



PEACE RETURNING TO MANIPUR: PM MODI

SPEAKS OF A "NEW INDIA" WITH A BRIGHT FUTURE IN NEXT FIVE YEARS



NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke for nearly 90 minutes in his 10th Independence Day address on August 15 where he highlighted his government's achievements as well as various challenges and opportunities before the nation.

Addressing the nation on the 77th Independence Day, the Prime Minister urged fellow citizens not to lose the opportunity to realize the country's potential as the decisions and sacrifices made in this period will impact the country for the next 1,000 years.

Mr. Modi attacked the opposition over issues of corruption, dynastic politics and appeasement. India is at a decisive turning point and has the strength to shape the new

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing from the ramparts of Redfort during the 77th Independence Day Celebration in New Delhi on August 15, 2023.

WhatsApp Photo / Shiv Kumar Pushpakar

CHANDRAYAAN-3'S FIRST DEBOOSTING SUCCESSFUL, GETS CLOSER TO MOON



Moon as seen by Chandrayaan-3 lander's camera on Thursday, August 17. Credit / PTI

AUGUST 18, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): A day after it separated from the propulsion module, the Chandrayaan-3 landing module comprising Vikram (the lander) and Pragyan (the rover) performed the first "deboost" maneuver on Friday, getting further close to the lunar surface ahead of the expected landing on August 23.

"The lander module (LM) health is normal. LM successfully underwent a deboosting operation that reduced its orbit to 113 km x 157 km. The second deboosting operation is scheduled for August 20, 2023, around 0200 hours (IST)," ISRO said on X (formerly Twitter). On Thursday, Vikram, with Pragyan placed inside, had separated from the propulsion module propelling it. At the time of the separation, the orbit of the spacecraft was 153 km x 163 km.

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India's Independence Day Celebrations Galore

Indian Americans celebrate the 77th Independence Day with enthusiasm

I.S. SALUJA
AUGUST 18, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP):The Consulate General of India in New York, celebrated 77th Independence Day of India on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at the Consulate in the presence of members of the community. On the occasion, a Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held in the morning in the Consulate Ball Room. Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General, unfurled the national flag and Indian national anthem was sung. Consul General read out the Address of the President of India and conveyed his greetings to the gathering.

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Consul General Randhir Kumar Jaiswal hoisting the national flag of India at the Indian Consulate in New York on August 15, 2023



US, South Korea, Japan set to deepen military ties

Agree on security pledge ahead of Camp David summit

AUGUST 18, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The United States, Japan and South Korea are set to sign on to a new security pledge, committing the three countries to consult with each other in the event of a security crisis or threat in the Pacific, according to Biden administration officials.

Details about the new "duty to consult" commitment emerged as President Joe Biden prepared Friday to welcome South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida for a summit at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland.

The move is one of several joint efforts that the leaders are expected to announce at the daylong summit, as the three countries look to tighten security



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and economic ties amid increasing concerns about North Korea's persistent nuclear threats and Chinese provocations in the Pacific.

Kishida, before departing Tokyo, told reporters the summit would be a "historic occasion". (Source: PTI)

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COMMENT

Another Year of Freedom: Exploring the Flip Side and the Flop Side

**BY
INDRAJIT SALUJA**

The period between August 15, 2022, and August 15, 2023, has been characterized by a complex interplay of achievements and challenges for India. The flip side reflects the nation's resilience, progress, and global influence in various spheres, including the economy, technology, renewable energy, and diplomacy. Despite the ongoing global challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, India's economy showcased resilience and recovery. The GDP growth rebounded, fueled by increased industrial production and a revival in consumer spending. The government's focus on self-reliance through initiatives like 'Make in India' contributed to the growth of domestic industries. India's digital transformation continued at an impressive pace. The adoption of digital technologies across sectors led to increased efficiency and improved access to services. The expansion of digital payment systems, e-governance initiatives, and the proliferation of technology startups further cemented India's status as a technology hub. India made significant strides in its commitment to renewable energy. The country witnessed the installation of

large-scale solar and wind energy projects, contributing to its goals of reducing carbon emissions and increasing energy sustainability. India's space agency, ISRO, achieved remarkable milestones during this period. The successful launch of advanced satellites for communication, navigation, and earth observation bolstered India's reputation as a space-faring nation. India continued to strengthen its diplomatic ties with various nations. High-level visits, collaborations, and strategic partnerships showcased India's role in global affairs. The successful hosting of international events like the BRICS Summit highlighted the country's leadership on the world stage.

However, the flop side highlights the need for ongoing efforts to strengthen public health infrastructure, control inflation, address environmental concerns, ensure inclusive education, and tackle social inequalities. While India's response to the pandemic improved since the devastating second wave, gaps in the public health infrastructure remain. The need for better healthcare facilities, improved access to medical resources, and a robust healthcare system became more evident during the ongoing battle against COVID-19. Rising inflation posed challenges for India's citizens, affecting the cost of basic goods and services. Addressing inflation and stabilizing the cost of living became

critical to ensure economic stability and protect the purchasing power of the population. Despite strides in renewable energy, environmental challenges persist. Air quality concerns, water scarcity issues, and deforestation demand a comprehensive approach to environmental conservation and sustainable development. The pandemic continued to disrupt education, with uneven access to online learning and the digital divide affecting students' educational experiences. Bridging this gap and ensuring quality education for all emerged as a priority. The year highlighted persisting social inequalities, including income disparities and unequal access to opportunities. Addressing these inequalities requires a multi-faceted approach that encompasses economic policies, social programs, and inclusive development strategies.

As India continues its journey, it must harness its successes while simultaneously addressing its challenges. Strategic policies, innovative solutions, and a collective commitment to progress will be crucial in ensuring that the flip side remains dominant and the flop side transforms into opportunities for growth. By acknowledging both sides and working towards a balanced and holistic development approach, India can continue to rise as a vibrant and dynamic nation on the global stage.

CAG audit findings

KICKERLINE: NEED TO PROBE IRREGULARITIES IN HEALTH SCHEME

A performance audit of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has detected glaring irregularities and deficiencies in the implementation of the Union Government's flagship scheme, which was launched in 2018 with the aim of reducing the out-of-pocket medical expenditure of the poor and vulnerable sections of the population. As per the CAG report, tabled in Parliament last week, Rs 6.97 (69.7 million) crore was paid for the treatment of 3,446 patients who had earlier been shown as deceased in the AB-PMJAY database. No less shocking is the fact that around 7.5 lakh beneficiaries under the scheme were linked to one mobile number,

9999999999. A total of 1,285 beneficiaries were linked to Aadhaar number 000000000000!

After the damning report was tabled, the government informed the Lok Sabha on Friday, August 18, that 210 hospitals had been de-empaneled and the licenses of 188 others suspended due to their involvement in activities non-compliant with the guidelines issued by the National Health Authority (NHA) or the state health authority. The NHA's National Anti-Fraud Unit is tasked with the detection, deterrence and prevention of fraud and abuse under AB-PMJAY, but its efficacy is under a cloud in view of the audit findings.

embarrassment for the BJP-led government, which has repeatedly reaffirmed its commitment to eradicating corruption. It's apparent that fake or ineligible beneficiaries are undermining this premier welfare scheme, which caters to around 55 crore (550 million) people in the country. An in-depth investigation is the need of the hour to unearth the nexus between hospital staffers, middlemen and government officials. The loopholes must be plugged on priority, failing which the fight against corruption - summed up by PM Modi's famous promise, 'Na khaonga na khaane doonga' - would suffer a big jolt, and that too in the run-up to the high-stakes Lok Sabha elections.

The CAG report comes as an

(Tribune, India)

India's Independence Day Celebrations Galore

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The event was made even more special by melodious renditions of patriotic songs by Sanjukta Sen, music teacher with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, and her disciple Kruti Acharya.

Amidst the felicitations, heartening congratulatory messages were received from a host of esteemed local elected officials. Of special significance was a video message from Governor Kathy Hochul of New York State, who highlighted the profound contributions of the Indian community that enrich the cultural and economic tapestry of New York. Commemorative proclamations celebrating India's 76 years of independence were also issued by the Governors of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

The Consul General raised the national flag at a special event organized by the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA - NY/NJ/CT) at the iconic Times Square in New York City. Music and dances brought cheer to the attendees and onlookers. Rimli Roy's Surati group gave a great dance performance. Among those who attended, included Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, the sarod maestro and the renowned Chef Vikas Khanna. The Times Square event featured the grand unveiling of a symbolic replica of the Konark Sun Temple's wheel, embodying the essence of India's philosophy and thought. On the occasion, the iconic Empire State Building in New York City was also lit in India's tricolors.

Noteworthy among this year's festivities was the flag raising ceremony at the historic Bowling Green arena, by the Consul General and Mayor Eric Adams of New York City. This landmark event organized by Mr. Sivadasan Nair of Indian Cultural Association of North America, Inc., was attended by Deputy Mayor of NYC Meera Joshi, Assemblywoman Jennifer Rajkumar, and several senior elected officials of Indian descent in the Mayor's administration, besides members of the Indian community.

The celebrations of Independence Day in Northeast US started on August 05th at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with an event organized by Asian Indian Americans of Central Pennsylvania (AIACPA) featuring a unique Robotic competition and also a Parade displaying India's rich culture.

