ASANA | SANGHA | ENERGY MEDICINE | AND MORE...**

With its famed red rock landscape and energetic vortexes, Sedona offers a unique opportunity for true personal transformation - many visitors to Sedona say that the shifts they experience here stay with them for a lifetime. That's why, in 2023, SYF will take place not only at world class performing arts facilities and retreat centers, and outside on stunning grounds, but also out on the land in the forests of Sedona that surround the small city. The Fest is offering what no other yoga festival can: An opportunity to practice and explore the eight limbs of yoga in this phenomenal landscape.

Participants gather in the morning for intention and group practice, and then disperse into the forest excursions, in-depth workshops, and active and accessible practices to nourish your soul and body. You'll have a chance to choose from yoga, meditation, workshops, and other deep explorations with some of the community's brightest lights - for what the Fest has always been known. Participants gather again in the evening for keynote addresses, panels, sacred chant, and celebration.

There is no question that yoga in the west has an appropriation and diversity problem. Part of this is certainly the adulteration of the practice as merely physical - a result, perhaps, of the co-opting of yoga by white and wealthy practitioners during the 1990s and 2000s as its popularity exploded in the U.S. This was codified by sexualized imagery and contortionist asana, resulting in a public perception of yoga that was as far from its origin as Patanjali is from expensive leggings.

In recent years, there have been efforts to return yoga to its roots, led by South Asian and BIPOC community leaders and their white allies. Focusing on diversity and inclusion - and the sacred intent of the tradition - is nothing new for Heather Sanders, producer of the Sedona Yoga Festival (SYF). Over the past 10 years, SYF has continually provided a platform to elevate the Festival's collective consciousness, by holding space and extending invitations to presenters from all corners of the yoga world. This year, however, Sanders is taking this dedication one step further with the creation of a programming team, made up of luminaries: Reggie Hubbard, Arundhati Baitmangalkar, Danni Pomplun, Indy Rishi Singh, Johanna Beekman, and Sanders.

Heather Sheree Sanders, festival producer, and co-founder says it is an event like no other. "The Sedona Yoga Festival aims to help provide the necessary tools to unleash your greatest potential through the practice of yoga. We pride ourselves in finding amazing teachers that are not always drawn to the festival circuit and curating a program unlike any other, where each attendee may plan their four-day experience from more than 150 offerings available on the schedule." The festival has classes and offerings suitable for every level of practitioner, adds Sanders. "From absolute beginners to experienced teachers, we have cultivated an audience of deep seekers of yoga. The event is attended by yoga and overall wellness professionals who want to apply themselves to the study of yoga. Conferences such as this can gather great teachers and allow the studio goer to deepen their relationship with the full breadth of what the practice of yoga has to offer. It takes discipline to cultivate a mind, body, and soul that is at ease, but that peace is contagious."

But SYF offers more than personal transformation and its event planners recognize the power of the platform, taking seriously the responsibility of sharing the multitude of authentic yoga practices in a way that represents the diversity of its practitioners.

**"SYF is laser-focused on representation because representation matters. If we truly want everyone to feel comfortable in exploring a yoga practice, we need to reveal the truth that people from all walks of life - all backgrounds, and races - are practicing, teaching, and benefitting from yoga,"** said Sanders.

The event will be held April 27-30, 2023, and there are several ways to be involved in this beautifully crafted event. From the ability to attend, sponsor or take part as a vendor, Sanders hopes it will be a life-changing experience for all who participate in the festival. "Yoga facilitated deep healing and transformation for me personally, so it is no surprise that I took the lifelong practice of bringing people together in the fields of arts, sustainability and community and brought that to my passion for yoga. The powerful vortex landscape of Sedona amplifies the effects of the practice, especially when we all practice together over a series of days, and I expect it to be uplifting, inspiring, and revealing."

## KIDS YOGA

Sedona Yoga Festival is delighted to offer a full weekend of open-to-the-public yoga activities for kids ages 6-13.

Programming is scheduled to coincide with adult classes.

So much fun to be had! Acro yoga, yoga dance, music, art, and much more. By donation.



Children's Yoga

Photo Credit / sedonayogafestival.com

Please note: Kids Yoga Instructors at Sedona Yoga Festival all have fingerprint clearance cards, so your children are in the best hands. The Festival authorities take the safety of children seriously. The staff and volunteers that run the SYF kids yoga program are experienced and professional.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

Mats and materials provided

Bring water and snacks

Friday - Saturday 8 am - 5 pm

Sunday 8 am - 5 pm

Classes are 1 hour long, supervision will be constant during open hours

Release forms are available on-site for parents

## SYF - IMMERSION

Learn more at [sedonayogafestival.com/immersions/?inf\\_contact\\_key=b748b62b5972523d028f607eb912f93f680f8914173f9191b1c0223e68310bb1](https://sedonayogafestival.com/immersions/?inf_contact_key=b748b62b5972523d028f607eb912f93f680f8914173f9191b1c0223e68310bb1)

## TRAUMA CONSCIOUS YOGA TRAINING

w/ Dr. Manmeet Kaur Rattu & Diana Cantú-Reyna, BSN, RN

This 20-hour yoga certification is a unique four-day immersive experience to develop a biological, heart-centered, and decolonial understanding of trauma, stress, and burnout. Surrounded by the gorgeous landscape of red rocks in Sedona, this program will offer participants insight and wisdom into cultivating trauma-conscious relationships within their communities. Through guided discussions, dynamic and interactive learning, movement, kirtan, and breathwork, attendees will walk away with an expanded awareness on how to best support personal and collective healing. This is an invitation for those seeking to lean into courageous and selfless service.

## OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this program, participants will be able to: Define trauma, stress, and the three states of arousal as described in polyvagal theory. Identify and learn current practices in yoga therapies for trauma and stress. Identify and understand social justice in yoga (i.e., implicit bias, systemic trauma, cultural appropriation vs appreciation, etc.) Define and learn strategies to better manage stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma with 10 practical tools for self-care. Be able to integrate a trauma-conscious lifestyle.

## TICKETS

For tickets to individual events or the entire festival, visit

[eventbrite.com/e/sedona-yoga-festival-10th-anniversary-tickets-334648080417?discount=TRUSTTHEPROCESS&inf\\_contact\\_key=db5dc731b97b69a2fb9d9e1fd9027e4680f8914173f9191b1c0223e68310bb1](https://eventbrite.com/e/sedona-yoga-festival-10th-anniversary-tickets-334648080417?discount=TRUSTTHEPROCESS&inf_contact_key=db5dc731b97b69a2fb9d9e1fd9027e4680f8914173f9191b1c0223e68310bb1)

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

# FILM FEST CELEBRATES STORIES AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

BY MABEL PAIS

Screening ATIN MEHRA'S 'Being Michelle,' among others

The ReelAbilities SPOTLIGHT AWARD to ACADEMY AWARD WINNING actor TROY KOTSUR

The 15th Annual ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York ([reelabilities.org/newyork](http://reelabilities.org/newyork)), the largest festival in the United States dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories, and artistic expressions of people with disabilities presents award-winning and premiere feature and short films at this year's festival.

Showcasing diversity through film during a weeklong celebration, ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York will mark its 15th anniversary from April 27 to May 3 at the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan ([mmjccm.org](http://mmjccm.org)) and multiple venues across New York City, as well as virtually. All presentations bring groundbreaking accessibility, raising the bar on inclusive film screenings and events.

## WHY REELABILITIES FEST?

Co-founded by Isaac Zablocki in 2007 ([linkedin.com/in/isaac-zablocki-3a534a2/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/isaac-zablocki-3a534a2/)), ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York puts disability in the spotlight by bringing the community together to explore and celebrate the diversity of the shared human experience through film and conversations that engage the public in promoting inclusion and diversity in film and beyond. This year's acclaimed film selections highlight a variety of important topics such as disability inclusion, human rights, and other social issues that push the limits of creativity and imagination and offer insightful reflections on the complexities of life with disability.

"ReelAbilities believes in highlighting impactful and creative storytelling as a powerful tool to engage and create change for both those who know nothing about the disability community and those who live it every day," says Isaac Zablocki, Director and Cofounder of ReelAbilities, and Senior Director of Film Programs at MMJCCM. "We are proud to feature authentic and first-person stories that bring these underserved images to the surface in the most responsible and engaging manner."

ReelAbilities strives to include all people. All films are presented with open captions and all venues are accessible to mobility devices. At the MMJCCM, the main festival venue, ASL interpretation, CART, audio description, hearing assist and information in braille are available at all times. For specific accommodations at other festival venues, individuals should check the venue website, or contact the screening venue directly.

The festival slate announced to date includes 10 features and 24 shorts in the film lineup, of which 70% are US and NY premieres, featuring works from 9 countries, and almost 50% are made by women filmmakers.

**REELABILITIES FILM FESTIVAL:** New York will continue to host its annual Industry Accessibility Summit on May 1 and 2, expanding its purview this year to highlight film and performing arts in partnership with The NYC Mayor's Office for Media and Entertainment. The festival will also bring additional special events and conversations relating to disabilities throughout the week of the festival including a Comedy Night at Gotham Comedy Club, Accessible beauty panel, and more.

## VENUES

This year's partner venues include the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan (MMJCCM), Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LC), DCTV Firehouse Cinema (DCTV), Maysles Documentary Center (Maysles),

Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI), Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Cinema Arts Centre (CAC), Manhattan College (MC), JCC Staten Island (JCC SI), and Jacob Burns Film Center (JBFC).

## FESTIVAL LINEUP

### FEATURES:

#### OPENING NIGHT

##### UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS

Dir. Juan Felipe Zuleta | USA | 2022 | Narrative | English | 1h 40m



Opening Night film, 'Unidentified Objects.'

Photo Credit / [mmjccm.org](http://mmjccm.org)

Peter's isolated daily routine is interrupted when his free-spirited neighbor shows up at his door, forcing him out of his shell and on an impromptu road trip.

Date(s)/Location(s): Thursday, April 27 at 6:30 p.m. (MMJCCM) and Saturday, April 29 at 4 p.m. (MOMI)

#### CLOSING NIGHT

##### OKAY! (THE ASD BAND FILM) - East Coast Premiere

Dir. Mark Bone | Can | 2022 | Doc | English | 1h 26m



Closing Night film, 'Okay!'

Photo Credit / [mmjccm.org](http://mmjccm.org)

Four musicians on the autism spectrum come together through their shared love of music to write, record, and perform their first album of original songs.

Date(s)/Location(s): Friday, April 28 at 7 p.m. (DCTV) and Closing Night Reception on Wednesday, May 3 at 7 p.m. (MMJCCM)

##### BEING MICHELLE

Dir. Atin Mehra | USA | 2022 | Doc | \*ASL/Eng | 1h 20m



Atin Mehra's 'Being Michelle.'

Photo Credit / [mmjccm.org](http://mmjccm.org)

When an incarcerated deaf woman with autism meets a prison life coach who is blind, art becomes a path for healing.

Date(s)/Location(s): Saturday, April 29 at 1:30 p.m. and Monday, May 1 at 8:15 p.m. (MMJCCM); Tuesday, May 2 at 3:30 p.m. (MC)

## THERE ARE 10 FEATURES INCLUDING OPENING & CLOSING NIGHTS:

### JASMINE IS A STAR

Dir. Jo Rochelle | USA | 2022 | Narr | English | 1h  
Date(s)/Location(s): Sunday, April 30 at 2 p.m. (MMJCCM) and Monday, May 1 at 7 p.m. (BAM)

### NO ORDINARY CAMPAIGN - East Coast Premiere

Dir. Chris Burke | USA | 2022 | Doc | Eng | 1h 22m  
Date(s)/Location(s): Friday, April 28 at 6 p.m. (MMJCCM)

### PUSHING BOUNDARIES

Dir. Lesia Kordonets | Ukrainian/Switzerland | 2021 | 1 Doc | 1h 42m

Date(s)/Location(s): Saturday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m. (MMJCCM) and Tuesday, May 2 at 7 p.m. (CAC)

### THE QUIET EPIDEMIC

Dirs. Lindsay Keys & Winslow Crane-Murdoch | USA | 2022 | Doc | English | 1h 42m

Date(s)/Location(s): Friday, April 28 at 7 p.m. (Maysles); Tuesday, May 2 at 8 p.m. (MMJCCM); and Monday, May 1 at 7 p.m. (CAC)

### SHADOW

Dir. Bruce Gladwin | Australia | 2021 | Narr | Eng | 57m

Date(s)/Location(s): Monday, May 1 at 6:30 p.m. (MMJCCM) and Wednesday, May 3 at 7 p.m. (JBFC)

### STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT

Dir. Kristen Abate & Steven Tanenbaum | USA | 2022 | Narr | Eng | 1h 28m

Date(s)/Location(s): Saturday, April 29 at 8:30 p.m. (MMJCCM)

### UPSIDE DOWN - International Premiere

Dir. Luca Tornatore | Italy | 2021 | Narr | Italian | 1h 33m

Date(s)/Location(s): Sunday, April 30 at 4:30 p.m. and Monday, May 1 at 7 p.m. (JCC SI)

## SHORTS

There are six reel short films categorized OUT OF THE BOX, five films categorized MENTAL HEALTH, five categorized FAMILY FRIENDLY, three categorized THE ART OF LIVING, and five categorized WITH AN EDGE.

## TICKETS

Some events are FREE. For updates, more information on the Festival and Tickets for individual films, and the entire festival, visit [reelabilities.org/newyork/films](http://reelabilities.org/newyork/films)

## REELABILITIES MISSION

ReelAbilities encourages inclusive language that acknowledges people's personal preferences. ReelAbilities supports:

Person-first language (a person with a disability, not a disabled person).

Asking people for their preferences and if they require assistance.

Creating an inclusive environment welcoming to people with and without disabilities

## REELABILITIES FILM FESTIVAL: NEW YORK

For more information, visit [reelabilities.org](http://reelabilities.org).

## THE MARLENE MEYERSON JCC MANHATTAN

Learn more at [mmjccm.org](http://mmjccm.org).

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

# SLO FILM FEST NUDGES FILM LOVERS TO IN-PERSON VIEWING

BY MABEL PAIS

Featuring  
Tribeca-Fest-Award-Winning Director NARDEEP KHURMI'S 'Land of Gold'  
Director ABHIJEET ACHAR'S 'Mysore Magic'  
Co-Director ABIDA CHOWDHURY'S 'The Reflection on My Screen'  
And more



Nardeep Khurmi's 'Land of Gold.' Photo credit / slofilmfest.org



'The Reflection On My Screen.'

Photo credit / slofilmfest.org

The 29th Annual San Luis Obispo International Film Festival (SLO FILM FEST) takes place April 25-30, 2023 with a robust film lineup.

San Luis Obispo Film Festival Director Skye McLennan said, "This year, the San Luis Obispo International Film Festival is focused on programming films and creating fun and exciting film events that are not available to our film fans every weekend at the multiplex. Seeing great films, meeting, and rubbing elbows with the filmmakers and actors responsible for them, and going to fun events built around all of it is what we promise to bring to SLO this year."

## SAN LUIS OBISPO 2023 FILM LINEUP

### OPENING NIGHT GALA SELECTION

#### BLACKBERRY

Director: Matt Johnson | Country: USA | Running Time: 2h 2m

The story of the meteoric rise and catastrophic demise of the world's first smartphone.

### CLOSING NIGHT GALA SELECTION

#### IMORDECAI

Director: Marvin Samel | Country: USA | Running Time: 1h 42m

Based on a true story, IMordecai is a comedy about a Holocaust survivor whose life changes when his son buys him an iPhone. Mordecai (Judd Hirsch) likes to fix things. Ultimately, through letting go, he begins to heal the things he cannot fix and turn the pain of his past

into something beautiful.

### NARRATIVE FEATURE

#### LAND OF GOLD

Director: Nardeep Khurmi | Country: USA | Running Time: 1h 45m

First-generation Punjabi truck driver Kiran is a soon-to-be dad. When on the job he hears pounding inside his shipping container and finds a young Mexican American girl inside, his already tumultuous life takes a drastic turn as he seeks to reunite her with her family. What begins as a road trip to Boston becomes much more as they form a friendship and teach each other unforgettable lessons.

