



The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

Will bring out a fully illustrated special edition on the occasion of Vaisakhi, April 14, 2023. Articles and advertisements are invited by April 10, 2023. Please email articles and advertisements to salujindra@gmail.com. For any queries, please call 646-247-9458. For more information, please visit www.theindianpanorama.news

'An Independent Press is Necessary', says Supreme Court; Lifts telecast ban on Malayalam news channel MediaOne

APRIL 5, 2023
NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday, April 5, quashed the Centre's telecast ban on Malayalam news channel MediaOne and pulled up the Ministry of Home Affairs for raising national security claims in "thin air" without facts.

Observing that the State can't impose unreasonable restrictions on press as it would have a chilling effect on press freedom, a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud set aside the Kerala High Court order which had upheld the Centre's decision to ban the channel's telecast on security grounds.

The top court said critical views of the channel against government policies cannot be termed as anti-establishment as an independent press is necessary for a robust democracy.

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A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud set aside the Kerala High Court order which had upheld the Centre's decision to ban the channel's telecast on security grounds. File photo / PTI

TRUMP DECRIES CHARGES AGAINST HIM, ACCUSES "RADICAL LEFT LUNATICS" OF ELECTION INTERFERENCE



Trump addresses his supporters at Mar-a-Lago on Tuesday, April 4, hours after he was arraigned in a New York court.

APRIL 05, 2023
PALM BEACH, FL (TIP): A defiant former president Donald Trump denounced the criminal charges against him in connection to hush money payments made to a porn star before the 2016 presidential election and said the US has now become a "failing nation" where the "radical left lunatics" want to interfere with the elections by using law enforcement.

Trump, the first former US President to be criminally charged, has pleaded not guilty to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records at his arraignment in a Manhattan court on charges relating to hush money payments made to Stormy Daniels.

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Richard Verma sworn in as Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources



Former US Ambassador to India Richard Verma swearing in as Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources

Credit: [Twitter/@DepSecStateMR](https://twitter.com/DepSecStateMR)

APRIL 06, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Former US Ambassador to India Richard Verma has been sworn in as the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, making him the highest-ranking Indian-American ever in the State Department. "An honor to return to the State Department," Verma said in a tweet after he was sworn into the top position in the State Department Wednesday, April 5.

The Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources is often referred to as the Chief Operating Officer of the State Department.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

Resolution introduced in US House of Representatives to designate April 14 as National Sikh Day

'IT IS ALTOGETHER FITTING AND PROPER TO CELEBRATE THE DAY OF VAISAKHI ALONGSIDE SIKHS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND TO HONOR THE LASTING CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY THE SIKH COMMUNITY TO THE US'

Resolution introduced in US House of Representatives to designate April 14 as National Sikh Day

File Photo / for representation only



APRIL 4, 2023
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A bipartisan group of lawmakers has introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives to designate April 14 as National Sikh Day in a bid to honor and celebrate the important role played by the

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GUEST COMMENT

Open justice: On the Supreme Court verdict in the MediaOne case

The Supreme Court verdict setting aside the denial of broadcasting permission to Malayalam channel MediaOne is one that protects the media against arbitrary action and bars the use of undisclosed national security considerations as a pretext to shut down an outlet. The Court has struck a blow for media freedom by ruling that the government could not term critical coverage or airing of critical opinions as "anti-establishment", and so initiate action. It said: "The use of such a terminology... represents an expectation that the press must support the establishment." The denial of security clearance to a media channel on the basis of views it was entitled to hold "produces a chilling effect on free speech and particularly on press freedom". The Bench also cited substantive grounds to allow MediaOne's petitions: that security clearance cannot be denied based on its alleged anti-establishment stance or a bald claim that its shareholders have

links with the Jamaat-e-Islami. The Court has rightly found fault with the approach of the Kerala High Court, which had accepted material in a sealed cover on why the Home Ministry denied security clearance to the channel. It expressed surprise that the High Court did not explain how it felt the denial of security clearance was justified even after noting that the gravity of the issue was not discernible from the files.

A significant aspect of the judgment is that it seeks to end the casual resort to 'sealed cover procedure' by courts by suggesting an alternative approach to state claims of immunity from publication in public interest. Drawing upon both Indian and foreign jurisprudence, the Bench has said it is now an established principle of natural justice that relevant material must be disclosed to the affected party, ensuring that the right to appeal can be effectively exercised. It acknowledges that confidentiality and national security

could be "legitimate aims for the purpose of limiting procedural guarantees". However, a blanket immunity from disclosure of all reports could not be granted and that the validity of the involvement of such considerations must be assessed by the use of relevant tests. It could be ascertained if there is proof that non-disclosure is in the interest of national security and whether a reasonable person would come to the same inference from it. In a bid to balance the public interest in non-disclosure with the one in ensuring a fair hearing, the Court has mooted alternatives such as redacting sensitive portions and providing a gist of the material given to the affected party. The Court could also appoint an amicus curiae, who could be given access to the material whenever the state claims immunity from disclosure.

(The Hindu)

Winds of change: Haryana khap vows to promote girls' education

In a welcome softening of the khaps' rigidly conservative and patriarchal posturing, the Sarv Jatiya Kandela khap of Haryana's Jind area has taken the lead in doing away with the practice of issuing diktats for the social boycott of persons, families or even political leaders and parties over local issues they deal with. Acting as a pseudo-judicial body holding sway over a collective of 20-30 surrounding villages, a khap has been traditionally resolving disputes by announcing verdicts, which, at times, are at odds with the law. Khap leaders are notorious for inciting honor killings in cases of same-gotra marriages. It has often led to run-ins with law enforcement authorities and drawn reprimands from the judiciary and civil society activists.

But the khaps' regressive mindset and rules are widely accepted and have hobbled Haryana's march towards an equitable society. This is evident from the state's skewed sex ratio and literacy rate. With the latest overall literacy rate being 75 per cent, that of males is 84 per cent and females 66 per cent. Underlining the preference for boys by even educated families and the menace of female feticide are the births of 917 females per 1,000 males recorded in 2022 despite the government's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' programme, which is being implemented since 2015.

In this light, the Kandela khap's decision to promote girls' education and hold nukkad meetings against the social evil of female feticide is commendable. Importantly, this initiative of the village elders will also address the hugely unfair gap in the quality of education received by urban and rural students. Coupled with its resolve to curb extravagance at wedding functions - the practice that pauperises many a girl's parents - Jind is on the path of progress. Other khaps, too, must embrace these norms and shed archaic and outdated customs. When a crusade arises from the grassroots, it has the power to transform society. These winds of change have been blowing for some time now. While progressive campaigns have suffered some setbacks, these should not deter khaps from achieving their new goals.<

(Tribune, India)

Landmark Act: Himachal women get landholding right like men

In a commendable act, the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu-led Congress government on April 4 set right a decades-old wrong through an amendment to an outdated landholding law that discriminates against women. Till now, in grave violation of the right to equality provided by the Constitution, the daughters of the state had been suffering gender bias. The Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act of 1972 allowed only an adult son to hold an additional 150 bighas (30 acres), taking the total permissible limit of land that a family could retain to 300 bighas. This right had been denied to his adult sister. Notably, religious outfits, tea estates, cooperative farming societies and land owned by state and Central governments are exempted from this Act.

The Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings (Amendment) Act 2023 is a landmark legislation that rectifies the error by treating the daughter on a par with the son. Thus now, prospectively, the adult daughter of a family is entitled to retain up to 150 bighas as a separate unit. The new Act will benefit families that have only daughters.

That it should have taken over half a century for the 1972 Act to be amended to bring the women on a parity with men underscores boldly the dominance of the patriarchal mindset. All these years, women have faced harassment and been forced to knock at the doors of courts to fight against glaring gender disparity. The unfair legislation of 1972 has been a big hurdle in them getting what should have rightfully been theirs all the while. Consequently, many families without sons have had to give up 150 bighas. Worse, this bigoted stipulation has had a regressive repercussion on the social attitude and outlook. In order to retain their properties, people have tended to have a preference for boys. The latest amendment also holds the promise of society shedding its traditional bias against girls. While being a case of better late than never, it does put the state on track to progress.

(Tribune, India)

Dr. V.K. Raju, President of EFA appeals for eradicating childhood blindness

APRIL 6, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) "There is so much blindness, and it can be avoided today, with the present-day cost-effective means. I could not have said this 25 years ago. Combating childhood blindness has been identified by the World Bank as the most cost-effective health intervention. 80% of learning comes through vision. If the child misses the chance, he suffers for the rest of his life -almost 75 years of life. With a very little investment we can give a child 75 years of productive life."

Dr. V. K. Raju, President of the Eye Foundation of America which has set for itself the goal to have a world without childhood blindness was speaking on the tragedy of childhood blindness at the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Indian American International Chamber of Commerce at the Ronald Reagan Center for International Trade in Washington, D.C. March 31.

Giving an impressive presentation on childhood blindness, Dr. Raju said that there are many conditions that cause blindness in children. They can be born with cataracts. They can be born with cloudy corneas. They can be born with glaucoma that is high blood pressure in the eye and various other abnormalities. If we catch them early, incredible things can be done today which we could not do 20 or 25 years ago.

My work started in 1977 at eye camps. We took some great technology in 70s and 80s to India which was not available at that time in India. Since '91, Indian ophthalmology has advanced because of



Dr. V.K. Raju speaking at the IAICC Convention in Washington, D.C. on March 31, 2023

liberalization and privatization. Some of the children we operated on went on to finish college.

The greatest story I would like to share with you is about Srinu Maddula. At the age of one and a half year, he was almost blind because of corneal cloudiness. Cornea is the front of the eye like a crystal of a watch. We brought him here to Morgantown in West Virginia. We performed corneal transplants on both eyes and he went on to finish doctorate in pharmacy from Rutgers University. He is the CEO of a multimillion-dollar retail pharmacy company. He never forgot what he received from the Eye Foundation of America. He is one of the greatest patrons of the Eye Foundation of America, which is involved in more than 30 countries to combat childhood



Mr. K.V. Kumar, Executive Chairman and CEO (left) and Mr. Shankar Rachakonda, Vice Chairman and Chairman, Fund-raising Committee, IAICC, USA (right) honoring Dr. V.K. Raju with a plaque

blindness. Real collaboration is the key for any major thing to happen in this world. We need political will, professional will, and people's will. If they combine, anything can be achieved.

In this century, we eradicated polio from the planet because of Rotary involvement. Rotary international brought together the political will, the professional will, and people's will. Nelson Mandela once said, "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

The Eye Foundation screened and examined over 4 million individuals and performed more than 300,000 surgeries of which 30,000 were on children in 30 countries of the world. Giving vision to children is priceless. It cannot be

measured in monetary terms. Let's come together to have a world which is free from childhood blindness.

Dr. Raju's impassioned plea was very well taken by the audience. IAICC leaders expressed a desire to collaborate with the Eye Foundation of America.

Incidentally, after India and neighboring countries and Africa, Dr. Raju is bending his attention to Central America. He goes to Guatemala later this month to hold eye examination camps there on the invitation of India's Ambassador to Guatemala, Mr. Manoj Mohapatra who is very keen to have Dr. Raju help out Guatemalans.

For more information on the Eye Foundation of America, please visit www.eyefoundationofamerica.org

Khalistan supporters protest at Times Square in New York to express support for Amritpal Singh

APRIL 6, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): A large number of Khalistan supporters staged a protest at the Times Square here to express support for Amritpal Singh.

THE PROTESTERS TOOK OUT A CAR RALLY THAT ORIGINATED FROM THE BABA MAKHAN SHAH LOBANA SIKH CENTRE IN THE RICHMOND HILL NEIGHBORHOOD AND CULMINATED AT TIMES SQUARE IN THE HEART OF MANHATTAN CITY ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON AMID TIGHT SECURITY.

With blaring music and loud horns, a multitude of cars with Khalistan flags and LED mobile billboard trucks displaying photos of Singh crisscrossed the streets near the venue.

Men, women and children gathered in



Khalistan supporters protest at Times Square, New York City on March 27

large numbers at the popular New York destination, carrying the Khalistani

flags and raising slogans at the rally. The protesters, carrying placards

reading 'Free Amritpal Singh', held up photos of Singh as they raised anti-India slogans. Singh's photo was also displayed on one of the billboards at Times Square.

There was a heavy police presence in the area with several New York City Police Department vans and cars manning the area.

The car rally came a day after Khalistan supporters gathered outside the Indian Embassy in Washington on Saturday, where many of their speakers tried to incite violence, but timely intervention by an alert US Secret Service and local police prevented a repeat of the London and San Francisco incidents of vandalism at the Indian missions.

India on Friday said it expects to see action against the perpetrators of vandalism at its missions abroad and hoped the host governments would prosecute those involved in these incidents instead of holding out assurances.

(Source: PTI)

INDIAN AMERICAN RENOWNED CHEF RAGHAVAN IYER DIES AFTER BATTLING CANCER



Noted Indian American chef, cookbook author and culinary teacher Raghavan Iyer has died after a long battle with cancer.

APRIL 4, 2023

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Noted Indian American chef, cookbook author and culinary teacher Raghavan Iyer has died after a long battle with cancer. He was 61. Iyer died on March 31 in San Francisco, according to an Instagram message by Terry Erickson, his partner of 41 years.

"It is with a heavy and sad heart I must tell you of Raghavan's passing this evening. He died peacefully at University of California San Francisco hospital," Erickson stated.

"A celebration of life will be planned for a later date. I will post the information on his Facebook page," he wrote. Thank you all for your thoughts and well wishes. He never saw a difference between family and friends, so I am sorry for your loss as well. Thank you."

Iyer "made Indian cooking accessible to Americans," a media channel wrote in an obit piece. "He broke with traditions in writing cookbooks, teaching thousands of cooks, consulting for restaurants, leading tours, catering meals and creating frozen dinners.

Iyer, "who as a young man left India for the United States clueless about how to cook even a simple potato curry, went on to teach America's heartland how to prepare one of the world's most complex cuisines," the channel said.

Erickson was one of the first people Iyer met when he arrived in Minnesota from Mumbai at 21 to attend a small but well-regarded hospitality management program. He had picked it because it was the least expensive one he could find in America.

"When I first got to this country, I was almost embarrassed about where I was from and the food we ate," he said in an interview with media in February. After a while, he said, he realized that his culture was the "tool" he could use to overcome feelings of inferiority.

Iyer's "contributions were a bridge to a new breed of American cooks and cookbook authors from the Indian diaspora, like Nik Sharma and Asha Gomez, who broke with classic preparations and found success playing with ingredients - swapping feta for the Indian cheese paneer, for example, or replacing the crust of a pizza with naan," according to the media.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Professor Dr. Nitya Abraham receives Young Urologist of the Year award

APRIL 3, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian American Associate Professor at New York-based Albert Einstein College of Medicine has been honored with the Young Urologist Award in recognition of her efforts and commitment to advance the development of fellow young urologists.

Dr Nitya Abraham, Program Director for the Montefiore Urology residency program, has mentored countless students, residents, fellows and junior faculty both at her institution and others in the New York region.

"I'm grateful to my mentors over the years, my chair at Montefiore Medical Center, and of course, my parents and supportive husband, for molding and equipping me to win this award," Abraham said in a statement.

"At a time when rates of physician burnout are increasing, it is wonderful that the American Urological Association and its leaders are recognizing the hard work of many young urologists across the country," she added.

According to the American Urological Association (AUA), a 'young' urologist is defined as someone (who has completed training) who has been in practice for 10 years or less.

Abraham is also the Chair of the Executive Curriculum Committee for Albert Einstein College of Medicine and has served the AUA as an Oral Board



Professor Dr. Nitya Abraham has been honored with the Young Urologist Award in recognition of her efforts and commitment to advance the development of fellow young urologists.

Review Course faculty member. She is a member of the Society for Urodynamics, Female Pelvic Medicine, and Urogenital Reconstruction (SUFU) Young Urologists Committee and social media committee.

The awards committee described Abraham as a prolific researcher with a clinical research focus on the impact of social determinants of health on pelvic floor health.

She has received funding from the US Department of Defense for urinary diagnostic markers of interstitial cystitis and is also a co-author of the AUA White Paper on Rationale and Strategies for

Reducing Urologic Post-Operative Opioid Prescribing, a statement released by AUA said. A graduate of University of Connecticut, Abraham completed Medicine at New York University Langone Medical Center and the Urology residency at the same place.

She did a fellowship in Female Urology at Cleveland Clinic, following which she joined the Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. She is the daughter of Dr Thomas Abraham, Chairman of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) International, and retired internist/geriatrician Dr Susy Abraham.

Along with Abraham, Rena Malik, MD from Mid-Atlantic Section at the University of Maryland; Jesse D. Sammon, DO from New England Section at Maine Medical Partners Urology; Sarah Vij, MD from North Central Section at Cleveland Clinic; Alexander J. Ernest from MD, Society of Government Service Urologists at Brooke Army Medical Center, etc., also received the award.

Established in 2012-2013, AUA's Young Urologist of the Year Award is presented annually to select early-career members in recognition of their efforts and commitment to advancing the development of fellow young urologists. The following members were selected by their colleagues who serve on the Young Urologists Committee and endorsed by their respective Section/Society to receive this special honor for 2023.

Indian-origin ex-bureaucrat gets 10 years in jail for stealing \$47.4 million from Ontario govt

APRIL 5, 2023

TORONTO (TIP): An Indian-origin former Ontario government employee has been sentenced to 10 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to stealing \$47.4 million from the provincial government, which included \$10.8 million of Covid aid. Sanjay Madan, who served as an IT Director within the Ministry of Education, pleaded guilty to multiple charges of fraud, breach of trust, and money laundering, which he



Sanjay Madan pleaded guilty to multiple charges of fraud, breach of trust, and money laundering.

Photo Credit / Twitter

committed by overseeing two complicated schemes to bilk millions of dollars from taxpayers, the Global News reported.

Madan's lawyer Chris Sewratan said he feels "sorry" for his crimes and is taking "responsibility for everything".

Madan has agreed to re-pay the entire amount, \$30 million of which, his lawyers say was immediately returned to the Ontario government, while the remainder can be repaid over the next 15 years. His deception came to light during the Covid-19 pandemic when the government set up the support for students fund to give parents a one-time payment of \$200 per child to offset the costs of learning from home during the pandemic. Madan, who had access to the internal processing portal, siphoned off more than 43,000 support payments into 2,841 bank accounts under his name -- taking \$10.8 million from the fund, according to Global News.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian origin Canadian Sikh Manveer Singh Dhesi facing assault, mischief charges turns himself in, say Police

APRIL 3, 2023

VANCOUVER (TIP): A 28-year-old Sikh, facing multiple charges including assault, uttering threats, and mischief, has turned himself in at Vancouver Provincial Court, police said.

Manveer Singh Dhesi, who turned himself in on March 31, is known to live in Surrey but police said he also frequents Burnaby in the Canadian province of British Columbia. The Burnaby Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had put out a notice earlier this week seeking public assistance in locating Dhesi wanted on a British Columbia wide arrest warrant. According to information presented during a bail hearing on March 31, Dhesi's charges relate to alleged incidents on March 13 at his ex-girlfriend's home, Burnaby Now reported.

His ex-girlfriend, her sister, her brother-in-law and her brother-in-law's brother were all at the house, according to Crown prosecutor Jennifer Dyck. "There was an alleged incident where Dhesi turned up at their home, assaulted, allegedly, two of the individuals and barged into the home without consent," Dyck told Burnaby Now. British Columbia provincial court Judge Jeffrey Campbell ordered Dhesi to pay a fine of \$500 and asked him not to go within two blocks of his ex-girlfriend's house, or contact any of his alleged victims.



Canadian Sikh Manveer Singh Dhesi facing assault, mischief charges turns himself in to police

Photo for representational purpose only / iStock

Five Indian American women among Barron's 100 most influential women in US finance

APRIL 6, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Five Indian American women figure in Barron's fourth annual list of the 100 Most Influential Women in US Finance honoring "women who have achieved positions of prominence in the financial services industry and are helping to shape its future."

Chosen by a panel of Barron's writers and editors based on external and internal nominations, the list includes executives at major US companies, investment managers and securities analysts, and public servants and policy makers.

Indian Americans on the list are Anu Aiyengar, Global Head, Mergers and Acquisitions, JP Morgan, Rupal J Bhansali, Chief Investment Officer & Portfolio Manager, Global Equities, Ariel Investments, Meena Lakdawala-Flynn, Co-Head, Global Private Wealth Management, Goldman Sachs Group, Sonal Desai, Chief Investment Officer, Fixed Income, Franklin Templeton, and Savita Subramanian, Head of US Equity & Quantitative Strategy, Bank of America Securities.

Anu Aiyengar has been in mergers and acquisitions from early in her career, according to her Barron's profile. She is the only person of color and the sole woman to carry this position on Wall Street.

Since 1999, she has advised both domestic and international clients on over \$500 billion worth of transactions including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures/separations, leveraged



Anu Aiyengar, Rupal J. Bhansali, Meena Lakdawala, Sonal Desai and Savita Subramanian are the five Indian American women among Barron's 100 most influential women in US finance

buyouts, proxy contests, unsolicited transactions and special committee assignments.

She also serves on JP Morgan's fairness and valuation committee. As the co-chair of the Investment Bank's women network Aiyengar is involved with several initiatives across JP Morgan and Wall Street to recruit, mentor and develop women.

She is also co-chair of the Smith Business Advisory Network. Aiyengar lives in New York City with her husband. She has a BA in economics from Smith College and an MBA from Vanderbilt University.

Rupal J. Bhansali, 55, broke through the glass ceiling and now uses her position as a senior leader to help other women succeed in finance. "My mantra is: I want women to earn money, learn money, manage money, and multiply money," she told Barron's.

Bhansali manages more than \$7

billion, including Ariel's International Fund and Global Fund. This is her third appearance on Barron's 100 list.

After joining the board of the nonprofit 100 Women in Finance, she launched the webinar series "Candid Conversations with CIOs," to give women an insider's view of what it takes to become a chief investment officer and to show the impact that investors can have when managing billions of dollars in funds.

"It's said that women can't be what they can't see, so this is my effort of giving female CIOs more visibility and trying to showcase to our industry at large that this is what you can be," she told the magazine.

She earned a Bachelor of Commerce in accounting and finance, as well as a Master of Commerce in international finance and banking from the University of Mumbai. She later earned an MBA in finance from the University of Rochester,

where she was a Rotary Foundation Scholar.

Sonal Desai, 58, is responsible for overseeing Franklin's Municipal, Corporate Credit, Floating Rate, Multisector, Global (including Emerging Markets), and Money Market Fixed Income teams.

She is also a portfolio manager for a number of strategies. A member of Franklin Resources' executive committee, a small group of the company's top leaders responsible for shaping the firm's overall strategy, she also serves on the firm's Management and Investment Committees.

Before her current role, she served as a portfolio manager with Dr Michael Hasenstab for the flagship Templeton Global Bond and Templeton Global Total Return strategies, as well as director of research for Templeton Global Macro.

Desai started her career as an assistant professor of economics at the University of Pittsburgh and then worked for over six years at the International Monetary Fund in Washington, DC.

Following this, she joined the private financial sector and worked for about five years as director and senior economist for Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein in London.

Desai joined Franklin Templeton in 2009. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Delhi University and a PhD in economics from Northwestern University.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American engineer to head NASA's newly established Moon to Mars Program



Amit Kshatriya, an Indian American software and robotics engineer, was appointed as the first head of NASA's newly established Moon to Mars Program

MARCH 31, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Amit Kshatriya, a decorated Indian American software and robotics engineer was appointed as the first head of NASA's newly established Moon to Mars Program that will help the agency ensure a long-term lunar presence needed to prepare for humanity's next giant leap to the Red Planet.

Kshatriya will serve as NASA's first head of the office, with immediate effect, the agency announced on Thursday, March 30.

The new office aims to carry out the agency's human exploration activities on the Moon and Mars for the benefit of

humanity, a NASA press release said.

"The golden age of exploration is happening right now, and this new office will help ensure that NASA successfully establishes a long-term lunar presence needed to prepare for humanity's next giant leap to the Red Planet," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson.

"The Moon to Mars Program Office will help prepare NASA to carry out our bold missions to the Moon and land the first humans on Mars," Nelson explained. The new office resides within the Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate, reporting to its Associate Administrator Jim Free, it said.

As directed by the 2022 NASA Authorization Act, the Moon to Mars Program Office focuses on hardware development, mission integration and risk management functions for programs critical to the agency's exploration approach that uses Artemis missions at the Moon to open a new era of scientific discovery and prepare for human missions to Mars, according to the press release. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Viraj Patel wins Illinois State University's student teaching award

APRIL 5, 2023

ILLINOIS (TIP): Viraj Patel, a doctoral student and teaching assistant at Illinois State University's School of Communications has received its Outstanding University Graduate Student Teaching Award for 2022.

The award for doctoral students who lead classes, recognizes graduate teaching assistants who demonstrate persistent, focused, and purposeful dedication to striving for excellence.

Patel, a second-year doctoral student in the School of Communication, has taught COM 110 and COM 111. His favorite class to teach is COM 110 because he has a love for public speaking and finds a sense of accomplishment when guiding students through the class, according to a university press release.

"Public speaking is so overwhelming, so I really like seeing those 'a ha' moments in students when they realize they can do this and that it isn't as scary



Viraj Patel has received Illinois State University's Outstanding University Graduate Student Teaching Award for 2022.

as they thought it would be," said Patel.

His motivations as a teacher have aided him in his time as an instructor, the release said.

"The great teachers I have had in the past inspire me, they have helped me to think better, be a better member of society, and showed me through teaching we can all collectively learn and help others learn to be better

people and better citizens in society," said Patel.

Patel has always been heavily involved in public speaking and communication, which became his way of defining himself, and teaching the public speaking course was an opportunity he enjoyed.

"It's amazing to receive recognition for teaching a subject that means so much to me and especially to be chosen by people who have seen and awarded incredible teachers throughout the years is an honor," said Patel. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

IOCUSA protests the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi

APRIL 1, 2023

LONG ISLAND, NY (TIP): Indian Overseas Congress, USA, an advocacy organization that promotes democracy and freedom in India, held a protest in New York against the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi from Lok Sabha following his conviction in a defamation case. The supporters held placards that said 'save democracy, save India', 'Modi-Adani Bhai Bhai', 'Adani & 20,000 Crores Rs', and 'Rahul Gandhi Zindabad' and shouted the slogans.

The protests were staged at an event organized by IOCUSA in Long Island, New York, where delegates from ten states were present-over one-hundred-chapter delegates of IOCUSA who were highly incensed by the conviction of Rahul Gandhi strongly expressed their disappointment and anger. The maximum penalty had been imposed for a non-lethal and drummed-up offense with extra-ordinary severity, which was totally out of the norm, character, and scope, which shows how far the Modi Government went to unjustly overreact with intent to remove Rahul Gandhi from the public square.

In the keynote address, Mr. Sam Pitroda, Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, challenged the audience and rhetorically asked what kind of India we all want. He went on to say, "In today's India, there is an ongoing disinformation campaign against the opposition: they used to call Rahul Gandhi Pappu and then filed court cases. However, after the successful Bharat Jodo Yatra, they have even ratcheted up the pressure. When Rahul went to London and had a series of private and public meetings, and said Indian democracy is a larger public good and added that Indian democracy is in danger, but that is our problem. However, in the media in India, on almost every channel, his talk was twisted and turned into a campaign against him. Every minister showed up on Indian T.V. and said Rahul was asking to interfere in Indian democracy. It is obvious that the ruling party has captured the media along with all other institutions, such as Judiciary, E.D., and Income tax. Even Civil society is not allowed to function as a watchdog. It is wrong. But nobody seemed to listen. There can be no meaningful conversation, and the sanctity of the scientific, logical, and rational mindset appears lost. It isn't easy to operate".

"We are in a situation where the 2024 election becomes very important for the country. It is the idea of India we are fighting. It is not a fight between Modi and Rahul Gandhi or Modi and XYZ, nor is it a fight between BJP and Congress. It is a fight about the idea of how we build a nation. We want to build a nation with peace and harmony where everybody can work comfortably, or should we be in a nation where everybody is fighting each other, affecting our growth and



Mr. Sam Pitroda, Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress addresses the IOCUSA members in New York on April 1, 2023

prosperity? We cannot ignore 200 million Muslims in India. They are very much a part of my life. I grew up with their music and culture, and they have become an integral part of India. Then you begin to separate Muslims and Christians, and whatever, you begin to attack the very fabric of India. That is what is going on, and that bothers many of us."

"2024 is ahead of us, and how do we convince people that we have to fight for the idea of India? Some people feel that the fight will be on social media, and others feel that it will be over Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). There are all kinds of ideas, and everyone has a view of what is wrong. There is so much interest in what is going on in India. These are the issues we are fighting for. Indian Overseas Congress has been here for a while. Today we are in 32 countries. We are successful only because of people like you who are present here. You make it happen. We don't see the results if we don't make things happen. Some seniors may feel that if BJP wins in 2024, they must write off India. However, I cannot afford to write off India. I want India to be the way it was when we were kids. Lots of good things have happened. When I came to America, I had never seen a telephone, television, or refrigerator in my life because we were that poor. Today, we have everything. India is what it is today because we planted the right seeds at the right time in education, industry, technology, and science. Today's India needs to forge ahead; we cannot have prosperity without having the core of it. And the core of it is being attacked. You may build high-speed trains, but there is no soul in them. We need to get the soul back. In the long run, there will be no prosperity if there is no peace. Peace only comes by respecting each other. I very strongly believe in it. Therefore, let us work together and take this message to our families and friends across India to make a difference starting today". Mr.



IOCUSA members protest the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi

Pitroda exhorted.