Among other several community-organized events, the prominent ones included an event organized by Global



Consul General Randhir Kumar Jaiswal who hoisted the national flag at Times Square, speaking on the occasion



Rimli Roy's Surati group of dancers perform at Chakra Sculpture inauguration



The CG addresses the gathering



New York Governor Kathy Hochul in her video message spoke highly of India and the Indian Americans

Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) at Stamford, Connecticut; flag hoisting ceremony at Philadelphia City Hall by Council of Indian Organizations in Greater Philadelphia; flag hoisting ceremony at Hartford, Connecticut by The India Association of Central Connecticut; India day Parade organized by Council of Heritage and Arts of India, at Williamsville, Buffalo, India Day Parade & Flag Hoisting celebrations organized by Federation of Indian Associations (FIA-NE), at the iconic Boston Harbour and other celebrations. The annual Battery Dance Festival showcased India's classical dance on August 15, 2023 at



Konark Sun Temple Wheel (Chakra) on display at Times Square



Vikas Khanna with two visitors who came to see the Chakra. L to R: Rohini Thapar, Vikas Khanna, and Sachin Vinayak



Sanjukta Sen and Kruti Acharya sang Bhajans and patriotic songs

Battery Park. FIA NY-NJ-CT will organize the largest India Day Parade, outside of India, on 20th August on Madison avenue. Earlier in the week, the Indo-American Arts Council organized a three-day music festival to commemorate the 77th Independence Day of India featuring prominent artists such as Padma Shri Malini Awasthi and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. To celebrate India's independence under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM), the Consulate General of India, New York organized a special event 'Mitti Ki Khusboo-Mitti Ki Yadein' on memories of growing up years in India on August 14, 2023. Those who spoke on the occasion included Colonel Virendra

Tavathia, Professor Indrajit Saluja, Dr. Amarjit Shastri, Mr. Thomas Mottackal, Mr. Alok Kumar, Mr. Harish Thakkar, Mr. Nachiketa Mitra, Ms. Vandana Nayak, and Mr. Siddharth Jain. An Exhibition on 'horrors on partition' was also displayed in the Consulate. Selfie point was set up for the community members to take a selfie with maati diya in hand and upload on merimaatimeradesh.gov.in, and www.yuva.gov.in with #Har Ghar Tiranga #Meri Maati Mera Desh. A standee with salutation to the brave soldiers was displayed on August 14 and also during the flag hoisting ceremony held at the Consulate on August 15, and later at Times Square.

Independence Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at a number of places in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. In Queens, New York, a parade, organized by Floral Park, Bellerose Indian Merchants Association, was taken out on August 13.

A parade in celebration of India's Independence Day was taken out in New Jersey. India's Independence Day was celebrated at City Hall of Jersey City with Congressman Rob Menendez joining the celebrations on August 17.

In Nassau County, India's Independence Day was celebrated at Town of Oyster Bay on August 15. Town Supervisor Town of Hempstead Supervisor Don Clavin hosted India's Independence Day celebration on August 15.

Then there are upcoming parades and celebrations. The largest India Day Parade outside of India is organized by FIANYNJCT. The 41st edition of the Parade takes place on Sunday, August 20.

Another parade organized by IDPUSA in Hicksville on Long Island is scheduled for Sunday, August 27.

In order to recognize and do honor to celebrations, The Indian Panorama will bring readers detailed reports on Independence Day celebrations in the editions to follow in the next two weeks.

The celebrations organized around Independence Day, this year, had a distinct flavor of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. Wholehearted Participation from members of the diaspora and friends of India transformed the landmark celebrations into a true people's movement.

(With inputs from the Consulate General of India, New York)

TEN INDIAN AMERICAN WOMEN ON FORBES 50 OVER 50 LIST

AUGUST 16, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): From Republican Party presidential aspirant Nikki Haley to leading woman owned investment firm founder Geeta Aiyer, 10 Indian American women have made it to 2023 Forbes 50 Over 50 list of entrepreneurs, investors, inventors and artists.

"All of them-200 in total, spread across four categories-are changing the world," says Forbes of the women on its third annual list - "a group of people whose collective power-literally-stretches from the deep sea to outer space."

Nikki Haley, 51, is featured in the Impact list of change makers with three others.

In February of 2023, Haley announced her intent to become the Republican party's candidate for US president.

The daughter of Indian immigrants, Haley became the first Indian American to serve in a presidential cabinet when she was sworn in as US ambassador to the United Nations in 2017.

She served as governor of South Carolina from 2010 to 2014. Of the 117 governors in South Carolina's history, she is the only woman and only person of color to have led the state.

Haley grew up in South Carolina and graduated from Clemson University with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

SARITA MOHANTY, 53, PRESIDENT & CEO, THE SCAN FOUNDATION

In 2021, at 50, Sarita Mohanty became the second CEO and president of The SCAN Foundation, a California-based healthcare nonprofit focused on improving care for older adults through policy, impact investing and grantmaking.

Mohanty came to the foundation from Kaiser Permanente, where she served as vice president of care coordination for Medicaid and vulnerable populations.

At Kaiser, she led the development of Thrive Local, a referral network of health systems, government agencies and community groups that provide social services, including housing, food and utilities.

She completed medical school at Boston University and residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. She holds an M.P.H. from Harvard University and an M.B.A. from UCLA.

GHAZAL QURESHI, 54, FOUNDER & CEO, UPBRAINERY TECHNOLOGIES

In 2020, just after she turned 51, Ghazal Qureshi founded UpBrainery Technologies. Her goal is to expand online education through AI, machine learning and a neuroscience-backed curriculum.

Within months of its launch, the startup formed partnerships with Whataburger, Nasdaq and the Girl Scouts.

In 2022, the Department of Defense awarded the company a \$5 million contract for the use of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) tech platform in military middle schools.

Today, UpBrainery offers a curriculum that exceeds 10,000 hours and a reach that spans 13 countries.

In 2011, Qureshi founded IDEA Lab Kids, a franchise that allows kids aged four to 14 to explore the STEAM fields (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) via online and in-person programming.

S. MONA SINHA, 58, GLOBAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EQUALITY NOW

In 2023, at 57, S. Mona Sinha became global executive director of Equality Now, an NGO that has advocated for the rights and protections of women and girls around the world since 1992.

She started her career in the corporate world and now



Seven of the ten Indian American women on Forbes 50 over 50 list

applies learnings from Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and Unilever to scale Equality Now's mission-driven initiatives.

At Equality Now, she has succeeded in reforming rape laws in the Latin America and Caribbean region and child marriage laws in Africa and the Middle East.

Sinha has chaired boards for the Equal Rights Amendment Coalition, Breakthrough and Women Moving Millions (WMM). To date, WMM has mobilized \$1 billion in aid for women and girls.

She additionally serves on the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum board.

Sinha grew up in Kolkata, India, and developed an interest in humanitarian efforts while volunteering at Mother Teresa's orphanage in the city. She came to the US in 1985 to attend Smith College.

Author Alka Joshi, 65, is featured in the Artists list.

In 2020, at 62, Alka Joshi published her debut novel, *The Henna Artist*. She began writing the book in 2010, but the ten years of work paid off: It became a global phenomenon, hitting the New York Times bestseller list and translated into 29 languages.

Within a year and a half of publication, Netflix announced it would develop *The Henna Artist* into a television series starring Frida Pinto.

Joshi published two more books in 2021 and 2023 and has a contract with Harper Collins to produce two more by 2025.

Four decades after immigrating to the US, Joshi says her passion to inform the world about India through historical fiction took root in her 50s, when she traveled back to her birth country with her mother.

The Henna Artist was inspired by Joshi's mother, who had an arranged marriage at 18. Joshi wrote a protagonist who lived in an alternate reality-one where a woman like her mom could live independently.

MONICA JAIN, 60, FOUNDER, FISH 2.0 VENTURES

In 2013, at age 50, Monica Jain merged her passion for the ocean with her expertise in finance to confound Fish 2.0 Ventures and grow the blue economy-businesses that improve the health of the world's seas and marine life.

Fish 2.0 has connected more than 600 entrepreneurs in the seafood industry to a network of 500 private investors and facilitated investments of over \$400 million.

Jain, who also founded and heads a consulting firm called Manta Consulting, works directly with Fish 2.0 businesses to advise them and help them scale.

She was recognized as a White House Champion of Change for Sustainable Seafood in 2016 for her impact on the industry.

GEETA AIYER, 65, PRESIDENT & FOUNDER, BOSTON COMMON ASSET MANAGEMENT

A finance executive with over 30 years of experience and a passion for social justice, Geeta Aiyer founded Boston Common Asset Management, a majority women-

and employee-owned sustainable investment firm, in 2003. She is the firm's president and has AUM of \$5 billion.

In 2015, Aiyer became the first U.S. asset manager to serve on the board of UN PRI (Principles for Responsible Investment), which encourages investors to adopt sustainable investing.

It has been her aim to work on sustainable and inclusive investment. Her portfolio has invested in Owens Corning, a manufacturer of energy-saving insulation, roofing and fiberglass composites. The firm has also invested in Carrier Global Corp, a global leader in making sustainable buildings, air conditioning, and healthy solutions for homes.

In 2013, Aiyer received the SRI Service Award, recognizing leadership and innovation in SRI (Sustainable, Responsible, Impact) investing.

MALA GAONKAR, 53, FOUNDER, SURGOCAP PARTNERS

Mala Gaonkar founded SurgoCap Partners in 2022, a New York investment firm focused on disruptive technologies across broad industry categories.

On January 3, 2023, SurgoCap Partners began trading with an estimated \$1.8 billion in trading under management. This marked the largest hedge fund launch led by a woman ever.

Born in the US and raised in Bengaluru, India, Gaonkar founded the Surgo Foundation with Sema Sgaier in 2015 to invest in AI-powered technology that can solve global health problems.

Gaonkar has reserved \$100 million of her fund's AUM for smaller endowments, foundations and nonprofits focusing on underserved communities or climate change. In her spare time, Gaonkar loves to write. Her short stories have appeared in *Catamaran*, *Carolina Quarterly*, and *American Short Fiction*.

RANJI NAGASWAMI, 59 | CHIEF STRATEGY AND CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, STRATEGIC VALUE PARTNERS

Ranji Nagaswami is the chief strategy and chief commercial officer of Strategic Value Partners, a global investment firm managing nearly \$18 billion in private credit, distressed debt and private equity investments.

From 2010 to 2012, Nagaswami chaired the NYC Retirement System as chief investment advisor to Mayor Michael Bloomberg, overseeing the city's pension funds.

In 2016, she became the founder and lead moderator for the Aspen Finance Leaders Fellowship (FLF). Today there are 125 Aspen Finance Fellows around the world.

Nagaswami has served on the Yale University investment committee, the UAW VEBA investment advisory council, and the Curtis Institute investment advisory council.

PURNIMA PURI, 51, GOVERNING PARTNER AND HEAD OF LIQUID CREDIT, HPS INVESTMENT PARTNERS

Purnima Puri is a governing partner at HPS Investment Partners, a \$100 billion-AUM global investment firm. Puri leads the company's \$22 billion liquid credit business.

Under her leadership, the firm launched new investment vehicles in 2022, including credit funds that capitalize on market volatility and new partnerships with pension clients, including California-based Fresno County Employees' Retirement Association and State of Hawaii Employees' Retirement System.