### NARRATIVE SHORT

#### MYSORE MAGIC

Director: Abijeet Achar | Country: USA | Running Time: 14m

### FILMMAKERS OF TOMORROW

#### THE REFLECTION ON MY SCREEN

Filmmakers: Abida Chowdhury, Leslie Gomez, Christell Pelico, Zaira Ortiz | Country: USA; Running Time: 6 min

For a complete film lineup, visit [slofilmfest.org](http://slofilmfest.org).

### TICKETS

More information, Tickets & Passes are available at [slofilmfest.org](http://slofilmfest.org).

## AILEY ARTS CELEBRATE 15TH ANNIVERSARY WITH FREE DANCE & MOVEMENT CLASSES

BY MABEL PAIS

Do you know someone who wishes to participate in FREE classes, workshops and conversations to celebrate Alvin Ailey's 15th Anniversary Ailey Day?

classes, including learning steps from Ailey's masterpiece "Revelations," artist talks, art projects, and more.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater ([pressroom.alvinailey.org/alvin-ailey-american-dance-theater](http://pressroom.alvinailey.org/alvin-ailey-american-dance-theater)), founded in



Ailey class.

Photo Credit / NJPAC

Dancers of all ages and levels of expertise are invited to join NJPAC and Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs (AIE) for free classes, workshops and conversations at the 15th annual Ailey Celebration at the Arts Center ([njpac.org/event/15th-anniversary-ailey-day](http://njpac.org/event/15th-anniversary-ailey-day)), beginning at 9 AM on Saturday, April 29.

Led by former Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater members and Ailey Teaching Artists, dancers of all ages and skill levels will join in the fun with a variety of dance and movement

1958 by Alvin Ailey the famed dancer, choreographer and activist, has performed annually at NJPAC since the Arts Center's opening in 1997.

For the past 15 years, in advance of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's engagement at the Arts Center, Ailey Day has welcomed hundreds of dance enthusiasts from across Greater Newark to a day of Ailey-inspired dance classes and more, including a workshop with two former Ailey dancers, Nasha Thomas ([pressroom.alvinailey.org/arts-in-education/directors/nasha-thomas](http://pressroom.alvinailey.org/arts-in-education/directors/nasha-thomas))

and Amos Machanic ([pressroom.alvinailey.org/the-ailey-extension/faculty/amos-machanic](http://pressroom.alvinailey.org/the-ailey-extension/faculty/amos-machanic)), where attendees can learn the choreography of Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece, Revelations ([pressroom.alvinailey.org/alvin-ailey-american-dance-theater/repertory/revelations](http://pressroom.alvinailey.org/alvin-ailey-american-dance-theater/repertory/revelations)).

"This is always a joyful day, a chance for our community to come together to celebrate the history and the legacy of an iconic African American dancer," says Eyesha Marable, NJPAC's Vice President, Community Engagement.

Initially held in churches throughout the city, the 'Ailey Day' program now fills the Arts Center's downtown Newark campus with dance classes throughout the day, including specialized classes for children, and a limited-mobility dance workshop that utilizes chairs and props. Ailey's Teaching Artists will lead classes in jazz and Horton dance styles. Other instructors will offer classes that explore West African dance styles.

In addition, visiting dance instructors will offer an insightful glimpse into their work through a panel conversation, and attendees will be invited to take part in arts and wellness activities including children's book readings, health screenings, crafts and mosaic art making. The day concludes with a 'Show and Share' event, where

participants will have a chance to perform what they've learned in class.

"It's always a joy to share the legacy of Alvin Ailey and his signature ballet, Revelations, with the Newark community. I'm inspired by the connections made through the workshops on Ailey Day at NJPAC," says Nasha Thomas, National AileyCamp Director and Master Teacher for Arts In Education.

### REGISTRATION

While the day's events are free, registration is required. Community members are invited to register at [njpac.org/event/15th-anniversary-ailey-day](http://njpac.org/event/15th-anniversary-ailey-day).

Attendees will have access to discounted tickets to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's May 12 and 13 performances at NJPAC.

### NJPAC

To learn more, visit [njpac.org](http://njpac.org).

The Ailey Organization and Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs

For more information about Ailey's performances and programs, visit [alvinailey.org](http://alvinailey.org).

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

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*Ileana D'Cruz has announced that she is expecting her first child*

Actress Ileana D'Cruz has announced on social media that she is expecting her first child.

However, Ileana did not share the identity of her baby's father. The actress took to Instagram to post a photo of a black and white onesie.

"And so the Adventure Begins" was written on the onesie.

In another post, Ileana showed a close-up of a pendant with the word "mama" written on it.

Ileana was formerly in a relationship with Andrew Kneebone. Even though it was unclear whether the two were married or not, the actress referred to Kneebone as "best hubby ever" in an Instagram post. However, it was reported in 2019 that the pair had already parted up.

According to speculation, Ileana has found love again in Sebastian Laurent Michel, a model living in London and Katrina Kaif's brother. *Source: IANS*

## Rani Mukerji wins hearts with her pantsuit look

Pantsuits are undoubtedly one of the hottest and most comfortable fashion trends and our Bollywood divas are making sure to nail this ensemble with their unique touch.

On April 26, Rani turned muse for fashion designer Masaba. She did a photoshoot in a beige pantsuit designed by none other than Masaba.

Sharing the pictures, Masaba captioned the post, "Rani Mukerji in The New Collection. The new rock n roll print is paired over a casual spread collar shirt and is coupled with straight fit, wide leg trousers." She also added the hashtags - feels like summer, the future is print, think in colour, House of Masaba, Masaba Masaba and The Masaba Print.

Rani give a nerdy touch to the outfit by sporting roon-coloured glasses. For the glam, she opted for nude pink lips, kohl rimmed eyes and mascara-laden lashes.

She was also seen wearing several bracelets on her wrists.

Rani's bossy lady look stole netizens' attention. Heaping praises on Rani, a social media user wrote, "Wow just wow !!! Rani is looking like a rani.", "wow.great creation Masaba..the queen looks elegant," another one wrote.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Rani is currently basking in the success of her film 'Mrs. Chatterjee v/s Norway'.

Directed by Ashima Chibber, 'Mrs. Chatterjee VS Norway' talks about the life of an immigrant mother who fights against all odds to win back the custody of her children. Neena Gupta, Jim Sarbh and Bengali actor Anirban Bhattacharya played pivotal roles in the movie.

Expressing her happiness about the film's success, Rani told ANI, "It always feels great to see stories of our Indian women being heard globally. I have always tried my best to take the stories of our Indian women to a global platform. I am an Indian woman and I know our powers...so I always ensure that our stories are heard with my work." *Source: ANI*



## Ramayana adaptation 'Adipurush' to have world premiere at Tribeca Film Fest



Prabhas, Kriti Sanon and Saif Ali Khan-starrer film 'Adipurush' is heading to the Tribeca Film Festival, which is set to be held in Manhattan from June 7 to June 18.

The film, which depicts the Indian epic of 'The Ramayana' will have its world premiere at the festival on June 13 after this the film will release in India and globally on June 16. The film will be showcased in 3D format as 'Midnight Offering' at the festival.

The Tribeca Festival, presented by OKX and founded by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal, and Craig Hatkoff in 2001, brings artists and diverse audiences together to celebrate storytelling in all its forms.

Reacting to the news, the film's director, Om Raut shared: "Adipurush' is not a film, it is an emotion, a sentiment. It is our vision of a story that resonates with the very spirit of India. When I learnt that Adipurush has been selected by the esteemed jury of one of the prestigious film festivals in the world that I always aspired to be at as a student."

He further mentioned: "This very premiere at Tribeca Festival is truly surreal for me as well as the entire team as we get to showcase a story on a global stage that has been very ingrained in our culture! We are truly thrilled and excited to see the audience's reaction at the world premiere."

Actor Prabhas, who essays the role of lord Ram in the film, said: "I am honoured that 'Adipurush' will have its World Premiere At The Tribeca Festival, New York. It's an absolute privilege to be a part of a project that mirrors the ethos of our nation. To see our Indian films, especially one that is so close to me, 'Adipurush', reach the global stage makes me extremely proud not only as an actor but as an Indian too."





*Brad Pitt to race in British Grand Prix for Formula One movie*

Hollywood star Brad Pitt has been specially allowed to take part in the first parade lap in July alongside race car driver Lewis Hamilton in order to shoot scenes for his upcoming yet-untitled movie, in which he plays a veteran driver who comes out of retirement to mentor a rising star. "Watching Brad Pitt leading the field in the British Grand Prix will be an incredible and surreal moment for TV viewers and fans at Silverstone this July," a source said.

Hamilton's own production company, Dawn Apollo Films, is making the film and the driver, 38, is helping with casting. He previously said, "It's a cool project [and] spending good time with Brad is pretty epic (sic)." The Joseph Kosinski directorial venture will be released next year. The Babylon actor and the Top Gun: Maverick filmmaker previously attempted to collaborate for a racing movie with Go Like Hell (2013).

The story would have chronicled the rivalry between Ford and Ferrari at Le Mans. The tale would eventually reach the screen in the 2019 film Le Mans 66, which starred Matt Damon and Christian Bale and was directed by James Mangold.

**'Harry Potter' star Daniel Radcliffe welcomes first child with longtime girlfriend Erin Darke**

Harry Potter star Daniel Radcliffe and his longtime girlfriend Erin Darke have welcomed their first child. A representative of Radcliffe confirmed the good news to People Magazine. However, the gender of the baby or when the day when the baby was born is still unknown.

While Daniel and Erin are yet to make an official announcement of the arrival of their baby, on April 25, Tuesday the couple was spotted pushing a pram around New York City which confirmed the news of their newborn.

Last month, it was reported that Daniel and Erin are expecting a baby after they were spotted in New York, where Darke's baby bump was visible underneath her black zip-up hoodie.

For the unversed, both Daniel and Erin have been together for more than a decade. The couple who first met on the sets of 'Kill Your Darlings' in 2012, have been in a romantic relationship since then.

In the 2013 romantic biographical drama, 'Kill Your Darlings', while Daniel Radcliffe essayed the role of a poet called Allen Ginsberg, American actor Erin Darke played Gwendolyn, Radcliffe's love interest in the movie.

Both Daniel and Erin are very private about their relationship and they rarely make any red carpet or public appearances. Last month, the photos of Erin with her baby bump went insanely viral on the Internet. While Daniel isn't there on any of the major social media platforms, the photos of the couple,



where Erin's baby bump was visible, were shared by one of the fan accounts of Daniel's on Instagram.

In an interview with People Magazine last year, the 'Harry Potter' star opened up about his relationship with Erin, indicating that things are going great between them. While shedding light on his relationship with Erin, Daniel told the US-based outlet, "I've got a really nice life. I've been with my girlfriend for a decade pretty much. We're really

happy." The popular British actor, Daniel Radcliffe was 12 when he was cast as the bespectacled boy wizard in 'Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone' in 2001 alongside Emma Watson and Rupert Grint. He went on to appear in all eight films based on the books written by British author JK Rowling. More recently, he played the lead role in 'Weird: The Al Yankovic Story', for which he was nominated for BAFTA.

*Kim Kardashian admits she'd give up reality TV to be a 'full-time' lawyer*



Reality TV star Kim Kardashian does not mind quitting showbiz for being a lawyer "full-time".

"I would be just as happy being an attorney full time," she answered, when asked if she would ever consider a life without being in the spotlight.

"The journey just really opened up my eyes so much," she shared, adding, "It gets overwhelming because there's so much to be done ... I brought my sister Khloe [Kardashian] to a prison for the first time last week, and that was really eye-opening for her."

While not yet an official lawyer, The Kardashians star shared with moderator Poppy Harlow that she hopes her efforts in the movement will be "her life's most meaningful work."

"I hope so," she said, adding, "I always joke with my mom -- who's my manager -- I say Kim K. is retiring, and I'm just going to be an attorney."

Kim's reform work began in

October 2017 after learning about the case of Alice Marie Johnson, who had been in prison since October 1996 after being convicted for helping facilitate communications in a drug trafficking case.

She dedicated her time to freeing Johnson (67) and even met former President Donald Trump on the matter. Trump (76) commuted her sentence in 2018 and Johnson was released.

Since then, Kim has gone on to advocate for the release of several other convicts and revealed in 2019 that she was studying to become a lawyer.

In December 2021, she passed the first-year law students' examination ("baby bar") after first revealing in May 2019 that she was choosing to follow in the footsteps of her late father Robert Kardashian Sr. the attorney who got O.J. Simpson acquitted in the 1995 murder trial of Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman.

## HEAVY BATTLES IN SUDAN DESPITE LATEST TRUCE

**KHARTOUM (TIP):** Fighting raged in Sudan on April 28, despite rival forces agreeing to extend a truce aimed to stem nearly two weeks of warfare that has killed hundreds and caused widespread destruction.

In the capital Khartoum, where foreign nations are scrambling to organise mass evacuations of their citizens, Turkey's defence ministry said a military transport aircraft came under fire.

Witnesses reported mass looting as gunmen fired rockets in bitter urban battles in the western Darfur region.

There have been multiple truce efforts since fighting broke out on April 15 between Sudan's army led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commanded by his former deputy and fellow coup leader Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. All have failed. On Thursday, the two sides agreed to extend a repeatedly broken ceasefire for three more days.

The United States, Saudi Arabia, as well as the African Union, the United Nations and others, welcomed the rival generals' "readiness to engage in dialogue" in a bid to create a "more durable cessation of hostilities and ensure unimpeded humanitarian access".

Since a power struggle between Burhan and Daglo erupted into violence, fighter jets have pounded RSF positions with air strikes in densely packed districts of Khartoum, as fighters on the ground exchanged volleys of artillery and heavy machine gun fire. In some parts of the city of some five million people, trenches have been dug as gunmen battle each other street by street.

At least 512 people have been killed and 4,193 wounded in the fighting, according to health ministry figures, although the real death toll is likely much higher.

### 'FOOLISH WAR'

Fighting has also spread across Sudan, especially in Darfur, where witnesses reported intense conflict.

The Darfur Bar Association, a civil society group, said fighters were "launching rockets at houses" in El Geneina, the state capital of West Darfur, as well as reporting firing from "rifles, machine guns and anti-aircraft weapons". Fighting has spread "nearly all over the city" and fighters have "looted camps for the displaced and the university hospital" as well as setting fire to "markets, public buildings, aid warehouses and banks", the Bar Association added.

It urged Burhan and Daglo to "immediately stop this foolish war that is being waged on the backs of civilians across Sudan". The doctors' union said "dozens" have been killed or wounded in El Geneina, where the UN has said it has reports of the "distribution of weapons among local communities". (AFP)

# Togo's president says 140 people killed in jihadist 'war'

**GHANA (TIP):** Around 40 soldiers and 100 civilians have been killed in a jihadist "war" in northern Togo, President Faure Gnassingbe has said, in a ground-breaking interview.

The small West African nation, along with neighbouring Benin, Ghana and Ivory Coast, is increasingly facing threats of a jihadist spillover from Burkina Faso and Mali.

"We have paid a heavy price, especially our defence and security forces, who have lost around 40 men unfortunately, and then we add civilian victims, a hundred or so civilian victims in the country," Gnassingbe said in an interview with local private station New World TV broadcast on April 27.

The president's family has ruled Togo since 1967.

The interview -- his first since taking over from his father in 2005 -- marked mark the 63rd anniversary of the country's independence from France.

"What is happening to us is a form of aggression by two groups... one is called the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and the other, the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims," he said, referring to a group linked to al-Qaeda.

This campaign by "two terrorist organisations... is a form of war," said Gnassingbe.

The president said a three-tiered strategy had been put in place to confront the threat, including launching a military operation known as Koundjoare in September 2018.

"It was a preventive operation at first, which then became defensive, and now occasionally we are also on the offensive," he said.



The 56-year-old, reelected three times in polls contested by the opposition, addressed concerns over the government and military's choice to stay mum over the more frequent attacks when questioned by the media including AFP.

"There is something indecent about proclaiming someone's death," he said.

"It is not because we don't issue statements that we don't have successes. We do have successes."