In his presidential address, Mr. Mohinder Singh Gilzian asserted that we are at a critical time for India, particularly for democracy and freedom of expression in our motherland. As NRIs, we have a responsibility to see that a democratic and secular India survives and prospers. The last three years have been challenging. Covid has stopped us from achieving many of the goals we have set out to accomplish. However, the time is ripe now for us to become active and be counted. Sam ji has proposed a reorganization of IOCUSA to be more responsive to the ongoing challenges. That will include appointing five working Presidents to work in their respective zones. This way, we hope to reach the maximum possible NRIs and convince them to join us to help preserve democracy and the rule of law in India. What happened to Rahul Gandhi should never have occurred in a democratic country. We have seen the weaponization of the law enforcement system against the opposition.

In summary, we are joining a fight against tyranny and dictatorship. In 90 days, we will have chapters reorganized or newly created in every state where there is a substantial number of Indian Americans. The 2024 National elections are just a year away, and we need volunteers to help our party to defeat communalism and preserve freedom. I know that for many, America has become the new home. They see India only in a rearview mirror. Many others are concerned but unwilling to get involved. Are we saying that we have no obligation to the country that has given us birth, education, and freedom to immigrate to this great country? We owe it to our brothers and sisters who are left behind the same freedom we enjoy here in the U.S. In the coming days, the newly appointed working Presidents will assemble a team in their own zones. New York is in the Northeast Zone, which includes several nearby states. He concluded by urging the gathering to come forward and enlist and make their talents and skillset available so we can

work together and rally behind the cause of freedom and democracy.

George Abraham, Vice-Chairman, in his speech, thanked Mr. Pitroda for his spirited defense of freedom everywhere in the last couple of weeks. He added, "only a few years ago, four Justices of the Supreme Court held unprecedented news conferences in which they asserted that democracy was in danger in India. That prediction is steadily becoming a reality. A mere expression of words in jest can put you in jail. This is not the India we left behind. This is not the India Nehru and Ambedkar envisaged. Today, institutions are undermined, media is muzzled, a parliament is no longer a debating body, diets are regulated, and freedom of expression is curtailed. With the recently enacted changes to OCI, NRIs are also gagged, and it is all part of silencing any dissent. We want you to use words in support of this cause that means speaking out," Mr. Abraham added.

After Krishna Sree Gandham and Sharath Chandra Vemuganti sang the Indian National Anthem, Secretary Secretary-General Harbachan Singh, Master of Ceremony, declared the event open with a welcome speech and thanked everyone who came from far and near. He also gave a rousing welcome to the Chief Guest and Global Chairman, Dr. Sam Pitroda. All those who spoke at the event include Minhaj Khan, Gurmit Singh Gill, Pradeep Samala, John Joseph, Rajendar Dichpally, Balinder Singh Kundu, Dr. Dayan Naik, Sabu Sakaria, Pavan Darsi, Gurinderpal Singh, Gurpreet Singh, Amel Singh, Gulshan Singh Ghotra, Sharath Chandra, Gourishankar Ranganagoudra, Dr. Jayesh Patel, Devindarpal Bhullar, Kulraj Grewal, Srivatsa Ramanathan, Sharod Chandra, Johnson Myalil, Sukhy Dho, Verghese Pothanikadu, Zinda Singh and Pappy Badosh.

In the end, Dr. Sam Pitroda proudly bestowed "The Chairman's" award upon Secretary General Harbachan Singh Esq., which stated in part, "your untiring efforts and outstanding performances have earned our highest esteem."

Sam Pitroda, Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, revamps the organization in the USA



Dr. Sam Pitroda, Global Chairman of IOC is given a floral welcome.



The newly appointed officials of IOCUSA



IOC officials with Dr. Pitroda

APRIL 1, 2023

LONG ISLAND, NY (TIP): Addressing a charged-up group of Indian Overseas Congress USA leaders from all over the USA who were assembled at a special meeting in New York on April 1, 2023, Dr. Sam Pitroda emphasized the importance of recalibrating collaborative efforts to canvass, educate, and respond to the electorate in India on what they are looking for from their elected representatives. At this time, he has appointed five new working presidents to cover the five zones that he had delineated of the USA for this purpose as follows:

Working President, North-East Zone - Mr. Pradeep Samala.

Working President, South-East Zone - Dr. Sajan Kurian

Working President, South-West Zone - Mr. Srivatsa Ramanathan

Working President, Mid-West Zone - Mr. Kulraj S. Grewal

Working President, West Coast Zone. - Mr. Devenderpal S. Bhullar

OTHER CHANGES/APPOINTMENTS:

Vice-President, Community Liaison - Mr. Rajendar Dichpally

Chairman, Disciplinary Committee, - Mr. Gurmit Gill

Chairman, Membership Committee, - Mr. Nikhil Thagadur

Chairman, Social Media Committee, - Mr. Avinash Dandiya

General Secretary, - Mr. Sandeep Vangala

General Secretary, - Mr. Balinder Singh Kundu

with the guidance of IOC global Chairman Sam Pitroda ji, IOC USA president Mohinder Ji and other leaders. "At this crucial juncture, it is very critical to bring NRIs & PIOs into the IOC fold and work for the betterment of the country," Mr. Samala added.

Mr. Kulraj Singh Grewal, IOC Working President In Charge Mid-West Region, said, "Thank you very much to our IOC Chairman Sam Pitroda ji, and IOC USA president Mohinder Singh Gilzian ji for giving me this opportunity. I promise to fight for the party with everything I have and meet every expectation that you have of me."

Rajender Dichpally, IOC Vice-President for Community Relations, said that there was a need to work with the Indian organizations to find common goals away from the religious and biased approach adopted by HSS and other right-aligned forces in the USA so that we can strengthen the forces of secularism and help promote values of love, tolerance and progressive approach, which the congress party stands for. He said the message Rahul

took to all of India during his Bharat Jodo Yatra should be the basis of finding common ground with Indian organizations and diaspora. We should unite the forces in the fight to save the idea of India.

John Joseph, IOC Vice-President, said, "India is no longer a true democracy; MLAs and MPs are bought for a price as the BJP leaders are perpetual liars - it looks like someone writes the script, and all of them echo the same. BJP has

become the government for a few Business houses, and the common man is neglected and ignored - when the Indian currency is losing its value, the finance minister says that it is not true the Dollar is gaining! If we have people of such caliber, how will India face the economic downcall (Crash) that is expected soon? We need a government that cares for the common man - the neglected/oppressed and squeezed beyond tolerance. Rahul Gandhi is the only one who can turn it around, and Congress is the only party that really cares for India. Let us unite and remove the party that is abusing power in 2024."

Mr. Balinder Singh Kundu, IOC General Secretary said, "Parliament Elections in India are around the corner; we have to unify IOC globally to support the party in our home states; our leader Rahul Gandhi ji gave us a great tool "weapons" in the form of Bharat Jodo Yatra and Hath se Hath Jodo going on now, we have to promote his Agenda "Nafrat ke Bazar mein Mohabbet ki dukan khole" We have to sound in unison.

Gurmit Gill, Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee, said, "we need to support Rahul Gandhi in the upcoming 2024 election; he is our only chance to save democracy in India".

Avi Dandia, Chairman of the Social Media Committee, said, " I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Sam Pitroda and Mr. Mohinder Singh of overseas congress for appointing me as chairman of social media (US chapter) with independent charge."



Dr. Sam Pitroda bestowed "The Chairman's" award upon Secretary General Harbachan Singh Esq., which stated in part, "your untiring efforts and outstanding performances have earned our highest esteem." Seen on the right is IOCUSA President Mohinder Singh Gilzian

President Mohinder Singh Gilzian expressed gratitude to all the leaders who came from all over the USA. He also praised the vision and the valuable guidance of Dr. Sam Pitroda ji, who is respected as a great visionary leader. George Abraham, the Vice-Chair, congratulated all the new appointees and thanked them for their dedication to the cause.

Pradeep Samala, IOC Working President In charge Northeast Region stated that as a Working President, he would work towards building IOC chapters across the Northeast region

A very different conception of 'Ram Rajya'

MAHATMA GANDHI'S IDEA OF RAM RAJYA - THE VERY IDEA OF GANDHI, ONE MIGHT SAY - IS IN DANGER OF BEING SWEEP ASIDE BY PREVAILING IDEOLOGICAL CURRENTS, IRONICALLY IN FAVOR OF A VERY DIFFERENT CONCEPTION OF RAMA. THESE DAYS, WHEN THE STANDING OF HIS HISTORIC DETRACTORS IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH, GANDHIJI HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR WEAKNESS, FOR HAVING BENT OVER TOO FAR TO ACCOMMODATE MUSLIM INTERESTS, AND FOR HIS PACIFISM, WHICH IS SEEN BY THE JINGOISTIC HINDUTVA MOVEMENT AS UNMANLY.

It was the longest-serving Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) sarsangchalak, M.S. Golwalkar, who famously spurned Gandhian ahimsa by observing tartly, "all Hindu gods are depicted carrying weapons". Some of his acolytes this year have decided to emulate their gods on Ram Navami, as Hindu marchers, in what were ostensibly religious processions, turned up brandishing swords, maces, even knives and revolvers to advertise their strength. This weaponization of faith was a reminder of the derisive rejection of Gandhian 'universalism' and 'non-violence' by Hindutva's original proponent, V.D. Savarkar, who considered them delusory opiates. Instead of Mahatma Gandhi's moral lessons in favor of peace, Savarkar advocated the "political virility" of Hindutva, an idea which seems to have found full flower in today's foot-soldiers of that doctrine.

Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Ram Rajya - the very idea of Gandhi, one might say - is in danger of being swept aside by prevailing ideological currents, ironically in favor of a very different conception of Rama. These days, when the standing of his historic detractors is at an all-time high, Gandhiji has been criticized for weakness, for having bent over too far to accommodate Muslim interests, and for his pacifism, which is seen by the jingoistic Hindutva movement as unmanly. The Mahatma was killed, with the name of Rama on his lips, for being too pro-Muslim. Indeed, he had just come out of a fast he had conducted to coerce his own followers, the ministers of the new Indian government, to transfer a larger share than they had intended of the assets of undivided India to the new state of Pakistan. Gandhiji's idea of Ram Rajya was arguably utopian - a vision of perfect social harmony, economic justice and political freedom. The Hindutva idea is one of unbridled Hindutva dominance, in which those who do not conform are firmly put in their place.

TRUTH AND THE MAHATMA

The Mahatma was more than just the extraordinary leader of the world's first successful non-violent movement for independence from colonial rule. He was also a philosopher who was constantly seeking to live out his own ideas, whether they applied to individual self-improvement or social change: his autobiography was typically subtitled *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.

No dictionary imbues 'truth' with the depth of meaning Gandhiji gave it. His truth emerged from



A pencil portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, drawn from life in 1931

Photo Credit/ PTI

his convictions: it meant not only what was accurate, but what was just and, therefore, right. Truth could not be obtained by 'untruthful' or unjust means, which included inflicting violence upon one's opponent. To describe his method, Gandhiji coined the expression satyagraha - literally, 'holding on to truth' or, as he variously described it, truth-force, love-force or soul-force. He disliked the English term 'passive resistance', because satyagraha required activism, not passivity. If you believed in the truth and cared enough to obtain it, Gandhiji felt, you could not afford to be passive: you had to be prepared actively to suffer for the truth.

So non-violence, like many later concepts labelled with a negation, from non-cooperation to non-alignment, meant much more than the denial of an opposite; it did not merely imply the absence of violence. Non-violence was the way to vindicate the truth not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on oneself. It was essential to willingly accept punishment in order to demonstrate the strength of one's convictions.

AN AMBIVALENCE

The attitude of the Hindutva-inspired government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi towards Gandhiji is deeply ambivalent. Many RSS pracharaks and other members of the Sangh Parivar were schooled in an intense dislike of the Mahatma, whose message of tolerance and pluralism was emphatically rejected as minority appeasement by the Sangh Parivar, and whose credo of non-violence, or ahimsa, was seen as an admission of weakness unworthy of manly Hindus. Hindutva ideologue Savarkar, whom Mr. Modi has described as one of his heroes, had expressed contempt for Gandhiji's 'perverse doctrine of non-violence and truth' and claimed it 'was bound to destroy the power of the country'. But the Prime Minister, for all his Hindutva mindset, his admiration of Savarkar and his lifetime affiliation to the Sangh Parivar, has embraced Gandhiji, hailing the Mahatma and even using his glasses as a symbol of the Swachh Bharat campaign, linking it to a call to revive Gandhiji's idea of seva through the 'Swachhta Hi Seva' Campaign.

The ambivalence speaks volumes: when many members of Mr. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party



BY SHASHI THAROOR

(BJP) call for replacing Gandhiji's statues across the country with those of his assassin, Nathuram Godse, the Prime Minister seeks to lay claim to the mantle of his fellow Gujarati for his own political benefit. At the same time, there is also a dissonance between the official governmental embrace of Gandhiji and the unofficial ideological distaste for him privately expressed by members and supporters of the ruling party, some of whom have not hidden their view that his assassination was, in their eyes, a patriotic act. Even the Mahatma's declared intention, shortly before his assassination, to spend his remaining days in Pakistan, sits uncomfortably with a party whose leaders' favorite imprecation for its critics is 'Go to Pakistan!'

THE DIFFERENCE

It is well understood that the vision of Gandhiji, an openly practicing Hindu, differed greatly from that of his fellow Hindus Savarkar and Golwalkar, the principal ideologues of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS respectively (the forerunners of the BJP). His Hinduism, open, eclectic and accepting of difference, could have lent itself to a different form of 'Hindu nationalism', a liberal nationalism imbued with his Hindu values, and so well suited to managing the diversity of India. But Gandhiji was far too inclusive to have qualified his nationalism with a communal adjective. Savarkar, who had little use for Hindu religious beliefs and practices except as a label for identity formation, never thought much of Gandhi's faith or the principle of non-violence that emerged from it. To the Hindutvavadi, nationalism cannot be non-violent because in order to succeed, it needs to be coercive and destructive of enemies, and when it succeeds it is expressed through the apparatus of the state, which has a monopoly over violence. Despite being a far more deeply rooted Hindu than Savarkar, Mahatma Gandhi has little place in the Hindutva imagination.

Hinduism and Hindutva, as I have argued in my books, *Why I Am a Hindu* and *The Battle of Belonging*, represent two very distinct and contrasting ideas, with vitally different implications for nationalism and the role of the Hindu faith. The principles Gandhiji stood for and the way in which he asserted them are easier to admire than to follow. But their conception of Ram Rajya represented an ideal that is betrayed every day by those who distort Hinduism to promote a narrow, exclusionary bigotry.

(Shashi Tharoor is Member of Parliament (Congress), Lok Sabha, for Thiruvananthapuram, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, and Chairman, All-India Professionals' Congress)

USA is a Nation of Laws: Trump Indicted

D.A. ALVIN BRAGG UNSEALS 34 FELONY COUNTS



THE TASK FOR POLITICIANS IS TO GIVE POLITICS A REST, AS OUR NATION IS UNDERGOING A STRESS-TEST THE LIKES OF WHICH EVEN RICHARD NIXON WAS EXEMPTED FROM. OUR REPUBLIC NEED NOT HAVE GOTTEN TO THIS DAY, AS WE OUGHT NOT HAVE HAD JANUARY 6TH. IT IS TIME TO BE AMERICAN FIRST, AND PARTY-POLITICIAN SECOND. AMERICA IS MADE UP OF ALL AMERICANS, AND WE NEED POLITICAL E PLURIBUS UNUM MORE THAN EVER TO REMAIN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND NOT BECOME, AS SENATOR JOE MANCHIN RECENTLY SAID: DIVIDED STATES OF AMERICA.



In our nearly 250 year history, since our exceptional birth and Constitution, we have proudly said: we are a nation of laws, not men. Today, on that secular altar of justice, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg held up former President Donald John Trump, duly indicted with 34 felony counts, as "Exhibit A" proving that truly "no one is above the law." The Manhattan DA's office has been occupied by Giants, each of whom made history: Tom Dewey, Frank Hogan, Robert M. Morgenthau (my dear friend and mentor), Cyrus Roberts Vance, Jr., and now Alvin Leonard Bragg, Jr.

Leaving politics aside, there ought to be no joy in the heart of any American that a former American President stands criminally charged - no matter whether you love Trump or hate him. Indeed, it's painful, perhaps, even more than January 6th, that a former President



President Donald John Trump is arraigned in the court of Justice Juan M. Merchan, April 4, 2023

violated his personal oath to honor the rule of law. That Justice will prevail, and Mr. Trump will be afforded every Constitutional right that every American gets, including, presumptive-innocence and the all-powerful right to confront the witnesses against him is something we, as Americans, are uniquely proud of. After all, these legal and constitutional rights protect citizens from preventing anyone in Government - who may seek to violate Lincoln's promise that our government is "of, by and for" the people - run roughshod over any one of us.

THESE 34 FELONY COUNTS ARE ALL ABOUT "MENS REA" AND THE "UPGRADE"

The 34 counts are business record-based, which is to say that the "bad act" part of each crime is nearly incontrovertible, leaving open for advocacy only the "bad mind," or "mens rea," to prove the crime was committed beyond a reasonable doubt. Normally, the Prosecutor has to prove both the "bad act" and the "bad mind" beyond a reasonable doubt to a fair and impartial jury of twelve.

The additional legal challenge for DA Bragg here is to prove the "upgrading" of normal misdemeanor business record-charges into felony charges due to: "with intent to defraud and intent to commit another crime and aid and conceal the commission thereof." And, for that, DA Bragg, in his press conference post-plea, said the "other crime" was New York State election law violation as well as a violation of federal campaign contribution limits. He need not prove both; just proving one of the two will be enough to "upgrade" the misdemeanor into a "felony," and unlike flying on a plane when the upgrade gets you more seat and leg-room for greater comfort, here, the upgrade provides the

Sentencing Judge with the authority to order the then-convicted-defendant more pain and a longer sentence commensurate with the crimes convicted, while considering all mitigating factors, including, age and health, for a lesser sentence, including, no jail time.

The political irony here is that New York State has been blasted by Republicans on being "soft" on defendants charged with crimes. Well, now, that very objected-to New York "softness" helps former President Trump, including, our state laws that insist upon expansive discovery production by prosecutors to help all defendants better prepare for trial.

The legal battle, then, when it truly gets past the initial flurry of activity, will be hand-to-hand combat with the defense trying to raise doubt about Mr. Trump's "intent" for each Count and the "upgrade" state or federal predicate.

JUSTICE MERCHAN TAKES CHARGE

Today, President Trump pled "Not Guilty," and was warned by Justice Juan Merchan to "refrain" from social media posts with the potential to incite violence. This warning was not idle, and presents additional legal jeopardy for Mr. Trump - just like Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. did by holding: you cannot yell "fire" in a crowded theater, without being held liable for those who get trampled in the ensuing melee.

While President Trump has enjoyed being a political or economic pugilist to-date, suddenly, there are legal risks now imposed by Justice Merchan, as the law is not a trifle, and the integrity of the profession must be maintained. As America's greatest mayor Rudy Giuliani has learned, a title he earned by keeping all New Yorkers together after 9/11, when his law license was suspended by the



BY RAVI BATRA

NYS Supreme Court's Appellate Division First Department for his over-zealous advocacy, which the Court held violated the core obligation imposed-by-law on every lawyer by the Rules of Professional Conduct: to maintain the integrity of the profession, and safeguard Judicial Independence. Lying by a lawyer is not allowed, and is surely not risk-free.

PROCEDURES AND TIMELINES

New York allows interlocutory appeals of Orders the aggrieved party wishes to appeal, and by doing so, there is delay of the trial. Federal cases, generally, do not have as-of-right appeal of every Order issued, and hence are quicker to try the case. Here, President Trump has more legal jeopardy as there is US DOJ Special Counsel Jack Smith (Confidential Documents etc.) and Georgia state DA looking into the "11,780 votes" Mr. Trump was desperately looking to find. And then, there are civil cases. Mr. Trump is going to be quite busy consulting with his lawyers or being in Court. The national convention will occur next summer, with a presidential election in November 2024. It's quite likely that one or more trials may not have occurred before November 2024. Mr. Trump may well find that he needs to pay real close attention to exercising all of his legal rights, if he is to avoid, or at least, minimize, legal liability.

E PLURIBUS UNUM, NOT REPUBLICANS OR DEMOCRATS

The task for politicians is to give politics a rest, as our nation is undergoing a stress-test the likes of which even Richard Nixon was exempted from. Our Republic need not have gotten to this day, as we ought not have had January 6th. It is time to be American first, and party-politician second. America is made up of all Americans, and we need political E Pluribus Unum more than ever to remain the United States of America, and not become, as Senator Joe Manchin recently said: divided States of America.

AMERICA: REVEILLE!

To close, I urge all Americans to recall the special wish of the Lion of the Senate, Pat Leahy: let America always have "Reveille!"

(The author is the publisher of The America Times Company Ltd., and since January 2022, is the Editor-in-Chief. He is a member of the National Press Club, in Washington D.C., and a member of its "Freedom of the Press" and "International Correspondents" Teams/Committees. An eminent, he is a member of the bar since 1981.)

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The age of toxic politics

DEATH OF CRITICAL THINKING IS WHAT ALL AUTHORITARIAN MASTERS CHERISH



BY AVIJIT PATHAK



NO MEANINGFUL TEACHING/LEARNING IS POSSIBLE IF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR ROBS US OF OUR VOICE. IN FACT, THE TOXIC POLITICS WE SEE AROUND HAS CREATED AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH ONE CAN BE CENSORED, DISCIPLINED AND PUNISHED FOR ANY CRITICAL VOICE THAT SEEKS TO INTERROGATE THE LOGIC OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, SAY, THE REDUCTION OF THE SUPREME LEADER OF THE RULING PARTY INTO A NON-QUESTIONABLE MESSIAH; THE LEGITIMIZATION OF HIS EVERY ACT, SPEECH OR POLICY THROUGH THE LOGIC OF POPULARITY AND ELECTORAL STATISTICS; AND THE SIMPLE EQUATION THAT DIVIDES US INTO TWO CATEGORIES OR BINARIES - DESHBHAKTS OR NATIONALISTS AND ANTI-NATIONAL CONSPIRATORS.



The politics of critical pedagogy probes the discourse of power, interrogates all sorts of authoritarianism, promotes the ethos of dialogue and art of listening, sees education beyond the acquisition of mere market-friendly technical skills, and strives for enlightened/democratic citizenship. However, these days amid the all-pervading toxic politics, and cultural/psychic pollution all around, a sense of despair or pessimism seems to be preventing many of us from celebrating or practicing the art of critical pedagogy.

It is vital to spread the ethos of critical pedagogy - the pedagogy of love, resistance and social transformation.



To begin with, let us acknowledge a simple fact: no meaningful teaching/learning is possible if the psychology of fear robs us of our voice. In fact, the toxic politics we see around has created an environment in which one can be censored, disciplined and punished for any critical voice that seeks to interrogate the logic of the Establishment, say, the reduction of the supreme leader of the ruling party into a non-questionable messiah; the legitimization of his every act, speech or policy through the logic of popularity and electoral statistics; and the simple equation that divides us into two categories or binaries - deshbhaks or nationalists and anti-national conspirators.

As this psychology of fear invades our campuses and classrooms through politically appointed academic bureaucrats, it destroys the soul of critical pedagogy. It becomes difficult to learn and unlearn through questions, conversations and dialogue. Imagine the intensity of the danger: A student or a teacher can be suspended or expelled if he/she dares to watch the much talked about BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots. Or, for that matter, a series of FIRs can haunt you if you print a poster revealing your unhappiness with the present regime. And you can be jailed if your critical reflections 'hurt' the sentiments of hyper-nationalists playing with the fire of religious fundamentalism.

How is it then possible to create a culture of learning that promotes dialogue and art of listening, and encourages us to ask uncomfortable questions? The fact is that the cult of authoritarianism, and even electoral authoritarianism, needs either non-reflexive conformists or indulgent consumers as market fundamentalism and religious fundamentalism often go together. This is like annihilating the spirit of critical pedagogy.

Likewise, critical pedagogy requires the cultivation of some mental/intellectual faculties, say, the quality of endurance and patience needed to examine an issue relating to politics, culture, religion or economy with alertness, facts and conceptual clarity; and the courage to amend and even alter one's position through nuanced debates and conversations. However, the characteristic feature of toxic politics is that it is loud, noisy and abusive. And it has further been accelerated by the propaganda machinery and the instantaneity of social media. If your educator is primarily the noisy television news anchor who turns everything into its opposite, or if you continually see political spokespersons of different colors or even ministers spreading lies and false information without the slightest shame and guilt, or if anything beyond irresponsible and destructive messages disseminated through social media look 'boring', how is it possible to verify facts, think clearly and critically, and evolve an informed opinion?

To take an illustration, let us ask a question: In his Cambridge speech, did Rahul Gandhi really plead for foreign intervention in India to save Indian democracy, as the spokespersons for the ruling party want us to believe? Or, is it that while emphasizing this 'internal' problem - the growing danger to our democracy - he only urged his audience to be aware of it as Indian democracy is a 'public good'? You can verify facts and respond with moral responsibility only if you bother to see beyond 'viral' videos, aggressive press conferences, catchy Twitter messages, and listen to Rahul's long speech carefully.

Likewise, it is only through deep listening and alert thinking can you understand that if you are critical of Lalit Modi or Nirav Modi, you are not conveying a message that all those who bear the surname 'Modi' or belong to a

particular caste are like these two corrupt persons. It is as simple as understanding that every Gandhi is not necessarily like Mahatma Gandhi, or, for that matter, every Savarkar is not necessarily a proponent of militant Hindutva. Imagine the damage that this intoxication with toxic politics and associated fake news has done to our collective psyche. Indeed, the death of critical thinking is what authoritarian/narcissistic masters all over the world cherish.

And finally, critically pedagogy is related to the pedagogy of hope. However, this hope seems to be eroding fast as the toxic political culture is transforming even children, adolescents and youth into cynics, or dreamless 'pragmatists'. Imagine what it means to live in a world where our political bosses, ministers and demagogues do not have the slightest hesitation in vomiting filthy words and nasty slogans to castigate their opponents. Are we normalizing hate speech, like 'Yeh Congress ki kaunsi vidhwa thi, jiske khaate mein rupaya jaata tha?', 'Goli maaro saalon ko', or 'Apne kabhi dekha hai 50 crore ka girlfriend?' Such vulgar language has entered every locality; and ironically, decency in public life is seen as 'effeminate' as we normalise authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism and hyper-masculine aggression as the order of the day. Can we recover the lost language - the language of sanity, or the language of ethically responsible and intellectually nuanced conversations?

Yes, these are terribly difficult times. But then, those who believe in the efficacy of a truly transformative education ought to unite, raise their voice, interact with students and teachers, and spread the ethos of critical pedagogy - the pedagogy of love, resistance and social transformation.

(The author is a sociologist)

Today, one can be censored, disciplined and punished for any critical voice that seeks to interrogate the logic of the Establishment

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IRS wraps up 2023 Dirty Dozen list; reminds taxpayers and tax pros to be wary of scams and schemes, even after tax season

APRIL 5, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Internal Revenue Service wrapped up the annual Dirty Dozen list of tax scams for 2023 with a reminder for taxpayers, businesses and tax professionals to watch out for these schemes throughout the year, not just during tax season.

Many of these schemes peak during filing season as people prepare their tax returns. In reality, these scams can occur throughout the year as fraudsters look for ways to steal money, personal information, data and more.

To help people watch out for these scams, the IRS and the Security Summit partners are providing an overview recapping this year's Dirty Dozen scams.

"Scammers are coming up with new ways all the time to try to steal information from taxpayers," said IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel. "People should be wary and avoid sharing sensitive personal data over the phone, email or social media to avoid getting caught up in these scams. And people should always remember to be wary if a tax deal sounds too good to be true."

Working together as the Security Summit, the IRS, state tax agencies and the nation's tax industry, including tax professionals, have taken numerous steps since 2015 to warn people about common scams and schemes during tax season and beyond that can increase the risk of identity theft. The Security Summit initiative is committed to protecting taxpayers, businesses and the tax system from scammers and identity thieves.

Some items on this year's list were new and some made a return visit. While the list is not a legal document or a formal listing of agency enforcement priorities, it is intended to alert taxpayers and the tax professional community about various scams and schemes.

2023 Dirty Dozen summary:

EMPLOYEE RETENTION CREDIT CLAIMS

Taxpayers should be aware of aggressive pitches from scammers who promote large refunds related to the Employee Retention Credit (ERC). The warning follows blatant attempts by promoters to con ineligible people to claim credit. The IRS highlighted these schemes from promoters who have been blasting ads on radio and the internet touting refunds involving Employee Retention Credits. These promotions can be based on inaccurate information related to eligibility for and computation of the credit. Additionally, some of these advertisements exist solely to collect the taxpayer's personally identifiable information in exchange for false promises. The scammers then use the information to conduct identity theft.

PHISHING AND SMISHING

Taxpayers and tax professionals should be alert to fake communications from those posing as legitimate organizations in the tax and financial community, including the IRS and the states. These messages arrive in the form of an unsolicited text (smishing) or email (phishing) to lure unsuspecting victims to provide valuable personal and financial information that can lead to identity theft. The IRS initiates most contacts through regular mail and will never initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text or social media regarding a bill or tax refund.

ONLINE ACCOUNT HELP FROM THIRD-PARTY SCAMMERS

Swindlers pose as a "helpful" third party and offer to help create a taxpayer's IRS Online Account at IRS.gov. In reality, no help is needed. The online account provides taxpayers with valuable tax information. But third parties making these offers will try to steal a taxpayer's personal information this way. Taxpayers can and should establish their own online account through IRS.gov.

FALSE FUEL TAX CREDIT CLAIMS

The fuel tax credit is meant for off-highway business and farming use and, as such, is not available to most taxpayers. However, unscrupulous tax return preparers and promoters are enticing taxpayers to inflate their refunds by erroneously claiming the credit. The IRS has seen an increase in the promotion of filing certain refundable credits using Form 4136, Credit for Federal Tax Paid on Fuels.