Before joining HPS in 2007, Puri was a principal at Redwood Capital Management, a credit opportunity hedge fund. Prior to that, she worked at Goldman Sachs on both its credit arbitrage desk and principal investment areas. Puri serves on the Board of Trustees of Northwestern University, the Board of Dean's Advisors of Harvard Business School, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas' financial sector advisory council.

Indian American Diversity Expert Kalpana Kotagal sworn in as EEOC Commissioner



Kalpana Kotagal (center) takes the oath of office as EEOC Commissioner, sworn in by EEOC Chair Charlotte A. Burrows Aug. 9, 2023, for a term expiring July 1, 2027. Kotagal is a diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility expert and represented women and other marginalized people in employment and civil rights litigation involving issues related to Title VII, the Equal Pay Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as wage and hour issues and the non-discrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act. Photo / USEEOC

Commission."

Prior to her appointment to the EEOC, Kotagal was a partner at Cohen Milstein, a member of the firm's Civil Rights & Employment practice group, and chair of the firm's Hiring and Diversity Committee.

Kotagal is a highly acclaimed litigator who has represented women and other marginalized people in employment and civil rights litigation involving issues related to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as wage and hour issues and the non-discrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act.

"It's an honor to start a new chapter as an EEOC Commissioner and an incredible opportunity to apply the experience from my previous work," Kotagal said.

"I look forward to working toward solutions for the issues facing today's workforce alongside my colleagues on the Commission and in the agency."

Prior to her work at Cohen Milstein, Kotagal served as a law clerk to Betty Binns Fletcher of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

She attended Stanford University, where she was a Morris K. Udall Scholar and graduated with honors. She earned her JD, cum laude, from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law, where she was a James Wilson Fellow.

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination.

AUGUST 15, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Kalpana Kotagal, an Indian American diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility expert, has been sworn in as Commissioner of the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Nominated by President Joe Biden on April 1, 2022, she was confirmed on July 14, 2023, to serve as Commissioner, for a term expiring July 1, 2027. She was sworn in by EEOC Chair Charlotte A. Burrows on Aug 9.

Kotagal joins Burrows, Vice Chair Jocelyn Samuels, and Commissioners

Keith E. Sonderling and Andrea R. Lucas on the presidentially appointed, bipartisan Commission. Kotagal's swearing in restores the Commission to its full complement, according to an EEOC release.

"We are excited to welcome Kalpana Kotagal to the Commission," Burrows said. "She has dedicated her career to advancing civil rights both in the courtroom and by working collaboratively with employers. Her creative approaches to ensuring equal opportunity, her legal expertise, and her commitment to workers will greatly benefit the

Indian American Executive Neeraj Khemlani quits as CBS News President



Neeraj Khemlani, who has led the Tiffany Network's news division and local TV stations for a little more than two years, is stepping down to take up a new role.

AUGUST 14, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): CBS News President and co-head Neeraj Khemlani, who has led the Tiffany Network's news division and local TV stations for a little more than two years, is stepping down to take up a new role.

The Indian American executive had been in charge of flagship programs such as "60 Minutes," "CBS Sunday Morning," "Face the Nation," and the "Evening News."

He will remain at CBS in a different capacity, he told staff in an internal email, according to media reports. He has signed a "multi-year, multi-platform first-look deal with CBS to develop content" for the network, including "documentaries, scripted series and books for Simon & Schuster."

"I have some news to share today, and I don't want to bury the lead," Khemlani wrote. "After an exhilarating run, and before the next season starts, I've decided to step back from my current role and start a new exciting chapter."

"It's an opportunity that will allow me to write, report and develop stories that I've long wanted to pursue," he added.

It's unclear who will replace Khemlani, though Wendy McMahon, who shared his title as president and co-head of CBS News and TV stations, is seen as a possible successor, media channel reported.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indo-Canadian real-estate kingpin Daljit Thind honored with Order of British Columbia

AUGUST 14, 2023

VANCOUVER (TIP): An Indo-Canadian real-estate mogul is among the 14 people who have been named to the Order of British Columbia, the province's highest form of recognition and an official part of the Canadian Honors System.

Daljit Thind of Thind Properties is one of Vancouver's premier real-estate developers and collaborates with the cities and non-profit organizations to offer low-cost rental apartments, thereby addressing a crucial housing shortage.

"This honor is a mark of excellence, reflected in the service and achievements of these incredible British Columbians. Their accomplishments have left an indelible mark on their communities, and ensuing legacies will impact our province to the benefit of future generations," said Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

Born and raised at Rachian village in Ludhiana, Thind moved to Burnaby in 1990.

However, he was unable to get credentialled to pursue his desired career as a pharmacist and needed financial assistance to support his family.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Arushi Garg won \$50,000 Hot Wheels: Ultimate Challenge



Arushi Garg from Houston just won season 1 of Hot Wheels: Ultimate Challenge that aired on NBC

AUGUST 15, 2023

HOUSTON, TX (TIP): Breaking many stereotypes about women and their hobbies, an Indian American woman just won a mega prize on reality TV that involved giving plush makeovers to cars.

Arushi Garg, a 38-year-old social media creator and mom from Houston just won season 1 of Hot Wheels: Ultimate Challenge that aired on NBC. Apart from national recognition, Garg got to take home a cash prize of \$50,000 as well as a highly customized Nissan Skyline (GT-R).

Her design is now also available as a die-cast toy exclusively to be purchased on Mattel Creations. Garg who originally hails from Jaipur,

Rajasthan, showcased her roots by transforming a Maruti Van - a car launched in India during the early 80's.

She called her transformed car "Jaipur Jewel," and liberally used motifs, colors and patterns from India. Her entry made her win a ticket to the finale along with \$25,000.

In the finale, Garg was given the iconic 1996 Nissan Skyline to transform into a life-size Hot Wheels showstopper.

The car, dubbed "Rally Resilience" by Arushi, is a bright red creation with 24-inch wheels, extended fenders and beaming light bars representing power, bravery, kindness and courage.

Adding to its uniqueness is the affirmation "never quit," which is transcribed on the car and can be seen under UV light.

For me, this win represents getting outside of your comfort zone and using the opportunity to challenge everyone to go for their dreams and use their creativity to empower and inspire others.

I hope this win shows to the younger immigrant generation that anything is possible as long as we have the courage and belief in ourselves.

"My win on the show is a representation of my family's approach toward life. It also shows that one should never quit. I may be the first person of Indian-origin to have designed a Hot Wheels and I am proud of my little achievement", said Arushi Garg in her interview to a media portal.

Legislator Drucker, Plainview Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce Welcome Nice Day Chinese Takeout to Plainview




AUGUST 16, 2023

PLAINVIEW, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County Legislator Arnold W. Drucker (D - Plainview) joined the Plainview - Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, Aug. 15 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the grand opening of Nice Day Chinese Takeout in Plainview. The eatery specializes in fresh, made to order, dine-in and take-out classic American Chinese cuisine. During the ceremony, Legislator Drucker presented a Nassau County Citation to

co-owners Yong and Wanting Zhang to commemorate the momentous occasion.

"Small businesses like Nice Day Chinese Takeout offer residents an opportunity to experience delicious cuisine inspired by the full spectrum of the world's cultures," Legislator Drucker said. "It was a pleasure to join the Plainview - Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce and the local community in celebrating their grand opening and wishing Yong and Wanting all the best in this new chapter of their lives."



JAGDISH SEWHANI
PRESIDENT
THE AMERICAN INDIA PUBLIC
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MESSAGE

2023 - Another year to respect the heroes, to celebrate freedom and stand for harmony. Let's make our country proud while celebrating the 77th Independence Day.

In the hustle and bustle of our work lives, every so often, time confines us to rejoice the important events that united us as a nation.

One such meaningful occasion is India's Independence Day, a day that marks the end of British colonial rule and the birth of a free and independent India.

This day serves as a time to tribute the sacrifices of our freedom fighters and reflect on the value of unity, diversity and patriotism.

Let's feel proud to be a part of our glorious nation and educate the next generation about the struggles and hoist the tricolor high. We honor the past, celebrate the present, and embrace the future - all in the name of freedom.

Happy Independence Day!
Vande Mataram
Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!
Jagdish Sewhani

Legislator Lafazan Named to 2023 Long Island Press Power List



Legislator Lafazan, pictured with his family at the Heritage Club in Old Bethpage, on Thursday, June 29.

Photo credit / Office of Legislator Joshua Lafazan

OLD BETHPAGE, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County Legislator Joshua Lafazan (D - Woodbury) was among the dozens of regional leaders named to the Long Island Press Power List - a distinction which was celebrated during a reception at the Heritage Club in Old Bethpage on Thursday, June 29.

Hosted by Schneps Media, publishers of the Long Island Press, Dan's Papers and Noticia, compiles this annual list to "recognizes the most influential individuals in the Long Island region. Honorees are being recognized for their commitment, impact, and influence on Long Island." Proceeds from the reception benefitted the Family & Children's Association.

"I am grateful each day for the opportunity to serve in public office and represent my community, and I am committed to working diligently to deliver open and honest government that works for everybody," Legislator Lafazan said. "It is a truly humbling privilege to share this distinction with so many distinguished leaders in our region, and I thank Schneps Media for this great honor."

Legislator Lafazan Recognizes LICADD Angel Ball Honorees



Legislator Lafazan's presentation to Michael Brennan. Right: Presentation to John Polsinelli.

HUNTINGTON, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County Legislator Joshua Lafazan (D - Woodbury) recently supported the Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD) at their 36th annual Adele C. Smithers Angel Ball at Oheka Castle in Huntington.

At the Thursday, June 22 event, which raised awareness and funds for drug intervention and prevention programs on Long Island, LICADD presented its 2023 Founders Award to Michael J. Brennan, and its Humanitarian Award to John Polsinelli and the Polsinelli family. Legislator Lafazan, a LICADD board member, presented the honorees with a Nassau County Legislature Citation

in recognition of their contributions to the cause of promoting recovery.

"As Nassau County and our entire nation continues to grapple with the devastation wrought by the opioid drug crisis, the work of organizations like LICADD becomes more impactful and essential than ever before," Legislator Lafazan said. "The success of their Angel Ball will equip LICADD to further amplify their life-saving efforts to prevent substance abuse, provide addiction treatment, and encourage the pursuit of recovery - and we are all gratified to Michael Brennan, the Polsinelli family, and all of LICADD's supporters for making this possible."