Members of the political opposition and civil society have often criticised the authorities' silence over the situation in the north.

An official asking to remain anonymous recently told AFP that this was "a choice, because we have to protect our defence and security forces."

Thousands displaced

Gnassingbe warned the Togolese people "should expect a long fight with dramatic moments, which is inevitable in times of war."

"But I want to assure my countrymen

that in the end, we will win," he said.

In addition to military operations, he said the government had set up "an interministerial committee for the prevention and fight against violent extremism."

The aim, he said, was "to try and deradicalise or prevent radicalisation, because it is men, young people, who are being used to conduct these attacks."

The president said that nearly 12,000 people had been from their homes by the government in order to "better protect the border."

The region is also hosting people displaced from Burkina Faso, and the president said that about half of the 100 civilians killed in the jihadist "war" in the north were not Togolese citizens.

Earlier this month, the country's parliament voted to extend a state of emergency in the north, a measure that allows security forces and local authorities more flexibility to take urgent measures to combat threats from militant groups. (AFP)

## Bond actress Eva Green wins UK court case over acting fee of \$1 million

**LONDON (TIP):** James Bond star Eva Green on April 28 won a court case in the UK over her \$1 million (£810,000) acting fee for the never-made science fiction film "A Patriot".

The French actress had sued UK-based production company White Lantern Film at the High Court in London for the fee but the firm countersued, saying she derailed the £4 million project by making "unreasonable demands".

Judge Michael Green ruled the 42-year-old actress was entitled to the sum and dismissed the counter-claim.

"In particular, I find that Ms Green did not renounce her obligations under the artist agreement; nor did she commit any repudiatory breaches of it," the judge said.

Green, famous for her role as Vesper Lynd in 2006 Bond film "Casino Royale", was due to play a soldier.

She signed up to the project in 2018, but became increasingly uneasy as funding



issues meant that UK producer Jake Seal began to assume more control.

The star attended a trial in January, where messages between her and production staff were read out.

At one point, she blamed her "Frenchness" for calling a film director "weak and stupid" and accusing him of making a cheap "B shitty movie".

Max Mallin, lawyer for White Lantern, said Green had shown a "categorical and unequivocal refusal to perform" and

repeatedly made "unreasonable demands".

"I don't care about the money. I live to make good films. It's my religion," Green had told the court.

Green was also angry that production was shifting from Ireland to Black Hangar studios in southern England.

"I need my team around me so that I can handle anything evil Jake (Seal) throws at me", she messaged her agent.

"My team will have to pull out and I will be obliged to take his shitty peasant crew members" from nearby Hampshire, she added.

Green claims that she was not given enough training for the role and accused the producers of "cutting corners".

"Look at what happened with Alec Baldwin on the movie 'Rust'," she told the court.

"Producers cutting corners, no safety measures in place, and a young woman got killed." (AFP)

# Russian missile and drone attack in Ukraine kills 12 people

**UMAN (TIP):** Russia fired more than 20 cruise missiles and two drones at Ukraine early April 28, killing at least 12 people, most of them when two missiles slammed into an apartment building in the centre of the country, officials said.

The attacks included the first one against Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, in nearly two months, although there were no reports of any targets hit. The city government said Ukraine's air force intercepted 11 cruise missiles and two unmanned aerial vehicles over Kyiv.

The strikes on the nine-story residential building in central Ukraine occurred in Uman, a city located around 215 kilometres (134 miles) south of Kyiv. Ten people died in that attack, according to Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Ihor Klymenko. The Ukrainian national police said 17 people were wounded and three children were rescued from the rubble.

The bombardment was nowhere near the war's sprawling front lines or active combat zones in eastern Ukraine, where a grinding war of attrition has taken hold. Moscow has frequently launched long-range missile attacks during the 14-month war, often indiscriminately hitting civilian areas.

Ukrainian officials and analysts have alleged the strikes are part of a deliberate intimidation strategy by the Kremlin. Russia has denied its military aims at civilian targets.

Survivors of the Uman strikes recounted terrifying moments as the missiles hit when it still was dark outside. "All the glass flew out, everything flew out, even the chandelier



fell. Everything was covered in glass," resident Olha Turina told The Associated Press at the scene.

"Then there was an explosion. ... We barely found our things and ran out," she said. Turina, whose husband is fighting on the front lines, said one of her child's classmates was missing.

"I don't know where they are, I don't know if they are alive," she said. "I don't know why we have to go through all this. We never bothered anyone."

One of the 10 people killed in the Uman attack was a 75-year-old who was in her apartment in a neighbouring building and suffered internal bleeding from the shockwave of the blast, according to emergency personnel on the scene. Three body bags lay next to the building as smoke continued to billow hours after the attack. Soldiers, civilians and emergency crews searched through the rubble outside for more victims, while residents dragged belongings out of the damaged building.

One woman, crying in shock, was

taken away by rescue crews for help.

A 31-year-old woman and her 2-year-old daughter were also killed in the eastern city of Dnipro in another attack, regional Governor Serhii Lysak said. Four people were also wounded, and a private home and business were damaged. In Kyiv, fragments from intercepted missiles or drones damaged power lines and a road in one neighbourhood. No casualties were reported. The city's anti-aircraft system was activated, according to the Kyiv City Administration. Air raid sirens started at about 4 a.m., and the alert ended about two hours later. The attack was the first in the capital since March 9.

The missiles were fired from aircraft operating in the Caspian Sea region, according to Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander in Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

Overall, he said, Ukraine intercepted 21 of 23 Kh-101 and Kh-555 type cruise missiles launched, as well as the two drones. (AP)

## AUSTRALIA CLOSES OLDEST COAL PLANT, PIVOTS TO RENEWABLES

**SYDNEY (TIP):** Australia's oldest coal-fired power plant was shuttered on April 28, as the country -- a once-notorious climate straggler -- prepares for a seismic shift towards renewable energy. The Liddell power station, a three-hour drive north of Sydney, was one in a series of ageing coal-fired plants slated to close in the coming years. Built in 1971, Liddell provided about 10 per cent of the electricity used in New South Wales, Australia's most populous state.

Liddell's owner AGL said it would take about two years to demolish the hulking facility, which would free up the site for new clean energy projects such as a hydrogen power plant.

"More than 90 per cent of the materials in the power station will be recycled, including 70,000 tonnes of steel -- which is more steel than there is in the Sydney Harbour Bridge," the company said. For decades, coal has provided the bulk of Australia's electricity, but University of New South Wales renewable energy expert Mark Diesendorf said that stations such as Liddell were fast becoming unreliable "clunkers".

Besides being inefficient, highly polluting and expensive to repair, the continued widespread use of coal-fired power plants would make Australia's climate targets almost impossible to meet. Australia has long been one of the world's largest coal producers and exporters, and a series of governments have resisted pressure to scale back the industry. But the centre-left Labor Party elected last year on the promise of climate action has pledged that 82 per cent of the country's electricity will come from renewable sources by 2030.

A demands a drastic overhaul -- while world leaders such as Norway produce more than 90 per cent of their power through renewables, Australia currently sits around 30 per cent.

"The plans are for a fairly rapid phase-out," Diesendorf said.

"These stations are overdue for retirement and there's no economic argument for replacing them with new coal." Under growing public pressure to address the climate crisis, many Australian fossil fuel companies increasingly prefer to shutter old coal plants than keep them online.

Australia's largest coal-fired power station, the Eraring facility in New South Wales, is scheduled to close in 2025 and a handful more will follow over the next decade.

While these closures will test whether renewables are ready to fill the gap, a government report released Friday indicated Australia was heading in the right direction.

The Australian Energy Market Operator found that record levels of renewable electricity -- mostly solar power -- were already driving down both emissions and household power prices. (AP)

# 'I'd rather die': Syrians in Lebanon fear deportation

**BEIRUT (TIP):** Samer and his family thought they had found safety in Lebanon after fleeing Syria's war nearly a decade ago, but amid growing anti-refugee sentiment, Beirut handed his brother to the Syrian army.

Syrians poured into Lebanon after civil war broke out in 2011, with Damascus's brutal suppression of peaceful protests. With the regime now back in control of most of the country, calls have intensified in crisis-hit Lebanon for Syrians to go home.

Samer said Lebanon's army intelligence raided his brother's apartment in a Beirut suburb last week, detaining him, his wife and children and deporting them to Syria.

Like others AFP spoke to, Samer preferred to use an alias, citing security concerns.

Syrian authorities released the wife and children but arrested his brother,

who together with Samer had taken part in anti-government protests more than a decade ago.

He has not heard from him since.

"Our biggest fear is for him to disappear (in regime prisons), never to be heard from again," said Samer, 26.

"We fear we will meet the same fate: deported to Syria, where we could be arrested or disappeared."

Authorities say Lebanon currently hosts around two million Syrians, while more than 800,000 are registered with the United Nations -- the highest number of refugees per capita in the world.

Lebanon has long pushed for Syrians to return home, and has made several repatriation efforts for Syrians that authorities describe as voluntary.

In recent weeks the army has intensified a crackdown on undocumented Syrians, with some 450 arrested and at least 66 deported, a

humanitarian source said.

**WANT A SOLUTION :** Lebanon has seen anti-Syrian sentiment soar recently as some officials seek to blame refugees for the country's woes.

Lebanon has been in the throes of a devastating economic crisis since 2019 that has plunged most of the population into poverty. The local currency has tanked, while the World Bank has blamed authorities for misusing and mispending people's deposits.

Social Affairs Minister Hector Hajjar recently claimed there were "dangerous demographic changes" underway, warning: "We will become refugees in our own country."

Some municipalities over the years have imposed restrictions on Syrians' movement, while recent social media posts have painted refugees as criminals hungry for United Nations aid.

(AP)

## THAI WOMAN HELD FOR MURDERING 12 FRIENDS BY POISONING THEM WITH CYANIDE: REPORTS

**BANGKOK (TIP) :** Thailand's police have arrested a pregnant woman suspected of killing 12 of her friends and acquaintances using cyanide, reports said.

Saratat Rangsiwuthaporn (32), was arrested in Bangkok on April 23 and charged with first-degree murder over the deaths which happened over the span of several years.

She came under suspicion following the death of her friend Siriporn Khanwong (32), who collapsed during a trip with her to the western Thai province of Ratchaburi on 14 April, the Independent reported.

One of the victims targeted by Sararat had loaned her 250,000 baht (\$7,300), police said. The woman had lunch with Sararat, after which she vomited and fainted. However, she survived, according to a report in Wion.

Police said the victims include her former partner and two female police officers but did not identify the victims.

The Independent report, citing the police, said the murders may have been motivated by financial reasons.

According to the Mirror, Sararat, who is pregnant, denied all charges and experienced her blood pressure rising to 170-220 while in custody, according to her lawyer.

The suspect, who is the former wife of a senior police officer, was reportedly denied bail by the court as she is considered a flight risk.

She is currently detained at the Central Women's Correctional Institution, the Mirror added. (Agencies)

# Taliban kill mastermind of Kabul airport bombing which left 13 US troops & 170 Afghans dead

**KABUL (TIP):** A ground assault by the Taliban killed the Islamic State militant who spearheaded the August 2021 suicide bombing at the Kabul airport that left 13 U.S. troops and about 170 Afghans dead during the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, U.S. officials said.

Initially, neither the U.S. nor apparently the Taliban were aware that the mastermind was dead. He was killed during a series of battles early this month in southern Afghanistan between the Taliban and the Islamic State group's affiliate, according to several officials.

But in the past few days, U.S. intelligence confirmed "with high confidence" that the Islamic State leader had been killed, a senior administration official said on April 23. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence matters.

Late Tuesday night, Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder issued a statement confirming that the plotter had been killed by the Taliban. "The United States was not involved in this operation," Ryder said.

Over the weekend, the U.S. military began to inform the parents of the 11 Marines, the sailor and the soldier who were killed in the blast at Abbey Gate, and they shared the information in a private group messaging chat. The father of one of the Marines said the death of his son's killer brings little comfort.

"Whatever happens, it's not going to bring Taylor back and I understand that," Darin Hoover, the father of Staff Sgt. Darin Taylor Hoover, said in a phone call with The Associated Press. "About the only thing his mom and I can do now is be an advocate for him. All we want is the truth. And we're not getting it. That's the frustrating part."



Hoover said he and his son's mother, Kelly Henson, have spent the past year and a half grieving his death and praying for accountability from the Biden administration for the handling of the withdrawal.

He added that the Marines provided only limited information to him and did not identify the Islamic State leader or give the circumstances of his death. U.S. officials declined to provide many details because of sensitivities in the intelligence gathering.

The administration official said it was their "moral responsibility" to let the victims' families know that the "mastermind" and "person most responsible for the airport attack" had been taken off the battlefield. The official added that intelligence officials determined that the leader had "remained a key plotter and overseer" for the group.

Several officials said the U.S. played no role in the killing and did not coordinate at all with the Taliban. The administration official called the Taliban action "significant" and said the

U.S. only learned of the operation through its "over the horizon" intelligence capabilities.

Hoover is among a group of 12 Gold Star families that have kept in touch since the bombing, supporting one another and sharing information through the messaging chat. The chat was created by Cheryl Rex, the mother of Marine Lance Cpl. Dylan Merola, who died in the blast.

Rex, who has been a vocal critic of the Biden administration's handling of the withdrawal, told the AP it was through the chat group that they were informed late Monday about the killing as they awaited official confirmation from U.S. military officials.

The fallen service members were among those screening the thousands of Afghans frantically trying on Aug. 26, 2021, to get onto one of the crowded flights out of the country after the brutal Taliban takeover. The scene of desperation quickly turned into one of horror when a suicide bomber attacked. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility. (AP)

## PAKISTANI FEMALE DANCER SHOT DEAD IN PUNJAB PROVINCE BY EX-HUSBAND

**LAHORE (TIP):** A 26-year-old well-known Pakistani female stage dancer has been shot dead in the Punjab province allegedly by her former husband, police said on April 23.

The incident took place in the Hafizabad district of Punjab, some 110 km from Lahore, on April 22.

According to police, Munaza Multani alias Ashi, a stage dancer in the Multan district, was at her house in Hafizabad city on Monday when her former husband, Zubair, along with his five accomplices barged into her home and shot her dead.

Multani's mother Shahida Bibi told

the police that Zubair and Multani had a son from their marriage.

"Zubair divorced Munaza last year and was demanding custody of the child. He had divorced her for not quitting her profession (stage dancing)," she said.

Police said that her killers shot at her face.

An FIR was registered against Zubair and five others and a police team was formed to arrest the suspects.

Many young stage actresses/dancers have been killed in the Punjab province during the past few years either by their estranged lovers or ex-husbands. (PTI)

## Sri Lanka PM Gunawardena unveils special cover for Sita Temple

**COLOMBO (TIP):** Sri Lanka Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena unveiled a special commemorative cover for Sita Temple near the historic town of Nuwara Eliya on April 27 and laid the foundation stone for the meditation centre at Ramayana fame Ashoka Vatika site to boost tourism in the cash-strapped country.

Prime Minister Gunawardena was accompanied by Indian High Commissioner Gopal Bagalay and other dignitaries for the gala event.

"H.E. Prime Minister @DCRGunawardena accompanied by the High Commissioner and other dignitaries issued a Special Commemorative Cover for Sita Temple

**They also laid the foundation stone for a Meditation Centre at the Temple which is believed to signify the place of Ashok Vatika.**

near Nuwara Eliya in Sri Lanka today," the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka tweeted.