FAKE CHARITIES

Bogus charities are a perennial problem that gets bigger whenever a crisis or natural disaster strikes. Scammers set up these fake organizations to take advantage of the public's generosity. They seek money and personal information, which can be used to further exploit victims through identity theft. Taxpayers who give money or goods to a charity might be able to claim a deduction on their federal tax return if they itemize deductions, but charitable donations only count if they go to a qualified tax-exempt organization recognized by the IRS.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

IRS unveils Strategic Operating Plan; ambitious effort details a decade of change

42 KEY INITIATIVES, 190 KEY PROJECTS DESIGNED TO HELP TAXPAYERS, THE TAX COMMUNITY AND THE NATION

APRIL 6, 2023

WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP): Following months of work, the Internal Revenue Service, on April 6, unveiled its Strategic Operating Plan, an ambitious effort to transform the tax agency and dramatically improve service to taxpayers and the nation during the next decade.

The 150-page report to the Secretary of the Treasury outlines the agency's historic plans to make fundamental changes following funding from last year's Inflation Reduction Act. The plan makes clear that the resources to be deployed over the short and long term will be used to:

Rebuild and strengthen IRS customer service activities, putting an end to long wait times on the phone, adding capacity to the in-person taxpayer assistance centers around the country, and providing new online tools for those who want to engage with the IRS digitally.

Add capacity to unpack the complex filings of high-income taxpayers, large corporations and complex partnerships, addressing a growing chasm between the number of experienced compliance personnel at the IRS who audit high-income, high-wealth tax filings for compliance (about 2,600 employees) and the roughly 30,000 individuals making more than \$10 million a year, 60,000 large corporations and 300,000 large partnerships and S corps.

Update various outdated systems in IRS core operations to help ensure the agency has the most modern and robust security in technology to protect taxpayer data.

In IRS customer service initiatives, taxpayers can already see important changes this tax season, and the plan provides a foundation for future efforts. In compliance initiatives, the IRS will ensure that the agency follows Treasury Secretary Yellen's directive not to raise audit rates above historical levels for small businesses and households making less than \$400,000. What this means is that over the next number of years, as the IRS moves to implement the Strategic Operating Plan, the agency is focused on pursuing high-income and high-wealth individuals, complex partnerships and large corporations that are not paying the taxes they owe. As a result, the IRS has no plans to increase the audit rate for small businesses and households making less than \$400,000.

"The plan is a bold look at what the

future can look like for taxpayers and the IRS," IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel said. "Now that we have long-term funding, the IRS has an opportunity to transform its operations and provide the service people deserve. Through both service and technology enhancements, the experience of the future will look and feel much different from the IRS of today. This plan charts the course forward for the IRS and tax administration."

THE PLAN IS ORGANIZED AROUND FIVE OBJECTIVES:

- Dramatically improve services to help taxpayers meet their obligations and receive the tax incentives for which they are eligible.
- Quickly resolve taxpayer issues when they arise.
- Focus expanded enforcement on taxpayers with complex tax filings and high-dollar noncompliance to address the tax gap.
- Deliver cutting-edge technology, data and analytics to operate more effectively.
- Attract, retain and empower a highly skilled, diverse workforce and develop a culture that is better equipped to deliver results for taxpayers.

Each objective will be accomplished through specific initiatives outlined in the plan. The plan contains 42 initiatives designed to achieve IRS goals, each of which includes multiple key projects and milestones to measure progress. The plan covers more than 190 key projects and more than 200 specific milestones. The IRS will identify additional projects and milestones as work continues. The number of projects and milestones will grow significantly over time as the plan evolves to meet the needs of the nation and tax administration.

For each milestone, the plan includes specific timeframes based on year.

Following passage of the law last August, the IRS embarked on this effort to identify the highest-priority opportunities to deliver transformational change. In addition to working with the Department of the Treasury, the IRS received input from tax professionals, partner groups inside and outside of the tax community, taxpayer groups, IRS federal advisory groups and IRS employees. The planning process also built on prior IRS efforts that received feedback, including the Taxpayer First Act Report to Congress.

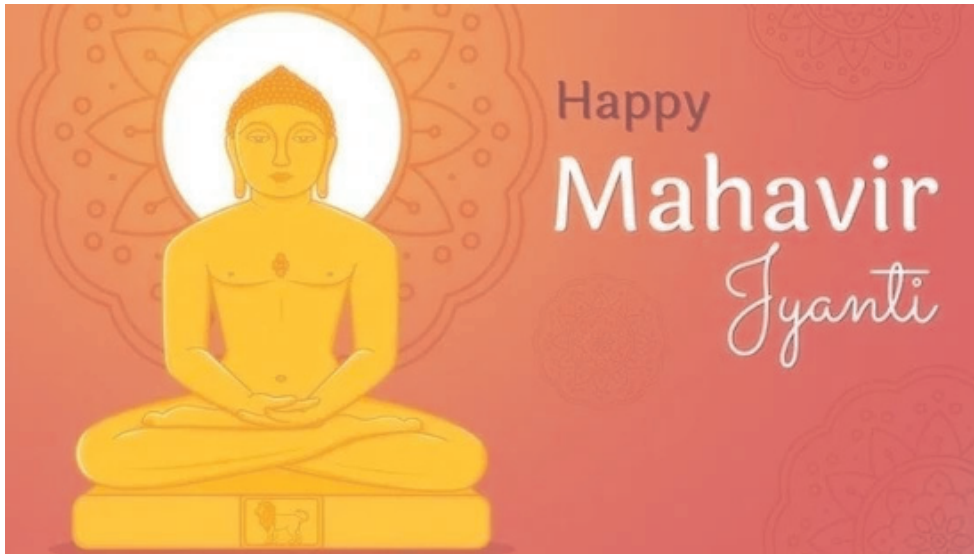
In addition to the efforts outlined in the plan, the Inflation Reduction Act is already making a difference for taxpayers and tax professionals during the 2023 filing season.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

US President Biden, VP Harris greet Jain community on Mahavir Jayanti



Happy Mahavir Jayanti

Credit / Twitter

APRIL 5, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have extended their greetings of Mahavir Jayanti to the Jain community across the world and encouraged people to strive for peace and harmony.

"(First Lady) Jill (Biden) and I wish a happy and prosperous Mahavir Jayanti to all those observing. Today, we

recognize the values of Mahavir Swami and strive to live with peace, truth, and harmony," Biden tweeted on Tuesday.

Vice President Harris also sent her greetings on the occasion.

"On Mahavir Jayanti, Doug and I join Jains around the world in celebrating the birth of Mahavir Swami, who taught that all living beings are equal. Today, let us recommit to upholding these universal values of respect and non-

violence," Harris tweeted.

The greetings from the US president and the vice president were welcomed by an Indian American community leader.

"We members of the Jain community thank President Biden and Vice President Harris for sending greetings on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, which no other president has done in the last," said community leader Ajay Jain Bhutoria.

"On this day, let us also take a pledge to work towards creating a more peaceful and harmonious world by following the path of Ahimsa, which was the core principle of Lord Mahavir's teachings," he said.

Let us strive to create a society where there is no violence, discrimination, or hatred, and where everyone is treated with equal dignity and respect, Bhutoria said in a statement.

"As we celebrate the birth of Lord Mahavir, let us also take a moment to reflect on his life and teachings, and to seek inspiration from his journey towards enlightenment. May this day bring us closer to our true selves and help us lead a life of purpose, compassion, and righteousness," Bhutoria said.

INDIA & US WORKING TO ADDRESS 'PRESSING CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES': AMBASSADOR SANDHU



Addressing the packed State Assembly, Ambassador Sandhu said that he was convinced of the strength of the shared beliefs of the two countries and the deep-rooted friendship and partnership as he stood "in this temple of democracy, steeped in people's hopes and aspirations."

APRIL 6, 2023

WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP): As trusted global partners, India and the US are working to address the "pressing challenges of our times," Indian Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu said on Thursday, April 6.

Addressing the New Hampshire State Assembly, a rare privilege given to foreign diplomats, Sandhu said that India stands today as a "beacon of stability, amidst geopolitical uncertainties; an usher of global economic growth; a solution provider to some of the complex challenges of the times; and a consensus builder, in times of conflict and rising tensions."

"India remains interesting, important and incredible," he said.

President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi characterize India-US ties as a "Partnership for Global Good" and people call it the "most defining relationship of the 21st century," he told the lawmakers.

"Our partnership within the QUAD, IPEF and I2U2 frameworks is creating progress and prosperity for the world at large," he added.

Sandhu said that India and the US, as trusted global partners, are working to address pressing challenges of the times, the solutions to which would involve combining American technology and Indian talent, Washington's strength to innovate and New Delhi's ability to scale.

"Some of this is already happening," he said.

American companies are manufacturing more in India than before, the two countries have launched a historic initiative on critical and emerging technologies, he said, adding, "The technologies that are driving tomorrow's world, yesterday, - semiconductors, Artificial Intelligence, telecom, and quantum."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Dr. Sampat Shivangi Participates in British Parliament Event to honor Diaspora



Dr. Sampat Shivangi of Mississippi, participated in an event at the Parliament of the United Kingdom held at the House of Lords in British Parliament

APRIL 6, 2023

MISSISSIPPI / LONDON (TIP): Indian-American physician and community activist, Dr. Sampat Shivangi of Mississippi, participated in an event at the Parliament of the United Kingdom held at the House of Lords in British Parliament on March 7-8, 2023, to honor the Indian diaspora. The event was attended by Indians from European countries, United States, and diaspora elsewhere, Dr. Shivangi said.

House of Lords member Swaraj Paul was instrumental in organizing the event along with Lord Karan Bilimoria, and Lord Rami Ranger a business tycoon. "It was such a wonderful experience and opportunity to meet these British Indian billionaires who have made their strides in UK," Dr. Shivangi said in his note about the visit.

Dr. Shivangi was also invited to the home of Lord Paul, who is in his 90s and "still very active and much involved in Indian diplomacy and Indian diaspora," Shivangi said, adding, "He mentioned to me that London Zoo will be named after his family in recognition of his services to Britain." Lord Paul also scheduled a visit to the House of Lords March 8, for Dr. Shivangi.

A conservative lifelong member of the Republican Party, Dr. Shivangi is the founding member of the Republican Indian Council and the Republican Indian National Council. Dr. Shivangi is the National President of Indian American Forum for Political Education, one of the oldest Indian American Associations. Over the past three decades, he has lobbied for several Bills in the US Congress on behalf of India through his enormous contacts with US Senators and Congressmen.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

US recognizes Arunachal Pradesh as India's integral part: White House

APRIL 5, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The US has recognized Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India and strongly opposes any unilateral attempts to advance territorial claims by renaming localities, the White House has said.

The US reaction came in response to Beijing announcing Chinese names for 11 more places in Arunachal Pradesh which the neighboring country claims as the southern part of Tibet.

The official names of the 11 places were released on Sunday by China's ministry of civil affairs.

"The United States has recognized that territory (Arunachal Pradesh) for a long time (as an integral part of India). And we strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to advance territorial claims by renaming localities," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said on Tuesday, April 4.

"And so, again, this is something that we have long stood by," Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference.

India on Tuesday outrightly rejected China renaming some places in Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that the state is an integral part of India and assigning "invented" names does not alter this reality.

"We have seen such reports. This is not the first time China has made such an attempt. We reject this outright," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

"Arunachal Pradesh is, has been, and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. Attempts to assign invented names will not alter this reality," he said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said at a press conference on April 4: "The United States has recognized that territory (Arunachal Pradesh) for a long time (as an integral part of India). And we strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to advance territorial claims by renaming localities,"

Congress veteran AK Antony's son joins BJP

In an embarrassment for the Congress, party veteran and steering committee member AK Antony's son Anil Antony on Thursday, April 6, joined the BJP, saying while those in the Congress considered "serving a family" their religion, he considered "serving the nation" his duty.

Anil Antony had quit the Congress on January 25, protesting the party's stand on the BBC documentary on Gujarat riots." Nowadays, some Congress leaders believe it is their dharma to serve the interests of a single family. But I believe it is my duty to serve the nation," Anil Antony said, joining the BJP in the presence of Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, MoS External Affairs V Muraleedharan and Kerala BJP chief K Surendran. Back in Kerala, former Defence Minister AK Antony termed the development "very painful."

Currently, chairman of AICC's disciplinary committee and a confidant of former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, AK Antony said, "My son's action is wrong and very painful." AK Antony had authored the 2014 Lok Sabha election debacle report identifying Muslim appeasement a major factor for the party's rout.

Asked if he had consulted his father on joining the BJP, Anil Antony replied: "This is not about personalities, this is about difference of opinion and ideas. I strongly believe that I have taken the right step. But my respect for my father remains. There is no question of any politics in my family."

Modi govt talks lot about democracy but does not walk the talk: Mallikarjun Kharge

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday, April 6, accused the Narendra Modi government of not walking the talk on democratic principles and causing disruptions in Parliament to divert attention from the Opposition's demand for a JPC probe into the Adani issue.

Addressing a joint press conference of opposition leaders at the Constitution Club after a "Tiranga March" from Parliament House to Vijay Chowk, he said the government's intention was to get the Budget Session washed out.

He said the government talks a lot about democracy, but it does not follow what it says, and asserted that the Opposition was unitedly fighting for democracy and the Constitution.

"The budget of Rs 50-lakh crore was passed in just 12 minutes, but they (BJP) always allege that the opposition parties have no interest and they keep disturbing the House," Kharge said.

"The disturbance was created by the ruling party. Whenever we made a demand, we were not allowed to speak. This has happened for the first time in my public life of 52 years and never has such a thing happened earlier," he said.

The government's "intention was to get the Budget Session washed out and



Soon after the Lok Sabha adjourned sine die, several opposition parties, including the Congress, took out a 'Tricolour March' in New Delhi, alleging that "democracy is under attack".

we condemn this attitude", the Congress chief said and added that "if this continues, democracy will be finished and we will move towards dictatorship".

He said the issues raised by 18 to 19 opposition parties was on the Adani matter and how his wealth increased to Rs 12 lakh crore in just a period of 2 to 2.5 years.

"Why are you fearing from constituting a joint parliamentary committee probe even when the BJP will have its say as it will have majority members? Something is fishy, that is

why the government is not agreeing to order a JPC probe into the Adani issue," Kharge said.

He said the government did not answer on the Adani issue in Parliament and instead diverted attention by demanding Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's apology over his remarks in the UK.

The demand for the JPC probe was made to ensure transparency in the Adani case as MPs of opposition parties would have got an opportunity to inspect the documents related to the issue, the Congress chief said.

Excise 'scam': ED claims fresh proof against Manish Sisodia

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The ED Wednesday, April 5, told a Delhi court the investigation in the money laundering probe against AAP leader Manish Sisodia in the alleged excise scam is at a "crucial" stage and it has found fresh evidence of his complicity.

The agency made the submissions while seeking time to argue on the bail application of the former Delhi deputy chief minister.

Special Judge M K Nagpal adjourned for April 12 the arguments on the application.

The judge also extended till April 17 the judicial custody of Sisodia after he was produced before the court and the agency sought an extension of custody.

During the arguments, the Enforcement Directorate counsel said the agency was "in process of gathering fresh evidence that has come to light."

"We need time...requesting court to grant time to advance arguments," the counsel said after a brief argument.

The counsel appearing for Sisodia, meanwhile, claimed before the court the ED does not have evidence to prove the charge that he had indulged in money laundering.

"There's no basis (for the charge). They've probed and examined everything,



raided my residence etc. but found nothing. The (excise) policy was approved by various authorities concerned, including the LG. Now you're blaming Sisodia solely. Also, this (the probe) is not under the preview of the ED," the counsel said.

He asserted the central anti-money laundering agency cannot make the vague allegation that he will tamper with evidence if enlarged on bail.

"You never claimed any effort by me to influence, contact, threaten witnesses when I was out and holding (excise) portfolio. Now I'm not even holding any portfolio," he said.

Cabinet okays reduced gas prices; new space policy

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Thursday, April 6, okayed a new gas pricing formula to reduce prices of piped natural gas (PNG) and compressed natural gas (CNG). It also okayed a new space policy laying down roles of various private and public entities besides the setting up of a Rs 2,600 crore Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) in Hingoli, Maharashtra.

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur announced the new gas pricing policy saying domestic and industrial users of PNG would see a 10 per cent reduction in pricing. The reduction in CNG, used in vehicles, would also be reduced.

This has come about after an amendment to domestic gas pricing guidelines issued in 2014. As off now the gas pricing is done as per average price at four international gas hubs, said Thakur. In the past two years the international prices has gone up \$1.79 dollar Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBtu) in October 2020 to \$ 8.57 MMBtu in October 2022.

Now the domestic gas price will be linked to imported crude price. It will be at 10 per cent of crude price.

A 'base floor price' of \$ 4 MMBtu has been fixed and a 'ceiling price' of \$ 6.50 MMBtu has been fixed. These prices will apply to all gas from ONGC and Oil India fields. The price band is for two years henceforth it will rise at 0.25 cents every year.

Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Dr Jitendra Singh said the new space policy aims to enhance the role of Department of Space, boost activities of ISRO missions and give a larger participation of research, academia, startups and industry.

Some three years ago, space was opened to private participation and after three years ISRO has 150 startups. The 'InSpace' was created as entity easing public private participation and is like a coordinator between public and private sector. The policy will lay down the roles of all.

India for CBI probe against Oxfam India over alleged violations of foreign funds Act

The Union Home Ministry on Thursday recommended a CBI probe into the affairs of the Indian arm of the global NGO Oxfam for alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, sources said.

The home ministry found that Oxfam India continued to transfer foreign contributions to various entities, including other NGOs, even after registering under the FCRA, which prohibits such transfers after an amendment that came into force on September 29, 2020, sources said.

Oxfam India is the second NGO against whom the home ministry has recommended a CBI probe within a month for alleged violation of the FCRA. On March 20, the home ministry recommended a CBI inquiry against Aman Biradari, an NGO established by activist Harsh Mander.

Aman Biradari was one of the NGOs to which Oxfam India transferred foreign contributions, violating the law, sources said. There was no immediate reaction from Oxfam India.

During a survey by the Income-Tax department, multiple emails were found which revealed that Oxfam India was allegedly planning to circumvent provisions of the FCRA by routing funds to other FCRA-registered associations or through the for-profit consultancy route, sources said.

The survey also "exposed" Oxfam India as a probable instrument of the foreign policy of foreign organisations or entities, which have funded the NGO liberally over the years, they said.

Kerala train fire accused arrested from Maharashtra

The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Maharashtra Police and Central Intelligence on Wednesday, April 5, nabbed a man suspected of starting fire on a Kerala train that killed three people. The absconding accused, identified as Shahrugh Saifi, was nabbed from Ratnagiri railway station.

According to the Maharashtra ATS, he will be handed over soon to a team of Kerala cops and is expected to be brought to Kochi by evening.

In a statement to ANI, Kerala DGP Anil Kant confirmed that Saifi has been taken into custody. "After a detailed interrogation of the accused, we will be able to know more details," he added.

Saifi, who hails from Delhi's Shaheen Bagh, was reported missing from his house on March 30. His parents had filed a missing person's complaint on Saturday. His plans to escape to Gujarat was foiled as the burn injuries on his face aggravated and Saifi was forced to get down in Maharashtra, a senior officer said.

He had allegedly poured petrol on a co-passenger, injuring several others, inside the Alappuzha-Kannur Executive Express on Sunday after the train left Kozhikode railway station. At least three of the injured are women.

Budget session ends; productivity suffers due to daily adjournments, disruptions

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Budget session of Parliament ended on Thursday, April 6, amid noisy protests by the Opposition over the Adani issue, a matter which virtually washed out the 25-day-long second leg and all six bills including the crucial Finance Bill were passed with any debate.

When Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar were delivering their valedictory addresses in the respective House, opposition members were raising slogans.

While the Opposition pressed for a probe by a joint parliamentary committee into the Adani issue, BJP members countered by demanding an apology by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his "democracy in danger" remark made in the United Kingdom.

Rahul Gandhi since stands disqualified as a Lok Sabha member following his conviction in a criminal defamation case by a Gujarat court.

As opposition members raised slogans and displayed placards demanding a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe into allegations of fraud against the Adani Group. Birla said, "You have lowered the dignity of the House. This behaviour is not good for parliamentary system and the country." "This House is always for high level of debate and discussions. But you systematically disrupt the proceedings which is not good," he lamented.

This session, Lok Sabha functioned for only 45 hours as against its scheduled 133.6 hours because of disruptions, according to a think tank that compiles the data.

Rajya Sabha worked for just over 31 hours out of 130 hours in the session, the data said.

The Budget session of Parliament was held from January 31, 2023 to April 6, 2023, with a recess from February 14 to March 12.

According to data compiled by PRS Legislative Research, the productivity, which is the percentage of time the House functioned against the total schedule, was 34.38 per cent for the Lower House in the Budget Session.

The only time the Lok Sabha's productivity was lower than this was in the Monsoon Session of 2021, when it functioned only for 20.93 per cent of the scheduled time.



The Rajya Sabha, meanwhile, recorded its lowest productivity since 2019, functioning only around 24 per cent of its scheduled time. In the Monsoon Session of 2021, its productivity was around 28 per cent.

Rajya Sabha could devote around just two minutes to legislative business, while it was less than an hour in Lok Sabha.

Financial Business took 17.25 hours in Lok Sabha and 18.23 hours in Rajya Sabha.

Throughout the Session, both Houses witnessed repeated adjournments of the Question Hour.

In his concluding remarks, Birla said the House held discussions on the General Budget for 14.45 hours, and 145 MPs participated in it. Discussions on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address were held for 13.44 hours with participation of 143 MPs.

Excluding the Finance and Appropriation Bills, The Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2022 was the only Bill passed during this session. Both bills were passed without any discussion by either House. *Source: PTI*

XBB.1.16 variant accounting for 38.2% of Covid-19 infections in India: Report

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The newly emerged recombinant coronavirus variant XBB.1.16 has been observed in different parts of the country, accounting for 38.2 per cent of the infection till date, according to the latest INSACOG bulletin.

The bulletin of March 27, which was released on Thursday, said among the samples collected till the third week of March 2023, XBB continued to be the most commonly circulating Omicron sublineages.

Noting that Omicron and its sublineages continue to be the dominant variants in India, the bulletin said an increase in infection rate has been observed, especially in western, southern and northern parts of India.

"A newly emerged recombinant variant XBB.1.16 has been observed in different parts of India, accounting for 38.2 per cent of the infection till date," the bulletin said.

The bulletin further said a few BA.2.10 and BA.2.75 sublineage was detected in some part of the country whereas XBB was the most prevalent sublineage of the Omicron variant.

The INSACOG said globally, nearly 3.7 million new cases and 26,000 deaths have been reported in the last 28 days.

During the week nine of the year 2023, there has been a continued increasing trend in the proportions of recombinant lineages globally, it said.

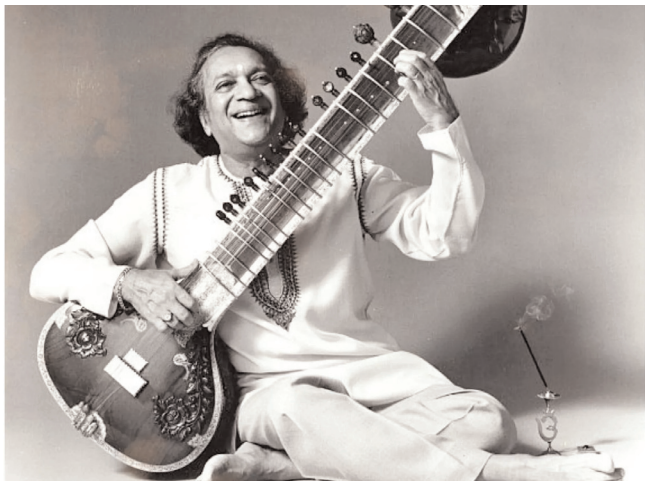


India has logged 5,335 fresh coronavirus cases, the highest in 195 days, while the active cases have increased to 25,587, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Thursday, April 6.

India in history this Week

APRIL 7, 2023, TO APRIL 13, 2023

07 APRIL



1920 Famous sitar player Pandit Ravi Shankar was born in 1920.

1948 United Nations Health Affairs Agency World Health Organization was established. That is why today's day is also celebrated as World Health Day.

2000 The Delhi Police uncovered a racket of fixing and betting cricket matches worth crores of rupees in 2000.

08 APRIL

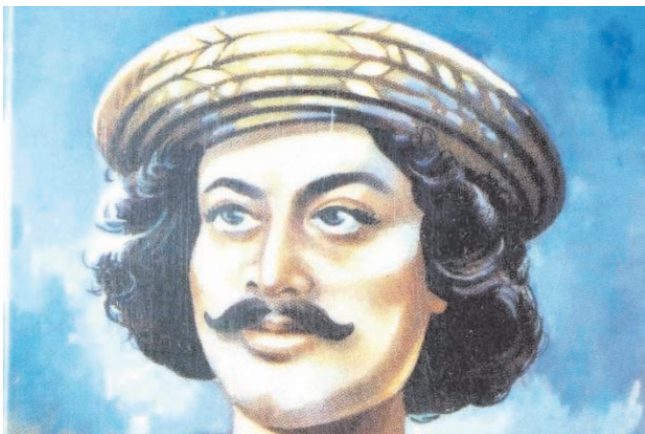


1857 On the day of 1857, Mangal Pandey, a soldier of the Barrackpore Regiment of British India, was hanged for the crime of breaching military discipline and murder.

1894 Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, the author of India's national song "Vande Mataram", died in 1894.

1929 On this day in 1929, revolutionary Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb in Delhi assembly.

1950 After the 1950 India-Pakistan partition, on this day both countries had entered into an agreement with a view to securing the rights of the minorities living in their respective countries and ending the possibilities of war between the two countries in future.



1831 The famous social reformer Raja Ram Mohan

Roy arrived in England in 1831.

2008 The governments of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka declared Sikhs as a minority in their state.

09 APRIL

1669 Aurangzeb, the emperor of the Mughal Empire, ordered the demolition of all Hindu schools and temples in 1669.

1965 A battle broke out between the Indian and Pakistan Army in the Rann of Kutch.

2004 The Supreme Court of Portugal asked for a re-review of the extradition order of India, the wanted mafia kingpin Abu Salem, in several criminal cases in India.



2011 IIPM Rabindranath Tagore International Peace Prize was announced to Anna Hazare for anti-corruption campaign in 2011.

1893 Rahul Sankrityayan was born, he is given the title of Mahapandit. Rahul Sankrityayan is counted among the leading writers of Hindi. His research on Buddhism is considered epoch-making in Hindi literature.

10 APRIL

1894 Birth of Indian industrialist Ghanshyamdas Birla.

1912 Titanic leaves for Southampton harbor in Britain on its first and last voyage.

1995 Fifth Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai passed away with Bharat Ratna.

1875 Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Aryasamaj in 1875.

1889 Ram Chandra Chatterjee became the first Indian to fly in a hot balloon in 1889.

1930 Synthetic Rabak was first produced in 1930.

1982 Successful launch of India's multi-purpose satellite "INSAT-1A" in 1982.

2001 Tehran Declaration signed between India and Iran.

1897 Born in 1897 to Prafulla Chandra Sen, a prominent Congress leader of Bengal, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi and a freedom fighter.

1894 Birth of Indian industrialist Ghanshyamdas Birla in 1894.

11 APRIL

1869 Kasturba Gandhi, wife of Mahatma Gandhi, was born in 1869.

1919 The International Labor Organization was established in 1919.

1921 The first live commentary of the Games was broadcast on radio.

1930 A 124-meter swinging bridge made of steel wires was opened to the public in Rishikesh. It was named Laxman Jhula.

1999 The Agni 2 missile was tested in 1999.

2011 Pulitzer Prize for Indian-origin American writer Jhumpa Lahiri for her debut work 'Interpreter of Melladies'.

1964 The Communist Party of India was divided into two parts. The main party is called the Communist

Party of India and the second party that was divided was named Communist Party (Marxist).

1910 Anant Laxman Kanhere, one of the young revolutionaries who sacrificed his life for the independence of the country, died in 1910.

1801 Ranjit Singh himself declared Maharaja of Punjab.

12 APRIL

1885 Birth of famous historian Rakhaldas Banerjee who discovered Mohenjodaro.

2007 Pakistan approves India on Iran Gas Pipeline.

1621 Birth of Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur in 1621.

1955 The polio vaccine developed by Dr. Jones Sak was declared safe and effective.

1978 The country's first double-decker train Sinhgad Express was run from the Victoria Terminal of Bombay (now Mumbai) to Pune to mark 125 years of Indian Railways.

2008 Three people, including two Indian engineers, were killed in a suicide attack on a convoy of Indians in Afghanistan in 2008.



2014 The famous lyricist Gulzar was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2013 in 2014.

13 APRIL

1699 The tenth Sikh Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa Panth. The festival of Baisakhi is made on this day every year.

1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre, indicative of the culmination of the atrocities of the British, was carried out.

1984 The Indian Army started a campaign of armed forces to occupy the Siachen Glacier in Kashmir.

1947 Diplomatic relations established between India and Pakistan.

1984 Indian cricket team won the Asia Cup for the first time by defeating Pakistan by 58 runs in Sharjah.

1648 Construction of the Red Fort was completed.

1939 The Hindustani Red Army (Indian Red Army) was formed in India in 1939 for an armed struggle with the British.

1978 The first flag carrier of the country "INS" was demoted to Delhi in 1978.

2000 Lara Dutta was elected Miss Universe in 2000.



2005 Vishwanathan Anand became 'World Chess Champion' for the fourth time in 2005.

Bihar Jharkhand Association of North America celebrates Holi

FORDS, NJ (TIP): BIHAR JAHRKHAND ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA (BJANA) celebrated Holi, one of its trademark events at Royal Albert Palace in New Jersey. More than 550 people from the Bihar and Jharkhand diaspora attended the event. This gathering of members from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut is a signature event for the BJANA family.

This Holi festival brings people together in a spirit of unity and joy as we celebrate the coming of spring and the regeneration of life.