Jersey City Celebrates India's Independence Day



Congressman Rob Menendez with Indian Americans holding the National Flag of India



Congressman Rob Menendez is speaking on the occasion

AUGUST 17, 2023

JERSEY CITY (TIP): Jersey City hosted a celebration of India's 77th Independence Day. Congressman Rob Menendez was the chief guest.

Congressman spoke of the friendly relations between the oldest and the largest democracy of the world and thanked the Indian American community to strengthening the relations between the U.S. and India. He appreciated the enormous contribution of the Indian American community to the growth of America. On the



The honorees with Congressman Rob Menendez at right. Photos / Mohammed Jaffer-Snapsindia

occasion, a few Indian Americans were honored for their services to community.

Senator Gopal Responds Angrily to Lottery Decision on Online Sales, Says it Will Harm Small Businesses

AUGUST 17, 2023

OCEAN TOWNSHIP (TIP): State Senator Vin Gopal, on August 17, slammed the New Jersey Lottery Commission's decision to approve a proposal that will allow players to purchase lottery tickets directly through a state-run app, depriving small businesses that currently sell lottery tickets of a crucial source of revenue.

"After telling me directly that they would delay this vote to have more stakeholder input, the New Jersey Lottery Commission has chosen to ignore significant stakeholder concerns and move ahead with a proposal that will devastate countless small businesses in the state," Senator Gopal said.

The Commission's online rule change represents a sharp departure from the 2019 Lottery Courier Services Act, which requires that all online lottery sales be tied to a brick-and-mortar business. Vendors have warned that the shift would not only result in the loss of direct lottery sales, and would cost their businesses ancillary sales from customers who purchase additional products when they visit local stores to buy lottery tickets.

"This decision will only serve to take sales away from New Jersey small businesses without providing them with any compensation," stated Gopal.

In light of the Commission's vote, Gopal reiterated his plan to introduce legislation to protect New Jersey lottery vendors.

"This decision clearly defies the Legislature's intent in passing the 2019 Lottery Courier Services Act," Gopal said. "It is not the job of the state of New Jersey to simply make money at the expense of cutting our mom and pop small-businesses out."

"As promised I will push forward legislation to make sure that small-businesses are included in this and I will lobby Governor Murphy over his final 2 years, as well as whomever his successor is to support legislation to respond to this disastrous action by the Lottery Commission," Gopal added.



New Jersey State Senator Vin Gopal

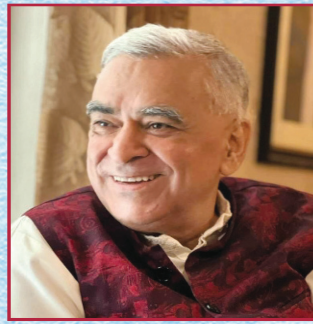


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You are everything, O Lord.
So what can we offer You?"
--Shaiv mystic Lalleshwari

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Indian-Americans test the waters in run-up to US primaries



BY LUV PURI

IN A NUTSHELL, RELATIVELY RICHER INDIAN-AMERICANS, AS THEIR NUMBER BECOMES BIGGER, MAY REFLECT THE CURRENT US POLITICAL LANDSCAPE, WHICH IS MORE OR LESS EVENLY DIVIDED BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATS AND THE REPUBLICANS.

"GIVEN THE PECULIARITIES OF MIGRATION, THE TREND OF INDIAN-AMERICANS BEING REPRESENTED IN BOTH PARTIES WILL FURTHER SOLIDIFY AS MORE AND MORE GET CITIZENSHIP. THE STRUGGLE OF OTHER MINORITY GROUPS IS NOT REFLECTED IN THE LIVES OF MANY RELATIVELY YOUNGER INDIAN-AMERICANS, WHO WERE BORN TO HIGHLY EDUCATED FIRST-GENERATION INDIAN-AMERICAN PARENTS. BACKED BY QUALITY EDUCATION, TIMING AND THE AVAILABLE ECOSYSTEM, THE YOUNGER COHORT HAS STRUCK SUCCESS IN MANY FINANCIALLY LUCRATIVE PROFESSIONAL FIELDS."



Indian-Americans Vivek Ramaswamy (L) and Nikki Haley have thrown their hat in the Republican ring for the 2024 US presidential election. Photo / Tribune

The contest for the primaries is hotting up a year ahead of the US presidential election. A few Indian-Americans are vying to be the Republican Party's presidential candidate.

Indian-Americans, with a population of four million, account for nearly 1.3 per cent of the US population. In the past decade, the US Congress reportedly has had five Indian-Americans. Former South Carolina Governor and US Permanent Representative to the UN Nikki Randhawa Haley is in the race to become the Republican nominee. She has a proven record in governance.

The spotlight, however, is on 38-year-old entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, who founded a successful biotech startup. Flush with money, a Midwest upbringing and Ivy League credentials, Ramaswamy has been profiled by leading media establishments. There is an element of exaggeration in terms of his narrative, though he has been impactful as he has a good understanding of the target audience and their soft spots.

Ramaswamy's messaging may be anathema to the larger Indian community in the US or other minority groups, who are overwhelmingly Democrat, as he speaks against diversity in workplaces, though cleverly adding that he favors diverse ideas. In a profile on him in The New Yorker, the author noted, "To Ramaswamy, such corporate do-gooderism - and especially environmental, social and governance investing, known as ESG - is a smoke screen designed to distract from the less virtuous things that companies do to make money." He has proposed a constitutional amendment that would require citizens aged between 18 and 24 years to pass a civics test in order to vote. This is again cunning messaging, keeping in mind the disdain middle-aged Republican voters have for the

younger population, which is largely Democrat.

But none of the Indian-American contenders stands a chance against former President Donald Trump when it comes to getting the Republican Party nomination. Still, these trends have their own importance in the US landscape as to why Indian-Americans, who usually vote for the Democrats, are gaining spotlight in the Republican Party.

This goes against the truism that the Democratic Party, with its progressive ideals, is a natural party for minority groups, who are victims of majoritarian politics and its consequent discriminatory policies. One needs to pay attention to particular aspects of migration of Indians to the US and the strata they are coming from. The first phase of migration of Indians, prominently from Punjab, started in the early years of the 20th century through the modern tech hub of San Francisco. The immigrants, marginal in number due to legal restrictions for Asians, looked for railroad, lumber or agricultural jobs. Even Congressman Dalip Singh Saund, who had got his doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1924, had to work as a farmer as he was denied citizenship till 1949. Born in Amritsar, he later became the first Asian-American, the first Indian-American and the first Sikh to be elected to the US Congress, from California in 1956 on the Democratic Party ticket.

Then there is a pool of Indian-Americans who are the children of a very successful grouping who migrated after the immigration Bill was signed by then President Lyndon B Johnson on October 3, 1965, which removed stipulations on migration from Asian countries. This enabled highly educated Indians to study and work in the US. Many of them went there on

scholarships. Journalist Anita Raghavan, in her book *The Billionaire's Apprentice: The Rise of the Indian-American Elite and the Fall of the Galleon Hedge Fund*, made the expression 'generation twice blessed' famous as she described this group of immigrants. This group benefited from both the relaxation of US immigration laws and the enormous investment that India made in education following Independence, particularly in research and engineering institutes.

The post-1995 migration was triggered by a sudden explosion in the demand for technological workers, including the Y2K migration project, coupled with an interest in India's emerging markets, which opened avenues for many finance professionals as well. Equipped with a strong background in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and a functional knowledge of the English language, nearly 75 per cent of the H-1B non-immigrant visa programme applicants came from India and many who got the visa became American citizens in a decade or so. A number of them, who migrated after 2000 or in the past 10 years, are permanent residents and in the process of acquiring citizenship.

Given the peculiarities of migration, the trend of Indian-Americans being represented in both parties will further solidify as more and more get citizenship. The struggle of other minority groups is not reflected in the lives of many relatively younger Indian-Americans, who were born to highly educated first-generation Indian-American parents. Backed by quality education, timing and the available ecosystem, the younger cohort has struck success in many financially lucrative professional fields.

Some from the Generation Z or the Millennial generation will support policies such as lower income tax and a private healthcare system, and there may also be a general antipathy towards welfarism, unlike other minority groups - which is more or less the present-day mantra of the Republican Party. Indian-American political affiliations may not strictly be a derivative of our understanding of politics of other minority groups in the US. In a nutshell, relatively richer Indian-Americans, as their number becomes bigger, may reflect the current US political landscape, which is more or less evenly divided between the Democrats and the Republicans.

(Luv Puri is journalist and author)

India Is on the Brink

UNDER MR. MODI'S GOVERNMENT, THE STATE MONOPOLY ON VIOLENCE IS BEING SURRENDERED TO EXTREMISTS AND VIGILANTES. THOSE TARGETED BY THE KIND OF MOB VIOLENCE THAT WE ARE SEEING IN INDIA MAY CONCLUDE THAT EQUAL RIGHTS ARE NO LONGER GUARANTEED, THAT POLITICAL DIFFERENCES CAN NO LONGER BE PEACEFULLY RECONCILED OR FAIRLY MEDIATED AND THAT VIOLENCE IS THE ONLY WAY FOR THEM TO RESIST.



Widespread tensions and violence in Manipur

Indian social media is a brutal place, a window on the everyday hatred and violence that has come to colonize the country in the nine years since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government came to power. But the images from the northeastern state of Manipur that began circulating in July were shocking even by those low standards.

A video clip showed two women being sexually assaulted as they were paraded, naked, by a crowd of men who later gang-raped one of them, according to a police complaint. The horrific scene was part of an explosion of ethnic violence since May that has turned the small state into a war zone, killing more than 150 people and displacing tens of thousands.

The state has a long history of ethnic animosities that predate Mr. Modi's rise. But the fuse for the current unrest in Manipur was lit by the politics of Hindu supremacy, xenophobia and religious polarization championed by his Bharatiya Janata Party.

India is a diverse nation, crisscrossed by religious, ethnic, caste, regional and political fault lines. Since Mr. Modi took office in 2014, his ruling party has torn those asunder with dangerous exclusionary politics intended to charge up the party's base and advance its goal of remaking India's secular republic into a majoritarian Hindu state. The repugnant nature of this brand of politics has been clear for some time, but the situation in Manipur shows what's ahead for India: The world's most populous country is slowly degenerating into a conflict zone of sectarian violence.

Under Mr. Modi's government, the state monopoly on violence is being surrendered to extremists and vigilantes. Those targeted by the kind

of mob violence that we are seeing in India may conclude that equal rights are no longer guaranteed, that political differences can no longer be peacefully reconciled or fairly mediated and that violence is the only way for them to resist.