"They also laid the foundation stone for a Meditation Centre at the Temple which is believed to signify the place of Ashok Vatika in the epic #ramayana. The Meditation Centre will add to the facilities at the Temple and help attract more tourists from #India and other places," the Indian High Commission said in another tweet. (PTI)



# ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀ ਰਿਚਮੰਡ ਹਿੱਲ



95-30-118 ਸਟਰੀਟ, ਰਿਚਮੰਡ ਹਿੱਲ, ਨਿਊਯਾਰਕ 11419 ਵੱਲੋਂ



## 35ਵੀਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਭੈਅ ਪਰੇਡ

ਮਿਤੀ 29 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ 2023, ਦਿਨ ਸ਼ਨੀਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ 12.00 ਵਜੇ ਆਰੰਭ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

ਨਿਊਯਾਰਕ ਸਿਟੀ ਦੇ ਮਨਹਾਟਨ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਰਪ੍ਰਸਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਹੇਠ ਸਮੂਹ ਟ੍ਰਾਈਸਟੇਟ ਦੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ, ਪੰਥਕ ਜੱਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ, ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਸਜਾਈ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

ਆਪ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵੀਰ ਸਿਰ 'ਤੇ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਦਸਤਾਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਦੁਪੱਟੇ ਸਜਾ ਕੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਇਸ ਪਰੇਡ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਵੋ ਜੀ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਣੂੰ ਕਰਵਾ ਸਕੀਏ। ਸੰਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਰੇਡ ਦੇ ਰੂਟ ਉੱਪਰ ਫੁੱਟਪਾਥ ਤੇ ਖੜੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਪਰੇਡ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਾਨੋਂ ਸ਼ੌਕਤ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਵਧਾਈ ਜੀ।

ਪਰੇਡ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਨਾਮਵਰ ਕੀਰਤਨੀ ਜੱਥੇ, ਕਥਾਵਾਚਕ, ਰਾਗੀ, ਢਾਡੀ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਚੇਚੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਨਿਊਯਾਰਕ ਸਿਟੀ ਦੇ ਇਲੈਕਟ੍ਰਿਕ ਆਫੀਸ਼ੀਅਲ, ਸਿਆਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤਾਂ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

### ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਹਿੱਤ

ਸੰਗਤ ਸਵੇਰੇ 10.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੋਂ 12.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਮਨਹਾਟਨ ਦੇ ਮੈਡੀਸਨ ਐਵੇਨਿਊ ਅਤੇ 37, 38 ਸਟਰੀਟ ਵਿਖੇ ਇਕੱਤਰ ਹੋਣਗੀਆਂ, ਠੀਕ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ 12.30 ਵਜੇ ਮੈਡੀਸਨ ਐਵੇਨਿਊ ਅਤੇ 37 ਸਟਰੀਟ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇਡ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਕੇ 26ਵੀਂ ਸਟਰੀਟ ਵਿਖੇ ਖਤਮ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। 24ਵੀਂ ਸਟਰੀਟ ਤੇ ਸਟੇਜ ਸਜਾਈ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ ਜਿੱਥੋਂ ਢਾਡੀ ਜੱਥੇ, ਸਥਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਦੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਆਸਤਕਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਪੰਥਕ ਬੁਲਾਰੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਕਰਨਗੇ।

ਲੰਗਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀ ਦੀ ਮੈਨੇਜਮੈਂਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

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**ਬੇਨਤੀਕਰਤਾ : ਸਮੂਹ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ**

# Simple lifestyle changes to get rid of dark armpits

The dark underarms of many people make them feel ashamed and uneasy, especially while wearing sleeveless or exposed clothing. We frequently spend some time taking care of our underarms, whether it's shaving, using body wash, or applying deodorant to prevent us from smelling too bad. The underarm darkening can be brought on by a number of things, such as hyperpigmentation, hormonal changes, excessive sweating, wearing tight clothing, and poor hygiene.

Did you know that obesity is one of the main reasons for dark underarms? To help you reduce your weight to a healthy level for your height, discuss diet and exercise plans with your doctor. By taking care of your underarms, you might be able to lessen the look of black spots and feel more confident about your appearance.

## Exfoliate

Due to itchiness and ingrown hairs that may come from it, the underarm region may appear darker. Alternatives include waxing or hair removal products.

## Shaving

The underarm area can seem darker due to irritation and ingrown hairs that can result from it. Use waxing or hair removal solutions as an alternative.

## Natural Deodorant

Some antiperspirants and deodorants have harsh chemicals in



them that aggravate the skin and darken it. Change to a natural deodorant that is fragrance- and chemical-free.

## Maintain Hygiene

Maintaining cleanliness and dryness in the underarm area can stop bacterial growth, which can cause darkening. Every day, take a shower and completely wipe your underarms.

## Diet Check

Coffee and spicy foods, for instance, can make you sweat more, which makes your underarms

darker. As much as you can, stay away from these meals.

## Comfortable Clothing

The underarm area may become darker as a result of friction and irritation caused by tight garments. Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable materials to prevent this.

## Skin Lightening Products

Use products with ingredients like vitamin C, kojic acid, and niacinamide to lighten dark underarms. Creams and serums can also assist.

## Food

# Tomato Fish

## INGREDIENTS

250 gm tomato, 1 large onion, 2 teaspoon turmeric, 2 teaspoon ginger paste, 1 teaspoon coriander powder, 1 pinch salt, 1 tablespoon coriander leaves, 500 gm fish, 2 tablespoon yoghurt (curd), 1 teaspoon red chilli, 1/2 teaspoon cumin, 1/2 teaspoon sugar, 3 tablespoon refined oil.



## Method

- Remove any pin bones from the fish fillets and cut into large chunks. Rub 1 1/2 tsp turmeric powder and 1 tsp salt over the fish and set aside for 10 minutes.
- Boil water in a pan. Make a cross cut on the stem side of the tomatoes. Plunge the tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds and remove. Peel the tomatoes and chop them finely. Also, chop onions very finely.
- Heat oil in a large pan. Spread the fish pieces on the pan and fry till golden in color. Turn and fry on the other side as well. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
- Add the onions to the same pan. Saute for 5-6 minutes till soft and cooked. Add the turmeric powder, red chili powder, cumin powder, coriander powder, ginger paste, sugar and chopped tomatoes. Mix well and cook for 4-5 minutes till the tomatoes are tender.
- Remove from fire, cool slightly and blend in a blender to get a coarse paste. Return the paste to the pan on the fire. Add 1 cup water and bring to a boil.
- Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for a minute. Whisk the yoghurt and add to the simmering curry.
- Add the fish pieces along with any juices and simmer for 4-5 minutes. Add the chopped coriander and mix well.
- Remove from fire and serve hot with rice or rotis.

# Egg Salad Sandwich

A delicious dish, Egg Salad Sandwich is a healthy recipe made using tomatoes, onions and mayonnaise with bread slices and eggs! This breakfast recipe is a great sandwich and is a kids favourite! Try out this simple and easy to make recipe.

## INGREDIENTS

4 bread slices, 4 teaspoon mayonnaise, 1 pinch salt, 2 teaspoon ghee, 1/4 cup finely chopped spring onions, 1 handful chopped lettuce loose-leaf, 2 boiled, finely chopped egg, 1/2 teaspoon chilli flakes, 1 dash spice black pepper, 1 sliced tomato, 1 sliced Red onion.

## Method

Mix the eggs, mayonnaise, red chilli flakes, salt and pepper powder in a bowl. Spread this on 2 bread slices. Top it up with the tomato, spring onions, red onion and lettuce leaves. Cover with the remaining slices. Heat a tawa over low flame. Place the sandwiches and apply little ghee around the edges. Cook for 30 seconds on each side and remove. Serve with french fries.



# Tricks to hide your grey hair

Having a grey hair problem? Try applying grey hair chalk or braid a section of your hair with colourful threads, says an expert.

## Hair chalk

You can apply hair chalk as it is easily available and you will get stylish and colourful hair. Hair chalks are not harmful for hair as it is an instant application to hide your grey hair.

## Colorful threads

Braid a section of your hair with colourful threads and include the discoloured area in it. It will add a funky look to your hairstyle.

## Sleek side parted ponytail

Hide white hair of your middle part by making sleek side parted pony tail. It is very easy to do, if you are in hurry you can go for this stylish hairdo.

## Light accessories

There are so many accessories



that can be used to hide the grey hairs. Like artificial flowers, transparent stone beads in various colours, transparent head bands and bandanas.

## Curls

Use curling rollers or an iron to curl your hair or a particular

section of it and hide grey areas. Curls are best styling trick, because you can move and mould them easily, and will be spread in different sections of your hair.

## Side swept heavy bangs

This hairstyle will take care of those hairs which have turned white bang on top of your head and all kinds of parting will expose them out. A heavy bang brought from behind and swept cleverly to one side will do the trick.

## Bun it all up

If you have grey hair in and around the crown area, you can gather all your hair into an elegant bun and glam this bun up with bling accessories. There shouldn't be any parting in the front otherwise there are chances that white hair would be visible from there. For a casual day out, instead of a sleek neat bun go for messy buns, they will give your overall personality an edge and compliment your casual attire.

# Poor diet linked to 14 million cases of type 2 diabetes globally: Study

Poor diet contributed to over 14.1 million cases of type 2 diabetes in 2018, representing over 70 per cent of new diagnoses globally, according to a study.

Of the 30 most populated countries studied, India, Nigeria, and Ethiopia had the fewest case of type 2 diabetes related to unhealthy eating, the researchers said.

The analysis, published in the journal Nature Medicine, looked at data from 1990 and 2018, providing valuable insight into which dietary factors are driving type 2 diabetes burden by world region.

The researchers found that Of the 11 dietary factors considered, three had an outsized contribution to the rising global incidence of type 2 diabetes: Insufficient intake of whole grains, excesses of refined rice and wheat, and the overconsumption of processed meat.

Factors such as drinking too much fruit juice and not eating enough non-starchy vegetables, nuts, or seeds, had less of an impact on new cases of the disease, they said.

"Our study suggests poor carbohydrate quality is a leading driver of diet-attributable type 2 diabetes globally, and with important variation by nation and over time," said study senior author Dariush Mozaffarian, from Tufts University in the US. "These new findings reveal critical areas for national and global focus to improve nutrition and reduce devastating burdens of diabetes," Mozaffarian said.

Type 2 diabetes is characterised by the resistance of the body's cells to insulin, a hormone created by pancreas that controls the amount of glucose in the bloodstream at any given moment.

Of the 184 countries included in the study, all saw an increase in type 2 diabetes cases between 1990 and 2018, representing a growing burden on individuals, families, and health care systems.

The research team based its model on information from the Global Dietary Database, along with population demographics from multiple sources, global type 2 diabetes incidence estimates, and data on how



food choices impact people living with obesity and type 2 diabetes from multiple published papers.

The analysis showed that poor diet is causing a larger proportion of total type 2 diabetes incidence in men versus women, in younger versus older adults, and in urban versus rural residents at the global level.

Regionally, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia—particularly in Poland and Russia, where diets tend to be rich in red meat, processed meat, and potatoes—had the greatest number of type 2 diabetes cases linked to diet, the researchers said. Incidence was also high in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in Colombia and Mexico, which was credited to high consumption of sugary drinks, processed meat, and low intake of whole grains.

Regions where diet had less of an impact on type 2 diabetes cases included South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa — though the largest increases in type 2 diabetes due to poor diet between 1990 and 2018 were observed in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Source: PTI*



## Long Covid smell loss linked to changes in brain: Study

People living with long Covid who suffer from loss of smell show different patterns of activity in certain regions of the brain, a new study has found.

The research from University College London used MRI scanning to compare the brain activity of people with long Covid who lost their sense of smell, those whose smell had returned to normal after Covid infection, and people who had never tested positive for Covid-19.

Published in eClinicalMedicine, the observational study found that the people with long Covid smell loss had reduced brain activity and impaired communication between two parts of the brain which process important smell information: the orbitofrontal cortex and the prefrontal cortex.

This connection was not impaired in people who had regained their sense of smell after Covid.

The findings suggest smell loss, known as anosmia, caused by long Covid is linked to a change in the brain that stops smells from being processed properly.

Because it's clinically reversible, as shown in some people, it may be possible to retrain the brain to recover its sense of smell in people suffering the side effects of long Covid.

"Persistent loss of smell is just one way long Covid is still impacting people's quality of life. Our study gives reassurance that, for the majority of people whose sense of smell comes back, there are no permanent changes to brain activity," said lead author Dr Jed Wingrove from UCL Department of Medicine.

Researchers say their findings also suggest that the brains of people with long Covid smell loss might be compensating for this lost sense by boosting connections with other sensory regions: their brains had increased activity between the parts of the brain that process smell and areas that process sight (the visual cortex).

"This tells us that the neurons that would normally process smell are still there, but they're just working in a different way," Dr Wingrove said. *Source: IANS*

# Novel way to reduce harmful side effects of antibiotics found

Scientists have found a new approach that combines antibiotics with a protective antidote to reduce their harmful side effects without compromising the efficiency of the drugs.

The study, published in the journal Nature, analysed the effects of 144 different antibiotics on the abundance of the most common gut bacteria.

Presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) in Copenhagen, Denmark from April 15-18, the research offers novel insights into reducing the adverse effects of antibiotic treatment on the gut microbiome.

"The scientists identified a novel approach that combines antibiotics with a protective antidote to help keep the gut microbiome healthy and reduce the harmful side effects of antibiotics without compromising their efficiency," said Ulrike Lober, of the Max-Delbrück-Center for Molecular Medicine in Berlin, Germany.

"Despite our promising findings, further research is needed to identify optimum and personalized combinations of antidote drugs and to exclude any potential long-term effects on the gut microbiome," Lober said.

The trillions of microorganisms in the human gut profoundly impact health by aiding digestion, providing nutrients and metabolites, and working with



the immune system to fend off harmful bacteria and viruses.

Antibiotics can damage these microbial communities, resulting in an imbalance that can lead to recurrent gastrointestinal problems caused by Clostridioides difficile infections as well as long-term health problems such as obesity, allergies, asthma and other immunological or inflammatory diseases.

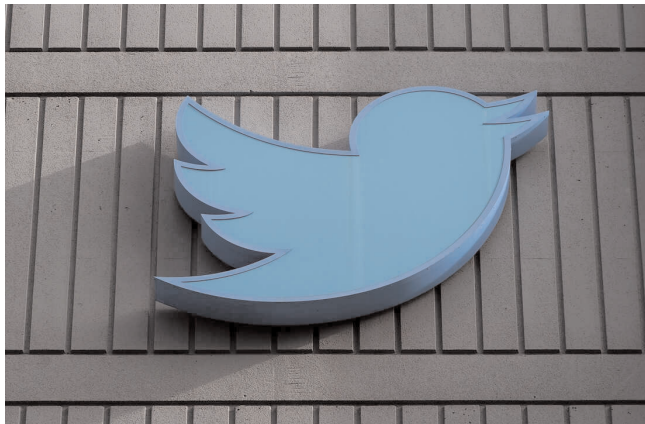
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## Twitter will label 'hateful' tweets, make them less discoverable

Twitter has announced to add publicly visible labels to tweets identified as potentially violating its policies, letting the users know the company has limited their visibility.

The company occasionally restricts tweets that violate its policies by making them harder to find or visible to fewer people.

The new labels will make those actions more clear, said the Elon Musk-run company.

"Restricting the reach of Tweets, also known as visibility filtering, is one of our existing enforcement actions that allows us to move beyond the binary 'leave up versus take down' approach to content moderation," Twitter said in a blog post.

"However, like other social platforms, we have not historically been transparent when we've taken this action," it added.

The labels are only implemented at "tweet level" and won't affect a user's account.

Tweets with new labels will be made less discoverable on the platform.

"Additionally, we will not place ads adjacent to content that we label," said the company.

While these labels will initially only apply to a set of Tweets that potentially violate our Hateful Conduct policy, the company plans to expand them to other applicable policy areas in the coming months.

"Our mission at Twitter 2.0 is to promote and protect the public conversation. We believe Twitter users have the right to express their opinions and ideas without fear of censorship," said the microblogging platform. *Source: IANS*

# Future ChatGPT models to replace many human tasks: Top AI scientist

The future versions of ChatGPT have the potential to replace many tasks currently performed by humans, leading AI researcher and cognitive scientist Ben Goertzel has warned.

Known for co-developing Sophia the Robot, Goertzel believes the new large language models that power generative AI will transform the world, reports ZDNet.

"You don't need to be incredibly creative and innovative or make big leaps to do most people's jobs, as it turns out," Goertzel was quoted as saying.

Automated AI tools could lead to industry reshuffling and reassigning job duties.

Drive-through fast-food workers, copy editors and designers are already impacted by AI.