Doctor Ashish Jha (Covid 19 Response coordinator and Assistant to US president) was the event's chief guest, and Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, consul general, was the guest of honor to this mega event. Dr. Jha thanked the BJANA team for inviting him to this major event and wished the crowd that this holiday season would bring success and growth to everyone's lives.

The Consul General appreciated the work done by BJANA to promote Made In Bihar Products Biharika and Made in Jharkhand Products Jharcraft and Tourism during the event.

Dr. Ramjee Prasad Scientist from Denmark, Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Awardee, Dr. Sujal Singh, Dr. Archana Narain, and Mr. Mohan from TEAM Aid were also honored for their outstanding contributions to society during the event.

Mr. Anurag Kumar, the president of BJANA, addressed the audience and gave a shared BJANA fundraising efforts and its social/charitable program like US Kids Teaching the Kids in Bihar and Jharkhand, promoting tourism and business opportunity. Mr. Kumar acknowledged the invite accepted by Dr. Ashish's and his presence enriched the importance of the event. Mr. Kumar also expressed gratitude to the Ramesh Bhatia Foundation for its kind



A dance performance



A song by kids



BJANA Team



Dr. Ashish Jha



Sponsors



A dance performance by kids

donation of money to the charitable and social causes run by BJANA.

Immediate past president Dr. Avinash Gupta and Bihar Foundation East Coast Chairman Alok Kumar have congratulated the BJANA Team and volunteers for taking the effort to make this grand event memorable and bring the community together.

The audiences were mesmerized by the folk dance from Bihar and Jharkhand that was performed by BJANA members as part of the event packed with guests and enjoyable cultural performances like singing and dancing by a children's women's group.

Attendees enjoyed the lucky draw, sumptuous food, and performances, the scholarship awards were also given at the Holi event to meritorious students. The launch of the special Holi magazine Vaishali and the rewards given to the children who contributed to it.

Mr. Sanjeev Singh, vice president of BJANA, thanked the committee members and volunteers for their tireless efforts over the past few weeks to make this huge event a success.

Guru Tegh Bahadur: The ninth master of Sikhs

Guru Tegh Bahadur ji is the ninth Master of the Sikhs who sacrificed his life to secure the right to practice one's chosen faith. His birth anniversary in 2023 falls on April 11.

Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, is often venerated as the 'Protector of Humanity' (Srisht-di-Chadar) by the Sikhs. Known as a great teacher, Guru Tegh Bahadur was also an excellent warrior, thinker, and poet, who wrote detailed description of the nature of God, mind, body, and physical attachments among other things spiritual. His writings are housed in the sacred text, 'Guru Granth Sahib,' in the form of 116 poetic hymns.

He was also an avid traveler and played a key role in setting up preaching centers throughout the Indian subcontinent. During one such mission, he founded the town of Chak-Nanki in Punjab, which later became a part of Punjab's Anandpur Sahib. In 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was forced by the then Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb to give up his faith and convert to Islam. When he refused, the Sikh Guru was beheaded on November 24, 1675, in Delhi.

Early Life

Guru Tegh Bahadur was born Tyag Mal on April 1, 1621, in Amritsar, Panjab. He was born to the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind, and his wife, Mata Nanaki. As a child, Tyag Mal learnt Sanskrit, Hindi, and Gurmukhi from the revered Sikh scholar, Bhai Gurdas. While horsemanship and archery was taught to him by Baba Buddha ji, Guru Hargobind taught him swordsmanship.

When Tyag Mal was just 13 years old, he accompanied his father to a battle against the Mughals, who had laid siege to Kartarpur. Thanks to Guru Hargobind and Tyag Mal, Kartarpur was successfully defended by the Sikhs. For exhibiting great valor and military skills in the battle, Guru Hargobind bestowed upon his son the title 'Tegh Bahadur,' which literally means 'brave sword wielder.' Tyag Mal henceforth came to be known as Tegh Bahadur.

In 1632, Tegh Bahadur got married to Mata Gujri. By now, Tegh Bahadur had begun to spend much of his time in meditation and had gradually secluded himself. In 1644, Guru Hargobind asked Tegh Bahadur to move to a village, Bakala, along with his wife and his mother. The next two decades saw Tegh Bahadur spend most of his time meditating in an underground room in Bakala, where he would later be recognized as the ninth Sikh Guru. During his stay in Bakala, Tegh Bahadur traveled extensively and even visited Delhi to meet Guru Har Krishan, the eighth Sikh guru.

Guruship

In 1664, Guru Har Krishan's health was badly affected by smallpox, which ultimately led to his death on March 30, 1664. While on his death bed, Guru Har Krishan was asked who would be his successor to which he simply uttered the words 'Baba' and 'Bakala,' which implied that the next Guru would be found in Bakala. When the word about the next Sikh Guru spread, many imposters settled down in Bakala and claimed to be the next Guru for monetary and other trivial gains. This led to confusion among the Sikhs as it made the task of finding the real Sikh Guru very difficult.

Meanwhile, a wealthy trader named Baba Makhan Shah Labana had once been caught in a powerful storm, which had almost capsized his ship. During the incident, Baba Makhan Shah felt helpless and hence prayed to God that he would offer 500 gold coins to the Guru, should he be saved from the storm. After being saved miraculously, Baba Makhan Shah went in search of Guru Har Krishan, when he was informed about the passing of the Guru. He was also informed that Guru Har Kishan had professed that the next Guru will be found in Bakala.

When Baba Makhan Shah Labana arrived in Bakala on August 1664, he was surprised to see as many as 22



imposters claiming to be the ninth Sikh Guru. Baba Makhan Shah recalled his prayer and then started giving away two Dinars to every imposter. As expected, all the imposters walked away happily after receiving two Dinars. Baba Makhan Shah, who was disappointed for not having met the real Guru, was taken to Tegh Bahadur on August 10, 1664. Upon seeing Tegh Bahadur, Baba Makhan Shah placed two Dinars before him, for which Tegh Bahadur replied by saying, 'why two when you pledged 500?' Upon hearing those words, Baba Makhan Shah placed 500 gold coins before Tegh Bahadur and started yelling with excitement, 'Guru ladho re' (I have found the Guru). Henceforth, Tegh Bahadur was declared as the ninth Sikh Guru.

Works

Guru Tegh Bahadur started traveling to various parts of the country in order to preach the teachings of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak. He also started spreading the message of Sikhism, while helping those in need. In 1664, Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Kiratpur thrice for three different reasons. During his first visit on August 21, 1664, the Guru met with Bibi Rup, the daughter of the seventh Sikh guru, who was mourning the death of her father as well as that of her brother. The second visit was prompted by the death of Bassi, the mother of the seventh Sikh guru, Guru Har Rai. The third visit marked the end of a long journey through the northwestern Indian subcontinent.

On one of his visits to Bilaspur, Guru Tegh Bahadur met with Rani Champa of Bilaspur, who offered him a piece of land. The Guru insisted on paying her 500 rupees for the land, where he founded a city called Anandpur Sahib.

Some of Guru Tegh Bahadur's works are added in the 'Guru Granth Sahib' and cover a range of topics, including nature of God, mind, body, physical attachments, etc. In 1672, the Guru traveled through the North-West Frontier, where the persecution of non-Muslims was at its peak.

Execution

When the then Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb forced the Brahmin scholars of Kashmir to convert to Islam, the Brahmins approached Guru Tegh Bahadur for a solution. The Guru sent them back with a message to

Aurangzeb, which stated that the Mughal emperor could convert the Brahmins if he succeeds in converting Guru Tegh Bahadur. A few days after his proclamation, Guru Tegh Bahadur was arrested along with a couple of his followers, namely Bhai Mati Das and Bhai Dayal Das. When the trio refused to convert to Islam despite being tortured, Aurangzeb ordered their execution. While Mati Das was sawn to death, Dayal Das was cast into a huge cauldron of boiling water. On November 24, 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded in Delhi for standing up against the Mughal ruler.

Impact of the Execution

Post Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution, the Sikhs became more resilience than ever. Many Sikh temples were built in the memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur and his deceased followers. 'Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib' was built in Chandni Chowk, where the Guru was executed. After his execution, the severed head of the Guru was taken back to Punjab by one of his followers named Bhai Jaita. After cremating his head, another Sikh temple was built there. The Guru's sacrifice continues to remind the followers of the Sikh religion to stay true to their faith.

Legacy

Upon Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution, his son Gobind Singh became the tenth Sikh Guru and came to be known as Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution left an indelible impression on Guru Gobind Singh, who was just nine years old at that time. As a result, Guru Gobind Singh organized the Sikh group in such a way that it eventually became a distinct and symbol-patterned community. Also, the Sikhs began to focus more on aspects like bravery and self-defense, which gave rise to the 'Khalsa.'

A number of places, including educational institutions and hospitals have been named after Guru Tegh Bahadur. While many of these places are located in Punjab, there are several places in other parts of India, which have been named after Guru Tegh Bahadur. While Maharashtra has several educational institutions named after him, places like New Delhi and Uttar Pradesh too, have a number of schools and colleges that have been named after the great Sikh Guru.

Source: CultureIndia

Good Friday: The crucifixion of Jesus Christ

Good Friday is a Christian holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary. The day in 2023 falls on April 7.

Good Friday is a religious holiday observed by Christians around the world to commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, his death, and his burial. It is observed on the Friday before Easter Sunday and marks the end of Holy Week.

In 2023, Good Friday known by various names such as Holy Friday, and Easter Friday will be celebrated on April 7th this year as Easter falls on Sunday, April 9 2023. However, the date of Good Friday changes every year as it is calculated based on the lunar cycle.

Good Friday is a day of solemnity and mourning for Christians, and it is observed by fasting, prayer, and attending church services. Many churches hold special services, such as the Stations of the Cross, which reflect on Jesus' journey to the crucifixion. It is a time for reflection on Jesus' sacrifice for humanity and the significance of his death and resurrection.

In many countries, Good Friday is a public holiday, and businesses and schools are closed. Some traditions associated with Good Friday include the consumption of hot cross buns, which have a cross on top to symbolize the crucifixion, and the abstaining from meat in some Christian communities.

History

According to the holy book Bible, Jesus was arrested, and sentenced to death by crucifixion by the Roman authorities under the rule of Pontius Pilate, the highest form of criminal punishment at the time. Jesus' crucifixion was a brutal and painful form of execution, which involved nailing the person to a wooden cross and leaving them to die slowly.

The events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion are recorded in the four Gospels of the New Testament. The Gospels tell of Jesus' last supper with his disciples, his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, and his trial before Pilate. They also record his death on the cross and his burial in a nearby tomb.

Christians around the world commemorate Good Friday with special services, prayers, and devotions. Many churches hold processions, reenactments of the crucifixion, and veneration of the cross. In some countries, such as the Philippines, devotees even participate in self-flagellation and crucifixion to show their devotion to Christ.

Good Friday is a solemn and reflective day for Christians, reminding them of Jesus' sacrifice and the price he paid for their salvation. It is a time for prayer, fasting, and repentance, as well as a time to express gratitude for God's love and mercy.

Significance

Good Friday, also known as Holy Friday or Black Friday, is a Christian holiday that commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. It is observed on the Friday before Easter Sunday and is a significant event in the Christian calendar. This year Good Friday will be celebrated on 7 April 2023.

The significance of Good Friday lies in the belief that Jesus Christ willingly sacrificed himself on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. Christians believe that through his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ opened the way for humanity to be reconciled with God and receive eternal life.

On Good Friday, many Christians participate in various forms of worship and reflection, such as attending church services, fasting, and engaging in acts of repentance and self-denial. Some traditions also include reenactments of the crucifixion, such as the Stations of the Cross.

Good Friday is also a day of mourning and reflection on the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It serves as a reminder of the love and mercy of God, and the importance of humility, sacrifice, and forgiveness in the Christian faith.



In addition to its religious significance, Good Friday has also played a significant role in the history and culture of many countries. It is a public holiday in many nations, and is often marked by special events, processions, and traditions.

Good Friday holds a significant place in the Christian faith as a solemn day of reflection on the sacrifice and love of Jesus Christ, and as a reminder of the importance of faith, forgiveness, and redemption.

What is Good Friday?

The name "Good Friday" may seem paradoxical, given that it commemorates the death of Jesus, but it is thought to have originated from the phrase "God's Friday," which over time evolved into "Good Friday." The goodness of the day lies in the belief that Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice that atoned for the sins of humanity, making it possible for people to be reconciled with God and receive eternal life.

How is Good Friday observed?

Many Christians attend church services on Good Friday, which typically include prayers, hymns, and readings from the Bible. Some churches hold a special service called the Stations of the Cross also called Way of the Cross, which involves walking through the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion, as depicted in 14 images or stations.

In some countries, Good Friday is a public holiday, and businesses and schools may be closed. Many people choose to observe the day by fasting or abstaining from meat, as a sign of respect and solidarity with Jesus' suffering.

Other common traditions include the veneration of the cross, where a large cross is displayed and worshippers are invited to approach it and kneel or touch it. This practice is often accompanied by singing or chanting.

In some cultures, there are also processions or

reenactments of the crucifixion, where people dress up as biblical characters and walk through the streets, carrying crosses or statues of Jesus.

Good Friday is a solemn and reflective day for Christians around the world, who seek to remember and honor the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as they prepare for the celebration of his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Who was Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is a central figure and founder of Christianity and is also considered to be the son of God. He is believed to have been born in Bethlehem in the first century AD to the Virgin Mary and Joseph, a carpenter. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the savior of the world, and that his teachings provide a path to salvation and eternal life.

According to the Bible, Jesus spent his early life in Nazareth and began his public ministry at the age of 30. He traveled throughout Galilee and Judea, preaching about the kingdom of God and performing miracles such as healing the sick and feeding the hungry.

Jesus' teachings emphasized the importance of love, compassion, and forgiveness, and he often spoke in parables to convey his message. His teachings were controversial, and he was eventually arrested and sentenced to death by crucifixion.

Christians believe that Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice for the sins of humanity, and that he rose from the dead on the third day, thereby conquering death and offering the promise of eternal life to all who believe in him. This event is celebrated as Easter by Christians worldwide.

Jesus' life and teachings have had a profound impact on the world, shaping the beliefs and practices of millions of people across the globe. He is considered by many to be the most important figure in human history, and his message of love and redemption continues to inspire people of all faiths and backgrounds.

Source: *Indiatimes*

Guru Arjan: The embodiment of godly devotion, selfless service

Guru Arjan Dev Ji is the fifth Master of the Sikhs. He stood against the Moghul rulers of the time for the human rights of the people of India. His birth anniversary in 2023 falls on April 12.

Guru Arjan is the fifth Sikh Guru. He was the youngest son of Guru Ram Das. He was born in Goindwal, India. He breathed his last in Lahore, Pakistan where the Gurdwara of Dehra Sahib was established. His mother was Mata Bhani Ji. His wife was Mata Ganga Ji, They had only one son, Hargobind, who became Guru Hargobind Sahib.

Guru Arjan completed the work of his father by finishing the construction of the Harimandir Sahib.

Guru Arjan also undertook the tremendous task of creating the Adi Granth, which became the predecessor to the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. Recognizing that the Shabad Guru was the base of the Sikh practice, Guru Arjan created a compilation of sacred songs that included the songs of the previous Sikh Gurus, songs from Hindu and Sufi mystics, and his own sacred writings. As a master, Guru Arjan could hear whether a song was in the sound current of the Shabad – and those songs that clearly came from the Universal Teachings were incorporated into the work. Guru Arjan viewed the Adi Granth as holding the eternal, universal wisdom of the Shabad Guru. While working on the Adi Granth, he would keep the Adi Granth on his bed and himself sleep next to it on the floor – like a servant. The Adi Granth exemplified the Sikh Gurus' teachings that the Word, itself, is the Teacher – not a human person.

During this period of time, the community that surrounded Guru Arjan thrived and became very prosperous. Through a series of political intrigues, the sovereignty of Guru Arjan and his people were challenged by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir. To protect the independence of the community, Guru Arjan allowed himself to be tortured for five days and five nights. He was chained to a hot metal plate while his captors poured burning sand on his body. Guru Arjan smiled the entire time, for he saw the hand of the Divine behind it all. He saw the One Creator playing every part in the torture and recognized his Union with the Creator. After five days and nights, Guru Arjan was permitted to bathe in a nearby river. Guru Arjan dove into the water and dissolved into Light. His physical body was never seen again.

Early life

Guru Ram Das had envisioned heavenly qualities in his youngest son Arjan. From his earliest childhood the Guru had found him to be imbued with the Name, and immersed in tranquillity. Almost since his birth it seemed that the Guruship was destined to be bestowed upon Arjan. One day baby Arjan had crawled up onto the Divine throne of his grandfather, Guru Amar Das the third Guru, and sat there comfortably.

Seeing this the Guru smiled and prophesied, "My maternal Grandson will



ship the Name across." But growing up Arjan was always well aware that despite his Grandfather's prediction, it was the service to the Sangat, not their lineage that had bestowed Guruship on the previous preceptors, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das. With this in mind, he indulged in Seva (service) most ardently.

But his emotive intentions were always quite perceptible to his father, Guru Ram Das Ji and, all to apparent to his eldest brother, Prithi Chand, who suspecting the consequence of their Grandfather's prophecy, indulged in numerous means to disrupt the life of Guru Arjan, that ended in bringing about what he had feared.

Sent to Lahore to attend a wedding on behalf of his father, Arjan was kept there for a long time, by the cunning manipulations of his elder brother Prithi Chand, who had long worked to inherit the Guru Gaddi (Throne) himself. But by his interception and concealment of a series of letters that Arjan had sent to his father; (Majh M.5 G.G.S. Page 96) his duplicity, when it was discovered, ended with Arjan being installed as the fifth Guru.

Despite his brother's actions he showed no resentment to his elder brother and inundated him with reverence and honour. Guru Arjan Dev Ji was a born an apostle of peace. Although he ascended

the throne of Guru Nanak at the age of 18, he was far more advanced in wisdom than normal for his years not to mention his angelic qualities. The letters he wrote to his father from Lahore, not then even a teen-aged boy, stand testimony to that fact.

Completion of the Harmandar Sahib

The Basics of the new religion had been defined by Baba Nanak, and the groundwork was carried out by three of his successors. Guru Arjan Dev Ji set upon a mission of putting it on a solid footing. As ordained by his predecessors, Guru Nanak through Guru Ram Das Ji, he took the task of the completion of the place where his father had constructed a clay tank of Nectar. In the true spirit of "I am neither Hindu, nor Muslim..." Guru Arjan Dev Ji invited Mian Mir, a Muslim Saint from Lahore to lay the cornerstone of the foundation of the Harmandar, the present Golden Temple. The doors on all four sides of the building signified its acceptance of all the four castes and every Religion. Contrary to the requests of the congregation, the floor of the Harmandar Saheb was kept lower than the surrounding area; as the water flows downward so would the seekers of God's blessings. Along with God's House came the existence of the City of Amritsar with all its reverence, amenities, and

gaiety.

The completion of the Adi Granth

The preparation of the Holy Book is the most valuable achievement of Guru Arjan Dev Ji. With three things in his mind he initiated the compilation of the Holy Book, the present Guru Granth Sahib. Unfortunately the Hymns and teachings of the first four Gurus were being added to and even distorted by impostors. Seeing such things going on Guru Arjan wanted to preserve these original treasures. Not only fixing the path of the efforts of his predecessors, but also bestowing, on the Panth, an everlasting guiding light that was to serve as both a physical and spiritual phenomenon.

And most of all he wanted to establish the credibility of the Sikh Religion as a casteless and secular society. Laced among the Hymns of the earlier Nanaks he added his own compositions as well as, the celestial utterances of Sheikh Farid and Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Ravi Das, Dhanna Namdev, Ramannand, Jai Dev, Trilochan, Beni, Pipa and Surdas. All of whom belong to different times, beliefs, sects, and Castes from high and low.

The poetic revelations of Guru Arjan are of the greatest aesthetic calibre. More than half of the Guru Granth Sahib is constituted of his own holy renderings. The Granth Sahib is not only a collection of the revelations but also it throws considerable light on the contemporary political and social life; the physical being and spiritual awareness are fused into one. Among his other equally important accomplishments are the creation of new cities at Kartarpur, Tarn Taran with its magnanimous Tank of Salvation and the construction of the Baoli at Lahore.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan

On 16 June 1606, the Mughal Emperor Jahangir ordered that Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru be tortured and sentenced to death after the Guru had refused to stop preaching his message of God as started by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Guru was made to sit on a burning hot sheet while boiling hot sand was poured over his body. After enduring five days of unrelenting torture, Guru Arjan Dev Ji was taken for a bath in the river. As thousands watched he entered the river, never to be seen again.

Accordingly, on the 16 of June of every year since 1606, the Sikhs commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Guru and the first Sikh Martyr. Before the arrest, torture, and martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, the Sikhs had nothing to do with weapons or violence, as all the Sikh Gurus had taught the message of compassion, love, dedication, hard work, worship of one God, and the commitment to peace and harmony for all the people of the world.

Easter: The celebration of the resurrection of Jesus

Easter, also called Pascha or Resurrection Sunday, is a Christian festival and cultural holiday commemorating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, described in the New Testament as having occurred on the third day of his burial following his crucifixion by the Romans at Calvary c. 30 AD. The day in 2023 falls on April 9.

Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb on the third day after his crucifixion. Easter is the fulfilled prophecy of the Messiah who would be persecuted, die for our sins, and rise on the third day (Isaiah 53). Remembering the resurrection of Jesus is a way to renew daily hope that we have victory over sin. According to the New Testament, Easter is three days after the death of Jesus on the cross.

Easter follows a period of fasting called Lent, in which many churches set aside time for repentance and remembrance. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Good Friday, the day of Jesus' crucifixion. The 40 day period was established by Pope Gregory I using the 40-day pattern of Israel, Moses, Elijah, and Jesus' time in the wilderness.

The week leading up to Easter is called The Holy Week, or "Passion Week", and includes Palm Sunday (the day Jesus entered Jerusalem and was celebrated), Maundy Thursday (the "Last Supper" where Jesus met with his disciples to observe Passover), and Good Friday (when Jesus would be crucified on the cross).

Easter is a very significant date within Christianity and is the foundation of the Christian faith. Jesus, the Son of God, fulfilled prophecy and through his death, has given the gift of eternal life in heaven to those who believe in his death and resurrection.

Origin of Easter

The earliest Christians celebrated the resurrection on the fourteenth of Nisan (our March-April), the date of the Jewish Passover. Jewish days were reckoned from evening to evening, so Jesus had celebrated His Last Supper the evening of the Passover and was crucified the day of the Passover. The origin of Easter started with early Christians celebrating the Passover worshiped Jesus as the Paschal Lamb and Redeemer.

The origin of some of the Gentile Christians began celebrating Easter in the nearest Sunday to the Passover since Jesus actually arose on a Sunday. This especially became the case in the western part of the Roman Empire. In Rome itself, different congregations celebrated Easter on different days!

Many felt that the date should continue to be based on the timing of the Resurrection during Passover. Once Jewish leaders determined the date of Passover each year, Christian leaders could set the date for Easter by figuring three days after Passover. Following this schedule would have meant that Easter would be a different day of the week each year, only falling on a Sunday once in a while.

Others believed since the Lord rose on a Sunday and this day had been set aside as the Lord's Day, this was the only possible



day to celebrate His resurrection. As Christianity drew away from Judaism, some were reluctant to base the Christian celebration on the Jewish calendar.

Constantine wanted Christianity to be totally separated from Judaism and did not want Easter to be celebrated on the Jewish Passover. The Council of Nicea accordingly required the feast of the resurrection to be celebrated on a Sunday and never on the Jewish Passover. Easter was to be the Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. Since the date of the vernal equinox changed from year to year, calculating the proper date can be difficult. This is still the method used to determine Easter today, which is why some years we have Easter earlier than other years.

Easter this Year?

In 2023, Easter falls on Sunday, April 9th. Easter is celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon, the Paschal full moon, after the vernal equinox. Since the vernal equinox date changed from year to year, calculating the proper date can be difficult. This is still the method used to determine Easter today, which is

why some years we have Easter earlier than other years.

What Does Easter mean?

The origin of the word easter isn't certain. The Venerable Bede, an eighth-century monk, and scholar suggested that the word may have come from the Anglo-Saxon Eostre or Eastre – a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility. Recent scholars haven't been able to find any reference to the goddess Bede mentioned and consider the theory discredited.

Another possibility is the Norse eostur, eastur, or ostara, which meant "the season of the growing sun" or "the season of new birth." The word east comes from the same roots. In this case, easter would be linked to the changing of the season.

A more recent and complex explanation comes from the Christian background of Easter rather than the pagan. The early Latin name for the week of Easter was hebdomada alba or "white week," while the Sunday after Easter day was called dominica in albis from the white robes of those who had been newly baptized. The word alba is Latin both for white and

dawn. People speaking Old High German made a mistake in their translation and used a plural word for dawn, ostarun, instead of a plural for white. From ostarun we get the German Ostern and the English Easter.

Origin and History of the Easter Bunny

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Easter? As a Christian, the first image might be the cross or the empty tomb. For the general public, a blitz of media images and merchandise on store shelves makes it more likely that the Easter Bunny comes to mind. So how did a rabbit distributing eggs become a part of Easter?

There are several reasons for the rabbit, or hare, to be associated with Easter, all of which come through pagan celebrations or beliefs. The most obvious is the hare's fertility. Easter comes during spring and celebrates new life. The Christian meaning of new life through Christ and a general emphasis on new life are different, but the two gradually merged. Any animals – like the hare – that produced many offspring were easy to include.

The hare is also an ancient symbol for the moon. The date of Easter depends on the moon. This may have helped the hare to be absorbed into Easter celebrations.

The hare or rabbit's burrow helped the animal's adoption as part of Easter celebrations. Believers saw the rabbit coming out of its underground home as a symbol for Jesus coming out of the tomb. Perhaps this was another case of taking a pre-existing symbol and giving it a Christian meaning.

The Easter hare came to America with German immigrants, and the hare's role passed to the common American rabbit. Originally children made nests for the rabbit in hats, bonnets, or fancy paper boxes, rather than the baskets of today. Once the children finished their nests, they put them in a secluded spot to keep from frightening the shy rabbit. The appealing nests full of colored eggs probably helped the customs to spread.

Origin and History of Easter Eggs

Next to the Easter bunny, the most familiar symbol is the Easter egg. Like others, the egg has a long pre-Christian history. Again there's no certainty as to why it became associated with Easter.

Many Ancient cultures viewed eggs as a symbol of life. Hindus, Egyptians, Persians, and Phoenicians believed the world began with an enormous egg. The Persians, Greeks, and Chinese gave gifts of eggs during spring festivals in celebration of new life all around them. Other sources say people ate dyed eggs at spring festivals in Egypt, Persia, Greece, and Rome. In ancient Druid lore, the eggs of serpents were sacred and stood for life. *Source: Crosswalk*

INDIA'S LEADING DANCERS HONOR "DANCING THE GODS" FEST

BY MABEL PAIS



(left) Sreelakshmy Govardhanan and Praveen Kumar. Credit / worldmusicinstitute.org

Two of India's leading classical dancers honor World Music Institute's 12th year of its annual 'Dancing The Gods' Festival. The events will be held on two nights, April 14 & 15, at the Ailey Theater at 405 W 55th St, Manhattan, New York City.

Each program will begin with a pre-show slide presentation titled 'Epics, Poetry and Indian Dance' from festival curator and respected Indian dance expert and storyteller Rajika Puri.

Hailed as "among the most probing and serious Indian classical dance festivals" (DanceTabs), with "a record of attracting some truly godlike dancers" (The New York Times), audiences will be treated to spectacular performances.

PROGRAM

NIGHT ONE:

Sreelakshmy Govardhanan - 'Sampradaya' (Solo Kuchipudi with live music)
Friday April 14, 2023
Doors: 6.30 PM | Lecture/Demonstration by curator Rajika Puri: 7 PM |

Performance: 8 PM
Sreelakshmy Govardhanan is a renowned creative dancer, choreographer and teacher of Kuchipudi. She is the founder and Artistic Director of the Avantika Space for Dance, a center for learning, performance and research, as well as a trained psychologist who utilizes this professional perspective to bring a difference to her art, as well as to young minds in need. Her dance activity includes workshops, classes, seminars and lecture demonstrations. In this solo performance set to live music, she will explore the Nritta, Nritya and Natya elements of Kuchipudi through a repertoire set in the format of Margam (performance set in a traditional format).

Kuchipudi is a dance form rooted in the theatrical and dance traditions of Andhra Pradesh, named for the village - also known as Kuchelapuram - where it originated. Traditionally it was performed by troupes of male actor-dancers who presented full-length plays, often lasting all night, to celebrate

festivals dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Alongside this tradition developed a solo form, which is popular today around the world. Enjoy Sreelakshmy speak & perform in this video - youtu.be/7KfuzvTGwbU

NIGHT TWO:

Praveen Kumar 'Sakha' (solo Bharatanatyam with live music)
Saturday, April 15th, 2023
Doors: 6.30 PM | Lecture/Demonstration by curator Rajika Puri: 7 PM |

Performance: 8 PM
Born into a family of artists, Praveen Kumar showed an inclination toward dance at a very young age. After beginning his studies with the eminent guru of Bangalore, the late Smt. Narmada, he learned to appreciate the aesthetic depths of Bharatanatyam and decided to dedicate himself to the ancient dance form. He now trains under the celebrated Guru Prof. C.V. Chandrasekhar and runs the Chithkala School of Dance in Bangalore. In this solo recital, he will explore a man's journey as a companion, an admirer, and a friend through various facets of life. The performance will be accompanied by musicians who will provide the exquisite feel of South Indian traditional music. Enjoy Praveen Kumar performing in this video - youtu.be/xhm7hi7arvI.