The targeting of minorities - particularly Muslims - by right-wing Hindu extremists is now a way of life in many states. Vigilante mobs, which often assemble provocatively in front of mosques, regularly assault Muslims as understaffed and underequipped police forces fail to intervene. Lynchings and open calls for genocide are common. India now ranks among the 10 countries at the highest risk of mass killings, according to Early Warning Project, which assesses such risks around the world.

In Manipur, Christians are bearing the brunt as the state's B.J.P. government stokes the insecurities of the majority ethnic Meitei, who are predominantly Hindu. State leaders have branded the Kuki who populate the hill districts and who are mostly Christian as infiltrators from Myanmar, blamed them for poppy cultivation intended for the drug trade and evicted some of them from their forest habitats. The specific trigger for the current violence was a court ruling in the state in favor of granting the Meitei affirmative action provisions and other benefits that have long been enjoyed by the Kuki and other tribes, which sparked a protest by tribal communities opposed to the ruling. The Manipur government this year also began a citizenship verification drive that infringes on the privacy of Kuki. A similar drive in neighboring Assam state targeting Muslims has already reportedly disenfranchised nearly two million people.

Emboldened by the state

government's rhetoric, Meitei militias in Manipur have gone on a rampage of raping, pillaging, looting police armories and burning villages. More than 250 churches have been burned down. Those were Meitei men in the horrific 26-second video, sexually assaulting two Kuki women. (The video was shot in early May but came to light only in July, possibly delayed by a government internet ban imposed in the state in response to the violence.) Many similar attacks on Kuki women have been reported. Mr. Modi has called the rape incident "shameful" but has otherwise said little about the chaos in Manipur.



Women hold a sit-in protest against spiraling violence in Manipur

The violent impact of his party's polarizing politics is acutely felt in India's heartland, too. The area near a tech and finance hub on the outskirts of New Delhi was rocked by violence last week as Hindu supremacists staging a religious procession clashed with Muslims. Mosques were attacked, an imam was killed, businesses were burned and looted, and hundreds of Muslims have fled.

In tandem with the B.J.P.'s demonizing of India's nearly 200 million Muslims, television, cinema and social media are deployed to radicalize the Hindu majority, pumping out a steady stream of Islamophobia and vile dog whistles. Extremist groups, at least one of which appears to have received the public support of the prime minister, run amok. Muslims have been arrested for praying, had their livelihoods and businesses destroyed and their homes razed. Bulldozers, used to demolish homes, have become an anti-Muslim symbol, proudly paraded by B.J.P. supporters at political rallies.

As John Keane and I argue in our book "To Kill a Democracy: India's Passage to Despotism," it's a signature



BY DEBASISH ROY
CHOWDHURY

tactic of modern-day despots: tightening their grip on power by redefining who belongs to the polity and ostracizing others. In the ultimate subversion of democracy, the government chooses the people, rather than the people choosing the government.

India is already a complex federation of regional identities, many of which consider themselves distinct from Hindi-speaking north India, the power base of Mr. Modi's party. This federal structure is held together by delicate bonds of social and political accommodation. But they are fraying fast under Mr. Modi, who has no appetite for either, shrinking the space for nonviolent political contestation. Some regional political parties see the Bharatiya

Janata Party's centralizing and homogenizing Hindu-first thrust as a cultural imposition from outside and are assailing it with the same divisive us-versus-them vocabulary.

Because of its giant and growing population, India will become more important to the rest of the world geopolitically and economically, with the promise of its massive market. And so Western leaders like President Biden - who staged a lavish welcome for Mr. Modi on a state visit to Washington in June - engage with the prime minister, downplaying his government's assaults on liberalism.

But a political strategy of conspicuous humiliation and subjugation of ethnic and religious minorities that make up around one-fifth of the population is dangerously deluded. India can be either a conflict zone or an economic powerhouse - not both. It is increasingly clear which of those two destinies awaits the country

(Debasish Roy Chowdhury (@Planet_Deb) is a Hong Kong-based Indian journalist and the author, with John Keane, of "To Kill a Democracy: India's Passage to Despotism.")

(First published in The New York Times)

The anatomy of bulldozer justice

THE STATE CAN'T LET ITS ANIMUS AGAINST THE MINORITY COMMUNITY LEAD IT TO COMMIT ILLEGALITIES



BY JULIO RIBEIRO

"THE DIVISION BENCH OF THE PUNJAB AND HARYANA HIGH COURT HAS BEEN SCATHING IN ITS OBSERVATIONS OF THE BULLDOZER'S USE IN NUH. IT NOTED THAT ALL THE ASSETS DESTROYED BELONGED TO JUST ONE COMMUNITY AND ASKED IF THE INTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS SINISTER. IT ALSO PULLED UP THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT FOLLOWING ITS OWN RULES BEFORE DEMOLISHING BUILT-UP STRUCTURES. THE MOST BASIC REQUIREMENT IS TO GIVE A WRITTEN NOTICE OF ITS INTENTION TO DEMOLISH, WHICH WAS NOT DONE!"

The bulldozer was used in Haryana to mete out justice. It brought down houses, shops, hotels and restaurants, starting from the very first building on the road in Nuh along which a Hindu religious procession was organized by the VHP. Hundreds of buildings or shanties were razed by the state before a Division Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court intervened.

The BJP's goal of the consolidation of Hindu votes has succeeded to the extent that the party is now in the pole position in the electoral race.

Dispensing bulldozer justice was the brainchild of Yogi Adityanath, the BJP Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. A known Muslim-baiter who has mellowed down, he conceived of 'encounter' justice to keep criminals in check. Since poverty is the recruiting ground for crime, he would kill two birds with one stone. It is because of poverty that many of the state's criminals hail from the Muslim



There is a procedure that has to be followed before the bulldozer is brought into play.

Photo / PTI

community.

CM Yogi became vastly popular in UP with his directions to the police force to bring down notorious criminals. To his credit, it must be said that he tried not to discriminate between the two communities, especially in really bad cases. Vikas Dubey, who had a dozen or so policemen killed in an ambush, was himself shot by a police party.

Yogi then thought about taming rioters who damaged public property. The bulldozer became the symbol of punishment. Those who were suspected of destroying property had their dwellings demolished. The legal explanation for 'encounter' killings was self-defense. Since this excuse was not available when the bulldozer was brought into use, irregular construction was advanced as the reason for municipal or government action.

The Division Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court has been scathing in its observations of the bulldozer's use in Nuh. It noted that all the assets destroyed belonged to just one community and asked if the intention of the government was sinister. It also pulled up the government for not following its own rules before demolishing built-up structures. The most basic requirement is to give a written notice of its intention to demolish, which was not done!

The rioting in Nuh started when the VHP took out a religious procession through a Muslim locality. The intention, of course, was to provoke the minority community to react, which it did. Was such a procession taken along that particular route before? Why was it permitted? Why was Mohit Yadav aka Monu Manesar, a known trouble-maker owing allegiance to the Bajrang Dal, and

wanted for the murder of two Muslim cattle traders, allowed to circulate a video urging Hindus to join the VHP procession in large numbers?

The entire episode of rioting in Nuh, which spread to Gurugram, a commercial hub where many big-ticket corporates have their offices, smacks of an organized attempt to stoke communal passions prior to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. If my guess is correct, the next conclusion that can be drawn is that the Sangh Parivar is not sure of victory in 2024 and hence its recourse to division and provocation to nudge fence-sitters to join the majoritarian clamor.

The two judges of the High Court must be complimented for standing up for what is right and just. How can the executive go about dispensing 'bulldozer justice' which is not sanctioned by law? Even the reasonable and normally law-abiding Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, has indulged in this monstrosity. No judicial authority had sanctioned demolition and yet it was effected!

Municipal and local government bodies are empowered to demolish illegal constructions. But there is a procedure that has to be followed before the bulldozer is brought into play. If unauthorized construction is in progress, a 'stop work' order is first issued. In Nuh, the buildings were in existence for many years. How were they allowed to be built and who was responsible for stopping the illegality? Were the erring municipal or local government officials ever punished? If not, why was this particular occasion chosen to punish the occupiers without proof of their participation in the riots?

If punishment to such offenders includes destruction of their homes and

their sources of income, there should be a law passed to enable that to be done. There is no such law at present, which means that the state itself has turned rogue! The majoritarian state cannot let its animus against the minority community lead it to commit patent illegalities.

Around 50 panchayats in Haryana have decided not to allow Muslims to trade in their respective jurisdictions. Such instructions offend the Constitution's provisions. A legitimate source of livelihood cannot be denied to any citizen of this country, and certainly not because of his or her religion.

I had a good friend who had settled in Ahmedabad after he retired as the head of the state's police force. He was a devout Hindu who walked every day barefoot to the nearest temple. But he had no prejudices against people of other faiths. His privately employed driver was a Muslim. During the 2002 disturbances, VHP activists phoned him daily to get rid of his Muslim driver! Not only did he refuse to stoop to that level, but he also kept the man at his house for two months till the communal frenzy had abated. My friend had been Ahmedabad's Police Commissioner and knew the VHP's operatives who used to phone him.

The BJP's goal of the consolidation of Hindu votes has succeeded to the extent that the party is now in the pole position in the electoral race. It is time to revise the strategy now, lest the unity required for the country to progress is destroyed irreparably. Characters like Monu Manesar need to be reined in. That will require a signal from the PM or the Home Minister.

(Author is a former Governor, and a highly decorated retired Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.)



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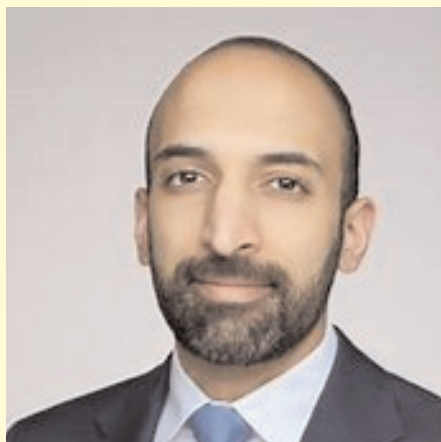


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INDIAN AMERICAN LAWYER VAROON MODAK NAMED AS BALLOT ACCESS COUNSEL BY BIDEN-HARRIS CAMPAIGN



US President Joe Biden has named prominent Indian American lawyer Varoon Modak as the senior counsel for ballot access for the Biden-Harris 2024 re-election campaign.