"Tools like Grammarly decrease the need for human copy editors," Goertzel said.

China-based marketing and public relations agency BlueFocus is replacing third-party copy writers, designers, and short-term contractors to fully embrace generative AI like ChatGPT.

After the ChatGPT success, apps with the term 'AI Chatbot' or 'AI Chat' in either their app name, subtitle, or description on both Google and Apple app stores have increased a whopping 1,480 per cent (year-over-year) in the first quarter this year.

According to analytics firm Apptopia, just this year (through March), 158 such apps have arrived on the app stores.

However, jobs where the essence



is human contact, like preschool teachers, political strategists and artists, "will not become obsolete".

Today's generative AIs "are able to impersonate general AIs by just having such a broad variety of

training data. They don't have to go far beyond that training data to do amazing stuff. It's a testament to the power of computer networks and multi-GPU server farms," he was quoted as saying.

## WhatsApp's new feature allows adding descriptions to forwarded messages

Meta-owned WhatsApp has released a new feature, allowing users to add descriptions to forwarded images, videos, GIFs, and documents on Android, which is currently available to some beta testers.

According to WABetaInfo, this feature can come in handy if the current caption doesn't accurately describe the image or if you want to add a different description.

By removing the existing caption and replacing it with your own, the new description will be sent as a separate message. This will help ensure that the recipients know that it doesn't belong to the original message.

Users now will be able to add more context to the forwarded media they send, as this will enable them to provide a brief explanation of why they forwarded the media, and also share their thoughts, opinions, or feelings about the content.

Moreover, the report said that after installing this update, some users may experience issues when viewing status updates and downloading videos.

Meanwhile, WhatsApp has rolled out the "companion mode" feature to all beta testers in its latest update on



Android. Earlier, the companion mode was only available to a select group of beta testers.

This feature, an extension of multi-device support, has been designed to allow users to link their existing WhatsApp account to another mobile phone.

### WhatsApp to release new interface for screen lock view

To enhance user experience, WhatsApp always

looks for new ways to improve its interface. Now, according to a report, the Meta-owned platform is tweaking its screen lock view.

The development was reported by WABetaInfo, a website that tracks news and updates related to WhatsApp. To explain how the new interface would differ from the current one, the website shared this screenshot:

As seen above, the tweaked screen lock view would have the 'Use Face ID' label as a button, and the lock icon has been moved to the top of the screen.

This new view, as per WABetaInfo, is 'definitely more intuitive and modern.'

Some users, however, may face some issues with the redesign, as the new screen lock view may appear unexpectedly even when it shouldn't, said WABetaInfo, adding that the issue is likely to be fixed in the next updates.

The redesigned screen lock view is currently available only for select beta testers who have installed the latest version of WhatsApp beta for iOS from the TestFlight app. It will be rolled out for more people over the coming days.



## Adani to raise up to \$1.5 bn for funding green energy projects

Industrialist Gautam Adani's group is looking to raise \$1-1.5 billion for financing new green energy projects in the conglomerate's biggest borrowing since the group came under attack from a US short seller in January.

The group recently held a roadshow in Singapore, followed by another two-day roadshow in Hong Kong, talking to global financial institutions for the fundraising, sources with knowledge of the development said. The Singapore meeting was held with the help of 12 global banks like BNP Paribas, DBS Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank, ING, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Mizhuo, they said. US short-seller Hindenburg Research in January alleged accounting fraud and stock price manipulation at the Adani Group, triggering a stock market rout that had erased about \$145 billion in the group's market value at its lowest point.

## Tesla Power in pact with IOC to sell batteries

Tesla Power USA on Thursday inked a pact with Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to sell and service batteries at the firm's petrol pumps. It will enable Tesla Power to sell and service batteries at over 36,000 petrol pumps across India, the US-based firm said. "To start with, Tesla Power USA batteries will be available at the select IOC fuel pumps in the Delhi-NCR region," it added.

# Air India to hire over 1,000 pilots in a bid to expand its fleet



Air India will hire more than 1,000 pilots, including captains and trainers, as the Tata Group-owned airline expands its fleet and network.

The airline, which currently has more than 1,800 pilots, has placed orders for 470 aircraft with Boeing and Airbus, including for wide-body planes.

The latest Airbus firm order comprises 210 A320/321 Neo/XLR and 40 A350-900/1000. The Boeing firm order comprises 190 737-Max, 20 787s and 10 777s.

The carrier, which was taken over by the Tata Group in January last year, is hiring more than 1,000 pilots, according to an advertisement on Thursday.

"We are offering multiple opportunities and accelerated growth across our A320, B777, B787 and B737 fleet for captains and first officers, as well as trainers," it said, adding that more than 500 aircraft are joining its fleet.

Meanwhile, pilots of Air India have raised concerns about the airline's latest decision to revamp their salary structure and service conditions.

On April 17, Air India rolled out a revamped compensation structure for its pilots and cabin crew, which has since been rejected by the two pilot unions - Indian Commercial Pilots Association (ICPA) and Indian Pilots Guild (IPG) - on grounds that the airline, in alleged violation of labour practices, did not consult them before finalising the new contracts.

Tata Group has four airlines -- Air India, Air India Express, AIX Connect and Vistara, which is a joint venture with Singapore Airlines. The group is in the process of merging Air India Express and AIX Connect as well as Vistara with Air India.

## US Q1 growth slows to 1.1%, inflation rises

US economic growth slowed to 1.1 percent in the first quarter of this year, the Commerce Department said on Thursday, as the possibility of a mild recession increases.

The figure came in below economists' expectations of 2 per cent growth, while core personal consumption expenditure for the first quarter rose by 4.9 per cent, versus economists' projections of 4.7 per cent growth.

The economy grew by 2.6 per cent in the fourth quarter of last year.

The first-quarter GDP figure "reflected increases in consumer spending, exports, federal government spending," along with some forms of investment, the Commerce Department said in a statement.

Economic activity has been easing as the US central bank has rapidly raised the benchmark lending rate to tackle stubborn inflation, while the full fallout from recent financial sector unrest — following the failures of three midsized lenders last month — has yet to be seen.

Inflation and consumer spending figures could well keep the Federal Reserve on track to raise interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point next week.

First Republic Bank's continuing struggles, however, do raise the possibility that the central bank could pause.

"Inflation remains stubborn, and along with the continued strength in the labour market, it should keep the Fed on pace for a May and potentially a June rate hike," said Cliff Hodge of Cornerstone Wealth.



A restaurant on the outskirts of Nairobi skimps on the size of its chapatis — a flaky, chewy Kenyan flatbread — to save on cooking oil.

Cash-strapped Pakistanis reluctantly go vegetarian, dropping beef and chicken from their diets because they can no longer afford meat.

In Hungary, a cafe pulls burgers and fries off the menu, trying to dodge the high cost of oil and beef.

Around the world, food prices are persistently, painfully high. Puzzlingly, too. On global markets, the prices of grains, vegetable oil, dairy and other agricultural commodities have fallen steadily from record highs. But the relief hasn't made it to the real

# Why food prices are falling on world markets but not on kitchen tables?

world of shopkeepers, street vendors and families trying to make ends meet.

"We cannot afford to eat lunch and dinner on most days because we still have rent and school fees to pay," said Linnah Meuni, a Kenyan mother of four.

She says a 2-kilogram (4.4-pound) packet of corn flour costs twice what she earns a day selling vegetables at a kiosk.

Food prices were already running high when Russia invaded Ukraine in February last year, disrupting trade in grain and fertilizer and sending prices up even more. But on a global scale, that price shock ended long ago.

The United Nations says food prices have fallen for 12 straight months, helped by decent harvests in places like Brazil and Russia and a fragile wartime agreement to allow grain shipments out of the Black Sea.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's food price index is lower than it was when Russian troops entered Ukraine.

Yet somehow exorbitant food prices that people have little choice but to pay are still climbing, contributing disproportionately to painfully high inflation from the United States and Europe to the struggling countries of the developing world.

Food markets are so interconnected that "wherever you are in the world, you feel the effect if global prices go up," said Ian Mitchell, an economist and London-

based co-director of the Europe program at the Center for Global Development.

Why is food price inflation so intractable, if not in world commodity markets, then where it counts — in bazaars and grocery stores and kitchen tables around the world?

Joseph Glauber, former chief economist at the US Department of Agriculture, notes that the price of specific agricultural products — oranges, wheat, livestock — are just the beginning.

In the United States, where food prices were up 8.5 per cent last month from a year earlier, he says that "75 per cent of the costs are coming after it leaves the farm.

It's energy costs. It's all the processing costs. All the transportation costs. All the labor costs." And many of those costs are embedded in so-called core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices and has proven stubbornly hard to wring out of the world economy. Food prices soared 19.5 per cent in the European Union last month from a year earlier and 19.2 per cent in the UK, the biggest increase in nearly 46 years. Food inflation, Glauber says, "will come down, but it's going to come down slowly, largely because these other factors are still running pretty high." Others, including US President Joe Biden, see another culprit: a wave of mergers that have, over the years, reduced competition in the food industry. *Source: AP*

## Shree Ganeshaya Namah

## Monthly Horoscope: May 2023

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

**ARIES**

Ganesha says that there will be mental disturbance this month. For some reason, the mind will remain restless. Due to the rudeness of your nature, the situation of confusion will increase. In the beginning, there may be temporary differences with the life partner due to the seduction of a family member. Loss is possible from an important contract. Miscalculations can lead to loss. Commenting on everyone in the family can have a negative effect on the family environment. Interest will be seen in the spiritual and philosophical literature. Don't run away from problems, face them. Don't get into arguments. There are signs of estrangement between the opposite sexes. Avoid unnecessary speech. Do not take any big steps without checking. There can be ideological differences between the spouses. Parents may suffer due to running away. External contacts will be beneficial. Avoid hurting someone's self-respect.

**TAURUS**

Ganesha says that your financial condition may become a little normal this month. There will be a slight decrease in income, but the economic condition will be fine. Many new opportunities can be found. Someone's jealousy can force your problem. There can be tension between colleagues and partners. There will be unhappiness due to the non-discharge of duties of employees and co-workers. Don't invest for the short term. The sweet speech will work. There may be pain in the nerves and muscles. Avoid discord in the family. There will be a feeling of happiness when there are signs of speed in the works that have been stalled for a few months. Be careful about your image, otherwise, someone may try to spoil it.

**GEMINI**

Ganesha says that at the beginning of the month, there are chances of a long journey. There will be an increase in dominance in career and in the number of supporters. There are signs of an increase in intellectual power. Eyes will become moist due to the action of an opponent. Your confidence will remain strong even in adverse circumstances. Efficiency in work will increase. Business relations will improve. Economic power will expand. There is a sum of expenditure on happiness and prosperity. Will get the support of family members. Busyness in your career is being reflected. Any work will go on getting worse. There will be happiness and peace in the family. With the cooperation of the government or any big person, the background of some big profit will be formed. Brother will get new opportunities. The trend toward music and literature will increase. In the middle of the month, due to someone's stupidity, the lines on the forehead will shrink.

**CANCER**

Ganesha says you may get the support of senior officials. Relatives will be useful. A wrong decision will cause loss. There are possibilities of getting auspicious results in the third week of the month. Ego will spoil things. Any small thing will become a canker and will give mental tension. Prudent behaviour will be beneficial. Weight will increase. The mind will be distressed by the pain of an old friend. The sharpness of thoughts will be appreciated. Do not take financial risk,

otherwise, there may be loss. You will get someone's support. Speak with courage. New people will pave the way for profit. There will be family happiness. Inner happiness will increase. Religious interest will be visible.

**LEO**

Ganesha says there will be new opportunities in business. You will get the grace of a Guru or a Guru-like person. Fame will spread through new ideas. Your spirits will be high. Awareness will increase among people. You will get help from someone. Legal complications may arise. Positive results will be received in the third week of the month. A profitable deal will come. Maintain humility in nature. Do not dispute with seniors. Take special care of valuables. Help but don't lend. There will be benefits from cleverness. An overseas contract will do wonders in trading. Love relations will be intense. control your emotions. Take care of your health. Credibility will increase. Will get the support of the life partner. Women may have the problem of irregular menstruation. Pets have the sum of suffering.

**VIRGO**

Ganesha says that this month is good in terms of career. There will be family happiness. Desired work can happen. Old aspirations are likely to be fulfilled. There will be panic among the opponents. Philosophical interest will appear. There will be mental pain from rivals. Loss can increase due to sudden loss. The experience of an experienced person will come in handy. There will be happiness in the middle of the month. Father may be in trouble. Investments will get positive results at the end of the month. Will be interested in astrology. One's soft health can cause stress.

**LIBRA**

Ganesha says that the attraction toward the opposite sex will increase. You will get success in your career. Will get special support from friends. There will be the happiness of accomplishment. Your health will be fine. Efficiency will further improve and profit will come. The economic condition will be fine. Your spoiled relationship with your sister will improve. The irregular routine will affect health. Some disorders can bother you. Avoid harsh words and criticism. The child will be restless. Victory will come through love and forgiveness, not deceit. The body and mind will get rest. Interest in music and literature will increase. Salary cuts can be frustrating. There will be trouble due to the dramatic nature of the spouse.

**SCORPIO**

Ganesha says that harshness of speech can cause harm this month. There will be new opportunities in business. There will be fear of theft or the loss of a loved one. Will get the support of the life partner. Wisdom discretion will benefit. Pain in the legs and muscles is possible. You will be saddened by bad news related to an acquaintance. In the absence of complete information, do not get the faulty equipment repaired, otherwise, there will be trouble. New ideas of income will emerge. In the middle of the month, you will have mental stress due to unnecessary disturbance. Sister's obstinate behaviour and hot temper will cause trouble. There will be chances of profit from the opposite sex. Be careful in financial transactions. Avoid trying to make quick money. There can be some deception.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Ganesha says that there are indications of physical and sensual pleasures. Mental happiness will increase. Time is better than one medium for a career. Wishes will

get wings. There can be financial loss in the second week. Domestic tension is possible. There can be a mole in a small dispute. There will be a decrease in confidence. Experienced people will be contacted. Marital happiness will be moderate to best. There will be uneasiness due to the negative behaviour of the father's family members. This month the attraction towards the opposite sex will increase. The third week will be as complicated as a jalebi. A positive situation will be created. Problems will arise due to the mistakes of colleagues. Sudden profit is possible at the end of the month.

**CAPRICORN**

Ganesha says You will get the fruits of your hard work in your career. In the first half of the month, any failure can bother you. There will be trouble due to false accusations. There will be mental tension. Caution is necessary for following the advice of others. There are indications of economic benefits from short-term business, both income and expenses will increase. There can be tension in financial transactions. A business deal will go bad. There can be tension with partners or team members. There will be sorrow due to the anger of the spouse. Keep your emotions under control. An old, complicated matter will be resolved. be careful about your health. Be careful with valuables and essentials. There can be trouble due to thoughts different from yours. Mental capacity will increase. Don't let yourself lose faith. Don't get into a dispute with anyone without any reason.

**AQUARIUS**

Ganesha says that the economic condition will be moderate, yet the mind will remain restless regarding money. Vigilance is necessary at the end of the month. An old, spoiled relationship can get spoiled. Always stay away from the worry and criticism of your spouse. The child will go on a long journey and due to laziness, the mind will be restless due to studies. The harsh words of a friend can pierce the heart. The family environment will be moderate. Obstacles will come this month, but they will go away. Any news related to someone close can increase your restlessness. There will be an increase in ideological power in the third week. Due to the non-availability of essential items, the atmosphere of the house may become disturbed. Government people will be benefited. There will be intimacy with high officials, and you will get the benefit of this. Inner qualities will come to the fore. Ignorance can cause damage. There will be an increase in prestige at the end of the month.