Festival Curator Rajika Puri:



Rajika Puri. Credit / worldmusicinstitute.org

Rajika Puri performed internationally in solo recitals of Bharatanatyam and Odissi for several years, before she was launched into western theatre by Julie Taymor in Lincoln Center Theater's "The Transposed Heads". The success of that role encouraged her to develop a form of danced storytelling she calls 'Sutradhari Natyam' in which she intersperses an English narration with excerpts from dances, spoken rhythms and chants as well as songs in Indian languages. In her full-length work: 'Eleni of Sparta' or 'Helen of Troy', she even sings in ancient Greek. Rajika has performed all over Latin America, Europe, Malaysia, the US and India, and in New York at the Asia Society and Ailey Theaters. Learn more at rajikapuri.com.

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE

Learn more at worldmusicinstitute.org.

LET MPAC SPRING YOU INTO ENTERTAINMENT

BY MABEL PAIS

MANHATTAN COMEDY NIGHT

Friday, April 7, 2023 at 8 pm

Get some comic relief with our popular stand-up series showcasing the rising stars of comedy. Mature content, language. Adults only.

Boney James

Saturday, April 8, 2023 at 8pm

During his 30-year career, Boney James has earned four Grammy nominations, two NAACP Image Award nominations and a Soul Train Award, while a dozen of his albums have landed at #1 on Billboard's Contemporary Jazz Album chart. His most recent album, 2022's Detour, represents the next extension of his trademark blend of genres which includes blues, soul, roots, classical, art-pop and hip-hop.

Johnny Mathis - The Voice of Romance

Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Legendary singer Johnny Mathis, celebrating 66 Years as a recording artist, performs his greatest hits & personal favorites. Come hear why Johnny will always be the Voice Of Romance!

On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan

Saturday April 15, 2023 at 8 pm

Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 2 pm and 7 pm

ON YOUR FEET! is the inspiring true story about heart, heritage and two people

who believed in their talent and each other to become an international sensation: Gloria and Emilio Estefan. This performance features some of the most iconic songs of the past quarter-century. Prepare to be on your feet from start to finish! Learn more at onyourfeetmusical.com.

Chicago

Tuesday-Wednesday, April 18-19, 2023 at 7:30 pm

One of the most successful bands of all time, 'Chicago' has amassed sales of over 100,000,000 records sold and has over 20 Top 10 singles such as "If You Leave Me Now," "Saturday in the Park," "Beginnings" and "Hard to Say I'm Sorry."

RAIN - A Tribute to The Beatles

Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:30 pm

RAIN - A Tribute to The Beatles, the foursome band delivering a note-for-note theatrical event, is the next best thing to the legendary Beatles. Learn more at raintribute.com.

Terry Fator: On The Road Again

Friday, April 21, 2023 at 8 pm

(Photo A 3 here)

For over a decade, Terry Fator has sold out night after night in Las Vegas with a show featuring his cast of characters that includes everyone from an Impersonating Turtle to Elton John to Elvis. In addition to winning America's Got Talent, Terry has



won Las Vegas's best show, best all-around performer, best family show and best overall show.

Piano Battle

Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 8 pm

Internationally acclaimed pianists Andreas Kern and Paul Cibis go head-to-head on stage, charming and enchanting audiences with a variety of classical pieces. The two artists, with distinctly different performance styles, take turns to perform pieces by leading classical composers. Who performs it best? You decide!

Take Me Home, the Music of John Denver starring Jim Curry

Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 3 pm

Jim Curry captures the natural essence of John Denver's persona and music through his heartfelt delivery of such multi-platinum hits such as "Rocky Mountain High," "Annie's Song" and "Country Roads."

National Geographic Live:

David Doubilet and Jennifer Hayes: Coral Kingdoms and Empires of Ice

Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Explore rarely seen undersea worlds with two photographers creating a visual voice for the world's oceans. David Doubilet is a legend in underwater photography. Together with his wife and underwater partner, photojournalist Jennifer Hayes, in just one remarkable year on assignment, he explored three unique marine environments for National Geographic. Together, they'll go beyond the published stories to share the reality of "behind-the-camera" adventures. Learn more at nationalgeographic.com/expeditions/experts/david-doubilet-jen-hayes

Kristin Chenoweth: For the Girls

Saturday, April 29, 2023 at 8 pm

Emmy and Tony Award winning actress and singer Kristin Chenoweth's career spans film, television, voice-over and stage.



Kristin Chenoweth. Credit / MPAC

Learn more at officialkristinchenoweth.com

The Mayo Performing Arts Center (MPAC)

Learn more at mayoarts.org.

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

EARTH DAY MINI FILM FEST CONTINUES TO "GET LOUD"

BY MABEL PAIS

One Earth Film Festival with the City of Chicago presents action opportunities in celebration of Earth Day 2023, April 19-23.

One Earth Film Festival with the City of Chicago's Office of Climate and Environmental Equity, following its 12th season in March, will celebrate Earth Day with its annual "Earth Day Mini Fest," April 19-23.

The mini fest continues One Earth's 2023 theme, "Let's Get Loud," with five screening events of top films and engaging discussions intended to illuminate environmental issues and equip audiences with the tools to take concrete actions to mitigate climate change and address environmental justice. Films topics range from the food justice movement in Black and Indigenous communities, understanding and reimagining wildfires, the global citizen-led fight to address traffic violence, and innovation inspired by nature.

On Earth Day, which is Saturday, April 22 a full day of programming will celebrate the 53rd anniversary of Earth Day. Festivities include the Earth Day Clean Up at Columbus Park and the Earth Day Action Fair, followed by a screening of "Biocentrics" at the Chicago Cultural Center.

SCHEDULE

Saturday, April 22, 2023

Earth Day Clean Up at Columbus Park

In partnership with BUILD Chicago, Openlands, One Earth Collective, Field Museum, Friends of the Parks, Interfaith Green Network, Oak Park Climate Action Network, Seven Generations Ahead Location: Meet at pavilion/shelter house north of Columbus Park Field House on Central Ave, Chicago.

- 9:00 a.m. sign in at the shelter/pavilion
- 9:00-11:30 a.m. trash clean-up, garden prep and mulching
- 11:30-12:30 p.m. reflection and lunch

EARTH DAY ACTION FAIR AT THE CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER

In partnership with the City of Chicago's Office of Climate & Environmental Equity

Location: Chicago Cultural Center 2nd Floor Rotunda, 78 E Washington St, Chicago

- 12:30-2:00 p.m. groups present work, opportunities, and events with refreshments and fellowship with other environmental advocates
- 2:00-4:30 p.m. watch-party of the award-winning film, "Biocentrics" and dialogue with activists in the Cultural Center's adjacent Claudia Cassidy Theater

EARTH WEEK MINI FEST FILMS AND SCHEDULE

Most events are free and all watch parties can be attended virtually

All Listings in Central Daylight Time

- 1) "Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire" | April 19, 6:30 p.m. | Thatcher Woods Pavilion, River Forest | Gorton Center, Lake Forest



Follow the Drinking Gourd; Remothering the Land.
Credit / oneearthfilmfest.org

- 2) "Follow the Drinking Gourd" | April 20, 6:30 p.m. | UIC Lecture Center F | Old St. Pat's Church
- 3) "Remothering the Land" | April 20, 6:30 p.m. | UIC Lecture Center F | Old St. Pat's Church
- 4) "Invisible Hand: Rights of Nature Documentary" | April 21, 6:30 p.m. | Truman College, Chicago
- 5) "Biocentrics" | April 22, 2 p.m. | Chicago Cultural

Center | Wayfarer Theaters, Highland Park



Street Protest.

Credit / oneearthfilmfest.org

- 6) "The Street Project" | April 23, 3 p.m. | Chicago Public Library, Humboldt Park Branch | Chicago Public Library, Austin Branch | Big Marsh Bike Park, Chicago

One Earth Film Festival's 12th annual regular season ran March 3-12 and featured ten thought-provoking and sharply focused films screened at venues across Chicago and virtually to audiences around the globe. The hybrid festival reached several thousand people through its watch parties, including panel discussions with subject experts and post-film Q&As.

TICKETS

Mini fest tickets are free with a suggested donation. Learn more at oneearthfilmfest.org.

ONE EARTH FILM FESTIVAL

One Earth Film Festival is the Midwest's premier environmental film festival, creating opportunities for understanding climate change, sustainability and the power of people.

It showcases top-issue, thought-provoking environmental films, leads audiences in interactive post-film discussions focused on solutions, and offers concrete actions people can take.

One Earth Film Festival is a production of One Earth Collective.

Learn more at oneearthfilmfest.org.

FILM OPPOSES DEMEANING OF NATIVE PEOPLES & OTHERS

BY MABEL PAIS



American Natives protest.
Credit / imaginingtheindianfilm.org

IMAGINING THE INDIAN: THE FIGHT AGAINST NATIVE AMERICAN MASCOTING

Dirs: Aviva Kempner & Ben West | USA | 2021 | 1h 35m

"The Original Sin occurred the minute Europe touched Native shores in North America and South America."

W. Richard West, Jr. (Southern Cheyenne)

'Imagining the Indian' is a comprehensive examination of the movement to eradicate the names, words, slurs, logos, images, and gestures that many Native Americans and their allies find demeaning and offensive. The film takes a deep-dive into the issues through archival footage and interviews with those involved in the fight. The psychological research is clear; the use of Native American mascots is detrimental, not only to Native people, but to marginalized groups everywhere.

The film investigates the impact that caricatures like Chief Wahoo -- the cartoonish former logo of the Cleveland Baseball Team -- gestures like the Atlanta Baseball Team's, "tomahawk chop" and epithets like the Washington Football Team's former moniker, "Redskins," have on the Native community, the sports community and society in general.

It introduces the audience to Suzan Shown Harjo, President of the Morning Star Institute and recipient of the

Presidential Medal of Freedom, whose 50-year fight against the exploitation of American Indians in the sports world is used as a lens through which to investigate the history of this issue.

The film provides an account of the genocidal history of Native peoples on this continent, and its role in proliferating negative stereotyping in sports, movies and television. A range of opinions are explored among Natives and non-Natives, including the staunch and steadfast opposition exhibited by Harjo and her contemporaries in advocacy over the years.

"Changing the names for the Washington Football team and Cleveland's baseball team was long overdue, but the victory is only piecemeal until names are also changed in Atlanta for baseball, in Chicago for hockey, and in Kansas City, and don't ignore the almost 2000 other teams with problematic names," said Co-Director Aviva Kempner.

"Imagining the Indian is a film that addresses the misrepresentation of Native

peoples in sports, television, movies, pop-culture and beyond. We are proud that this film is a product of Indian Country, and that its goals are for the good of all people," said Co-Director Ben West (Cheyenne).

"Eradicating mascotting of native people will rid us of its perniciousness, which is that exposure to it is at the root of negative stereotyping and treatment of all people of color," said Co-Producer Kevin Blackstone, an ESPN panelist and professor of the practice at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, who writes sports commentary for *The Washington Post*.

Watch the trailer - imaginingtheindianfilm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/iti_feb_2023_trailer_v2-720p.mp4

OPENING - Check local listings for theater running dates in New York City and beyond.

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

SFIFF CELEBRATES 11 DAYS OF FILMS & EVENTS

BY MABEL PAIS

The San Francisco International Film Festival (SFFILM) returns for the 66th year. It is considered the longest-running film festival in the Americas. This year's program, curated from over 5,000 submissions and invitations features work from 37 countries and spotlights new work from Bay Area Filmmakers. These will screen exclusively in theaters across San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley, April 13-April 23.

The 2023 SFFILM Festival will run in theaters across the Bay Area, including the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland, the Dolby Cinema @ 1275 Market, the Castro Theatre, the Premier Theater, The Walt Disney Family Museum, and Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA). The central hub of the Festival will be at CGV San Francisco to allow for maximum viewing; this location will also feature a hospitality lounge presented by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines for guests to meet and mingle with each other in between screenings.

BIG NIGHTS + SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening Night: "Stephen Curry: Underrated" Peter Nicks (USA 2023, 110 min)
Thursday, April 13 | 6:30 pm PT | Grand Lake Theatre
Thursday, April 13 | 9:30 pm PT | Grand Lake Theatre

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Award-winning filmmaker Peter Nicks delivers a searing documentary illuminating the career of NBA superstar Stephen Curry. Intertwining Curry's emergence at Davidson College with thrilling footage of the 2021-22 Golden State Warriors season when the team won its fourth championship of the Curry era, Nicks deftly builds a portrait of a man who continually defies expectations. With unique access, heart-pounding edits, and electrifying footage, Stephen Curry: Underrated tells the remarkable story of a local legend. Expected Guests: Director Peter Nicks, and producer Ryan Coogler.

TICKETS

Tickets are available to Opening Night Film & Party, Second Showing (screening only) for members & the general public.

CENTERPIECE: "PAST LIVES"

Celine Song (USA/South Korea 2023, 106 min)
Tuesday, April 18 | 8 pm PT | Castro Theatre

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Playwright Celine Song makes a masterful leap to film with this tenderly wrought relationship drama revolving around long-separated childhood friends' attempts to define their unusual connection over two reunions set 12 years apart. Expected Guests: Director Celine Song, and actor Greta Lee.

TICKETS

Tickets are available for members and the general public.

CLOSING NIGHT: "I'M A VIRGO"

Boots Riley (USA 2023, 115 min)
Sunday, April 23 | 6 pm PT | CGV 3
Sunday, April 23 | 7:30 pm PT | CGV 2

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

From visionary filmmaker Boots Riley (Sorry to Bother You, Festival 2018), I'm A Virgo is a darkly comedic fantastical coming-of-age joyride about Cootie (Jharrel Jerome, When They See Us), a 13-foot-tall young Black man in Oakland, CA. Having grown up hidden away, passing time on a diet of comic books and TV shows, he escapes to experience the beauty and contradictions of the real world. He forms friendships, finds love, navigates awkward situations, and encounters his idol, the real-life superhero named The

Hero, played by Walton Goggins. Riley will be in attendance at this special screening of the first four episodes of I'm A Virgo, which will be followed by a Q&A, presented by Prime Video. Expected Guests: Creator, Co-Showrunner, Executive Producer, Writer, Director, Boots Riley.

TICKETS

Tickets are available for members and the general public.

For the complete film lineup, visit sffilm.org.

FILMS CONNECTED TO THE INDIAN DIASPORA

DOCUMENTARIES: INTERNATIONAL



Against the Tide.

Credit / SFFILM

Against the Tide
Sarvnik Kaur (India 2023, 97 min)
Thursday, April 20 | 6 pm PT | CGV 3
Saturday, April 22 | 5:30 pm PT | BAMPFA

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

As the Arabian Sea's fish population dwindles, two fishermen from Mumbai's Koli community endeavor to change their fortunes. United by a shared ambition, their friendship is tested when each man chooses different technology. While Rakesh adheres to ancient practices handed down through generations of ancestors, Ganesh seeks modern methods that in the short-term promise a bigger catch but contribute to overfishing, dooming both men's long-term prospects. Ultimately powerless against the raging waters and growing mountains of debt, Rakesh and Ganesh sway along the waves of life, trying their best to keep their heads above the water that threatens to engulf them. Bookending it all, amidst centuries-old songs of valor and courage, is the customary hum of fishing boats and their promise of hope. 'Against the Tide' won a special jury prize for *vérité* filmmaking at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival and is an SFFILM Documentary Film Fund recipient.

SHORTS

How We Get Free
Geeta Gandbhir (USA 2023, 31 min)

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

In Denver, an intrepid activist runs for office with the aim of eliminating cash bail.



Birdsong.

Credit / SFFILM.

Birdsong
Omi Zola Gupta + Sparsh Ahuja (UK/Laos 2023, 18 min)

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

A meditation on the act of listening and perceiving, guided by the vanishing Hmong tradition of whistling.

Growing up with Memory Loss | A Gift for My 16th Birthday

Keertana Sreekumar (USA 2023, 3 min)

BAY AREA PREMIERE

A young artist with an impaired memory reflects on what it means to grow up.



Hop Heel Drop.

Credit / SFFILM

Hop Heel Drop
Sania Bhatia (USA 2023, 3 min)
Tap dancer Sydney Barnas shares her story of encouragement and passion for movement.
American Ball Game
Teja Mettu + Krish Mysoor (USA 2023, 9 min)

WORLD PREMIERE

With twisting dark humor, Dan uncomfortably tries to fit in with his friend's white family.

CONNECT WITH SFIFF:

Hashtags: #SFFILM and #SFFILMFestival
Twitter: @SFFILM
Instagram: @sffilm
Facebook: facebook.com/SFFILM
Letterboxd: letterboxd.com/sffilm

2023 SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (SFFILM FESTIVAL)

The official SFFILM program-curated from over 5,000 submissions and invitations-includes premieres, eagerly anticipated award titles, debut work from emerging storytellers, international narrative and documentary, mid-lengths and shorts, a Cine Latino section, and the Golden Gate Award juried competition. Filmmakers and guests can network at industry meetings and talks, and everyone will get to celebrate the magic of cinema with SFFILM's prestigious Persistence of Vision, Mel Novikoff, Sloan Science in Cinema awards, and a tribute to a special honoree.

The SFFILM Festival always centers the Bay Area with selections by local creators and crews, and serves students, teachers, and families with Youth Works, family friendly workshops, and educational screenings through Schools at the Festival that reaches thousands of students each year.

SFFILM

SFFILM's mission ensures independent voices in film are welcomed, heard, and given the resources to thrive. SFFILM connects and inspires audiences, students and teachers, and filmmakers through film exhibition, youth education, and artist development programs.

Annual public film programs include the San Francisco International Film Festival (SFFILM Festival) which is the longest running film festival in the Americas, Doc Stories documentary series, special events with the best and brightest in contemporary film, and family programming.

SFFILM Education serves more than 15,000 students and educators with learning opportunities designed to cultivate media literacy, global citizenship, and a lifelong love of movies. SFFILM Makers supports the careers of independent filmmakers from the Bay Area and beyond with grants, residencies, and other creative development services. For more information, visit sffilm.org.

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

New York Indian Consulate and GOPIO Manhattan Organize 'Meet & Greet' for Students from India at the Indian Consulate

APRIL 5, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The Consulate General of India in New York in cooperation with GOPIO Manhattan organized the 'Meet and Greet Students from India' studying in the Northeast to connect them to the community and providing mentoring opportunities as well as to raise awareness of Consular services to students from the Consulate. Students from many universities across the Northeast participated in person and via Facebook Live at the event hosted by the Indian Consulate on March 31st, 2023.

The program started with a welcome by Dr. Varun Jeph, Deputy Consul General with his welcome to the 135+ students in attendance and many more online. He summarized the event introducing the speakers and the topics that will be discussed by them and informed the services offered by the Consulate to the Students. He invited the students Consul General of India at New York Mr. Randhir Kumar Jaiswal to begin the evening's proceedings.

The host for the evening, Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, commented, "Namaste to all Young friends. A very warm welcome to the Consulate, your Home and my office."

He further highlighted there are two sets of students we deal with, one that are here and the others that come here from India. This Student Meet & Greet is an effort in the direction of you connecting with each other and being there as you grow in this new land of opportunities. We are the fifth largest economy and climbing to become the third largest economy. He added that there are 1 million students among the 34 million diaspora are going to play a very important role in that and be the real champions."

Consulate official Ms. Satpadi Tagore invited GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham for his remarks. Dr. Abraham serves as an advisor to GOPIO-Manhattan and started with "Namaskar and addressed the students by reflecting on his journey fifty years ago with an example that a simple phone call back home would cost around \$3/minute. There was a concept of host families. With the advancement of technologies and ease of communication and growth in students, there is no more such need of host families. Starting in 2021 and following session in Oct 2022, and today, we are hosting these sessions to connect you with the community, professional achievers and the Consulate for help with issues or in case of emergency. He noted the number of students across Columbia, NYU, Pace, SUNY Buffalo, Touro College, UPenn, NJIT and other universities represented in the room."

GOPIO Manhattan Co Secretary and Chair for the event and emcee Ms. Bhavya Gupta then introduced and invited the panelists for the evening Mr. Akshat Tewary, an immigration attorney, Ms. Sanjyot Dunung, CEO & Founder of Atma Global, Moderator Prof Srikant Jagabathula from NYU, Mr. Anthony Irudhyanathan, President Zillion Technologies and Prof. Rajashekar Vangapaty.

Mr. Srikanth Jagabathula, Robert Stansky Research Faculty Fellow and Associate Professor of Tech, Ops, and Stats at the NYU Stern School of Business, moderated the panel starting with giving each speaker a minute to talk about their background. He channeled the conversations across the topics of immigration to job search to internships, teaching assistantships etc. with the fellow speakers and engaged the audience. He shared his experiences with the students and said, "Wear different hats, multi-task, go out of your comfort zone, explore and discover."

GOPIO-Manhattan Executive Vice President Professor Rajashekar Vangapaty spoke about the importance of on-



Consul General Mr. Randhir Kumar Jaiswal and Dr. Thomas Abraham addressing the students



Students from different universities and colleges with Consulate and GOPIO officials and speakers

campus job and securing the teaching assistant role while at campus and its importance in job search. He added that "every skill-set you learn in your life will definitely benefit you somewhere in your lifetime. Never get discouraged if you get hurdles." He emphasized the fact that "do not guess the answers. If you don't know, ask. Whether you're given or not that's a different story."

Ms. Sanjyot Dunung, CEO & Founder of Atma Global, shared her experiences with the students about her journey from India to England to Chicago as she experienced the culture shifts. She added that it doesn't necessarily matter at what age you move to a new country. The concept of culture shock, learning new values, attitudes, understanding how people do things, can be startling at the very beginning. She bridged the two cultures with every summer trip to India to retain and touch that Indian cultural experience. She indulged the panel to assist students in formulating their choices of major and career path.

Mr. Anthony Irudhyanathan, President Zillion Technologies shared his journey as an Entrepreneur in the technology sector, started with \$400. He reflected on his journey and cited his motivation to be here was based on the fact that the Students from India have the chance to be a Game Changer and that he invests in the ideas from Students, a support not available when he started his journey in 1998. This platform of Meet & Greet is a good opportunity for Students to excel in being a game changer as 60% of top 100 companies have Indians as CIO/CTOs today. He added "students should immerse within the system, learn and connect with the people."

Mr. Akshat Tewary, an immigration attorney added "reflected on his journey to the USA in Jan 1986 highlighting the sense of expectation, optimism, growth etc. as the cultural differences between homeland and USA."

Dr. Bernadine Waller, Columbia University "reflected on the mental health issues ranging from anxiety to depression and all in between. She highlighted the various reasons the stresses that are faced by Students such as job search, internship search, competitiveness,

loneliness etc. The optimal way to deal with it is "One Bite At A Time." She further added that we encourage the students to think of their career, plan for the present, think about the future, but come back to the present.

Mr. Shivender Sofat, President GOPIO-Manhattan, who joined virtually told the importance of mentoring to the students, discussed chapter activities and motivated everyone to volunteer and become members at future events held by GOPIO Manhattan.

Mr. Siddharth Jain, GOPIO Manhattan Board Member concluded with a quote from Rumi: "It's your road, and yours alone, others may walk it with you, but no one can walk it for you."

Mr. Jain followed the quote with the vote of thanks to Host Ambassador Shri Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Dy. Consul Shri Varun Jeph, Dr. Thomas Abraham, Distinguished Panelists, Ms. Satabdi Tagore and the Consulate staff. Other GOPIO-Manhattan officials present at the meeting included President Shivender Sofat (attended virtually), EVP Professor Rajashekar Vangapaty, Treasurer Braj Aggarwal, VP Vimal Goyle, Board Member & Program Coordinator Bhavya Gupta, Board Member Chitranjan Belwariar, Members Raj Punjabi, & Tara Shajan.

"The students had an excellent time networking with students from different universities as well as with speakers and the Consulate and GOPIO officials and we plan to do a much bigger event next year," Dr. Abraham added.

In accordance with its mission to serve the larger society and those in need, GOPIO-Manhattan Chapter has taken several initiatives in the recent past. A Community Feeding is organized by the Chapter providing vegan or avegetarian lunch for the homeless and needy at Tomkins Square Park in Manhattan on the last Monday of every month. The chapter appeals to the community to support the initiative by being a volunteer and/or a sponsor.

For more info on GOPIO Manhattan, call President Shivender Sofat at 731-988-6969, e-mail: info@gopioinmanhattan.org or visit here: <https://gopioinmanhattan.org/>

Facebook Link: GOPIO Manhattan NYC



Radhika Apte: Audience loves woman-oriented stories

Vaah! Life Ho Toh Aisi! actress Radhika Apte, who is seen playing Durga, a housewife and an undercover agent in the spy comedy 'Mrs Undercover', said she fell in love with her character the minute she heard the script.

Radhika said that now-a-days, women-led films are getting more eyeballs from the viewers.

She said: "I think the premise of the film was really exciting for me. We live in a country where there is a lot of patriarchy and so many women slog days and nights to keep their families happy, and yet go unnoticed so I think it did resonate with me and what I like about Durga is her innocence, her naivety, her clumsiness and even her journey of discovering herself. I think that was really good."

Radhika, who is known for 'Raat Akeli Hai', 'Monica, O My Darling', and an American film, 'A Call To Spy', said women-oriented subjects are liked by the audience. Directed and written by debutant director, Anushree Mehta, 'Mrs Undercover' features Radhika Apte in the lead role. It also stars Sumeet Vyas, Rajesh Sharma and Saheb Chatterjee.

Source: IANS

Parineeti blushes as paparazzi tease her amid Raghav Chadha engagement rumours

Parineeti Chopra is being regularly spotted at the airport amid rumours of her engagement with politician Raghav Chadha. She was once again spotted at the Mumbai airport Wednesday evening in a bright red sweater, black pants and boots. When the paparazzi enquired her about her plans, she said she was going to London and even offered to show them her boarding pass to make them believe her.

A paparazzo account on Instagram shared a video of Parineeti from the Mumbai airport. She is seen smiling with her head down as photographers surround her. On being asked about her plans, she says, "London ja rahi hu. Main aapko dikhati hu boarding pass (I am going to London, I can show you the boarding pass)."

The paparazzo claimed she is set to get engaged to rumoured boyfriend and Aam Aadmi Party MP Raghav Chadha on April 10. Fans teased the actor about Raghav in the comments section. A fan wrote, "Parineeti se Rajneeti tak ka safar (the journey of Parineeti to politics)."

Parineeti and Raghav were spotted arriving together at the Mumbai airport this Sunday. Raghav smiled on seeing photographers and requested them to clear the path ahead. They did not answer any queries and left the airport in the same car. A few days back, Raghav also came to pick up Parineeti at the Delhi airport.

Though the duo remain tight-lipped about their relationship status, Aam Aadmi Party leader Sanjeev Arora recently congratulated them on Twitter. He tweeted, "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to @raghav_chadha and @ParineetiChopra. May their union be blessed with abundant love,



joy, and companionship. My best wishes!!!"

Recently, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar also teased Raghav after his pictures with Parineeti went viral on social media. He said, "You occupied enough space in #socialmedia, this may

be a day of silence for you."

Some reports suggest Parineeti and Raghav studied together at the London School of Economics and have been friends for a long time now. Parineeti and Raghav also follow each other on Instagram.

Yami Gautam bags 2nd spot on IMDB most popular actor list



Yami Gautam is being showered with love and praises with her string of success from 'Lost' to 'Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga'. That's not it! She has been ranked 2nd in the IMDB most popular actor list and there is no stopping her! In addition to Yami's position on the IMDB list, the recent movie 'Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga' in which she appeared has also been trending and growing in popularity.

Her Netflix release has become the most watched non English film across various platforms. Even at the global platform, the film is doing well in non English speaking countries. This is yet another huge feat. achieved by the Uri actress.

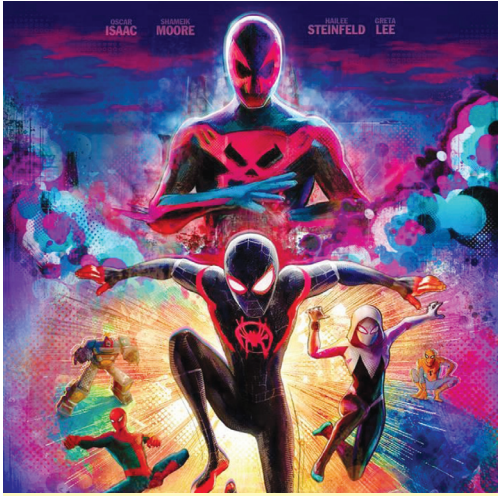
Ranking 2nd on the list of IMDB's popular actors and trending for weeks is a significant achievement. It clearly indicates that fans are raving about her and simply can't stop adoring her. Recently the IMDB's social media handle tweeted, "Winning fans over with her performance in @NetflixIndia's #ChorNikalKeBhaga, Yami Gautam is #2 on IMDb's Popular Indian Celebrities Feature!"

The actress was seen showing gratitude towards

the love and support she has been receiving. She says "This is for my fans, my audience. This is my award & my reward !!! Grateful for this love"

Yami Gautam is winning hearts as the lead actress in 'Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga' and is contributing to the film's success. The heart of the movie is Yami's performance, who holds the for strongly throughout the movie. It is difficult to think of another artist in the role with the intensity and commitment she has performed her part. Even last year her incredible performance in 'A Thursday' made the film one of the most liked film in the year 2022 across the OTT platforms.

Overall, Yami's performance has been a game-changer throughout and fans are eagerly waiting to see more of her in the future. The actress is undeniably winning over the audience's hearts with her on-screen performances after delivering back-to-back successes with movies like "A Thursday," "Lost," "Dasvi," and now "Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga. Spearheading to the top, she will next be seen in 'Dhoom Dhaam' along with Prateek Gandhi, and 'OMG 2' with Akshay Kumar.



Spiderman Across The Spiderverse Trailer: Miles Morales Sets Out For A New Mission

For the first time in the history of Cinema in India, a much awaited and popular Hollywood franchise film is being released theatrically in 10 different languages. Not only has the Spider-Man franchise seen tremendous success at the Indian box office, but Spider-Man is also the country's most-loved superhero, whose appeal cuts across the ages. Since Spider-Man has such passionate fans across the board in the country, the makers came up with a unique way of bringing him closer to all Indians, making it a Pan-India film and one of the most anticipated movies of 2023.