AUGUST 17, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden has named prominent Indian American lawyer Varoon Modak as the senior counsel for ballot access for the Biden-Harris 2024 re-election campaign.

Varoon, a California native, currently works as a counsel at Elias Law Group where he advises federal and non-federal candidates, party committees, and PACs on ballot access and campaign finance issues.

The announcement is integral to Team Biden-Harris' efforts to engage and energize the president's key supporters around the country ahead of next year's race for the White House.

Varoon, along with Alana Mounce, the ballot access director, will oversee the campaign efforts to cement President Biden's place on the ballot in all 57 states and territories and lead the campaign's delegate selection process, a statement from the Erie County Democratic Party said.

Alana has also served in battleground states for both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaigns.

The campaign's ballot access team will expand on the infrastructure built by the 2020 campaign and the DNC, including the existing massive volunteer and supporter network to ensure the president's place on the ballot.

Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna wins Democracy Award for best Workplace Environment

AUGUST 14, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) : Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna has been honored with a Democracy Award by the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) for outstanding achievement for the category of "Life in Congress"-Workplace Environment.

The "Life in Congress" Workplace Environment category highlights offices that have established both formal policies and informal cultures that enhance the work-life fit and professional development of their staffs, according to a press release from his office.

This is the second Democracy Award for Khanna who represents the 17th District of California, which covers communities in Silicon Valley. His office won the 2019 Democracy Award in the "Constituent Service" category.

"It's an honor to receive this award for best workplace environment in Congress. I want to congratulate my incredible staff for working alongside me to create a positive and inclusive work environment," said Khanna.

"As a strong supporter of workers' rights, it's important to me to live my



Ro Khanna has been honored with a Democracy Award by the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) for outstanding achievement for the category of "Life in Congress"-Workplace Environment.

values and ensure that all employees in my office have fair wages and benefits and are treated with dignity and respect."

"I'm very proud of our team's work over the years to make our office a top workplace on Capitol Hill. Each office is like a mini startup," said Geo Saba, chief of staff in Rep. Khanna's office. "There's

no centralized HR. This have given us the ability to be creative and reinvent what it means to work on the Hill."

"This award is the result of the work and efforts of everyone single member on the team who contributed to reimagining our office policies and creating a healthy work environment," Saba added.

"I've never worked in a more fun, kind, and people-centered workplace. We celebrate each other's wins and help one another work through challenges. I'm grateful to work, learn and laugh alongside such wonderful colleagues," said Sam Elghanayan, legislative aide in Khanna's office.

Among other noteworthy items, CMF included the following reasons for selecting Khanna for an award:

"The office of Rep. Khanna appears to be an open and collaborative workplace, with Rep. Khanna cultivating an individual relationship with every staff member, encouraging staff to offer their recommendations and to ask him questions directly. Staff are continually invited to offer their ideas for everything from the Member's policy positions to how to best connect our district's needs to the DC office's work."

Indian-origin college student Rejani Raveendran joins US Senate race in Wisconsin



Rejani Raveendran has launched a long-shot bid for US Senate from Wisconsin

AUGUST 10, 2023

WISCONSIN (TIP): Rejani Raveendran, a 40-year-old India-born college student has launched a long-shot bid for US Senate from Wisconsin, becoming the first Republican to challenge Democratic Senator Tammy Baldwin.

Raveendran, chair of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College Republicans, officially launched her run against 61-year-old Baldwin in Portage County on

Tuesday with just under a year to go until the primary, media reported.

"I have met lots of politicians, lobbyists, and policymakers. Many of them were there for 20, 30 and 40 years. We elect them, send them and they become so comfortable in DC and forget all about us, why we (have) sent them there," she said announcing her candidacy.

A single mother with three children, Raveendran has not been involved in politics until recently. She joined the Stevens Point College Republicans this year, and only decided to run for Senate after her trip to Washington earlier this summer.

She plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in political science and a certificate in international relations next year.

"I see what's going on in our country," Raveendran, who immigrated to the US in 2011 from India, where she was a nurse and midwife, told the Journal Sentinel in an interview last week.

"I realized how much DC is (dominated) by these polished politicians. I realized there is a need for a change in our political system. We need some new faces with new ideas," she said.

Hawaii wildfire victims qualify for tax relief; Oct. 16 deadline, other dates postponed to Feb. 15: IRS

AUGUST 18, 2023

WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP): The Internal Revenue Service today announced expansive tax relief for Hawaii wildfire victims in Maui and Hawaii counties. These taxpayers now have until Feb. 15, 2024, to file various federal individual and business tax returns and make tax payments.

The IRS is offering relief to any area designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This means that individuals and households that reside or have a business in these counties qualify for tax relief. The current list of eligible localities is always available on the disaster relief page on IRS.gov.

FILING AND PAYMENT RELIEF

The tax relief postpones various tax filing and payment deadlines that occurred from Aug. 8, 2023, through Feb. 15, 2024 (postponement period). As a result, affected individuals and businesses will have until Feb. 15, 2024, to file returns and pay any taxes that were originally due during this period.

This means, for example, that the Feb. 15, 2024, deadline will now apply to:

Individuals who had a valid extension to file their 2022 return due to run out on Oct. 16, 2023. The IRS noted, however, that because tax payments related to these 2022 returns were due on April 18, 2023, those payments are not eligible for this relief.

Quarterly estimated income tax payments normally due on Sept. 15, 2023, and Jan. 16, 2024.

Quarterly payroll and excise tax returns normally due on Oct. 31, 2023, and Jan. 31, 2024.



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US Congressional delegation's visit to India solidified bilateral ties: Indian Americans

AUGUST 17, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The ongoing visit to India of a US Congressional delegation led by Indian American lawmaker Ro Khanna has further solidified deep ties and underscores a unique vision that can serve as a blueprint to advance the bilateral relationship, according to Indian Americans.

The four-term Congressman representing Silicon Valley in the House of Representatives, Khanna on Wednesday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and attended the Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort on Tuesday where the prime minister hoisted the national flag.

During his trips to New Delhi and Mumbai, he has met leaders of the civic society, Bollywood superstars, including Amitabh Bachchan, and the opposition leaders.

"I am happy that elected members of the US Congress are present here today on the occasion of our celebration," Modi said in his Independence Day address.

"I was honored to visit Raj Ghat on India's Independence Day to pay my respects to Mahatma Gandhi, one of the world's greatest leaders. I also had the chance to lead our delegation at the Red Fort," Khanna posted on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"Glad to receive a Congressional delegation from the US, including co-chairs of India Caucus in the House of Representatives, Rep. Ro Khanna and Rep Michael Waltz," Modi wrote on X after his meeting with the Congressional delegation.

Modi said that strong bipartisan support from the US Congress was instrumental in further elevating India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

"Ro's trip to India is historic. For the grandson of an Indian freedom fighter who fought alongside Gandhi and was even jailed with him - to return to his parents' birthplace and lead a CODEL in



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, August 16, met US Congressional delegation and called strong bipartisan support from the US Congress "instrumental" in further elevating India-US comprehensive global strategic partnership. Photo / courtesy External Affairs Ministry

his role as a Member of Congress is as beautiful as it is poignant," said Ronak D Desai, a leading India practitioner at global law firm Paul Hastings LLP.

"It is a remarkable story that is only possible in America. This fact is one that I suspect Ro thinks about often, and motivated his desire to become a public servant," said Desai, also an expert at the Mittal South Asia Institute at Harvard University.

Community leader Yogi Chug said on Wednesday the visit of the US delegation further solidified the deep bilateral relationship.

"From Mumbai, Hyderabad, and New Delhi - whether it was with meeting Amitabh Bachchan, Anupam Kher, corporate leaders, or their visit to Akshardham this further solidified the deep relationship," he said.

He said the visit was important as the people-to-people and cultural interactions will be needed for the growing US-India Partnership in the years ahead.

With Prime Minister Modi's successful State Visit and the upcoming visit of President Joe Biden to India, the Congressional delegation led by US Congress India Caucus Chairs Ro Khanna (CA) and Michal Waltz (FL) could not

have come at a better time, he said.

"Many have described the US-India partnership as one of the most consequential partnerships of the 21st century. Equally exciting was that the Congressional delegation was invited and able to attend Modi's August 15 address at Red Fort. This is significant that a delegation was accorded such honor and visibility," Chug said.

"A good interaction with the US Congressional delegation today. Glad they could join as we celebrated Independence Day. Discussed the transformation underway in India, especially its outcomes of better governance," External Affairs Minister Jaishankar posted on social media platform X.

"Shared our aspirations and expectations for Amrit Kaal. Also exchanged views on our advancing bilateral partnership. Shared perspectives on the global situation and our collaboration on multilateral, regional and global issues," he said.

From news reports, it appears the delegation accomplished much during its visit, which also included ministerial-level meetings with the Defense and External Affairs ministries and tours of Western Naval Command further

amplifying the critical need for elevating the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

"This is an indication of the importance of the increased congressional engagements one will see in the years ahead. The India Caucus in the US Congress has the potential to play a critical role in this US objective and priority," Chug said.

"Ro Khanna has been a tireless champion of US-India relations for at least 20 years, well before he was elected to Congress. It is unsurprising that he has focused some of his efforts in the House over the past several years to lead the way in strengthening and advancing the bilateral relationship even further," Desai said on Wednesday.

According to Desai, Ro's delegation, in many ways, has been unlike any others that have visited India in the past.

"While it included some traditional aspects, including meeting with the Prime Minister and EAM, it seems Ro really endeavored to capture the full cultural richness and complexity of India through his meetings with Bollywood legends like Amitabh Bachchan and Anupam Kher, academics, and other civil society leaders.

"It underscores a unique vision of US-India relations that can serve as a blueprint for both counties moving forward," he said.

The Congressional delegation once again reaffirms one of the central, most important features of the US-India relationship - the nearly ironclad bipartisan consensus surrounding it, Desai said.

It is one of the primary reasons the partnership continues to grow in leaps and bounds regardless of who is in power in Washington, he said.