**PISCES**

Ganesha says that today your speech and intelligence will develop. Old lovers can come in contact again. With intelligence and tact, you will get many wonderful results. Lack of new income can cause stress. Someone's advice can do wonders. A correct prediction will give miraculous results in your career. Disappointment will increase due to interruption in work in the middle of the month. Uneasiness can increase due to the sorrow of the spouse. Supernatural inner strength will appear in the third week. There will be momentary tension in relations with loved ones. Be careful about reputation. Someone's love will be passionate. The way to get the stalled money will be made. Be careful in big decisions, otherwise, a small mistake can cost you dearly. Expert opinion is necessary before starting a new job. There will be happiness for sons and daughters. The praise of the boss will increase enthusiasm. An opponent will praise. Spoiled relationships will gradually improve. Don't doubt unnecessarily, otherwise, there can be long-term damage to the relationship.



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR  
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**The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope by Nastur Bejan Daruwalla**

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MAY 1 TO MAY 7, 2023



**ARIES:** Ganesha says that the people of Aries may face some problems at the beginning of the week, but the second half will prove to be very auspicious for you. During that time, you will be successful in improving your work area. At the beginning of the week, due to lack of timely support from close friends and colleagues, the mind may be a little disappointed. During this time, you will need to fulfill your family responsibilities properly. From the point of view of health also, this time can be a bit painful for you. You can be a victim of seasonal diseases, in this case, keep food and routine right. In the second half of the week, employed people will get the full support of both seniors and juniors in the field. People connected abroad can get unexpected benefits. There can be profit from buying and selling land and buildings. There will be intensity in love relations. Sweetness will remain in married life. Normal happiness and cooperation will remain on the child's side.



**TAURUS:** Ganesha says that this week, the natives of Taurus can get success in the work done, even if it is late. New sources of income can be created at the beginning of the week. This week can be normal in terms of health and you can get full support of luck. More time for women will be spent in worship or auspicious work. In the second half of the week, there will be a great success in economic matters. The decision can also come in your favor in matters related to the court. However, be careful while signing any paper and sign only after reading and understanding. There will be an increase in material comforts and resources in the family.



**GEMINI:** Ganesha says that this week is going to bring happiness and good fortune to the people of Gemini. Good news can be received from the child side at the beginning of the week. Those who are preparing for competitive exams will also get some good news. During this, you can get the full results of hard work and effort. However, avoid taking any big step by getting excited or getting carried away by emotions. Especially do not make the mistake of ignoring the feelings of family members. Desired progress will be seen in both career and business. This week will be good from the point of view of income, but the expenditure will also be in the same proportion. At the end of the week, you can buy any expensive item related to comfort. There will be strength in a love relationship. Sweetness will remain in married life.



**CANCER:** Ganesha says the first part of the week is going to be better for Cancer people. At the beginning of the week, you may see sudden progress in your career business. There will be relief in matters related to court-court. The opponents themselves may come to you to initiate the agreement. This week, working women may face some difficulties in coordinating between home and office. In the second half of the week, there will be an excess of work in the workplace. Due to some obstacles in the planned work, the mind will remain a little upset. During this, more hard work and effort will be required for success in work. Take a step forward carefully in a love relationship, otherwise, you may get into unnecessary trouble. To keep married life sweet, do not ignore the feelings of your spouse. There will be mental concerns about the health of an elderly person in the house.



**LEO:** Ganesha says the people of Leo zodiac may have to take full care of the fact that if caution is removed, an accident happens. This week, you will need to work harder to get the desired success in the field of employment. Beware of hidden enemies in the workplace and do not pay attention to the small things people do. During this time, your opponents may try to distract you from your goal. Drive carefully this week and take full care. There is a possibility of an old disease emerging once again. If you get an opportunity to settle the case going on in the court outside, do not miss it at all. Proceed thoughtfully in the love affair and avoid interfering excessively in the personal life of the love partner. In difficult times, your life partner will be with you like a shadow.



**VIRGO:** Ganesha says for the people of Virgo, this week can be like the fulfillment of dreams. At the beginning of the week, good news related to career business can be heard. For those who have been waiting for their transfer or promotion for a long time, their wish can be fulfilled this week. At the beginning of the week itself, it is possible to meet a senior and influential person, with the help of which profitable plans will be made in the future. During this period, through your intelligence and hard work, you will be able to make progress in your field of work, career, business, etc. This week, more money can be spent out of pocket on things related to comfort. Problems related to land-building will go away. You will get the happiness of ancestral property. In the second half of the week, some health-related problems may emerge. Love relations will be strong and there will be an opportunity to spend quality time with the love partner.



**LIBRA:** Ganesha says that at the beginning of the week, you may have to travel long or short distances in connection with work. During this time new sources of your income will be created, but the excess of expenditure can be a bit high. The behavior of relatives and best friends couldn't be more positive. The mind will remain troubled due to not getting timely help from relatives. Those who have been wandering for employment for a long time may have to wait a little longer to get the desired success. In the second half of the week, do not take any decision related to home or business in haste. The interference of a third person in love affairs can be the cause of your troubles. Try to solve any problem through dialogue. A spouse's health can become a major cause of worry.



**SCORPIO:** Ganesha says this week is a sign of being careful with the people of the Scorpio zodiac. If you are thinking of changing the job or investing money somewhere in the business, then before taking such a decision, do consult your relatives once. Think carefully before taking any major decision, otherwise, you may have to repent later. While taking decisions on any matter related to family, take full care of the feelings of your relatives. During this, it would be appropriate to move ahead by meeting friends and family members. Do not disclose your plans in the workplace; otherwise, opponents may put obstacles in it. Take a step forward with caution in your love affair; otherwise, things may get spoiled. At the end of the week, there can be a big concern regarding the child side. Take full care of your health and routine.



**SAGITTARIUS:** Ganesha says the week has brought good fortune for the people of Sagittarius. At the beginning of the week, with the help of a close friend or influential person, you may feel relieved by completing a long pending work. There will be full cooperation of senior and junior colleagues in the field. The mind will be happy by getting the desired position or work. The power of people associated with politics will increase. There will be an increase in respect etc. in the field of social prestige. In the second half of the week, you may have to run a lot in connection with the purchase and sale of property like land, vehicle, house, etc., but your hard work will give you both success and profit. Long or short-distance travel with family is possible at the end of the week. The journey will prove to be pleasant. You will continue to receive maximum happiness and cooperation from the parents.

*contd on page 36*

## BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MAY 1 TO MAY 7 BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

### MAY 1

Ganesha says you are quiet, tactile and sensory. You have a deep appreciation for beauty, and you often express themselves through their clothing, home decor, and other aesthetic choices. You are also known for your patience and your ability to work hard over long periods of time without losing focus or motivation. You value your freedom and are often willing to take risks in order to achieve your goals. You also have a deep appreciation for the arts and may be drawn to creative careers or hobbies.

### MAY 2

Ganesha says you are very determined and tenacious. You are not easily deterred by setbacks or obstacles and are often able to overcome challenges through sheer force of will. You are also known for

your strong intuition and your ability to read people and situations with ease. You also have a deep sense of purpose and are driven by a desire to make a positive impact in the world.

### MAY 3

Ganesha says you are often quite practical and grounded. You have a strong sense of realism and are able to see things as they truly are, without getting caught up in fantasies or illusions. You are also known for your love of nature and your appreciation for the simple pleasures in life. You also have a deep appreciation for the natural world and may enjoy spending time outdoors or pursuing environmentally-friendly hobbies.

### MAY 4

Ganesha says you are quite magnetic and charismatic. You have a natural charm and warmth that draws others to them and are often very

popular in social situations. You are also known for their determination and their ability to persevere in the face of adversity. You also have a deep sense of creativity and may be drawn to artistic or musical pursuits.

### MAY 5

Ganesha says you are very versatile and adaptable which may help you in future. You are able to thrive in a variety of different environments and situations, and you are often able to learn quickly and apply your knowledge in practical ways. You are also known for your sense of humor and your ability to make others laugh. You also have a strong sense of humor and may use it as a way of coping with stress or difficult situations.

### MAY 6

Ganesha says your analytical and logical mind will give you more opportunity. You have a strong mind

for problem-solving and are able to approach complex issues with clarity and precision. You are also known for your practicality and your ability to make sound decisions based on practical considerations. You will be full of happiness. You need to take care of your health and have to do some activity to keep your mental health and physical health good.

### MAY 7

Ganesha says people born on this day have a clear sense of purpose and are willing to work hard to achieve their goals. You are also known for your loyalty and your ability to form deep, meaningful relationships with others. You often have a strong appreciation for beauty and aesthetics and may pursue creative hobbies or interests as a way of expressing themselves. strong interest in spirituality or mysticism.

### CONTD FROM PAGE 35



### CAPRICORN :

Ganesha says the people of Capricorn who were worried about the progress of careers and business, their wishes can be fulfilled this week. Seniors in the workplace will appreciate your work. You may get some important responsibility. Earlier investment in any scheme or business will bring profit. Students engaged in the preparation for examination competitions can get good news. In the second half of the week, due to the arrival of a dear person in the house, there will be an atmosphere of happiness. Any auspicious work can be completed in the family or there will be an opportunity to participate in any auspicious occasion. Material comforts will increase. In matters related to love affairs, there will be a need to maintain better coordination with the love partner. Happiness and cooperation will remain with the spouse.



### AQUARIUS :

Ganesha says the people of Aquarius should take full care of their pockets while spending this week. At the beginning of the week, more money can be spent out of pocket on things related to amenities. If you are thinking of buying a new land, building, or vehicle, then take this decision very carefully. The help and advice of a friend will prove to be very effective in taking the business forward. In the first half of the week, long or short-distance travel is possible with the spouse. The journey will prove to be enjoyable and create new relationships. In the second half of the week, the mind will be worried about the health of an elderly person in the house. During this, be alert of the

opponents in the workplace and avoid making any such mistake, due to which there will be a decrease in your social prestige. There is a need to make better coordination with the love partner in a love affair. Sweetness will remain in married life.



**PISCES :** Ganesha says that this week is going to be very auspicious for the people of Pisces. At the

beginning of the week, there can be chances of profit and progress. During this time you can be successful in influencing others with your speech and behavior. There will be harmony with siblings. If you were planning to buy a land or building for a long time, then your wish may be fulfilled this week. You can get full support of your parents. With the help of best friends, there will be chances of profit in the

workplace or business. Students engaged in the preparation for examinations and competitions can achieve great success. Their interest in studies will increase. You will get success in a love affair. Mutual trust will increase with the love partner. You will have a pleasant time with the spouse. Health will be normal.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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# Janki or Sita Navami

**S**ita Navami is an important day of Hindu religion. This day is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Goddess Sita. Married women observe a fast on the day of Sita Navami and pray for the long life of their husbands. Sita Navami is also known as Sita Jayanti and Janaki Navami. Sita Jayanti is celebrated on the ninth day of Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month.

It is believed that Mother Sita was born on Tuesday in Pushya Nakshatra. Goddess Sita was married to Lord Rama. Lord Rama was also born on Navami Tithi during Shukla Paksha of Chaitra month. In the Hindu calendar, Sita Jayanti comes one month after Ram Navami.

Goddess Sita was the adopted daughter of King Janak of Mithila. Hence this day is also known as Janaki Navami. According to Hindu mythology, when King Janaka was plowing the land to perform a yajna, he found a baby girl in a gold coffin. A plowed land was called 'Sita' so King Janak named the girl Sita.

On the day of Sita Navami, special worship and rituals are performed in Lord Rama and Janaki temples across the country. Temples are decorated with



## Important information

**Janki or Sita Navami 2023**

**Saturday, 29 April 2023**

**Navami Tithi Begins - 28 April 2023 at 04:01 PM**

**Navami Tithi Ends - 29 April 2023 at 06:22 PM**

flowers and lights. Bhajan programs are also organized at various places after the recitation of Ramayana. Some take out Ram Rath Yatra through the temple and chant 'Jai Siya Ram' and sing devotional songs all the way.

## Sita Navami Worship

Goddess Sita is worshiped on the day of Sita Navami. Married women observe a fast on this day and pray for the long life of their husbands. It is believed that observing Sita Navami fast brings virtues like modesty, motherhood, sacrifice and dedication in a person. Worshiping Sita and Lord Rama together brings happiness and peace in married life.

# Mohini Ekadashi

**M**ohini Ekadashi is a Hindu holy day, which falls on the Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month or it can be said that Ekadashi of Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month is called Mohini Ekadashi. It is said that this day is the best day to destroy all sins.

Dharmaraja Yudhishtira had asked Lord Krishna, what is the name of Ekadashi of Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month? Shri Krishna said, O Rajeshwar! The name of this Ekadashi is Mohini. I tell you a story that Guru Vashist had told to Shri Ramchandraji. Once Shri Ram said, O Gurudev! Describe a vow that will destroy all sin and misery. I have spent a lot of time in disconnection of Sita.

Maharishi Vasistha said - O Ram! The name of Ekadashi that falls in Vaishakh month is Mohini Ekadashi. By observing this, a person is freed from all sins and evil, and is also freed from attachment. Love is anything, it makes a person weak. Therefore, the fast of Mohini Ekadashi is very good for a person who wishes to get rid of attachment.

## The story of Mohini Ekadashi Vrat

A king had five sons. Sumna, Dutiman, Medhavi, Sukrit and Dhrshtbuddhi. Dhrshtbuddhi was the fifth son, he was a very adulterant, a misogynist, an insult to the elders. He had great attachment in gambling and other miseries. He would be eager to meet prostitutes and wasting the father's money on the path of injustice. The king got fed up and drove him out of his kingdom. He lived in the jungles and wandered. One day, under the sanskars of a previous birth, he wandered away, hungry and thirsty, he reached the ashram of Maharishi Koundinya. The sage explained to him the importance of satsangati. This changed the heart of that Dhrshtbuddhi. He repented of his sinful deeds. Then Maharishi Koundinya advised him to observe Vaishakh Shukla Mohini Ekadashi fast. With the effect of fasting, the intellect of Dhrshtbuddhi became clean. Thus he was freed from his sins and sorrows. Even today, this fast is performed with reverence.

## What are The Rituals of Mohini Ekadashi?

The devotees observe a silent vow or a strict Mohini Ekadashi fast on this particular day.



The observers are required to wake up early in the morning and get dressed up in clean attire after taking a shower.

All the rituals of Mohini Ekadashi Fast initiate on the eve of Dashami (tenth day).

On this particular day, observers are required to consume a single satvik meal and that too before the period of sunset.

The Vrat continues till the time when Ekadashi tithi ends.

During the observance of Mohini Ekadashi Vrat, the observers are restricted to perform any kind of sinful or evil deed and are also restricted to speak lies.

The fast concludes on the eve of Dwadashi which is the twelfth day. All the observers are required to make some donations and offer food to the Brahmins before concluding their fast.

The observers are not allowed to sleep during the night. They must spend their entire time reciting Mantras in order to please Lord Vishnu.

## Important information

**Mohini Ekadashi Vrat**

**Monday, 01 May 2023**

**Mohini Ekadashi Begins : 30 April 2023 at 08:28 PM**

**Mohini Ekadashi Ends : 01 May 2023 at 10:09 PM**

Reciting of 'Vishnu Sahasranama' is considered as highly auspicious.

On this particular day, devotees worship Lord Vishnu with great zeal and immense devotion.

Once all the rituals are finished, devotees perform aarti.

Performing charity on the eve of Mohini Ekadashi is regarded as highly rewarding. The observer should donate food, clothes, and money to the Brahmins.

Devotees also organize a 'Brahman Bhoj' as a part of the donation as it is believed the individuals who perform charity and donations on the eve of this festival never go to hell after their death.

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

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# Mizoram: Hidden gem of the North-East

Mizoram is one of the states of Northeast India, with Aizawl as its capital. The name is derived from Mi (people), Zo (hill) and Ram (land), and thus Mizoram implies "land of the hill people". In the northeast, it is the southern most landlocked state sharing borders with three of the seven sister states, namely Tripura, Assam, Manipur. The state also shares a 722 kilometer border with the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Like several other northeastern states of India, Mizoram was previously part of Assam until 1972, when it was carved out as a Union Territory. It became the 23rd state of India, a step above Union Territory, on 20 February 1987.

This state is bounded by natural beauty in the form of wildlife sanctuaries like Dampa Wildlife Sanctuary, Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary, Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary and Lengteng National park to name a few.