Apart from English, 'Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse' will release in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi and Bengali. A release in 10 languages is a milestone on its own and will allow audiences to experience the movie in multiple languages, and as per their choice

Priyanka teaming up with John Cena and Idris Elba for action flick

Priyanka Chopra is one of the popular Indian actresses who established herself as one of the most talented stars in the global cinema platform, with years of hard work and dedication. The versatile actress, who has been considered one of the finest performers in her league, never had an easy journey in her acting career. The actress is quite active on social media and enjoys a massive fan following as she keeps her fans updated about her whereabouts. Currently, the actress is busy promoting her upcoming show Citadel. Reportedly, the actress has joined hands with Amazon Studios to star in Heads of State opposite John Cena and Idris Elba.

Priyanka is all set to star in Amazon Studios' Heads of State that will also star John Cena and Idris Elba. The actress took to her Instagram handle to share the news with her fans and wrote, 'On to the next.' However, the details of the film is being kept under wraps, the shoot will begin in May. Directed by Ilya Naishuller, the film is being produced by Safran Company's Peter Safran and John Rickard. Well, Priyanka's global debut series Citadel was just about to get release that now fans have got another good news from his professional front. However, more details about Heads of State are yet to be revealed by the makers.

The talented actress will be next seen in Citadel, the upcoming spy thriller series which is slated to be streamed on Amazon Prime Video, in April 2023. Priyanka Chopra is making a comeback to Bollywood with Jee Le Zaraa, the upcoming chick flick movie helmed by actor-filmmaker Farhan Akhtar.



Are Reese Witherspoon and Tom Brady dating?

Ever since Reese Witherspoon split from Jim Toth, rumours about the actress dating former football player Tom Brady have been doing the rounds. The 47-year-old actress announced the news of her separation from Toth, who was her husband of around 12 years. The two announced their separation last month followed by her filing for divorce on March 30.

Meanwhile, the 45-year-old NFL star and Brazilian model Gisele Bündchen finalized their divorce in 2022 after 13 years of marriage. Continue reading to find out if Witherspoon and Brady are dating and what the latest update about the rumours are.

Witherspoon's representative has now told People that the dating rumours are "completely false." A representative for Brady has also responded and confirmed that the rumours are "completely untrue," as per the portal. Sources reveal that the award-winning actress and the former football quarterback have not even met.

Witherspoon and Toth, who is a talent agent announced their separation through a statement that said, "We have some personal news to share... It is with a great deal of care and consideration that we have made the

difficult decision to divorce. We have enjoyed so many wonderful years together and are moving forward with deep love, kindness and mutual respect for everything we have created together."

They added, "Our biggest priority is our son and our entire family as we navigate this next chapter. These matters are never easy and are extremely personal. We truly appreciate everyone's respect for our family's privacy at this time." The two have a 10-year-old son named Tennessee, while Witherspoon also has two kids with her former husband Ryan Phillippe, namely 23-year-old Ava Phillippe, and 19-year-old Deacon Phillippe.

Meanwhile, Brady and Bündchen have two children namely, 13-year-old Benjamin, and 10-year-old Vivian. The retired football player also has a 15-year-old son, Jack, with his former girlfriend Bridget Moynahan. The model told Vanity Fair that their divorce was like the death of her dream. "You give everything you got to achieve your dream. You give a hundred per cent of yourself, and it's heartbreaking when it doesn't end up the way you hoped for, and worked for, but you can only do your part," said Bündchen.



ONE OF MACRON'S FAVOURITE RESTAURANTS IN FRANCE SET ON FIRE BY PROTESTERS OVER PENSION AGE HIKE



PARIS (TIP): Protesters started a fire at one of French President Emmanuel Macron's favourite restaurants in Paris on April 6 during clashes with riot police at the upmarket left-bank brasserie.

Staff at La Rotonde in the Montparnasse area of the city were forced to put out flames on the awning of the restaurant where Macron held a victory party during his successful 2017 election bid.

An AFP journalist saw a group of men dressed in black fire fireworks and throw stones in the direction of the eatery.

The fire was caused by a flare thrown onto the fabric awning, with firefighters needing to extinguish it.

Ranks of riot police formed to protect the business on the 11th day of national protests and strikes against Macron's widely unpopular bid to increase the retirement age to 64 from 62.

The red velour sofas and soft lighting of La Rotonde, a Belle Epoque hang-out once frequented by Picasso, have long been a favourite of Macron and his wife Brigitte.

The former investment banker held strategy meetings there as he prepared his bid for the presidency in 2017 and has been known to eat there with his wife since winning power.

In a decision criticised as elitist by his opponents at the time, Macron used La Rotonde to host staff and political allies for a party after he topped the first round of voting in 2017.

The restaurant has been targeted before because of its association with the 45-year-old president.

In 2020, during violent anti-government protests by so-called "Yellow Vests", a suspected arson attack left its entrance damaged.

"When there are marches and so on, you hear people saying 'Death to the Rotonde, Death to Macron'," Gerard Tafanel, who owns the bistro with his brother Serge, told AFP at the time.

"It happens all the time: anonymous phone calls, people who enter in the middle of the day saying 'Death to Macron'." (AP)

King Charles III supports probe into British monarchy's slave ties

LONDON (TIP): King Charles III for the first time has signaled support for research into the British monarchy's ties to slavery after a document showed an ancestor with shares in a slave-trading company, a Buckingham Palace spokesperson said on April 6.

Charles takes the issue "profoundly seriously" and academics will be given access to the royal collection and archives, the palace said.

The statement was in response to an article in The Guardian newspaper that revealed a document showing that the deputy governor of the slave-trading Royal African Company transferred 1,000 pounds of shares in the business to King William III in 1689.

The newspaper reported on the document as part of a series of stories on royal wealth and finances, as well as the monarchy's connection to slavery.

Charles ascended to the throne last year after the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. His coronation is planned for May 6.

Charles and his eldest son, Prince



William, have expressed their sorrow over slavery but haven't acknowledged the crown's connections to the trade.

The king has said he's trying to deepen his understanding of "slavery's enduring impact" that runs deep in the Commonwealth, an international grouping of countries made up mostly of former British colonies.

During a ceremony that marked Barbados becoming a republic two years

ago, Charles referred to "the darkest days of our past and the appalling atrocity of slavery, which forever stains our history." English settlers used African slaves to turn the island into a wealthy sugar colony.

The research into the monarchy's ties to slavery is co-sponsored by Historic Royal Palaces and Manchester University and is expected to be completed by 2026. (AP)

Hindu temple vandalised in Canada; police describes it as 'hate-motivated incident'

TORONTO (TIP): A prominent Hindu temple in Canada's Ontario province has been vandalised by unknown people with "anti-Hindu and anti-India graffiti", in what is described by police as a "hate-motivated incident."

In a statement, the police in Ontario's Windsor City said on April 5 that it has launched an investigation into the incident and looking for two suspects.

The High Commission of India in Ottawa, Canada has strongly condemned the act of vandalism.

"We have taken up with the Canadian authorities the hateful act of putting anti-India graffiti on the walls of BAPS Swaminarayan temple in Windsor. We strongly condemn this act of vandalism," the mission said in a tweet.

The Windsor Police Service said officers were dispatched to the Hindu temple in the 1700 block of Northway Avenue following a report of hate-motivated vandalism on Wednesday.

"Officers discovered anti-Hindu and anti-India graffiti sprayed in black on an exterior wall of the building," the police said in a statement.

The Windsor Police Service was investigating vandalism at the temple "as a hate-motivated incident," the statement said.

Through investigation, officers obtained a video that shows two suspects in the area just after 12 am.

In the video, one suspect appears to commit the vandalism on the wall of



the building while the other keeps watch, it said.

At the time of the incident, one suspect wore a black sweater, black pants with a small white logo on the left leg, and black and white high-top running shoes.

The second suspect wore black pants, a sweatshirt black shoes, and white socks.

Police asked residents in the immediate vicinity of the temple to check their home surveillance or dashcam video footage for evidence of the suspects.

In January, the Gauri Shankar temple in Brampton was targeted with anti-India graffiti, causing an outrage among the Indian community.

The Indian Consulate General in Toronto had said the defacing of the

temple had deeply hurt the sentiments of the Indian community in Canada.

At least three similar acts of vandalism have been recorded in Canada last year.

Last September, the Ministry of External Affairs issued a statement condemning the rise of hate crimes against Indians and anti-India activities in Canada, expressing their concern with stern language.

Statistics Canada reported a 72 per cent increase in hate crimes based on religion, sexual orientation, and race between 2019 and 2021.

This has led to increased fears among minority communities, particularly the Indian community, which is the fastest-growing demographic group in Canada, accounting for almost four per cent of the population. (PTI)

Saudi, Iran restore ties, say they seek Mideast stability

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (TIP): Long-time Mideast rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia took another significant step toward reconciliation April 6, formally restoring diplomatic ties after a seven-year rift, affirming the need for regional stability and agreeing to pursue economic cooperation.

The agreement was reached in Beijing during a meeting between the Iranian and Saudi foreign ministers, a month after China had brokered an initial reconciliation agreement between the two regional powerhouses.

The latest understanding further lowers the chance of armed conflict between the rivals, both directly and in proxy conflicts around the region. It could bolster efforts by diplomats to end a long war in Yemen, a conflict in which both Iran and Saudi Arabia are deeply entrenched.

April 6 announcement also represents another diplomatic victory for the Chinese as Gulf Arab states perceive the United States slowly withdrawing from the wider region.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian laid out details of Thursday's agreement in a tweet, after his talks with Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud.

The minister wrote that Thursday marked the beginning of "official diplomatic relations ... economic and commercial cooperation, the reopening of embassies and consulates general, and the emphasis on stability, stable security and development of the region."



Amirabdollahian said that the issues are "agreed upon and on the common agenda."

The official Iranian news agency, IRNA, said that in addition to reopening embassies in the two capitals, diplomatic missions would start operating in two other major cities — Mashhad in Iran and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. The report said both sides also agreed to study the prospects of resuming flights and official and private visits between the two nations, in addition to how to facilitate the visa process for their people.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said the two foreign ministers signed a joint statement and expressed their determination to improve ties in line with their talks in Beijing last month.

Thursday's talks in Beijing marked the

first formal meeting of senior diplomats from the two nations since 2016, when the kingdom broke ties with Iran after protesters invaded Saudi diplomatic posts there. Saudi Arabia had executed a prominent Shiite cleric with 46 others days earlier, triggering the demonstrations.

The warming of ties shows that "regional countries have the will and ability to take the lead" in maintaining peace, Mao said at the briefing.

She said China is ready to support both sides in fostering good relations, urging the international community to help the Middle Eastern countries resolve their differences.

"The colonial hegemonic tactics of stirring up contradictions, creating estrangement and division should be rejected by the people all over the world," she said. (AP)

ROCKETS FIRED FROM GAZA RAISE TENSION AS PASSOVER BEGINS

JERUSALEM (TIP): Palestinian militants fired a barrage of rockets early on April 6, setting off air raid sirens in southern Israel, as violence erupted for the second day in a row during a sensitive period of overlapping holidays. The barrage came after another tense night at Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where Israeli police clashed with Muslim worshippers attempting to stay overnight, in defiance of long-standing compromises about the management of the compound. The Israeli military said seven rockets launched from the Gaza Strip all exploded in midair. No group claimed responsibility for the barrage.

Unrest in the region was less intense than the previous days, but the rocket fire raised fears of a wider conflagration as Jews began the week-long Passover holiday, hundreds of Christians in the Old City gathered for Holy Thursday at the Holy Sepulcher to mark the Last Supper, and Muslims marked the Ramadan holy month.

Al-Aqsa is the third-holiest site in Islam and stands on a hilltop known to Jews as the Temple Mount, which is the holiest site in Judaism. Conflicting claims over it have spilt into violence before, including a bloody 11-day war two years ago between Israel and Hamas, the Islamic militant group that rules Gaza. Since Ramadan began on March 22, scores of Muslim worshippers have repeatedly tried to stay overnight in the mosque, a practice that is typically permitted only during the last 10 days of the monthlong holiday. Israeli police have entered nightly to evict the worshippers. (AP)

China deploys warships near Taiwan after Tsai-McCarthy meeting

TAIPEI (TIP): China sent warships through waters around Taiwan on April 6 as it vowed a "resolute response" to the island's president meeting US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen held talks with McCarthy in Los Angeles on Wednesday, expressing gratitude afterwards for the meeting that she said showed her island was not isolated on the international stage.

China had repeatedly warned both sides the meeting should not take place, and deployed an aircraft carrier through waters near Taiwan hours before the talks went ahead. Three additional warships were detected in waters separating the island from mainland China, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence said on Thursday morning. An anti-submarine helicopter had also crossed the island air defense identification zone, according to the ministry.

Despite Taiwan having been ruled separately for more than 70 years, China views it as part of its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary.

China carried out its largest-ever air and sea exercises around Taiwan following a visit in August last year by McCarthy's predecessor, Nancy Pelosi, to the island. China deployed warships, missiles and



fighter jets into the waters and skies around Taiwan in August.

Its response to the McCarthy meeting has so far been on a much lower level. Tsai said in the United States she had received a warm welcome from politicians on both sides of the aisle.

"Their presence and unwavering support reassure the people of Taiwan that we are not isolated and we are not alone," she told reporters at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley. Tsai's visit to California was technically a stop-over after a trip to Latin America to see two of Taiwan's dwindling band of official diplomatic allies.

Hours after the Tsai-McCarthy meeting, China issued

a strong rebuke. "In response to the seriously erroneous acts of collusion between the United States and Taiwan, China will take resolute and effective measures to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity," China's foreign ministry said.

However there were no initial signs of extra military activity on Thursday morning on Pingtan island in southeastern China -- home to a People's Liberation Army base and known as the closest point on the mainland to Taiwan. AFP journalists on Pingtan last year had witnessed missile launches and army helicopters flying over the island following Pelosi's visit.

McCarthy, who is second in line to the US presidency, said a shared belief in freedom and democracy underpinned a relationship that was "a matter of profound importance to the free world". He had originally planned to go himself but opted instead to meet Tsai in California.

The decision was viewed as a compromise that would underscore support for Taiwan but avoid inflaming tensions with China. McCarthy vowed US arms sales to Taiwan -- which infuriate Chinese leadership -- would continue, in what he said was a proven strategy to dissuade aggression. (AFP)

Pakistan PM Sharif convenes NSC meet amid faultlines between judiciary, government

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has convened a meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) for April 7, amid the widening chasm between the judiciary and the federal government over holding polls in the country's politically crucial Punjab province.

Pakistan's parliament on April 6 passed a resolution rejecting the country's Supreme Court's decision about the Punjab elections delaying the case and demanding a full court to decide on this vexing issue.

A three-member bench of the apex court led by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Tuesday fixed May 14 as the new date for elections to the Punjab Assembly, as it quashed the Election Commission of Pakistan's decision to extend the polls date from April 10 to October 8.

The top civil and military leadership will participate in the NSC meeting while the heads of the country's intelligence agencies will brief the participants on the national security situation, according to The Express



Tribune newspaper.

The meeting is scheduled to take place at 11 am on Friday at the Prime Minister's House, the report said.

The NSC is a federal institutional and consultative body chaired by the Prime Minister of Pakistan as its chairman.

It is a principal forum that is mandated for considering national security and foreign policy matters

with the senior national security advisers and Cabinet ministers.

In the latest development, the National Assembly or the lower house passed a resolution to reject the decision of the apex court.

The resolution was moved by lawmaker Khalid Magsi of the Balochistan Awami Party which is part of the ruling coalition and was adopted by the lower house.

It called upon Prime Minister Sharif and the federal cabinet not to implement this judgment as it is contrary to the Constitution.

The resolution came after Sharif addressing the cabinet meeting on Wednesday described the apex court's decision as a mockery of the Constitution and law, and added that it could not be implemented.

His idea was supported by the National Assembly, showing the bitter divide over the date of the election in Punjab where the assembly was dissolved on January 13 and the polls should be held within 90 days.

The federal government asserts that it has the power to delay the polls and hold them with the general elections in the country after August this year.

However, former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party has been pushing for early polls and demanding that instead of delaying the elections in the Punjab province, the national assembly should be dissolved and general elections called in the country. (PTI)

PAKISTAN SOLDIER, 8 TERRORISTS KILLED IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PROVINCE

PESHAWAR (TIP): A Pakistani soldier was killed and eight terrorists were eliminated during an overnight raid at a militant hideout in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military has said. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on April 5, an intense exchange of fire took place between the security personnel and terrorists during the intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the Shinwarsak area of South Waziristan district, which also left one soldier dead, the Dawn newspaper reported on April 6.

"Own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and eight terrorists, including terrorist commander Jan Muhammad alias Chorgh, were sent to hell," the statement said. Weapons and ammunition were seized from the slain terrorists, who have remained actively involved in terror activities against security forces and the killing of innocent citizens, it said.

"Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the statement added.

The military has not yet identified the militant group to which the slain terrorists belonged. Pakistan's government has stepped up its offensive against militants following a spike in terror attacks. (PTI)

Fire guts clothing market in Bangladesh, eight injured

DHAKA (TIP): A massive fire partly destroyed one of the biggest clothing markets here in the Bangladesh capital on April 4, injuring eight people, including two fire personnel.

The fire broke out at the Bangabazar market around 6:10 am and was brought under control after over six hours of efforts at 12:36 pm, Shahjahan Shikder, officer-in-charge of the media wing of Fire Service and Civil Defence said.

However, the fire was seen spreading to neighbouring buildings as a result of strong winds. Flames could still be observed in various locations.

Bangladesh Air Force helicopters sprayed water over the burning market, the bdnews24.com portal reported.

At least eight people, including two members of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, were injured while working to control the massive fire, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

According to Rafi Al Faruk, duty officer of the Fire Service and Civil Defence control room, 48 fire service units were working to control the fire.

The cause of the fire is yet to be known.

The first unit of firefighters reached the scene within two minutes, said Anwarul Islam Dolon, an official in the media department of the Fire Service.

Eyewitnesses said that owners and employees of shops in the market rushed to the spot after hearing the news of the fire. They were seen removing goods from their stores and moving them to a safe location. Businessmen at the site



said that at least six markets in Bangabazar caught fire.

Bangabazar Market has some 2,900 shops and about 150,000 people work there.

Bangabazar, one of the biggest markets in the country, houses hundreds of stores constructed of tin and wood.

With the advent of Eid, clothing stores stocked up new products aiming for a big sale. Many staff at the clothing stores spend the night in their stores during Ramzan.

The reports said the traders and their store staff were desperately trying to remove the products from the flames.

Bangabazar was burnt down to ashes earlier in 1995 before it was rebuilt.

Dhaka South City Corporation owns the market, which is divided into four parts: Bangabazar Complex, Gulistan Unit, Mohanagar Unit, and Adarsha Unit.

The last time the market caught fire was on Jul 24, 2018, which gutted some stores at its Gulistan unit. (PTI)

TEN CONFIRMED CASES OF NEW OMICRON VARIANT OF COVID-19 DETECTED IN NEPAL: HEALTH MINISTRY

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal on April 3 confirmed the detection of a new Omicron variant of COVID-19 identified as "XBB1.16" and said that at least 10 out of 24 latest samples of patients across the country have tested positive for the new strain.

Nepal's Ministry of Health and Population said it has cautioned its citizens after the detection of XBB1.6 variant, which has been identified and spreading in neighbouring India.

"A new variant of Omicron 'XBB1.16', spreading in the neighbouring country India, has also been detected in Nepal.

So far 10 of the 24 samples tested by the Health Ministry have been confirmed," Dr Sameer Kumar Adhikari, deputy spokesperson at the Ministry of Health and Population, said. According to the ministry, to identify the molecular genetic changes in COVID-19, 24 PCR, and antigen-positive samples were collected in March at the National Public Health Laboratory through random sampling.

Of the 24 samples collected, two tested positive for BA.1.1, two for BA.2, and one for BA.2.76, 2 for BA.5, two for BA.5.2, 10 for XBB 1.16, three for XBB 1.5, one for XBB 2.6, and one for XBF.

The health ministry has urged people travelling from abroad to get tested for coronavirus infection at the health desk at borders, and to get the necessary treatment and counselling from nearby hospitals if tested positive, arranged by the ministry, saying that the new variant is spreading rapidly in neighbouring India. (PTI)

Sikh History This Week

APRIL 7, 2023, TO APRIL 13, 2023

7th April

1924 3rd Shaheedhi Jatha of 500 Akali Satyagrahies, led by Sardar Santa Singh courted arrest upon reaching Gangsar, Jaito.

1948 Akali Dal passed resolution to keep its independent entity.

8th April



1929 Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in Legislative Assembly, Delhi.

1938 Karam Singh Jhingar dies on the last day his imprisonment.

1982 Akali Agitation initiated for the Waters Issue: Satluj-Yamuna link.

9th April



1656 Jotti Jot, Eighth Patshah, Guru Har Krishan Ji. ==> Guru HAR KRISHAN Patshah (1656-1668), was born on Monday, Sawan 8 sunmat 1713 (July 7, 1656) at Kiratpur, to father Sri Guru Har Rai Patshah and mother Matta Krishan Kaur. On Katak 8 sunmat 1718 (Oct. 7 1661), Guru Sahib ascended to Gur Gadhi. Based on the complaints of Baba Ram Rai, Guru Sahib were summoned to Aurangzeb's court in Delhi. While in Delhi, Guru Sahib suffered from small pox (Chaechak) and subsequently left for heavenly abode on Vaisak 3 sunmat 1721 (March 30, 1664). Two historical Gurudwaras marking Guru Sahib's visit to Delhi include Balla Sahib and Bangla Sahib. Guru Har Krishan, served as the eighth Guru of GurSikhism for a total of 2 years, 5 months and 26 days. Guru Sahib's entire journey through our planet totaled to 7 years, 8 months, and 26 days.

Gur Gadhi, Ninth Patshah, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

1746 Orders to shoot Sikhs at sight leading to the "Small Holocaust" in Sikh history.

1748 Mir Mannu was appointed Governor for the Punjab that brought some of the darkest period in Sikh History.

1796 Khalsa Dal restores the belongings of Udasi Sadhus that were snatched by the Vairaghis during Kumbh Mela.

1921 Kishan Singh Gargaj leaves his position as Howaldar Major of the 35 Sikh platoon and became the Secretary of Akali Dal.

10th April

1754 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia given Jathaedari of Sikh Nation.



1762 Kalandar Khan attacked Sri Harmandir Sahib under Abdali's influence. Sri Harmandir Sahib was destroyed with dynamites and the sarowar filled with debris. One of Sri Harmandir Sahib's brick hit Abdali's nose. This injury proved to be deadly for him.

1763 Panth Khalsa resolved to liberate a Kasur Brahmin's wife who was abducted by the Nawab (Chief) of Kasur, Punjab.

Khalsa Panth passed a resolution, on behalf of a poor Brahmin from Kasur, to seek the release of his beautiful wife. She had been abducted by the Nawab (Chief) of Kasur, Punjab. The Sikh outfits assembled at the holy Akal Takhat, unanimously took a vow to liberate the poor lady and successfully accomplished the task.

1973 The Articles of Incorporation of the Sikh Dharma Brotherhood were endorsed by the Secretary of the State of California. This act established Sikh Dharma as an official religious organization.

11th April

1748a Jassa Singh Ahluwalia killed Salabat Khan, then Governor of Amritsar. Diwan Kodha mal murdered Lakhpat Rai on April 13, 1748 and an intense battle erupted among the Manawala and Deburji.

Sardar Kapur Singh moved with his forces towards Lahore. Meanwhile, whatever Jagir that fell into the hands of the Sikhs was used for Guru Ka Langar.

1748b Meer Manu became Punjab's Governor. 1762 Ahmed Shah Abdali blew off Sri Harmandir Sahib, desecrated and filled the sarowar (sacred tank) with garbage.

In 1755, Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked India for the fourth time. After looting Mathura, Bindraban, Agra, and Delhi, he brought back jewelry, gold and thousands of young Hindu men and women. In order to liberate the enslaved Hindus, Baba Deep Singh and his associates attacked Durani near Peepli and Markanda (now in Haryana). The infuriated Abdali, made his son, Tamur Shah, as the subedar of Punjab and Jahan Khan as his General. He ordered them to kill all Sikhs and demolish Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Following orders, Jahan Khan went to Amritsar with heavy artillery. Baba Gurbaksh Singh along with 30 other Sikhs fought back, but unfortunately, Jahan Khan demolished Darbar Sahib, its surrounding buildings and filled the sarowar with garbage.

1883 Khalsa Diwan founded at Amritsar.

Khalsa Diwan was founded at Amritsar. This body too like the previous ones, from its very inception, was torn by internal dissensions, and the struggle for supremacy between the Amritsar and the Lahore parties wrecked it. This led to the formation of an independent Khalsa Diwan at Lahore in 1886. The leaders of the Lahore Diwan were progressive where as the Amritsar Diwan was the stronghold of the conservative elements mainly the aristocrats and Mahants. The latter failed to appreciate the wind that was blowing to restore

Sikhism to its pristine glory. Nonetheless during this period, the Sikhs were able to co-operate despite mutual acrimony and dissensions.

12th April

1759a Sikhs gathered in huge numbers for Baisakhi in Amritsar. Hukamnana was issued in the name of the Sikhs from Sri Akal Takhat for the collection of Daswand and to engage in religious deeds.

1759b Maratha Sabaji and the Sikhs together attacked Jahan Khan.

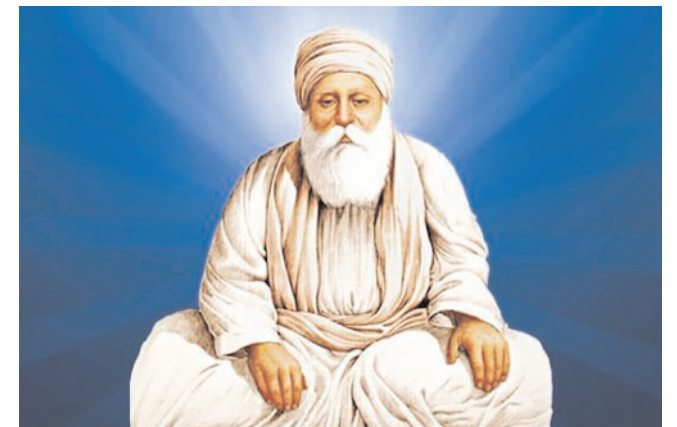
1801 Coronation of Ranjit Singh as Sarkar-i-Wala.

Ranjit Singh's was proclaimed ruler by Baba Sahib Bedi, a descendant of Guru Nanak. At the coronation ceremony Sardar Ranjit Singh assumed the title Sarkar-i-Wala. Although the ceremony was conducted in accordance with the ancient ceremony of Hindu monarchy, "abhisekha," he never sat on a throne in respect to the concept of Sikh sovereignty, for sovereignty belonged only to Guru Khalsa Panth and not any individual. He asked all non-Sikhs to address him as Maharaja and all Sikhs as Singh Sahib. He struck "NanakShahi" Silver Rupee coins, symbolising sovereignty the same year. The legend "Deg Tegh Fateh" of 1765 on Lahore mint Rupees was changed to the legend that existed on Amritsar coins of 1775 and coins of Banda Bahadur of 1710. Ranjit Singh adopted the same couplet and exactly in the same form as it appeared on 1784 Amritsar coins, without any modifications.

1876 Maharaja Mohinder Singh of Patiala passed away.

13th April

1559 Guru Amar Das Patshah established the Vaisakhi Mela traditions.



1746 Panth Khalsa passed a resolution on the Vaisakhi day, not to be part of the Afghan kingdom and actively work against any such designs.

1814 Nirankari Chief, Baba Darbara Singh, son of Baba Dyal Ji was born.

1861 Baba Ram Singh started the Namdhari movement.

1919 Jallianwala massacre took place, 379 unarmed killed and 2,000 wounded.



Promote growth and prevent hair loss

Sometimes, hair loss occurs because of factors that are beyond your control, such as hormonal problems, genetics, or illness. But other times, your hair can become brittle, damaged, and prone to breakage, leading to visible hair loss. You may be able to prevent some hair loss and damage by taking steps to keep your hair and scalp healthy, such as taking dietary supplements, healthy scalp treatment, altering your hair care regimen, or seeking professional help to promote healthy hair growth.

Change Your Hairstyle

Certain hair accessories — including hairpins, clips, and rubber bands — can cause extensive hair breakage when they are used to hold your hair tightly in place. Tight ponytails, cornrows, or braids can also create tension on your hair and cause it to break and appear thin. For healthy hair, experts recommend minimizing the use of hair accessories and not continuously wearing hairstyles that pull on your hair. And when you do use hair accessories, select hairpins with balled ends, clips with rubber padding, and fabric hair ties instead of rubber bands.

Consume More Iron

If your diet doesn't include enough iron, it could cause your hair to fall out. Your doctor can check this with a blood test. If you are iron deficient, an easy fix to help prevent hair loss is to increase the amount of dietary iron you consume. Good sources of iron include organ meats, clams, oysters, iron-fortified cereals, beans, pumpkin seeds, and spinach. But don't take an iron supplement without talking with your doctor — too much iron can be harmful.



Limit Brushing for Healthy Hair

Dermatologists say that vigorous grooming of your hair — such as following the old recommendation to brush it 100 strokes every night — can damage your hair and cause it to break off. If you excessively brush your hair and it appears thin or shaggy, try limiting how much you brush your hair. Often, the best way to improve the health of your hair is to leave it alone as much as possible.

Let Your Hair Air-Dry

High heat from blow dryers can be extremely damaging to your hair and leave it susceptible to breakage. When you hold a blow dryer close to your wet hair, it can actually boil the water in your hair shaft, which can cause your hair to be brittle. Rubbing wet hair vigorously with a

towel can also lead to breakage and thinning. To reduce your risk of hair damage and help prevent hair loss, let your hair air-dry when possible, and limit your use of heated styling tools.