"Ro's ability to work across the aisle is well reflected in the various bills he sponsored and have become laws. He's predictably deploying those bipartisan credentials now in service of the bilateral relationship," he said. (Source: PTI)

Trump and Allies Expected to Surrender to Georgia Police by August 25 in 2020 Election Indictment



Former President Donald Trump

File photo

AUGUST 16, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Donald Trump said on social media he would release a 100-page report on Monday, August 21, that would exonerate him, after a Georgia grand jury indicted him and 18 co-conspirators for attempting to overturn the state's 2020 presidential election results. The Fulton County

Sheriff's Office said Tuesday, August 15, that Trump and the 18 co-defendants are expected to surrender to police and will be booked at the Rice Street Jail. Trump was given a deadline of August 25 to turn himself in. "The jail is open 24/7," the sheriff added in the statement.

3 Candidates Have Not Yet Signed GOP Loyalty Pledge One Week Ahead of First Primary Debate

AUGUST 16, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) The first Republican presidential primary debate will be held next Wednesday, August 23. One criterion to appear on the debate stage is a pledge to support whoever emerges as the Republican nominee. Those who otherwise qualify but have not signed the pledge are Donald Trump, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and former Vice President Mike Pence, though he has said he will sign.



Donald Trump, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and former Vice President Mike Pence, though he has said he will sign, have not yet signed GOP Loyalty Pledge



3D-printed post office, 1st in India, opens in Karnataka

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today hailed the inauguration of India's first 3D-printed public building, a post office in Ulsoor's Cambridge Layout area of Bengaluru.

The post office was inaugurated by IT and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who hailed "a rising new India which was rolling out 5G at historic speed, and was working on 6G rollout".

The post office had made news recently with videos going viral of a robotic arm extruder being deployed for contour crafting, whereby a 3D printer uses quick setting materials to build a structure layer upon layer. The 3D-printing technology in construction can cut costs massively and reduce construction time.

"Every Indian would be proud to see India's first 3D-printed post office at Cambridge Layout, Bengaluru. A testament to our nation's innovation and progress, it also embodies the spirit of a self-reliant India. Compliments to those who have worked hard in ensuring the post office's completion," the PM tweeted.

12% of sitting Rajya Sabha MPs billionaires

About 12 per cent of sitting MPs of Rajya Sabha are billionaires with Andhra Pradesh and Telangana having the highest percentage of such parliamentarians, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms.

The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and the National Election Watch (NEW) have analysed and updated the criminal, financial and other background details of 225 out of 233 Rajya Sabha MPs.

In the current Rajya Sabha, one seat is vacant.

According to the report, 5 (45 per cent) out of 11 MPs from Andhra Pradesh, 3 (43 per cent) out of 7 MPs from Telangana, 3 (16 per cent) out of 19 MPs from Maharashtra, 1 (33 per cent) out of 3 MPs from Delhi, 2 (29 per cent) out of 7 MPs from Punjab, 1 (20 per cent) out of 5 MPs from Haryana and 2 (18 per cent) out of 11 MPs from Madhya Pradesh have declared assets worth more than Rs 100 crore.

The total assets of seven Members of Parliament (MPs) analysed from Telangana is Rs 5,596 crore, that of 11 MPs from Andhra Pradesh is Rs 3,823 crore, and 30 MPs analysed from Uttar Pradesh have total assets worth Rs 1,941 crore.

Must be ready for next health emergency: PM to G20 nations

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, August 18, called on G20 nations to facilitate "equitable availability" of technology and "open innovations", saying the global community must be ready to prevent and respond to the next health emergency.

Calling resilience one of the biggest lessons learnt during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister said the period underscored the need for health to be at the center of decisions and demonstrated the value of international cooperation, "whether in medicine and vaccine deliveries or in bringing people back home".

Modi was addressing the G20 Health Ministers' meeting in Gandhinagar via video conferencing when he made the remarks.

"Global initiatives on global health will bring together various digital health initiatives on a common platform. Let's open our innovations for public good. Let us avoid duplication of funding. Let us facilitate equitable availability of technology," he said.

Stressing on the role of digital solutions and innovations in making healthcare accessible, the Prime Minister said they are a useful means to make efforts equitable and inclusive, allowing patients from far and wide to receive quality care through tele-medicine.

"Let us facilitate equitable availability of technology. This initiative will allow countries in the Global South to close the



India leader in health space: US official

Xavier Becerra, Secretary, US Department of Health and Human Services, on Friday said India could prove it was a leader in the health space

On the sidelines of the G20 meeting, Becerra said, "India's role has increased dramatically and PM Modi recognises it. This is a moment in time when India can show it is a world leader in health space"

gap in healthcare delivery. It will take us one step closer to our goal of achieving universal health coverage (UHC)," he said. Modi said the Covid-19 pandemic taught the world that health issues in one part of the globe can affect every other part in a short period of time.

"We must be ready to prevent, prepare, and respond to the next health emergency.

This is especially important in today's interconnected world. As we saw during the pandemic, health issues in one part of the world can affect all other parts of the world in a very short time," he said.

Under the Vaccine Maitri initiative during the pandemic, the PM added, India delivered 300 million vaccine doses to more than 100 countries, including many in the Global South.

"In India, we are following a holistic and inclusive approach. We are expanding health infrastructure, promoting traditional systems of medicine, and providing affordable healthcare to all. We believe that holistic health and wellness can help enhance everyone's resilience," he said, as he highlighted the establishment of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine at Jamnagar. The Prime Minister also said that India will eradicate tuberculosis (TB) well before the global deadline of 2030. "We have called upon the people of the country to be Ni-kshay Mitra or Friends for Eradication of TB. Under this, nearly one million patients have been adopted by citizens. Now, we are on our way to achieving TB elimination well ahead of the global target," he said.

Highlighting the importance of public participation as a key factor in the success of health initiatives, Modi said it was one of the main reasons for the success of India's leprosy eradication campaign. The country's ambitious programme on TB elimination also encourages public participation, he added.

Cabinet approves extending Digital India programme with Rs 14,903 crore outlay

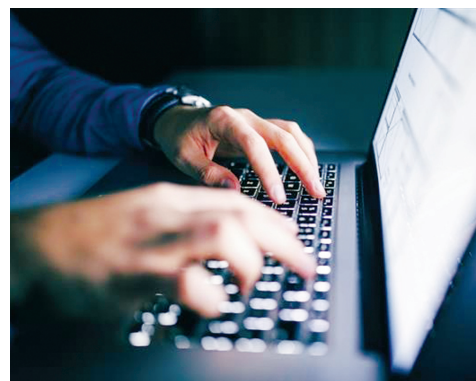
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Union Cabinet on Wednesday, August 16, approved extension of the Digital India programme with an outlay of Rs 14,903 crore to boost digital initiatives in skilling, cyber security, high performance computing and simplifying technology for masses, among other areas.

Briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the outlay has been approved for a five-year period between 2021-22 to 2025-26.

The extended Digital India programme will add on to the work done under the previous version of the scheme.

"The budget was allocated from time to time as per requirement. We have made changes in the schemes for which approval was required," Vaishnaw said, adding the Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the extension of the programme with the outlay of Rs 14,903 crore. Under the extended programme, nine more super computers will be added under the National Supercomputing Mission (NCM).



The minister said that 18 super computers have been deployed under NCM.

In March 2015, the government approved installation of 70 supercomputers under NCM by 2022 with an outlay of Rs 4,500 crore.

The minister said the approval for nine supercomputers have come in addition to the earlier approved project.

Vaishnaw said the Digilocker app will be extended to micro, small and medium enterprises to help them avail credit and other services by verifying their document stores in the app.

Under the approved programme, 6.25 lakh IT professionals will be reskilled

and upskilled, and 2.65 lakh persons will be trained in information security under the Information Security and Education Awareness Phase (ISEA) Programme.

He said cyber awareness courses for 12 crore college students will be conducted under the Digital India programme.

"CertIn, which does cyber forensics, emergency response and cyber diagnosis will be expanded massively," Vaishnaw said.

Further, the minister said the National Knowledge Network, a network of 1,787 universities and research and development institutes, will be further developed into Digital India Infoways.

"A centre of excellence will also be set up in the field of artificial intelligence for its use in agriculture, health and sustainability," the minister said.

Under the extended Digital India programme, new initiatives in the area of cyber security, including development of tools and integration of more than 200 sites with National Cyber Coordination Centre, will be carried out.

The extended programme has a provision for funding support to 1,200 startups based in tier 2 and 3 cities, the minister said.

India, China hold Major Gen-level talks on LAC issues

Days after the Indian Army and the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) held the 19th round of military dialogue to cool tensions in the Ladakh sector, the two sides on Friday held major-general level talks to discuss outstanding problems along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), officials aware of the matter said.

The talks, led by different major generals and their PLA counterparts, were held at separate locations in eastern Ladakh -- Daulet Beg Oldi and Chushul, the officials said, asking not to be named. To be sure, both sides have held several rounds of talks at the division commander level (a rung below the corps commanders) after the LAC standoff began in May 2020.

At the 19 rounds of talks between corps commanders of the two armies on August 13 and 14, the two sides agreed to resolve the remaining issues along the LAC in the Ladakh sector in a speedy manner through continued dialogue. That was the first time military talks were held over two days.

The talks took place in the run-up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi attending the Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) Summit in South Africa's Johannesburg on August 22-24. The possibility of a meeting between Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit has not been ruled out. Also, the Chinese leader is expected to be in New Delhi for the G20 summit in September.

Source: HT

RSS running everything, present in every institution: Rahul Gandhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who is on his first visit to Ladakh since Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two Union Territories, on Friday said the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was placing its own people in every institution of the country.

The RSS -- which is the ruling BJP's ideological parent, is running everything, the Gandhi scion charged.

"The RSS is placing its own people in every institution and is running everything," Rahul Gandhi said in Ladakh. Speaking further, Rahul Gandhi said, "Even if you ask any of the ministers in the Union government, they will tell you they are actually not running their ministries. Those deputed by the RSS are actually running these ministries and are suggesting everything." The same day, Rahul Gandhi also engaged with youth during an event in Leh, news agency ANI reported. During the event, the Congress MP said, "India got freedom in 1947 and consolidation of freedom in India is the constitution. The Constitution is a set of rules."

Supreme Court refuses to stay Bihar caste survey publication

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Supreme Court on Friday, August 18, observed that it cannot restrain the Bihar government from publishing the cumulative data or findings of the Bihar caste survey unless there is a prima facie case to show violation of any constitutional right or lack of competence on the part of the state government.

A bunch of petitions in the top court have challenged the August 1 judgment of the Patna high court that allowed the government to carry out the exercise which the Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar has pitched as essential and imperative to further the cause of social justice.