There are also many caves in Mizoram like Kungawrhi Puk, Mura Puk, Lamsial Puk and waterfalls in Mizoram like Vantawng Falls across the state. Mizoram also has tourist complexes, shopping joints and few architectural structures like the Mizoram State Museum and Luangmual Handicrafts Centre.

In addition to these tourist places, there are naturally beautiful tourist places like Lianchhiari Lunglentang, Thasiama Seno Neihna, Mangkhaia Lung, Fiara Tui and Sikpui Lung for tourists to look out for. Further more, adventure activities can be also enjoyed here in Mizoram.

## Aizawl

Aizawl, a 112 year old city is the capital of Mizoram and it is the largest city in the state with a population of 291,822. It is the centre of the administration of the entire state with all the government offices within and secretariat. Tourists can easily access the place via flights, buses and train. The main tourist attraction in Aizawl is Aizawl Zoological Park, State Museum in Mc Donald Hill, Science center, Handloom and handicrafts showroom, Horticulture Centre and Martyr's memorial. Natural attractions in the area are the Durtlang hills, KV Paradise and Muthi Hilltop.

## Champhai

With beautiful butterflies, tribal traditions and other cultural richness, the city of Champhai takes pride in a wonderful view of the Myanmar hills. The population in the city is 108,392 and covers an area of 3,185.83 sq km. It is a commercial town in Mizoram strewn with mesmerizing scenery around it. It is a great place for trekkers for hills and peaks surround the place where one can pack bags and go. Main tourist attractions of the place are Rih Dil Lake and other ancient ruins and stones such as Lamsial Puk, Mura Puk, Sikpui Lung, Fiara Tui.

## Thenzawl

A town in Serchhip district, Thenzawl is an important town in Mizoram which is famous for traditional handloom



industry. It is 43 kms. away from Aizawl. Tourists can visit the place and buy the best of handloom products. Tourist attractions here are Vantawng waterfall, Chawngchilhi Cave and the Thenzawl Deer park.

## Lunglei

Situated in the south central part of Mizoram, Lunglei is also often spelled as Lungleh which means 'bridge of rock'. It

is one of the prominent towns in Mizoram and is at a distance of 131 miles from Aizawl. Rich in flora and fauna, Lunglei is at an altitude of 1222 meters. There is a Buddha engrave stone in Lunglei for which it is famous.

## Kolasib

Located at a distance of 83 kms from Aizawl, Kolasib is a town which is at the north of Mizoram. The Krishi Vigyan

Kendra (KVK) which is a concept for farmers here by National Agricultural Research system is located in the town of Kolasib itself. Kolasib is worth visiting due to its agriculture dominated state. So rich is its agricultural production that the state of Mizoram yields a lot from it.

## Vairengte

A town in the district of Kolasib, Vairengte is located at a distance of 130 kms from the capital city of Aizawl. Surrounded by green lush and mountains, Vairengte is a postcard destination of Mizoram. One of those places which stays unexplored and virgin. It is the perfect place for adventurers who look out for surprises and excitement.

## Mamit

Mamit town is located in the district of Mamit about 89 kms from Aizawl and easily accessible via bus and jeep services. Mamit is mostly covered in dense forest and mountains and rivers. One can get a sense of visual as well as physical satisfaction just by driving through this place and enjoying the sceneries around.

## Serchhip

The headquarter town of Serchhip district, the town is located in the central part of Mizoram. It is at a distance of 112 kms away from the town of Aizawl. The Serchhip district has the highest literacy rate in the whole of India. Filled with grassy landscape, the town of Serchhip is the location to one of the spectacular waterfalls of Mizoram, Vantawng Khawthla. The sounds of the fall in one's ears is nothing less than melody.

## Saiha

A census town in the district of Saiha district, the town is the headquarters of Mara Autonomous District Council which is one of the three councils within Mizoram. The town is located in the south central part of the state. It is the third most populated and developed town in Mizoram. Tourism attractions in Saiha are Tipo Lake and Mt. Mawma. The missionary houses built 100 years back are still present here which are worth witnessing.

## Sanctuaries in Mizoram

Mizoram is a state in North east India which is thickly wooded and hence it has a lots of flora and fauna. The range of flora and fauna here is diverse and hence, different specimen of these entities can be found here. Ranging from varied colored birds to a variety of animals and plants, the forests in Mizoram are a thing of wildlife sanctuaries in Mizoram beauty for the tourists. Spread across the whole of Mizoram, the sanctuaries here include Phawngpui National Park, Murlen National Park, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary, Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary, Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary, Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary, Palak Wildlife Sanctuary and Dampa Wildlife Sanctuary.

contd from page 1

**'Trump is danger to democracy': US President Biden**

presents to our democracy," Biden said. "We've been down this road before."

Biden's Tuesday, April 25 launch video included imagery from the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by Trump's supporters and included pledges to protect American liberties from "extremists" linked to the former president.

Biden said he ran in 2020 because of what he described as a unique threat posed by Trump. Now, he says his decision to run again isn't connected to Trump.

"I think I still would be running if he wasn't," Biden said of Trump, who has already announced his candidacy, along with several other Republican hopefuls.

Biden added that he took a "hard look" at whether his age, 80, should factor into whether he decided to run and that he expected voters to look fairly at the same issue.

"I took a hard look before I decided to run and I feel good, I feel excited about the prospects and I think we're on the verge of really turning the corner in a way we haven't in a long time."

The president said there is more he needs to do to position the United States so it is "economically and politically secure for a long time."

"He doesn't know me at all," Trump said of Biden in an interview with WABC radio in New York, adding that the Biden administration is "destroying America."

Biden and Democratic groups that use the ActBlue fundraising platform to collect small-dollar contributions gathered at least \$6 million in the 24 hours following the campaign launch, according to a Reuters analysis.

The figure is not a comprehensive estimate of what the campaign raised as it includes other Democratic groups and excludes some sources of Biden fundraising. A spokesperson for Biden's campaign declined to comment.

Voters who supported Biden's campaign in 2020 have received at least four text messages and three emails since the launch requesting financial support.

A group of volunteers who bring in large sums by hosting private campaign functions with well-heeled donors are meeting on Friday with Biden and plan to start hosting events in the coming days. The campaign could raise and spend more than \$1 billion before 2024.

"Ridin with Biden. Let's go Joe," wrote Alex Soros, son of the billionaire investor and liberal donor George Soros, on Twitter.

Earlier on Wednesday, Biden's re-election campaign released its first advertisement for the 2024 cycle. It also features the Jan. 6 riots and focuses on gun violence, abortion and safeguarding democracy.

The campaign is spending more than \$1 million to air the ad over two weeks on cable channels in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania and

Wisconsin, each of which are key battleground states.

Priorities USA, a Democratic super political action committee (super PAC), announced it will spend \$75 million toward digital ads in the six battleground states. (Source: Reuters)

**Ajay Banga is uniquely equipped to lead the World Bank at such a critical moment: US**

poverty, and expanding prosperity, while also doing so in a very evolving and dynamic global playing field, where we're dealing with a lot of new and pressing issues and challenges, like climate change and global health challenges and other things as well," Patel said.

The former Mastercard Inc. chief, Banga currently serves as Vice Chairman at General Atlantic.

A new leader of the World Bank is expected to be chosen by early May.

Raised in India, Banga has a unique perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing developing countries and how the World Bank can deliver on its ambitious agenda to reduce poverty and expand prosperity, President Biden had said.

He has also worked closely with Vice President Harris as the Co-Chair of the Partnership for Central America.

He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2016.

Banga is expected to take over the reins of the anti-poverty lender at a crucial time, with the US and Western nations pitching for reforms to focus on addressing a slew of wide-ranging global issues like climate change.

**Akali patriarch Badal cremated with state honors, top leaders pay respects**

Badal, 95, died at a hospital in Mohali on Tuesday, April 25.

The last rites of the grand old man of state politics were performed by his son and SAD chief Sukhbir Badal along with his daughters, Harkirat Kaur and Gurleen Kaur, and son Anantveer Singh at their orchard.

Sukhbir's estranged cousin Manpreet Badal's son Arjun and daughter Rhea, sister Parneet Kaur Kairon's son Jai also lit the pyre. The SAD leadership claimed that the family had given a message of women empowerment following the teachings of the Guru Sahibs. A few minutes before lighting the pyre, Sukhbir broke down.

A brigade of policemen gave a gun salute to the former Chief Minister.

Earlier, during the day, the mortal remains of Badal were kept in the courtyard of his house, so that people could have his last 'darshan'. Senior BJP leadership, including its national president JP Nadda, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and leader Tarun Chugh also visited the residence. Former Maharashtra CM Sharad Pawar too visited the family's residence.

Among the prominent persons who came to pay tributes to the leader

included Union Minister of State Som Parkash, Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit, CM Bhagwant Mann, Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot, Deputy CM, Haryana, Dushyant Chautala, former CMs of Haryana Om Prakash Chautala and Bhupinder Hooda, J&K former CM Omar Abdullah, former Union Minister Pawan Bansal, Punjab Cabinet Ministers Aman Arora and Dr Baljit Kaur, Haryana Cabinet Minister Ranjit Chautala, Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, former minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, former minister of Rajasthan Gurjant Singh Brar, Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh, SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami, SGPC former presidents Hargobind Singh Longowal and Bibi Jagir Kaur, DSGMC chief Harmeet Singh Kalka, DSGMC former presidents Manjinder Singh Sirsa and Paramjit Singh Sarna, BSP state president Jasvir Singh Garhi, several leaders, including Bikram Singh Majithia, Dr Daljeet Singh Cheema, Sikander Singh Maluka, Maheshinder Singh Grewal, Sharanjit Dhillon.

contd from page 7

**G20 outcome under India's Presidency will be unprecedented: Harsh Shringla**

India will deliver in entirety to the international community's expectations, in particular the Global South, of which "we are a part and have been a voice of," he said.

Shringla also highlighted that about 100 G20 meetings have already been hosted across India with each meeting witnessing rejuvenation of that particular city and region, urban transformation and beautification.

It witnessed involvement at the public and grassroots level of people who have never known what G20 is but known this is something big for India and are happy to be a part of the effort, he said.

"Bringing G20 to the grassroots level through 'Jan Bhagidari' has been a major objective and one that has been achieved quite well," he said.

Earlier this month, the book 'Not An Accidental Rise', written by Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Sikkim University, Gangtok Dr Dipmala Roka was launched in Darjeeling.

Shringla noted that the book is a "well researched" and "candid" account "not just of my career, but my entire life, so far." Shringla, who was India's ambassador to the US and later the Foreign Secretary when Juster was Washington's envoy in New Delhi from 2017-2021, recalled working very closely with his American counterpart on a host of issues, including some challenging situations.

"It was a difficult time. There was shock upon shock. We not only had the Covid-19 crisis, we also had multiple transgressions on our western border from our neighbor China.

"We had a shock on our western borders that is Afghanistan and "another



shock on the eastern border with the situation in Myanmar as well as the Ukraine conflict," he said.

Juster recalled working closely with Shringla on a range of issues, with the 'Howdy Modi' event in 2019 being among the "most notable" when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then US President Donald Trump addressed over 50,000 people from the diaspora community in a stadium in Houston.

Juster added that he and Shringla also cooperated and worked together during the Covid-19 crisis, as well as during the Chinese standoff.

"It has always been a tremendous privilege to work with someone who has represented his own country extremely well and with someone you can discuss issues candidly and you can work together to solve problems in the best interest of both of our countries," Juster said.

Jaipur Foot USA Chairman Prem Bhandari described Shringla as the "People's Ambassador" and the "People's Foreign Secretary".

Bhandari expressed gratitude for the consistent support Shringla provided to the millions of people of Indian origin in America as well as around the world, particularly during crises such as the Covid pandemic, on issues related to OCI cards and evacuation of Indians from Ukraine in the aftermath of the conflict.

"He is the darling of 40 million NRIs throughout the world," Bhandari said.

Shringla noted that the book also deals with the aspect of people-to-people ties between India and the US.

"The community has been our mainstay and main support. Much of what we have achieved, from the nuclear deal to what we have achieved in the recent past, can be attributed to the wholehearted support from the Indian-American community," Shringla said.

Shringla also lauded Bhandari's efforts to help the community, saying he has been a "pillar of support" during difficult times, particularly during the devastating years of the Covid-19 pandemic when Bhandari helped send much-needed ventilators and concentrators to India.

(Source: PTI)



# Sikh History This Week

APRIL 28, 2023, TO MAY 4, 2023

## 28th April



1671: JanamDin Bhai Rupa, devoted Sikh of Guru HarGobind Sahib. Bhai RUP CHAND: Village Wadghar (near TaranTaran) resident Akal Singh, accidentally married his daughter Surti with Sadhu, the grandson of Suklani resident Sultania Sadhae. Bibi Surti brought her husband to Sri Guru Har Gobind Patshah's darbar at Daroli. Guru Sahib converted Sadhu to a Singh and blessed him with the honor of "Gurmukh". In sunmat 1671, Sadhu was blessed with a son. When the parents brought the child in Guru Sahib's presence, the sixth Guru baptized the child and named him "Rup Chand". He turned out to be a very noble and devoted sewak and earned the honor of "Bhai" from Guru Sahib. In sunmat 1688 (1631), Guru Sahib established a village named "Bhai Rupa", named after Bhai Rup Chand.

1835 Maharaja Ranjit Singh reaches Peshawar.

1921 The wall of Gurdwara Rakab Ganj was rebuilt.

## 29th April

1590 The digging of Taran Taran sarowar was initiated.

1635 Battle of Phagwara between Mughals and Sikhs led by Guru Hargobind Ji.



1849 Maharani Jind Kaur escapes from the maximum security of Chunar fort and reaches Kathmandhu in Nepal. Maharani JIND KAUR: was daughter of Sardar Manna Singh Auhlakh, a resident of village Chandh, district Sialkot, Tehsil Jafarwall. She was wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and mother of Maharaja Dalip Singh. Once the British government gained control of the Khalsa Raj's affairs, she was initially kept under house arrest at Saekhpura and

subsequently jailed at Chunar fort (U.P. district Mizapur). However, she escaped in a beggar's attire and reached Nepal, where she lived with dignity. In 1861, Maharani Jind Kaur reached England to visit her son Maharaja Dalip Singh, where she died on Aug. 1, 1863 at the age of 46. Her body was brought back and cremated in Nasik Nagar, on the outskirts of Bombay.

1986 Panthic Committee announced the "Declaration of Independence" from Akal Takht Sahib.

## 30th April



1689 Bhangani battle between Guru Gobind Singh and the Hill Rajas.

Battle of Bhangani took place between Sri Guru Gobind Singh and Hindu Rajas, Bhim Chand Kahluri, Fateh Shah Gadhwalia, Hari Chand Handuria, etc. Guru's forces came out victorious. This was Guru Gobind Singh first battle in which Bibi Biro's sons Sangho Shah and Jeetmal accepted shahdat. Raja Hari Chand and several rajputs were killed by Guru Gobind Singh. A detailed description of this battle is provided in the 8th Chapter of BachitarNatak. Also in this battle, Pir Budhu Shah's sons and 700 of his followers fought along side Guru's forces.

1837 Jamroadh battle where Hari Singh Nalwas accepted Shahadat.

1877 A mysterious aroma circumambulated the Holy Guru Granth Sahib in Harimandir Sahib, Golden Temple, Amritsar. NATURAL MIRACLE at DARBAR SAHIB: This incident is inscribed on the front wall of Darshani Deodhi leading to Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Its states.

## 1st May



1635 Guru Hargobind arrived at Kiratpur.

Guru Hargobind arrived at Kiratpur. Within a period of one year, Guru Sahib had seen four attacks. He was not ready for an all out armed confrontation with the provincial authorities. Besides he had nothing to gain by permitting the Punjab Government to continue its military campaigns against the Sikhs faith. Therefore

he continued his onward march and arrived at Kiratpur. Kiratpur is at the foot of Shivalik hills, comparatively inaccessible and outside the territorial jurisdiction of Punjab.

1837 Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa fatally wounded in Jamraud battle.

1924 5th Jatha of 500 Akalis, led by Sardar Utam Singh Samundari, started its march to Jaito from Sri Akal Takhat, Amritsar.