Take Biotin Supplements

Biotin is a B vitamin that is sometimes used to help reduce or prevent hair loss. Some people do not get enough biotin in their diet, resulting in biotin deficiency. Scientific evidence indicates that taking biotin supplements may help alleviate hair thinning if you have a biotin deficiency. Talk with your doctor if you suspect that you are deficient in biotin. He can assess your symptoms and determine whether biotin supplements may help you.

Source: *Everydayhealth*

FOOD

Italian Chicken

Ingredients

4 Pieces of Chicken Breast
2 Eggs ½ cup Maida
½ cup Chicken Stock
½ cup White Wine
3 Tbsp Lemon juice
2 Tbsp Olive Oil
2 Tbsp Unsalted Butter
2 sprigs Parsley Salt
Pepper to taste

Method

- Whisk eggs in a bowl and season it with salt and pepper and let it rest.
- Place the flour on a large plate and season that with salt and pepper and set aside.
- In another bowl, combine together chicken stock, lemon juice and white wine.
- Coat the chicken breast in flour, dip it in beaten egg and shallow fry it on a sauce pan. Cook for about 3 minutes till it turns golden brown. Now that the bake chicken off the pan.
- And add the wine and stock mixture to the pan and let it cook for a few minutes until it reduces slightly and thickens, add some butter, parsley, salt and pepper, continue to cook. Now add the chicken breast back in the sauce and cook them together for just another minute. Serve it hot.



Try face oils for healthier skin



Experts say that face oils are soft and light preparations that have natural oils like avocado, argan, olive, sesame etc, as their base along with therapeutic ingredients. According to dermatologists "We recommend argan, almond and olive oils for the face. These oils have moisturizing properties, are used in many face products and are great for dry skins. Women who have oily, acne prone skin can use tea-tree oil — avoid applying on the entire face — use an ear bud to apply a drop of tea tree oil on the acne."

Why use face oils

Face oils have many benefits thanks to the different ingredients.

They are rich in antioxidants Many botanical oils, including argan, passion fruit etc are potent antioxidants. A few drops can be used under your sunscreen or foundation. It works as a moisturizer as well as a primer.

Prevents inflammation

Some oils like argan oil have anti-inflammatory properties and prevent inflammation caused by other active

ingredients. Hence, they are ideal bases for skin formulations.

Great hydrants

These oils are lipophilic in nature and they penetrate through the lipid layer of the skin and prevent water or moisture loss. For example olive oil, coconut oil etc.

Anti-ageing properties

Since the oils are combined with anti-ageing ingredients like retinol, glycolic acid and vitamin C, they help in faster and deeper penetration of these molecules into the skin, thereby augmenting the anti-ageing benefits. It also counters the irritation caused by these molecules.

Combats rosacea

Certain aroma oils like orange, tea tree, peppermint etc actually help in reducing acne and rosacea. However this should be done after consultation with an expert.

Anti blemish Rosehip oil is very useful for marks and blemishes on skin.

Boosting anti-viral immune response could slow down aging: Study

Scientists have uncovered details regarding an immune response to a virus present in all human tissues, that kicks in the elderly and eliminates senescent, or aging, cells in the skin.

Senescent cells are those that stop dividing but do not die, accumulating in the body over time, fuelling chronic inflammation and contributing to conditions such as cancer and degenerative disorders.

Eliminating senescent cells from aging tissues has been found to restore tissue balance in mice, leading to an increased healthy lifespan.

When a team of scientists, led by Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), US, found that the number of senescent cells in samples from old individuals did not increase as the individuals got older, they realised that there is some mechanism kicking in to keep the aging in check.

The scientists have described their findings in the journal *Cell*.

Experiments have proved that in the elderly, certain immune cells called killer CD4+ T cells keep senescent cells from increasing.

Further investigating the procedure through which this happens revealed that aging skin cells express a protein, or antigen, produced by human cytomegalovirus, a pervasive herpesvirus that establishes lifelong latent infection in most humans without any symptoms.



By expressing this protein, senescent cells become targets for attack by killer CD4+ T cells.

"Most of us are infected with human cytomegalovirus, and our immune system has evolved to eliminate cells, including senescent cells, that upregulate the expression of cytomegalovirus antigens," said senior author Shawn Demehri, director of the High Risk Skin Cancer Clinic at MGH.

These findings, highlighting a

beneficial function of viruses living in our body, could have a variety of clinical applications.

"Our research enables a new therapeutic approach to eliminate aging cells by boosting the anti-viral immune response," said Demehri. Demehri noted that the work may also lead to advances in cosmetic dermatology, for example in the development of new treatments to make skin look younger.

Source: PTI



Eating disorders among teens have more than doubled during Covid, here's what to watch for

The COVID-19 pandemic has been associated with worsening mental health among teens, including increasing numbers of patients with eating disorders.

In fact, research indicates that the number of teens with eating disorders at least doubled during the pandemic.

This is particularly concerning given that eating disorders are among the most deadly of all mental health diagnoses, and teens with eating disorders are at higher risk for suicide than the general population.

While experts don't know exactly why eating disorders develop, studies show that body dissatisfaction and desire for weight loss are key contributors.

This can make conversations around weight and healthy behaviours particularly tricky with teens and young adults.

As an adolescent medicine doctor specialising in eating disorders, I have seen firsthand the increases in patients with eating disorders as well as the detrimental effects of eating disorder stereotypes. I regularly work with families to help teens develop positive relationships with body image, eating and exercise.

Understanding the signs of a possible eating disorder is important, as studies suggest that timely diagnosis and treatment leads to better long-term outcomes and to better chances of full recovery.

Eating disorders, which often start in adolescence, include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, other specified feeding and eating disorders and avoidant restrictive food intake disorder.

Each eating disorder has specific criteria that must be met in order to receive a diagnosis, which is made by a professional with eating disorder expertise.

Research suggests that up to 10 per cent of people will develop an eating disorder in their lifetime.

Source: PTI

Listening to music can make your medicines more effective: Study

Want your medicines to be more effective? Research suggests that turning up your favourite song while popping the pills may be of help soon.

While previous studies have used music-listening interventions as a tool to treat pain and anxiety, a team from the Michigan State University in the US took a novel approach by studying the effects of music-listening interventions on chemotherapy-induced nausea.

"Music-listening interventions are like over-the-counter medications," said Jason Kiernan, Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing. "You don't need a doctor to prescribe them."

"Pain and anxiety are both neurological phenomena and are interpreted in the brain as a state. Chemotherapy-induced nausea is not a stomach condition; it is a neurological one," Kiernan said.

The small pilot study, published in the journal *Clinical Nursing Research*, included 12 patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment who agreed to listen to their favourite music for 30 minutes each time they needed to take their as-needed anti-nausea medication.

They repeated the music intervention anytime nausea occurred over the five days beyond their chemotherapy treatment. The patients in the study



provided a total of 64 events.

"When we listen to music, our brains fire all kinds of neurons," Kiernan said.

While Kiernan did see a reduction in the ratings of patients' nausea severity and their distress (how much it bothered them to be nauseous), he cautions that it is difficult to isolate whether it was the gradual release of the medication doing its job or the increased benefit of the music.

Source: IANS

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Google's new policy to let users delete their account data from app

Google has introduced a new "data deletion policy", which aims to empower users with greater clarity and control over their in-app data, requiring Android apps to allow users to delete their accounts from the app and on the web.

"For apps that enable app account creation, developers will soon need to provide an option to initiate account and data deletion from within the app and online," Google said in a blogpost.

According to the company, the move aims to "better educate" users about their data control and to foster trust in both apps and the Play Store in general.

Additionally, developers can provide users with more options -- users, who do not wish to delete their entire account, can choose to delete only certain data (such as activity history, images, or videos).

In cases where developers have a legitimate reason for retaining certain data, like security, fraud prevention, or regulatory compliance, they must clearly disclose those practices, the company said.

The policy is taking effect in stages.

The tech giant mentioned that creators have until December 7 to answer questions about data deletion in their app's safety form.

Google Play users will begin to see reflected changes in their app's store listing in early 2024.

Developers who need more time can file for an extension in Play Console until May 31, 2024, to comply with the new policy. *Source: IANS*

iPhone 17 Pro may feature under-display Face ID tech

The under-display Face ID technology will reportedly debut on Apple's iPhone 17 Pro, which will become the first iPhone to feature such technology.

According to display analyst Ross Young, the under-display 'Face ID' technology will still be accompanied by a circular cutout for the front-facing camera, reports MacRumors.

This implementation is anticipated to last until 2027's 'Pro' iPhone models, which will also integrate the camera under the display for a true 'all-screen' experience.

Moreover, the report said that Young's original roadmap, published in May 2022, differs from this forecast.

Earlier, he predicted that the iPhone 16 Pro versions released in 2024 would be the first to include under-panel Face ID technology.

Last month, Young said that this one-year delay was due to "sensor issues".

The two display cutouts that presently comprise the Dynamic Island will apparently remain unchanged across three successive 'Pro' iPhone generations.

Young also stated that the standard iPhone 17 models will include ProMotion, which is presently only available on Apple's high-end devices, according to the report.

Meanwhile, Apple is reportedly working on a MacBook Air model which will feature a 13.4-inch OLED display.

Ross Young claimed that the new model will come with a slightly smaller display as compared to the existing MacBook Air with a 13.6-inch LCD panel.

Prof to live 100 days in underwater hotel

LONDON (TIP)

As nightmares go, being trapped in a small box deep underwater is probably high on many peoples' lists. But one US professor is doing this on purpose. Joe Dituri, a former US navy diver and expert in biomedical engineering has been living in a 55 square meter space 30 feet below the surface of the Florida Keys since March 1, and plans to stay for 100 days. If he manages this, he will break a record for most time spent in a habitat beneath the surface of the ocean.

Dituri conducts research into the effects of hyperbaric pressure -- when air pressure is greater than it would be at sea level -- on the human body. He is hoping to use his time spent below the surface to examine what impact living in this high-pressure environment has on his health.

Interestingly, Dituri's endeavour will be very different from living on a submarine. Submarines are sealed when submerged and maintained at sea level pressure. This means there's no significant difference in pressure, even when a submarine is at depths of hundreds of meters.

But Dituri's underwater habitat won't have any solid hatches or air locks between the ocean and the dry living space, as a submarine does. Think of it like when a glass of water is turned upside down and pushed into a sink full of water. A pocket of air will still exist at the top of Dituri's living space, with a



Joe Dituri, a former US navy diver.

pool of water in the floor of one room that comes from the ocean outside.

This means that the air inside his habitat is squeezed by the ocean's weight, increasing the air pressure around him. At a depth of 30 feet, the air pressure inside this habitat is about twice as much as what he'd be used to on land.

Under pressure

Little research has investigated what effect long-term exposure to hyperbaric pressure has on the body. As every certified diver is well aware, though, hyperbaric pressure can pose a very real threat to us. Our bodies have been adapted by generations of evolution for sea level conditions, where the two major gases involved in breathing (oxygen and carbon dioxide) are the only two that freely cross between our lungs and our blood.

But as pressure increases,

nitrogen in the air is forced across the delicate walls of our lungs and into our blood. This can cause a range of adverse effects. At depths of ten to 30 meters, this may cause mild euphoria and positive moods. After about 30 meters below sea level and beyond, it can lead to intoxicated-like behaviour -- hence the name "narcosis".

Scientists don't fully understand why this happens, but it could be due to changes in the way neurotransmitters signal between neurons in our brain. Fortunately, this won't be a risk to Dituri, as he's only at a depth of ten meters.

Health changes

But Dituri can expect to experience other physical changes while living in his underwater habitat.

Although the habitat has large windows, Dituri will still only be exposed to half the amount of sunlight as on land. This could cause issues with his circadian rhythm -- the internal "clock" that controls many body functions, including our sleep-wake cycle -- which relies on daylight. This may mean disrupted sleeping.

Another challenge for Dituri will be getting enough vitamin D. The skin must receive UV exposure to make this vitamin, and this typically comes from the sun. It's likely that Dituri will not be exposed to enough vitamin D while living in his underwater environment. *Source: IANS*

'Operation Cookie Monster': International police action seizes dark web market

WASHINGTON/LONDON (TIP)

International law enforcement agencies have seized a sprawling dark web marketplace popular with cybercriminals, Britain's National Crime Agency (NCA) said on Wednesday, in a multinational crackdown dubbed "Operation Cookie Monster".

A banner plastered across Genesis Market's site late on Tuesday said domains belonging to the organisation had been seized by the FBI. Logos of other European, Canadian and Australian police organisations were also emblazoned across the site, along with that of cybersecurity firm Qintel.

"We assess that the Genesis is one of the most significant access marketplaces anywhere in the world," said Rob Jones, the NCA's Director General of Threat Leadership.

The NCA estimated that the service hosted about 80 million credentials and digital fingerprints stolen from more than 2 million people.

US Justice Department Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said in a statement that many of the forum's users were arrested on Tuesday. The investigation into Genesis is still ongoing.

The US Treasury Department in a statement announcing sanctions against the market called it "one of the most prominent brokers of stolen credentials and other sensitive information."

British authorities said 17 countries were involved in



the operation, which was led by the FBI and Dutch National Police and resulted in about 120 arrests, more than 200 searches and almost 100 pieces of "preventative activity." Qintel did not immediately return messages seeking comment and Reuters could not immediately locate contact details for Genesis Market's administrators, which the U.S. Treasury said were believed to operate from Russia.

Genesis specialised in the sale of digital products, especially "browser fingerprints" harvested from computers infected with malicious software, said Louise Ferrett, an analyst at British cybersecurity firm Searchlight Cyber. *Source: Reuters*

RBI proposes expansion of UPI digital payments system to allow credit

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is proposing expanding the reach of the popular Unified Payments Interface (UPI) digital payments system by allowing credit to be offered via pre-approved bank lines.

"This initiative will further encourage innovation," RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday during the announcement of the central bank's monetary policy decision.

UPI is an instant real-time payments system that allows users to transfer money across multiple banks without disclosing bank account details. Its popularity is seen to have reduced the usage of cash and debit cards for daily transactions.

In March 2023, UPI recorded 8.65 billion transactions, amounting to 14.05 trillion rupees, its highest-ever since inception, data from the National Payments Corporation of India showed. In a bid to boost digital payments, the RBI recently allowed RuPay credit cards to be linked to UPI. This was to enable customers to link their credit cards and pay via UPI.

RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 6.5%

The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday, April 6, announced an unchanged repo rate (basic interest rate) on the expectations of lower inflation in the coming months due to past six successive rate hikes since May 2022.

The RBI expects the real GDP for '23-24 to be 6.5 per cent. The current April to June period will deliver the fastest growth of 7.8 per cent followed by 6.2 per cent, 6.1 per cent and 5.9 per cent in the next three quarters of '23-24.

This projection is slightly higher than the World Bank's latest expectations of 6.3 per cent GDP growth and the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) forecast of 6.4 per cent.

Termining the international situation as dynamic and fast evolving, RBI chief Shaktikanta Das warned that volatility in external markets will be a major risk factor for the health of the economy as well as stability of the rupee.

"We are living in very volatile times. The sudden announcement of output cut by OPEC and the jump in crude prices is another evidence of this volatility," he said while announcing the decision of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) which met for three days from April 3, the first time in this fiscal. The RBI chief said any further interest rate hike has been held back on the expectations of a modest inflation rate due to low prices in the Indian crude basket and a decent monsoon. Despite the elevated inflation seen in January and February due to sharp turnaround in food inflation, Das said the RBI expects the inflation rate to moderate to 5.2 per cent. The rate will be evenly spread over all the quarters with 5.1 per cent projection in April to June quarter. It will be 5.4 per cent, 5.4 per cent and 5.2 per cent in the next three quarters.

IMF head expects less than 3% global economic growth in 2023

The International Monetary Fund is not expected to downgrade its forecast for 2.7% growth in 2023, the head of the global lender said on Thursday, noting that concerns about an oil price spike had failed to materialize and labor markets remained strong.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said 2023 would be another "tough year" for the global economy, and inflation remained stubborn, but she did not expect another year of successive downgrades like those seen last year, barring unexpected developments.

"Growth continues to slow down in 2023," she told reporters at the IMF's headquarters in Washington. "The more positive piece of the picture is in the resilience of labor markets. As long as people are employed, even if prices are high, people spend ... and that has helped the performance."

She added that the IMF does not expect any major downgrades. "That's the good news."

Georgieva said the IMF expected the slowdown in global growth to "bottom out" and "turn around towards the end of '23 and into '24."

Georgieva said there was much hope that China - which previously contributed some 35% to 40% of global growth, but had "disappointing" results last year - would once again contribute to global growth, likely from mid-2023. But that depended on Beijing not changing course and sticking to its plans to reverse its zero-COVID policies, she said.

She said the United States - the biggest economy in the world - was likely to see a soft landing, and would suffer only a mild recession, if it did enter a technical



recession.

But Georgieva said great uncertainty remained, including a significant climate event, a major cyberattack or the danger of escalation in Russia's war in Ukraine, for instance through the use of nuclear weapons.

"We are now in a more shockprone world and we have to be open-minded that there could be risk turn that we are

not even thinking about," she said. "That's the whole point of the last years. The unthinkable has happened twice."

She cited concerns about growing social unrest in Brazil, Peru and other countries, and the impact of tightening financial conditions remained unclear.

But inflation remained "stubborn" and central banks should continue to press for price stability, she added.

Forbes' billionaire list 2023: Elon Musk loses top spot to Bernard Arnault

Bernard Arnault, chairman of French luxury goods company LVMH, became the world's richest person, replacing Tesla boss Elon Musk, whose net worth slipped by about \$39 billion in the past year to \$180 billion, according to the Forbes' annual 'World's Billionaire's List 2023'.

The French luxury goods tycoon estimated current net worth has increased by more than \$50 billion in the past year to \$211 billion. Arnault and Elon Musk frequently switch positions on Forbes' list of 'Real-Time Billionaires'.

According to Forbes, Musk's fortune has decreased since his \$44 billion purchase of Twitter, which was financed with Tesla shares, concerning investors and causing Tesla stock to drop drastically last year. Tesla recovered a good portion of those losses this year but is still far lower than it was before Musk purchased Twitter.

Tesla shares have decreased by 50% since Elon Musk took control of Twitter a year ago, according to Forbes. According to the magazine, SpaceX is a success for Musk because its valuation climbed by \$13 billion to \$140 billion over the previous year.

LVMH boss Bernard Arnault had a good 2022 because of record-high profits at the luxury conglomerate, which comprises Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior and Tiffany & Co. Shares of LVMH have climbed 25% over the past year.

Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, tumbled to third rank with a net worth of \$114bn after losing \$57bn, as his e-commerce giant's share price fell nearly 40 per cent.



More members of the Forbes list are Americans than citizens of any other country. The US (735 billionaires) is followed by China (495), India (169) and Germany (126).

Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - APRIL 10 TO APRIL 16, 2023

**Aries**

Ganesha says, this week will be difficult initially, but you will make things good eventually. There's a possibility that you're experiencing health issues. Unfounded animosity will impede your activities. Outside of the intellectual work you are doing, you won't experience loss or discontent. Keep an eye out for danger at all instances and avoid arguing. You can purchase both everyday necessities and worldly luxuries. If you share proportionately with your partner, your connection will grow stronger. Achievement is more likely for those who are constantly pursuing employment the most. The money elements of the project will be improved. If you've taken money from someone, you'll almost certainly get it back. All throughout the week, your feelings might be aware of your abandonment. Recent occurrences will cause a disturbance in your thoughts.

caution when making transactions because you could lose money. this week.

**Cancer**

Ganesha says, this week is a good one, and you'll learn a lot from various perspectives. The complete household will feel happier overall. Any major transaction issue that lasts a couple of days or more will be resolved. Now, local and long-distance trips may be postponed. This week, your connection will become more delicate. Your sexual self-assurance will increase. If you engage in your company right away, your earnings will rise. Your ties to your family will become stronger. The instructors will give the kids gifts and encouragement. Good communications will have the ability to bring about quick advantages. There are numerous ways that psychic worry can lead to depression in the context of this week.

**Libra**

Ganesha says, you can achieve your objectives this week thanks to your demeanor ambitions. Unexpected expenses will result in increased budgetary worry. Your family's dominance will lead to pointless disputes and allegations. I have no doubt the finance industry will be pleased. It's conceivable that all manufacturing will stop in the late afternoon. Effective business results will result in new advantages. If you start a new partnership at work, your chances of achievement and financial gain will increase. Some people have a great possibility of finding employment. You'll have your partner's company and support during this week. Your partner will congratulate you on how important you are to them.

**Taurus**

Ganesha says, this week is going to be amazing for you for no apparent reason. Your link could get more severe at some point in the future. Traveling is feasible to sites of devotion. Putting effort into charity endeavors. Weather disturbance will have an adverse effect on wellbeing. Developing differences with the parent could cause the relationship to deteriorate. Avoid gambling with your money and work to improve your financial situation. Maybe things aren't going the way you want them to this week. You won't be able to accomplish much this week if you've been concentrating on a large task for a while. Currently, a lot of individuals might try to convince you to join their cooperative businesses.

**Leo**

Ganesha says, your adversaries will battle and annihilate one another this week. Anxiety can result from mental instability. Being in the same situation as one's relatives may be distressing. This week, avoid conversing with strangers. Any real estate transactions you undertake this week could go horribly wrong. This week, you will be commended for your inventiveness and awarded a substantial reward. In a court case or lawsuit in the nighttime, you will win. One is going to pursue creative pursuits and feel content with some of their own successes. Educators will develop novel ideas and long-term plans as they progress. Regulate your emotions and speech when confronted with a difficult situation to prevent wasting the opportunity.

**Scorpio**

Ganesha says, you'll experience fiscal growth this week. You can settle both current and previous debts at once. The family's upbeat personality will improve the atmosphere at home. Keep your emotions in control because they might damage your relationship. You and your companion will enjoy an excellent time after a heated fight. You'll be overjoyed to hear that you performed well in an exam or competition. Any tasks that were postponed until the last minute can now be finished. You are welcome to attend any late-night recreational or religious gatherings. The entertainment industry will produce more well-known people. Time is of the essence when starting a new work. The folks might plan a gathering.

**Gemini**

Ganesha says, this week, you might hear some positive words coming from the other side. However, take caution not to overuse it. If you have experience in administration, you might now benefit from your proximity to and relationship to the ruling alliance. Beginning in the afternoon hours, there will be chances to engage in creative endeavors. Meeting new acquaintances will help you improve your skills, and you'll grow more engaged in spiritual views. With the aid of a life companion, you might be able to defeat hidden foes. Your stress may cause you to become agitated. Circumstances could get worse because of problems at both job and residence. The economy doesn't seem to be doing well. This week, use

**Virgo**

Ganesha says, you'll be content if those close to you prosper. You won't hesitate to encourage them in front of the audience. You will experience some sort of financial loss at the start of the week. It might be essential to disregard criticism coming from your competitors and concentrate on your task. The possibility exists that the corporate sector will crash. You'll discover the ideal companion who can assist you in saving money. This week might be difficult because you disrespected or undervalued those you care about. There will be more sources of income. For your delicacy of expression, you will be respected. You will now have a number of chances for challenge and education. You might require it

**Sagittarius**

Ganesha says, you'll discover several methods for dealing with the issues your children are experiencing. You are being negatively impacted by Rahu, which could cause you to encounter legal difficulties. Try to avoid going to court if anything comes up because it will be very expensive. It is not currently the best moment to tell your loved ones. Pay careful attention to the locations where you're divulging information about your goals. There may be people around you who will take advantage of your hard work to achieve your goals. This week, you will receive the necessary cash assistance. There will never be a more pressing need than for healthcare right now.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : APRIL 10 TO APRIL 16, 2023 BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

APRIL 10 : Ganesha says your working style will undergo significant adjustments. You'll also take greater care of your appearance and general well-being. Your financial position will be improved by investment and speculative gains. To your satisfaction, long-pending legal issues will be resolved. For some of you, promotions or raises are probably in the cards. It will be easier for you to get along with key government officials in different departments. While your partner will show you a lot of love and affection, having children may make you feel unsatisfied.

APRIL 11 : Ganesha says significant changes in your career or line of work appear to be occurring. It would be quite enticing to discover new ways to get money. Notwithstanding the likelihood of unexpected wins and losses. Long-term, your financial situation would get better. Health, subordination, and legal issues may cause you intermittent trouble, but on the plus side, you will increase your

level of life and forge new, crucial relationships during this time. children were predicted to bring in some exciting news. Some people might find long distance travel to be incredibly enjoyable and fulfilling.

APRIL 12 : Ganesha says you will benefit from your business acumen and from developing strong relationships with influential figures in both the public and private sectors. You could streamline your current tasks with the help of banks and other financial institutions. There will soon be plenty of new employment prospects for individuals in the service. For those who are single, romance and new alliances seem likely. The family's elders and young ones will need a lot of your focus. Your spouse's health could give you cause for worry and concern.

APRIL 13 : Ganesha says before making any significant investments, use extreme prudence. Those who work in the arts, writing, or other creative fields should anticipate recognition

and financial rewards. Your career and prosperity will receive a significant boost from unexpected assistance from a powerful individual. You might start working on projects for yourself that entail construction or design. Your financial situation would be substantially better, and you would feel a lot more confident and upbeat.

APRIL 14 : Ganesha says your workplace would improve, increasing your level of job satisfaction. It is possible that there will be unexpectedly significant financial benefits, whether from international business or a significant government contract. Opportunities to travel abroad for both work and pleasure may arise. You will profit from careful speculation. Around the end of the time, expect some shocking news from your kids. This should also include some remodelling, building, and pilgrimage.

APRIL 15 : Ganesha says you receive a fresh task and plans. You would experience more work pressure

and overtime due to a rigid timetable. Although there would be plenty of financial and other benefits, working under high levels of stress would be detrimental to your health. The court would rule in your favour on any legal issues that have been plaguing you. For individuals who are single, romance would give their life more vigour. A huge source of your happiness would be having children.

APRIL 16 : Ganesha says good financial gains are foreseen along with appreciation and plenty of reward. Your stars seem favourable for building new alliances and partnerships. Promotion and transfers likely for some. Selective speculation would be beneficial therefore be extra careful not to squander hard-earned money. Romantic alliances likely for those unattached, others would get tied into a matrimonial wedlock. Distant journey, pilgrimage or foreign travel. You are likely to be more inclined towards religious and spiritual activities.

CONTD FROM PAGE 36

Capricorn

Ganesha says, you will examine your inner nature, consider how to improve the qualities that others dislike, and learn to accept yourself exactly as you are. Your egotistical behavior may currently be hurting your peers. Another way to squander time is to imagine building a stronghold in the skies, which would distract you from your essential job. You can ultimately seize this opportunity now that your partner is facing his or her family. Your family will probably approve of your union, but you should proceed with caution first. You will get the unpaid bills and money. Avoid investing in development and progress under any conditions.

Aquarius

Ganesha says, your actions this week will demonstrate your high ethical values, helping to clear your name. If you're having problems at residence, be cautious not to get too invested in one side of a debate. When you and your partner visit a religious location, pray for wonders to assist you in overcoming your obstacles. The work you put forth to win your companion over will be greatly appreciated. You can have anything you want if you labor hard enough, and success will come. You'll also need to focus intently on each and every aspect of the job you do. This week, your physical health will be a major concern for you, but you won't be aware of how you're feeling psychologically.



Pisces

Ganesha says, this week, you have a fantastic opportunity to engage in tasks that will improve your self-worth. You'll find it easier to take care of the obligations and bills that have been piling

up for a while. Your reputation could be endangered by hidden connections. Authority and politics may be on your side. This week, you'll receive a fresh deal of some sort. Peculiar individuals may get in your way, especially in the nighttime. Your feelings will likely be off-balance. combination during work hours

should never be engaged in to prevent upsetting management. In the evenings, making social relationships might be advantageous. Both your bosses and coworkers will be very concerned about you. You'll be annoyed this week to discover your partner preoccupied with work.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Vikata Sankashti Chaturthi

Vikata Sankashti Chaturthi Vrat is an auspicious day amongst the Hindu community. The day is celebrated to offer prayers to Lord Ganesha, as on this day, Lord Shiva declares that his son is superior to other gods. The day is observed on the fourth day of Krishna Paksha. The word Sankashti means to get rid of hurdles and evils. People observe a fast to get blessings from Lord Ganesha. Devotees take fruits, milk-based products, peanuts, sabudana khichdi, and potatoes.

This year, Vikata Sankashti Chaturthi falls on Sunday, April 9, 2023.

The word Sankashti means deliverance and devotees believe that if they pray to Lord anapati on this day for a happy life, their wish will be granted. The puja is performed by offering Arghya (water) to the Moon God and then end their fast.

As per the legends, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati decided to play Chausar but there was nobody to monitor the game. Hence, Lord Shiva produced a little boy and asked him to pose as the referee. The boy agreed. The Lord and his consort started playing the game. On the three consecutive occasions, Devi Parvati won the game, but the boy declared Lord Shiva the winner. Agitated by the boy's biasness, she cursed him by saying that he would live in a swamp. Soon after getting punished, the boy pleaded for the mercy and apologised and said that he did it in ignorance.

After hearing boy's plead, Goddess Parvati asked the boy to wait for the the Nag Kanyas and learn about the Sankashti Ganesh Chaturthi Vrat and told him to observe a vrat for 21 days to get rid of the curse. As suggested, he observed the fast and succeeded in pleasing Lord Ganesha.

Meanwhile, Lord Shiva also observed fast for Devi Parvati to calm her down, who was upset with him. And Goddess Parvati too kept a fast, who wanted to meet her son Kartikeya. As a result, she returned to Kailasha (Lord Shiva's abode) and Lord Kartrikeya to pay her visit.

According to another legend, Ganesha was created by goddess Parvati, who is the wife of Lord Shiva. It is believed that Goddess Parvati created Ganesha out of turmeric paste and breathed life into the figure. She then set Lord Ganesha to guard her door while she took a bath.

When Lord Shiva returned, Ganesha did not know who he was and forbade him to enter. This enraged Lord Shjiva and asked his follower gods to teach the child some manners. Being born of Parvati, Ganesha was very powerful and defeated the godly followers as he guarded his mother while she bathed.

Later, Shiva severed the head of Ganesha. When goddess Parvati saw her son dead, she was filled with rage and vowed to destroy the universe where her son was killed. Shiva promised her that her son will live again. Lord Shiva found a mother elephant crying for her dead baby. He consoled the mother and fixed the head of the baby elephant in place of Ganesha's head. Shiva declared that the boy would be called Ganesha and that he will be symbolised as the remover of all obstacles and supreme lord of intelligence.

In Sanskrit, Sankashti means to wipe out hurdles and evil. On Sankashti Chaturthi, people observe a strict fast in the honour of Lord Ganesha. Those who keep the fast, eat fruits, milk based projects, peanuts, sabudana khichdi and potatoes. The puja is performed in the evening after seeing the moon. A photo or idol of Lord Ganesha is decorated with fresh flowers, kumkum and durva grass. Then, an oil lamp is lit and devotees chant Ganapati mantras and read the vrat katha or the story of Sankashti Chaturthi. The fast is completed after seeing the moon and doing Ganapati puja. The Lord is offered with modak, durva, water in the bhog.

GANESHA: THE REMOVER OF OBSTACLES

Ganesha is one of the most distinctive Hindu deities with his large elephant head and pot-bellied human body. He plays a dual role of a supreme being powerful enough to remove obstacles and ensure success or create obstructions for those whose ambition has become destructive.



Ganesha is an archetype who you might call upon when you're about to embark on a new endeavor. As the Remover of Obstacles and the god of success, Ganesha is honored throughout Indian and in Hindu cultures, at both secular and religious ceremonies. When someone launches a new business or moves into a new home, for example, the elephant-headed god is invoked to bless the venture.

Like other archetypes, Ganesha can be a source of inspiration or act as a role model as you try to achieve a goal. Archetypes are found everywhere, including in art, literature, and movies. Archetypes can be anyone who has traits you admire. In the Vedic tradition, they can play valuable roles in your relationships and spirituality as well as help shape your values and potential. Archetypes represent all of our collective soul's yearnings, imagination, and deepest desires. And these themes have existed forever.

Revered for his cleverness and wisdom, Ganesha is also known as the patron of letters and learning. Ganesha is the scribe who wrote down the legendary Indian epic the Mahabharata, dictated to him by the ancient sage Vyasa, according to some scholars of Hindu literature. It is said that Ganesha agreed to transcribe the epic only if Vyasa would recite the poem without pausing.

In many depictions of Ganesha, he is shown holding a broken tusk in his lower right hand like a pen, perhaps symbolizing the sacrifice he made in feverishly

writing the Mahabharata. Another interpretation of the broken tusk is that it's a symbol of the truth that outward imperfections have nothing to do with inner perfection.

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Coastal Karnataka

Coastal Karnataka is bestowed with sandy beaches, lush greenery, lively culture, magnificent temples, and delicious cuisine. If you are looking for a much-needed break from the hustle-bustle of daily life, the towns in coastal Karnataka will never disappoint you. Here is a list of the most sought-after destinations that you must visit during your next trip to Karnataka. An ideal road trip will take you through these cities, offering you a vacation like no other.

Gokarna

One of the most popular coastal Karnataka places, Gokarna is a nature's paradise. It is a quaint beach town, blessed with peaceful surroundings and pristine beaches. You can enjoy a relaxing vacation or enjoy thrilling activities. Parasailing, snorkelling, scuba diving and surfing are some of the exciting water sports to try here. Kudle Beach, Om Beach and Half Moon Beach are popular beaches. Gokarna is also a sacred pilgrimage site, housing the majestic Mahabaleshwar temple.

Mangalore

Renowned for its rich history, magnificent temples, alluring beaches, and authentic Mangalorean cuisine, Mangalore is a must-visit destination in coastal Karnataka. Kudroli Gokarnath Temple is one of the most popular temples in the region, known for its vibrant Mangalore Dasara celebration. Besides this, Sammilan Shetty's Butterfly Park and Mangaladevi Temple are other tourist attractions.

Udupi

Home to some of the most iconic temples, Udupi is another coastal Karnataka city that you must visit. Udupi Sri Krishna Temple, Maple Beach, St. Mary's Beach, and The Corporation Bank Heritage Museum are top attractions in the city. So, whether you are a spiritual seeker or a nature lover, there is something for everyone in Udupi.

Murudeshwar

A beautiful beachside pilgrim town, Murudeshwar is home to the world's second tallest statue of Lord Shiva. Murudeshwar Temple is among the most iconic temples of the state, beckoning thousands of devotees every year. Besides this, Mirjan Fort, The Statue Park, Netrani Island, and Murudeshwar Beach are the famous tourist places to visit in the town.

Karwar

This seaside city is a quaint paradise beckoning nature lovers and peace seekers. Here, you can enjoy boat rides on the Kali River, spend some time at the Kali River Garden, watch a mesmerising sunset at the Rabindranath Tagore Beach, and seek blessings at the Naganatha Temple. The authentic Karwar cuisine is a must-try too.

Coastal Karnataka has plenty to offer for the weary travellers. So, if you are planning a vacation, head to one of these cities for creating memories to last for a lifetime.

KOLLUR MOOKAMBIKA TEMPLE

Mookambika Devi Temple in Kollur is about 130 km from Mangaluru and 440 km from state capital Bengaluru. It is located amidst the hills of Kodachadri in Western Ghats, next to river Souparnika. Mookambika Temple in Kollur is



believed to be over 1200 years old. As per the legend, Parvathi came down to earth to eliminate a demon named Kamasura, who with his devil mischief was creating lots of trouble to the local people. Goddess made him dumb first to rein him (Mooka in Kannada) but when his trouble making habit didn't stop, he was eventually killed. Thanking Goddess Parvathi for relieving them from the trouble of Kamasura, local people started worshipping Parvathi devi and the temple was formed in Kollur. Kollur temple celebrates its annual festival during Navarathri and attracts lakhs of devotees during this period. Temple complex offers free meals to all visitors. During special occasions when crowd is large, special queue for darshan is facilitated for those who can pay extra. Lots of budget accommodations are available in Kollur. KSRTC runs buses to Kollur from Bengaluru and other major cities. Kundapura is a nearby city. Private buses are also available in large numbers. However, after 8 pm it will be difficult to get public transportation.

KATEEL DURGAPARAMESHWARI TEMPLE

At a distance of just about 20 km from Mangaluru is the popular Durgaparameshwari Temple in Kateel. This holy temple is located in the middle of River Nandini. The name Kateel is derived from two words 'Kati' meaning waist and 'Ile' meaning earth. Kateel means the central area of earth.

History: Arunasura was a demon growing strong with powers and was disrupting peace on earth. Gods were helpless as Arunasura had secured special powers from Brahma that he cannot be killed by any two or four legged creatures. When Arunasura's bad deeds grew beyond control, Adhishakti came down on earth as a beautiful woman, lured him and teased Arunasura to



agitate him. An angry Arunasura tried to kill Adhishakti, she turned herself into a rock. Arunasura tried to break open the rock, during which a series of big furious bees emerged and stung him repeatedly till his death, thus eliminating one more bad soul on earth. On this success, saints and sages performed abhishekam to lord Adhishakti who later took the form of a linga in the middle of river Nandini. Thus the Durga Parameshwari Temple is built around this. Kateel is well connected by public transportation and accommodation is available. Mangalore is the nearest town.

UDUPI SRI KRISHNA TEMPLE

Udupi is considered as the final resting place of Lord Krishna. Sri Krishna Temple and matha was set up in the 13th

century by Madhvacharya. Legend has it that once Kanakadasa, a worshipper of Lord Krishna was denied entrance into the temple. Determined to see god, Kanakadasa kept praying hard from the outside itself. Impressed by his devotion, it is believed that Lord Krishna's idol turned to face Kanakadasa and a small hole formed on the wall so that Kanakadasa can get a glimpse of Lord Krishna. This spot is now known as Kanakana kindi (window of Kanaka). Apart from Sri Krishna temple, there are two other temples in Udupi Chandreshwara and, Anantheshwara. Once in every two years, a grand festival named 'Paryayotsava' is held in Udupi. During this time, temple management changes hand from one of the 8 mathas (Asta matt) to another.

contd from page 1

'An Independent Press is Necessary', says Supreme Court; Lifts telecast ban on Malayalam news channel MediaOne

"Press has a duty to speak truth to power and present citizens with hard facts enabling them to make choices that propel democracy in the right direction. The restriction on freedom of press compels citizens to think along the same tangent.

"Homogenized views on issues that range from socio-economic polity to political ideologies would pose great dangers to democracy," the bench said, adding that non-renewal of license for a channel is a restriction on the right to freedom of speech.

The top court said the alleged link of the channel's shareholders to Jamaat-e-Islami Hind is not a legitimate ground to restrict the rights of the channel.

It said the State is using national security as a tool to deny citizens remedies that are provided under the law.

"National security claims cannot be made out of thin air, there must be material facts backing it," the bench said.

Here are the top 5 observations from the Supreme Court verdict.

"There is nothing to show terrorist links. National security claims cannot be made on the basis of thin air. It is seen that none of the material is against national security or threatens public order," the bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said.

"National security can't be raised to deny people their rights... it was raised by the MHA in a cavalier manner in this case," the court added.

"Government cannot be allowed to have a stand that press must support the government," the court said, adding that criticism of government cannot be a ground to revoke license of a TV channel.

"An independent press is necessary for the robust functioning of a democratic republic. Its role in the democratic society is crucial, for it shines a light on the functioning of the State," the court said.

"All investigation reports cannot be termed secret as these affect the rights and liberty of the citizens," the court said, adding that there cannot be a "blanket immunity" to the government from disclosing information.

Trump decries charges against him, accuses "radical left lunatics" of election interference

The 76-year-old former Republican president ruled the country for four years till January 2021.

Addressing his supporters hours after he was arraigned, Trump said: "The only crime that I committed is to fearlessly defend our nation from those who seek to

destroy it." "Incredibly, we are now a failing nation. We are a nation in decline. And now these radical left lunatics want to interfere with our elections by using law enforcement. We can't let that happen," Trump, who is eyeing the White House for a second time in 2024, told his supporters at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, soon after he flew back from New York.

"Our country is going to hell," the 76-year-old Republican leader said in a roughly 25-minute speech.

He described the time since his exit from office as "the most embarrassing time in our country's history." "With all of this being said, and with a very dark cloud over our beloved country, I have no doubt nevertheless, that we will make America great again," he said in the address, marking the first time he has spoken publicly since being arraigned on Tuesday.

Trump also attacked Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, the prosecutor whose office convinced a New York grand jury to bring the first criminal charges ever against a former US president.

"But now we're there. Spend time [in New York] today, as you possibly read, with a local failed district attorney, charging a former president of the United States for the first time in history on a basis that every single pundit and a legal analyst said, 'There is no case; there's no case.' They kept saying, 'There's no case!'" Trump said of his arrest.

"He knew there was no case. That's why last week he delayed for a month and then immediately took that back and threw this ridiculous indictment together; it came out today. Everybody said, 'This is not really an indictment. There's nothing here.' My lawyers came to me and they said, 'There's nothing here; they're not even saying what you did,'" he continued.

Trump went on to call for the prosecution of Bragg, claiming he leaked the grand jury documents to the public.

He criticized the indictment levelled against him, saying he is "going through a fake investigation" that "turned out to be a sham." "Let me be as clear as possible: I am Innocent. The only offence I have committed is to defend America from those who seek to destroy it. What we've witnessed is election interference in the highest order," he said.

"Let me assure you - I have never been more determined than I am right now. They will not beat me. They will not break me. They will not stop me from fighting to save this country. The more they try to frame me, slander me, and destroy me, the stronger my resolve to complete our mission," Trump said.

He did not even spare State Supreme Court Justice Juan M Merchan, who is overseeing his case.

The former president alleged that he is a "Trump-hating judge" with a "Trump-hating wife" and family "whose daughter works for Kamala (Harris) house and now receives money from the Biden-Harris campaign".

Trump said the US is now in a mess.

"Our economy is crashing. Inflation is out of control. Russia has joined with

China. Can you believe that? Saudi Arabia has joined with Iran," he said.

"China, Russia, Iran and North Korea have formed together as a menacing and destructive coalition that would have never happened if I were your president it would never have happened. Nor would Russia attack Ukraine. All of those lives will be saved. All of those beautiful cities would be standing," he said.

"Our currency is crashing and will soon no longer be the world standard, which will be our greatest defeat frankly, in 200 years. There will be no defeat like that will take us away from being even a great power. If you took the five worst presidents in the history of the United States and added them up they would not have done near the destruction to our country as Joe Biden and the Biden administration have done," Trump said.

The former president said that there are open threats by various countries of the use of nuclear weapons, something which was never mentioned or discussed by other nations during the Trump administration.

"This could very well lead under the Biden administration's leadership to an all-out nuclear World War III can happen. We're not very far away from it, believe it or not," Trump said. (Source: PTI)

Richard Verma sworn in as Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources

A lawyer, diplomat and executive, Verma, 54, was confirmed by the US Senate by a vote of 67-26 last month.

Verma, who served as the US Ambassador to India from January 16, 2015, to January 20, 2017, was till now the Chief Legal Officer and Head of Global Public Policy at Mastercard.

During the Obama administration, Verma also served as Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs.

Earlier in his career, he was National Security Advisor to US Senator Harry Reid while he was Democratic whip, Minority Leader and then-Majority Leader of the United States Senate.

He has served as Vice Chairman of The Asia Group, Partner and Senior Counselor at Steptoe & Johnson LLP, and Senior Counselor at the Albright Stonebridge Group. He is a veteran of the United States Air Force, where he served on active duty as a Judge Advocate.

Verma, who was born in 1968 to an Indian immigrant, grew up in Pennsylvania.

He attended a private college on a US Air Force scholarship. He earned a BS at Lehigh University, a J.D. cum laude at American University, an LLM with distinction at Georgetown University Law Center, and a PhD at Georgetown University.

He is the recipient of numerous awards and decorations, including the Distinguished Service Medal from the Department of State, the International Affairs Fellowship from the Council on Foreign Relations and the Meritorious Service Medal from the United States Air Force.

Verma was appointed to the President's Intelligence Advisory Board and is a former member of the Weapons



of Mass Destruction and Terrorism Commission.

He serves as a trustee of The Ford Foundation and is on numerous other boards, including that of the National Endowment for Democracy and Lehigh University.

He is a veteran of the United States Air Force, where he served as a Judge Advocate.

Resolution introduced in US House of Representatives to designate April 14 as National Sikh Day

Sikh community in strengthening and inspiring the people of the United States.

Observing that the US is enriched by the diversity of its residents, who have cultivated a climate of social tolerance and intellectual pluralism that has sustained the Nation throughout its history, the resolution said that Vaisakhi is a special occasion in which Sikhs remember the founding in 1699 of the Order of Khalsa, which played an important role in shaping the religion's history and identity.

Introduced by Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, the resolution says that through leading charitable events, the Sikh community embodies the sense of public service that underlies the founding principles of the US.

Stating that people of the US feel obliged to honor the Sikh community's important role in supporting and enriching the social fabric of the Nation, the resolution said Vaisakhi is a special occasion in which Sikhs remember the founding in 1699 of the Order of Khalsa, a fellowship of devout saint-soldier Sikhs, by the 10th Sikh Guru to fight tyranny and oppression, which played an important role in shaping the religion's history and identity.

"It is altogether fitting and proper to celebrate the day of Vaisakhi alongside Sikhs throughout the world and to honor the lasting contributions made by the Sikh community to the US," said the resolution. (Source: PTI)



Argentina back on top of Fifa rankings after six-year gap

World champions Argentina dethroned Brazil and returned to the top of the FIFA rankings on Thursday, April 6, after a six-year gap.

Argentina, who won last year's World Cup in Qatar by beating France in the final, achieved the No. 1 spot after Lionel Scaloni's side beat Panama 2-0 and Curacao 7-0 in friendlies.

France moved up one place to second after a 4-0 win over the Netherlands and 1-0 victory in Ireland in Euro 2024 qualifiers, while Brazil slipped to third after losing 2-1 away to Morocco in a friendly.

Belgium remained fourth, England were fifth followed by the Netherlands in sixth, Croatia seventh and Italy eighth. Portugal and Spain completed the top 10.

The Central African Republic were the biggest movers in the latest rankings, jumping 10 places to 122nd.

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson to undergo surgery, likely to miss ODI World Cup

Kane Williamson is likely to miss the ODI World Cup in India later this year as the New Zealand skipper is set to undergo a surgery for the treatment of his right knee which he injured while playing for Gujarat Giants in the ongoing IPL.

Following the injury, Williamson returned to New Zealand and the scans have confirmed that he has ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) of his right knee.

Williamson suffered the injury while fielding for the holders against Chennai Super Kings in Ahmedabad.

According to New Zealand Cricket statement, the right-handed batter will go under the knife within the next three weeks.

On receiving the news, Williamson acknowledged the support he had received from his franchise and NZC following the injury.

"I've received great support over the past few days and want to thank both the Gujarat Titans and New Zealand Cricket for that," he said.

"Naturally it's disappointing to get such an injury, but my focus now is on having the surgery and starting rehab.

"It's going to take some time, but I'll be doing everything I can to get back on the field as soon as possible," he added.

According to the standard rehabilitation period for such an injury, Williamson is unlikely to be fit and available for World Cup which is scheduled to be held in October-November.

"I look forward to doing what I can to support Gary (Stead) and the team over the next few months," Williamson said.

IPL 2023

All-round show helps KKR thrash RCB by 81 runs

KOLKATA (TIP)

Shardul Thakur smashed a counter-attacking half-century before the spinners played their part to perfection as Kolkata Knight Riders made a memorable homecoming with an 81-run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL here on Thursday, April 6.

KKR found themselves tottering for 89/5 before Thakur led a superb recovery with his 29-ball 68 to power his team to 204/7 after RCB opted to bowl.

Coming in at No 7, Thakur hammered the joint-fastest fifty of the season off 20 balls and shared an entertaining 103-run wicket partnership off 47 balls with Rinku Singh (46 off 33).

In reply, RCB failed to last the distance and folded up for 123 in 17.4 overs with the trio of Varun Chakravathy, Sunil Narine and debutant Suyash Sharma sharing eight wickets between themselves.

It was KKR's first win of the season.

Thakur also took one wicket in his all-round show in KKR's first home match after almost four years.

RCB were going great guns at 44 no loss in 25 balls in pursuit of the big chase before the Sunil Narine triggered the collapse, foxing Virat Kohli (21; 18b) with a beauty in his 150th IPL match.

Chakravathy then gave a double blow dismissing Glenn Maxwell (5) and Harshal Patel (0) in three balls before ending with splendid figures of 3.4-0-15-4.

Thereafter, it was 19-year-old leg-spinner Suyash Sharma (4-0-30-3) who made a dream debut after being



included as an impact player in place of Venkatesh Iyer.

The long-haired mystery spinner got two wickets in one over to have KKR reeling at 86/8.

Suyash got his maiden wicket when he deceived Anju Rawat (1) with a tossed up delivery and in space of three balls, he grabbed the prized-scalp of Dinesh Karthik (9) with a fuller delivery.

Fresh from his 82 not out against Mumbai Indians, Kohli teed off in style, scoring a boundary off the first ball of the innings against Umesh Yadav.

At 42 for no loss, the RCB opening duo looked set for another easy chase when Narine triggered the collapse, cleaning up Kohli with a beauty.

The star Indian completely missed the line as the ball sharply turned in

to knock his stumps.

Earlier, David Willey (4-1-16-2) and Karn Sharma (3-0-26-2) took wickets off successive deliveries in powerplay and middle overs respectively to give RCB the initial edge.

But RCB frittered away the start with Rahmanullah Gurbaz first taking the charge against a wayward Akash Deep en route to his 44-ball 57, his maiden IPL fifty.

It turned from bad to worse for KKR when a reverse-sweeping Nitish Rana (1) got out following a good review from RCB in the very first ball after powerplay.

KKR looked in trouble at 47/3 but Gurbaz led the charge against the 'local' Bengal pacer Akash Deep, pulling him for a six before collecting back-to-back boundaries.

MS Dhoni among five Indian cricketers to get MCC life membership

LONDON (TIP)

The prestigious Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) housed at the iconic Lord's cricket ground, on Wednesday, gave 'Life Membership' to World Cup winning captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni along with four other distinguished India internationals.

The other include, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, former women's national captain Mithali Raj and the legendary Jhulan Goswami.

The MCC announced naming 19 new honorary life members who represented eight Test-playing countries.

The club's cricket committee considers the nomination of players for life membership as recognition to the 'outstanding international careers for some of the greats of the game'. The membership is also



given to those individuals who have made an 'exceptional contribution' to the club or the sport.

Five Indian players have been recognised with Honorary Life Membership. Jhulan Goswami, who bowed out from internationals in the England v India Women's One-Day International at Lord's last year, is the leading wicket-taker in

women's ODIs whilst Mithali Raj heads the run-scoring list with 7,805 in 211 innings," said the MCC on its website.

"MS Dhoni and Yuvraj Singh were both integral parts of the India side which won the 2007 ICC Men's World T20 and the 2011 ICC Men's World Cup, and Suresh Raina scored over 5,500 ODI runs across a 13-year career," the note added.

The CEO and secretary of the MCC, Guy Lavender said, "We are thrilled to be able to announce our newest cohort of Honorary Life Members of MCC, as we prepare for the new international summer.

"The names that have been announced today are some of the greatest international players of modern times, and we are privileged to now count them as valued Members of our Club."

History This Week

APRIL 06 - 13, 2023

APRIL 7

April 7, 1712 - In New York City, 27 black slaves rebelled, shooting nine whites as they attempted to put out a fire started by the slaves. The state militia was called out to capture the rebels. Twenty one of the slaves were executed and six committed suicide.

APRIL 8

April 8th - Among Buddhists, celebrated as the birthday of Buddha (563-483 B.C.). An estimated 350 millions persons currently profess the Buddhist faith.

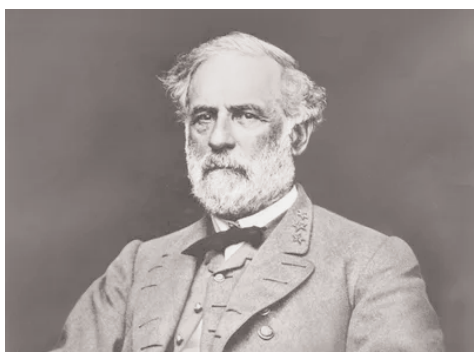
April 8, 1952 - President Harry S. Truman seized control of America's steel mills to prevent a shutdown by strikers. However, on April 29th, the seizure was ruled unconstitutional by a U.S. District Court. Workers immediately began a strike lasting 53 days, ending it when they received a 16-cents per-hour wage increase and additional benefits.

April 8, 1913 - The 17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified requiring direct popular election of U.S. senators. Previously, they had been chosen by state legislatures.



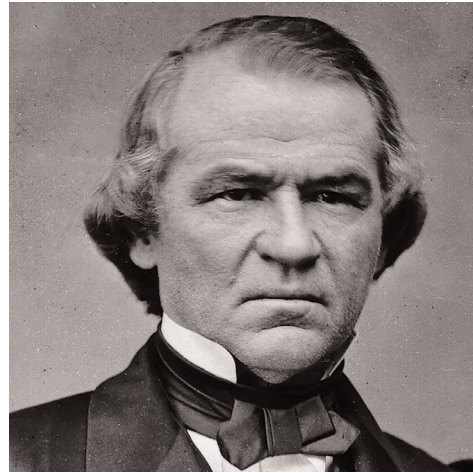
April 8, 1990 - Ryan White died at age 18 of complications from AIDS. As a young boy, White, a hemophiliac, contracted the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome from a blood transfusion. At age ten, he was banned from school. He then moved with his mother to Cicero, Indiana, where he was accepted by the students. As his plight was publicized, he gained international celebrity status and helped promote understanding of the dreaded disease.

APRIL 9



April 9, 1865 - After over 500,000 American deaths, the Civil War effectively ended as General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant in the village of Appomattox

Court House. The surrender occurred in the home of Wilmer McLean. Terms of the surrender, written by General Grant, allowed Confederates to keep their horses and return home. Officers were allowed to keep their swords and side arms.



April 9, 1866 - Despite a veto by President Andrew Johnson, the Civil Rights Bill of 1866 was passed by Congress granting blacks the rights and privileges of U.S. citizenship.

Birthday - African American actor and singer Paul Robeson (1898-1976) was born in Princeton, New Jersey. Best known for his performance in *The Emperor Jones*, he also enjoyed a long run on Broadway in Shakespeare's *Othello*. In 1950, amid ongoing anti-Communist hysteria, Robeson was denied a U.S. passport after refusing to sign an affidavit on whether he had ever been a member of the Communist Party.

APRIL 10

April 10, 1942 - During World War II in the Pacific, the Bataan Death March began as American and Filipino prisoners were forced on a six-day march from an airfield on Bataan to a camp near Cabanatuan. Some 76,000 Allied POWs including 12,000 Americans were forced to walk 60 miles under a blazing sun without food or water to the POW camp, resulting in over 5,000 American deaths.

April 10, 1945 - The Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald was liberated by U.S. troops. Located near Weimar in Germany, Buchenwald was established in July 1937 to hold criminals and was one of the first major concentration camps. It later included Jews and homosexuals and was used as a slave labor center for nearby German companies. Of a total of 238,980 Buchenwald inmates, 56,545 perished. Following its liberation, Supreme Allied Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and other top U.S. commanders visited the sub-camp at Ohrdruf. U.S. Troops also forced German civilians from nearby towns into the camp to view the carnage.

April 10, 1998 - Politicians in Northern Ireland reached an agreement aimed at ending 30 years of violence which had claimed over 3,400 lives. Under the agreement, Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland would govern together in a new 108-member Belfast assembly,

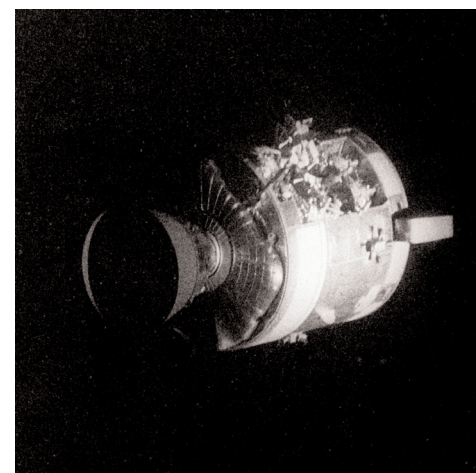
thus ending 26 years of "direct rule" from London.



Birthday - Publisher Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911) was born in Budapest, Hungary. He came to America in 1864 and fought briefly in the Civil War for the Union. He then began a remarkable career in journalism and publishing. His newspapers included the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *New York World*. He also endowed the journalism school at Columbia University and established a fund for the Pulitzer Prizes, awarded annually for excellence in journalism.

APRIL 11

April 11, 1968 - A week after the assassination of Martin Luther King, the Civil Rights Act of 1968 was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The law prohibited discrimination in housing, protected civil rights workers and expanded the rights of Native Americans.



April 11, 1970 - Apollo 13 was launched from Cape Kennedy at 2:13 p.m. Fifty-six hours into the flight an oxygen tank exploded in the service module. Astronaut John L. Swigert saw a warning light that accompanied the bang and said, "Houston, we've had a problem here." Swigert, James A. Lovell and Fred W. Haise then transferred into the lunar module, using it as a "lifeboat" and began a perilous return trip to Earth, splashing down safely on April 17th.

April 11, 1983 - Harold Washington became the first African American mayor of Chicago, receiving 51 percent of the vote. Re-elected in 1987, he suffered a fatal heart attack at his office seven months later.

Birthday - American orator Edward Everett (1794-1865) was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts. In 1863, at the

dedication of the Gettysburg Battlefield, he delivered the main address, lasting two hours. He was then followed by President Abraham Lincoln who spoke for about two minutes delivering the Gettysburg Address.

APRIL 12

April 12, 1861 - The American Civil War began as Confederate troops under the command of General Pierre Beauregard opened fire at 4:30 a.m. on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina.



April 12, 1945 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt died suddenly at Warm Springs, Georgia, after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage. He had been President since March 4, 1933, elected to four consecutive terms and had guided America out of the Great Depression and through World War II.

April 12, 1961 - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space. He traveled aboard the Soviet spacecraft Vostok I to an altitude of 187 miles (301 kilometers) above the earth and completed a single orbit in a flight lasting 108 minutes. The spectacular Russian success intensified the already ongoing Space Race between the Russians and Americans. Twenty-three days later, Alan Shepard became the first American in space. This was followed in 1962 by President Kennedy's open call to land an American on the moon before the decade's end.

April 12, 1981 - The first space shuttle flight occurred with the launching of Columbia with astronauts John Young and Robert Crippen aboard. Columbia spent 54 hours in space, making 36 orbits, then landed at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

APRIL 13

Birthday - Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was born in Albemarle County, Virginia. He was an author, inventor, lawyer, politician, architect, and one of the finest minds of the 1700's. He authored the American Declaration of Independence and later served as the 3rd U.S. President from 1801 to 1809. He died on July 4, 1826, the same day as his old friend and one-time political rival John Adams.





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**Message from
Peter J. McDonnell,
M.D. Director Wilmer Eye
Institute, Johns Hopkins
University, USA on the
occasion of laying the
foundation stone on
December 10, 2020**



"On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MO, I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautiful facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion. Best wishes, Peter"

"There can be no keener
revelation of a society's soul
than the way in which it treats
its children". - Nelson Mandela



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SURGERY**



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