1982 Dal Khalsa and National Council of Khalistan banned by the Indian Government.

## 2nd May

1940 Sardar Baldev Singh Pact as signed.

## 3rd May

1705 Siege of Anadpur was initiated. It lasted seven months and ended on Dec. 4, 1705.

1718 Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was born. Sardar JASSA SINGH AHLUWALIA was born in 1718. He was son of Ahluwalia resident Bader Singh. His close association with Nawab Kapur Singh influenced him in service of GurPanth. Raja Amir Singh of Patiala was introduced to amrit by him. He was a great General of the Khalsa forces during the 18th century and was called Sultan-ul-Quom, king of the nation, his heroic deeds and qualities of leadership. He killed Hakim SalabatKhan of Amritsar, in 1748, and captured the surrounding region. In 1789, he helped Diwan KodhaMal in removing ShahanWadh from Multan. In 1753, he defeated Hakim Adinabaegh and conquered Fataibad. He won the successful release of enslaved Hindu men and women from Ahmad Shah Durani. As a result he came to be popularly known as BandiShoadh (liberator). He bravely fought in Wada Ghulughara (the big holocaust). Even after receiving 22 grave bounds, he kept fighting. He was head as well as the life of the Ahluwalia Misl. In 1774, he captured Kapurthala state, established his capital there, and issues coins under our Gurth name. He was extremely popular among our Panth. He dies in 1783 in Amritsar. A monument in his memory was erected near Baba Atal, in Amritsar.

1914 Morcha launched for Rakab Ganj Gurudwara.

## 4th May



1479 PRAKASH UTSAV, Patshahi Third, Guru Amardas Ji.

The Third Patshah, Guru Amardas Ji, came to this planet. He was born in Baserke, district Amritsar, 13 kilometers from the city of Amritsar, in the house of Baba Tej Bahan and Matta Lakho. He was ten years younger than Guru Nanak. Today is the actual date of prakash, though Guru Khalsa Panth observes it on a different date (See description below for details on Guru Amar Das Ji).

1686 Janam Utsav of Sahibjada Baba Ajit Singh Ji, the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, was born to Mata Sundari at Paonta Sahib on Magh 23 sunmat 1743. He fought valiantly and accepted martyrdom in the battle field at Chamkaur on Poh 8th sunmat 1761 (Dec. 22, 1704).



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# History This Week

APRIL 28 - MAY 04, 2023

APRIL 28



April 28, 1789 - On board the British ship *Bounty*, Fletcher Christian led a mutiny against Captain William Bligh, setting him and 18 loyal crew members adrift in a 23-foot open boat. Bligh survived a 47-day voyage sailing over 3,600 miles before landing on a small island. Christian sailed the *Bounty* back to Tahiti, eventually settling on Pitcairn Island and burning the ship.

April 28, 1945 - Twenty-three years of Fascist rule in Italy ended abruptly as Italian partisans shot former Dictator Benito Mussolini. Other leaders of the Fascist Party and friends of Mussolini were also killed along with his mistress, Clara Petacci. Their bodies were then hung upside down and pelted with stones by jeering crowds in Milan.

Birthdays - James Monroe (1758-1831) the 5th U.S. President was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He served two terms from 1817 to 1825 and is best known for the Monroe Doctrine which declared the U.S. would not permit any European nation to extend its holdings or use armed force in North or South America.

APRIL 29

April 29, 1992 - Riots erupted in Los Angeles following the announcement that a jury in Simi Valley, California, had failed to convict four Los Angeles police officers accused in the videotaped beating of an African American man.

Birthdays - American publisher William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951) was born in San Francisco. The son of a gold miner, in 1887 he dropped out of Harvard to take control of the failing San Francisco Examiner which his father had purchased. He saved the Examiner, then went to New York and bought the New York Morning Journal to compete with Joseph Pulitzer. Hearst's sensational style of "yellow" journalism sold unprecedented numbers of newspapers and included

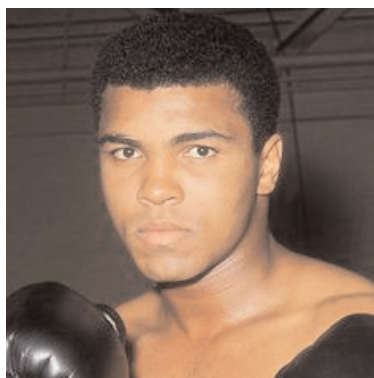
promoting a war with Cuba in 1897-98. He expanded into other cities and into magazine publishing, books and films. He also served in Congress and nearly became mayor of New York City.

Birthdays - Japan's Emperor Hirohito (1901-1989) was born in Tokyo. In 1926, he became the 124th in a long line of monarchs and then presided over wartime Japan which was led by militarist Prime Minister Hideki Tojo. Following the dropping of two atomic bombs by the U.S., he made a radio address urging his people to stop fighting. After the war, he remained the symbolic head of state in Japan's new parliamentary government. In 1946, he renounced his divinity and then pursued his interest in marine biology, becoming a recognized authority in the subject.

APRIL 30

April 30, 1789 - George Washington became the first U.S. President as he was administered the oath of office on the balcony of Federal Hall at the corner of Wall and Broad Streets in New York City.

April 30, 1948 - Palestinian Jews declared their independence from British rule and established the new state of Israel. The country soon became a destination for tens of thousands of Nazi Holocaust survivors and a strong U.S. ally.



April 30, 1967 - Boxer Muhammad Ali was stripped of his world heavyweight boxing championship after refusing to be inducted into the American military. He had claimed religious exemption.

MAY 1

May 1st - Observed as May Day, a holiday and spring festival since ancient times, also observed in socialist countries as a workers' holiday or Labor Day.

May 1, 1707 - Great Britain was formed from a union between England and Scotland. The union included Wales

which had already been part of England since the 1500's. The United Kingdom today consists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

May 1, 1960 - An American U-2 spy plane flying at 60,000 feet was shot down over Sverdlovsk in central Russia on the eve of a summit meeting between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Soviet Russia's Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The sensational incident caused a cancellation of the meeting and heightened existing Cold War tensions. The pilot, CIA agent Francis Gary Powers, survived the crash, and was tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison by a Russian court. Two years later he was released to America in exchange for an imprisoned Soviet spy. On his return to America, Powers encountered a hostile public which apparently believed he should not have allowed himself to be captured alive. He died in a helicopter crash in 1977.

May 1, 2004 - Eight former Communist nations and two Mediterranean countries joined the European Union (EU) marking its largest-ever expansion. The new members included Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, along with the island of Malta and the Greek portion of the island of Cyprus. They joined 15 countries already in the EU, representing in all 450 million persons.



Birthdays - Irish-born American labor leader Mary 'Mother' Jones (1830-1930) was born in County Cork, Ireland. She endured misfortune early in life as her husband and four children died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1867. She also lost all of her belongings in the Chicago Fire of 1871. She then devoted herself to organizing and advancing the cause of Labor, using the slogan, "Join the Union, boys." She also sought to prohibit child labor. She remained active until the very end, giving her last speech on her 100th birthday.

Birthdays - World War II General Mark Clark (1896-1984) was born in Madison Barracks, New York. He commanded the U.S. Fifth Army which invaded Italy in September of 1943, fighting a long and brutal campaign against stubborn German opposition.

Birthdays - African American Olympic athlete Archie Williams (1915-1993) was born in Oakland, California. Williams, along with Jesse Owens, defeated German athletes at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and helped debunk Adolf Hitler's theory of Aryan racial superiority. Williams won a gold medal in the 400-meter race. After the Olympics, he went on to earn a mechanical engineering degree from the University of California-Berkeley but faced discrimination and wound up digging ditches. He later became an airplane pilot and trained Tuskegee Institute pilots including the black air corp of World War II.

MAY 2



May 2, 2011 - U.S. Special Operations Forces killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The raid marked the culmination of a decade-long manhunt for the elusive leader of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization based in the Middle East. Bin Laden had ordered the coordinated aerial attacks of September 11th, 2001, in which four American passenger jets were hijacked then crashed, killing nearly 3,000 persons. Two jets had struck and subsequently collapsed the 110-story Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York, while another struck the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C. A fourth jet also headed toward Washington had crashed into a field in Pennsylvania as passengers attempted to overpower the hijackers on board.

Birthdays - Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) was born in Carpino, Italy

(as Gioacchino Pecci). He was elected Pope in 1878 at age 67 and lived to govern the church another 25 years, laying the foundation for modernization of Church attitudes toward a rapidly industrializing and changing world.

MAY 3

Birthdays - Italian writer and statesman Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) was born in Florence, Italy. He offered a blunt, realistic view of human nature and power in his works *The Prince* and *Discourses on Livy*.

Birthdays - Golda Meir (1898-1978) was born in Kiev, Russia. She was one of the founders of the modern state of Israel and served as prime minister from 1969 to 1974.

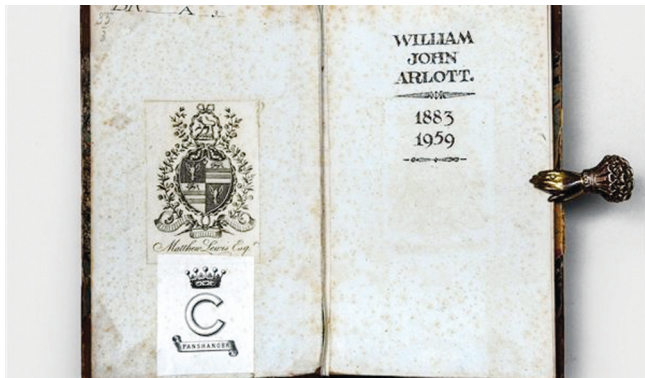
MAY 4

May 4, 1494 - During his second journey of exploration in the New World, Christopher Columbus discovered Jamaica.

May 4, 1886 - The Haymarket Square Riot occurred in Chicago after 180 police officers advanced on 1,300 persons gathered in the square listening to speeches of labor activists and anarchists. A bomb was thrown. Seven policemen were killed and over 50 wounded. Four anarchists were then charged with conspiracy to kill, convicted and hanged while another committed suicide in jail. Three others were given lengthy jail terms.



May 4, 1970 - At Kent State University, four students - Allison Krause, 19; Sandra Lee Scheuer, 20; Jeffrey Glenn Miller, 20; and William K. Schroeder, 19 - were killed by National Guardsmen who opened fire on a crowd of 1,000 students protesting President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia. Eleven others were wounded. The shootings set off tumultuous campus demonstrations across America resulting in the temporary closing of over 450 colleges and universities.



## One of the world's rarest cricket books to be offered for sale in UK

First edition of one of the world's rarest books on cricket from the library of eminent cricket commentator and collector John Arlott is eyeing a world record when it goes on sale at the Firsts Rare Book Fair in London next month, priced at GBP 225,000.

"Cricket. A Collection of All the Grand Matches of Cricket played in England within Twenty Years, viz. from 1771 to 1791" by William Epps was printed in 1799 and only a handful of copies are known to have ever existed. The writer was working at the very dawn of the collection of cricket statistics and the book is therefore valued as a precious account of the history of the sport.

"Epps' volume has long been recognised as virtually unobtainable. Only a handful of copies are known, apparently, just four have previously come up at auction," said Pom Harrington of rare bookseller Peter Harrington, which is offering the book for sale at the book fair event at London's Saatchi Gallery between May 18 and 21.

IPL 2023

# Rajasthan Royals beat Chennai Super Kings by 32 runs

JAIPUR (TIP)

Promising Yashasvi Jaiswal once again displayed his talent as he conjured up a brilliant half-century before Rajasthan Royals' spinners choked Chennai Super Kings to register a comfortable 32-run win in their IPL clash and move to the top of the standings.

Jaiswal (77 off 43 balls) continued his rich form with his third fifty of the tournament before Devdutt Padikkal (24 not out) and Dhruv Jurel (34 off 15) provided the final flourish to register 202/5 — their highest total — at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.

Spinners Adam Zampa (3/22) and Ravichandran Ashwin (2/35) then shared five wickets between them to restrict Chennai to 170/6 despite Rituraj Gaikwad (47) and Shivam Dube's (52) best efforts.

With the win, Rajasthan moved to the top of the table, while Chennai dropped down to third.

In contrast to Rajasthan, Chennai's openers found the going tough before Gaikwad, who was dropped on four, broke the shackles and hit Jason Holder (0/49) for a four over mid-on before cracking a six over deep backward square leg in the fourth over.



RR's Yashasvi Jaiswal made 77 against Chennai Super Kings. Photo: PTI

Rajasthan's skipper Sanju Samson intensified the pressure by bowling spin from both ends and the move paid dividends.

Devon Conway (8) continued to struggle and with the required run-rate increasing he was forced to hit a Zampa delivery flat to Sandeep Sharma at mid-off.

Unperturbed by the wicket, Gaikwad kept stealing boundaries every over to keep the scoreboard ticking before

Zampa struck once again to get rid of him.

Chennai were 72/2 at the halfway mark. Ashwin (2/35) then snared the wickets of Ajinkya Rahane (15) and impact player Ambati Rayudu (0) to further dent Chennai's chances.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Rajasthan Royals: 202/5 in 20 overs (Jaiswal 77; Deshpande 2/42); Chennai Super Kings: 170/6 in 20 overs (Dube 52, Gaikwad 47; Zampa 3/22). Source: PTI

## Kaur Singh, only Indian boxer to have fought Muhammad Ali, dies

Kaur Singh, an Asian Games gold medallist boxer and the only Indian to have fought against the legendary Muhammad Ali, died Thursday at a private hospital in Haryana's Kurukshetra. He was 74 and had been suffering from multiple health issues.

Coming from a farming family from the Khanal Khurd village of Sangrur, Kaur Singh joined the Army in 1971. He was at the front, in Barmer sector of Rajasthan, in the 1972 war against Pakistan and was later awarded the Sena Medal. It was during his stint in the Army that, Kaur Singh's boxing journey began. He made his debut at the senior national boxing championship in 1979 and won gold. He repeated the feat for four consecutive years, till 1983. In between, he won the gold at the Asian boxing championships held in Mumbai in 1980.

He emerged as a national hero in 1982, when he won the gold medal at the Asian Games in New Delhi. Following his achievements, his Asian Games gold earned him India's second-highest sporting honour, the Arjuna Award in 1982.

A year later, in recognition of his contribution to boxing, he was awarded the Padma Shri, the country's fourth-highest civilian honour.

He also represented India in the 1984 Summer Olympics held in Los Angeles.

Interestingly, Kaur Singh had faced off with Muhammad Ali in a four-round exhibition match held in New Delhi in 1980.

He took retirement from boxing in 1984. Kaur Singh, who retired from the Army in 1994, was awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal in 1988 in recognition of his outstanding service.

After retirement, Kaur Singh took to farming at his village. Locals recall how his intervention helped canal water reach their village and how he helped the hamlet get many other facilities.

In December 2020, Kaur Singh joined several others



from Punjab in returning his Padma Shri and Arjuna Award to the Centre in solidarity with the farmers who were protesting against now repealed agri laws.

A biopic on Kaur Singh was slated to be released in 2020 but was postponed to July 2022 for a limited release due to the pandemic. Actor Karam Bathh played the legendary boxer and the film depicted how the veteran boxer struggled to accept prize money from governments.

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI), the country's governing body of the sport, paid tribute to Kaur Singh. "Boxing Federation of India deeply mourns the demise

of Boxing Legend & Padma Shri, Kaur Singh Ji. Our heartfelt condolences and prayers to his family & friends," tweeted BFI.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann expressed sorrow over the veteran boxer's demise. Punjab sports minister Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer also condoled Kaur Singh's death.

Mann said Kaur Singh had made India proud by earning fame in the national and international arena of boxing. "From Khanal Khurd village in Sangrur, Kaur Singh shined like a star in the world of boxing and won a gold medal in Asian Games," Mann said. The life and contribution of Kaur Singh will inspire budding players to work hard and excel in sports, Mann added.

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Source: The Indian Express

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**Message from  
Peter J. McDonnell,  
M.D. Director Wilmer Eye  
Institute, Johns Hopkins  
University, USA on the  
occasion of laying the  
foundation stone on  
December 10, 2020**



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