"We are not going to stay anything unless there is a prima facie case to show some violation... some legal issues that are debatable. The exercise has already been completed and the judgment of the high court has been in their favour. We will not stay anything without there being a prima facie case now," a bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti remarked, as it took up a clutch of petitions challenging the Patna high court judgment of August 1.

As soon as the matter was taken up, senior counsel Aparajita Singh, appearing for one of the petitioners, requested the bench to stay the publication of the survey until the court decides the matter finally. "All the data has already been uploaded. We are requesting the court to stop the publication of the survey," she said.

But the bench remained indisposed. "Please, argue the case. We are not staying anything without hearing the parties. We will hear you on the prima facie case and will ask them to rebut. If you can make out a satisfactory prima facie case, we will pass



an order accordingly, but we are not going to pass any order right now," it clarified.

Appearing for the Bihar government -- a Mahagathbandhan, or Grand Alliance, of the Janata Dal (United), Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Congress -- senior counsel Shyam Divan opposed the plea for staying the publication of the survey, adding only the cumulative results of the survey and not the personal details of individuals are made public.

Following this, senior advocate CS Vaidyanathan opened the arguments on behalf of the NGO Youth For Equality, pressing that the Bihar government's survey was conducted in breach of the Supreme Court's nine-judge bench verdict in the Puttaswamy case. He said that the

judgment held that it is only through a law that a state can carry out an exercise which can impact a person's privacy.

"But here, the state government conducted the whole exercise through an executive order. There was no law made by the state government to carry out this survey, as envisaged under the nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court in Puttaswamy. An executive order cannot substitute a law when somebody's right to privacy is violated," Vaidyanathan argued.

Responding, the bench asked the counsel which aspect of privacy is alleged to be violated when the survey will publish only the cumulative data and not individualistic information. To this, Vaidyanathan said there were 17 socioeconomic questions asked of the individuals during the survey. But the bench replied that the process did not envisage any penalty if someone chose not to answer.

Concluding his submissions on the prima facie case, Vaidyanathan reiterated that the state was not authorised to conduct the exercise without there being a law. The court will take up the matter next on August 21 when Singh will argue her plea for staying the publication of the survey.

In Bihar, the call for a caste survey erupted last year and was supported by all parties, though the ruling Janata Dal (United) and Rashtriya Janata Dal led the demand. Over the past few months, a number of Opposition parties, including the Congress, have picked up the appeal across India, hoping that an enumeration of castes will be a game-changer in reversing the BJP's deep inroads into the backward groups, and countering religious polarisation.

3 dead as ambush ends Manipur's fragile peace

GUWAHATI/ NEW DELHI (TIP)

Armed men killed three village patrol guards in a Kuki-dominated village in Manipur's Ukhrul district in the early hours of Friday, August 18, shattering the tenuous peace established over the last two weeks in the northeastern state that has been roiled by ethnic clashes for three months.

State police said the killings occurred around 4.30am at Thouwai Kuki, a village inhabited by the Kuki tribal community around 47km from Ukhrul town, the headquarters of the district.

"According to our information, a group of armed miscreants approached the village from the hills located to the east of the village and started firing at village guards. Three people from the village have been killed in the incident. There are no reports of any injuries," said N Vashum, superintendent of police (SP), Ukhrul.

The village falls on the edge of the Naga-dominated Ukhrul district and the Meitei-dominated Imphal East district.



The three deceased were identified by the district administration as Thangkhokai Haokip, 35, Jamkhogin Haokip, 26, and Hollenson Baithe, 24.

Local residents said that the three men were on patrol duty at a bunker in a village where the 50 households took turns to volunteer as guards every night.

"This Kuki village has around 50-60 houses. Though there was no violence in the village for the last three months, a bunker was set up in the village as a security measure. The three villagers

were guarding the village when the armed militants caught them by surprise and shot at them," said David Paite, a resident of the village.

He said that the bodies bore stab marks. Baithe was a college student while the two other men were farmers.

The violence mark the first killings in the strife-torn state in 13 days, breaking the fragile peace established in a state where clashes between the dominant Meitei community and the tribal Kuki community has killed at least 160 people and displaced another 50,000 people. It comes nine days after Union home minister Amit Shah told Parliament on August 9 that the violence in Manipur was ebbing and ruled out a change of guard in the state, appealing to the warring communities to come to the negotiating table.

The SP said security measures were bolstered and joint operations by the state police and the Indian army were underway to nab the people involved in the murders.

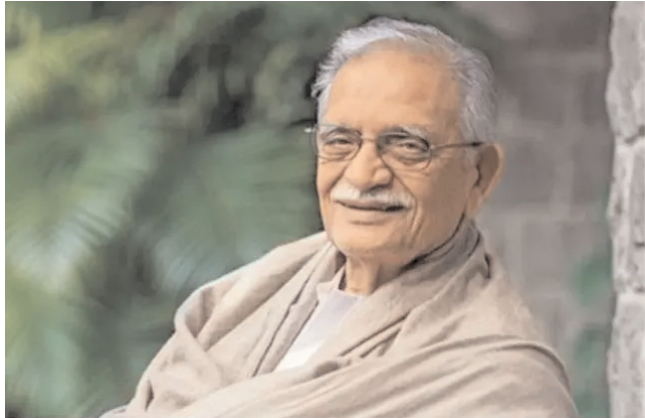
Source: HT

India in history this Week

AUGUST 18, 2023, TO AUGUST 24, 2023

18 AUGUST

1900 Vijayalakshmi Pandit, sister of former Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was born.



1934 The film director, lyricist and poet Gulzar was born.

1940 For the first time, the weather map was broadcast on television.

1945 The great freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chand Bose was badly injured in a plane crash in Taihoku, Taiwan, later died in a military hospital.

1951 Indian Institute of Technology was established in Kharagpur.

1872 Birth of Pandit Vishnu Digambar, the great musician of Maharashtra. Despite being blind, he achieved memorable achievements in the field of music.

1800 Governor General Lord Vallejali established Fort William College in Calcutta.

1956 Indian cricketer Sandeep Patil was born in Mumbai. He scored 1588 runs in 29 Test matches.

2008 The Mayawati government in Uttar Pradesh announced the implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission recommendations in 2008.

2010 In 2010, TVS Electronics included a rupee symbol just above the tab in its new key board called 'TVS Gold Bharat'.

1700 Bajirao I, the great general of the Maratha Empire, was born on 1700.

19 AUGUST

1757 The first one rupee coin of the East India Company was made in the Calcutta mint.

1918 Birth of Dr. Dr. Shankardayal Sharma, 9th President of India.

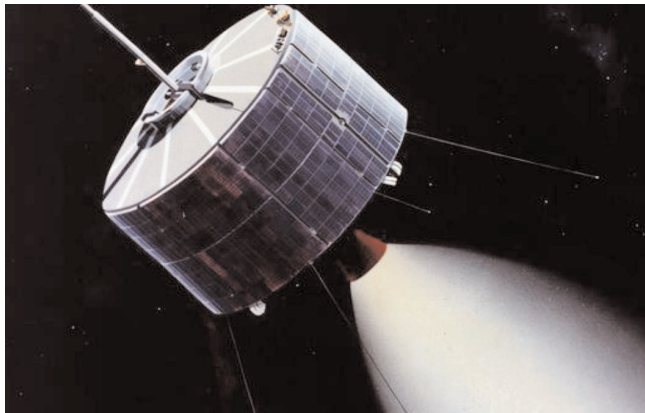
1666 Shivaji escaped from Aurangzeb's captivity by hiding in a fruit basket in Agra.

1949 Bhubaneswar became the capital of Odisha.

1999 Angered by India's draft nuclear policy, the G8 announced a ban on all kinds of aid.

1600 Mughal Emperor Akbar captured Ahmednagar.

1964 The communication satellite Cincom 3 was launched.



1939 Guruvar Ravindra Nath Tagore laid the foundation stone of Subhash Chandra Bose Mahajati Sadan in Calcutta in 1939.

1907 Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, essayist, novelist,

critic, thinker and researcher was born in 1907.

20 AUGUST

1597 Dutch East India Company's first ship returned from East Asia.

1944 Former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi was born.

1921 Start of Mopala Rebellion in Malabar, Kerala.

1979 Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh resigned from his post.

2011 India's famous historian Ram Sharan Sharma died.

1828 The first session of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj was held in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

1897 Ronald Ross identified malaria-causing anopheles mosquito while working at the Presidency General Hospital in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

1988 A magnitude 6.5 earthquake in India and Nepal killed a thousand people.



2018 Vinesh Phogat of India won the gold medal in the 50 kg category of the Jakarta Asian Games women's wrestling competition. She became the first woman wrestler in the country to achieve this feat.

21 AUGUST

1790 The British army, led by General Meadows, captured Dindigul in Tamil Nadu.

1988 One thousand people died due to the severe earthquake that hit the Indo-Nepal border.

2005 The ceasefire agreement between Bangladesh and India's Border Security Force concluded.



2006 Renowned Shehnai player Ustad Bismillah Khan passed away.

2008 The Caravan-e-Aman bus service plying between Muzaffarabad, the capital of Srinagar and 'Pakistan-occupied Kashmir', resumed.

1931 Pandit Vishnu Digambar died.

1972 The Wildlife Protection Act was passed in India.

2008 In 2008, India joined hands with NASA on the Moon mission.

2009 The Indian Navy's fighter aircraft 'Sea Harrier' crashed in the Arabian Sea after flying from Goa in 2009. Take the pilot. Commander Saurabh Saxena died.

22 AUGUST

1639 The British East India Company established Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu (erstwhile Madras).

1818 Warren Hasting, the first Governor General of India, died.

1921 Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi lit Holi of foreign clothes.



2012 Pranab Mukherjee was elected the 13th President of India.

1918 India's first proficient pilot Indralal Rai was killed in an air battle with Germany in London during the First World War.

1996 The state government changed the name of Madras to Chennai.

23 AUGUST

1944 The famous heroine of Indian films Saira Banu was born.

1947 Vallabhbhai Patel was appointed as the Deputy Prime Minister of the country.

1986 Bombay's Shambhu Apashane won the longest typing marathon by winning a world record.

1995 The country's first cellular phone was commercially introduced in Calcutta.

2011 Scientists at the Chinese Academy of Sciences discovered the origin of the Brahmaputra and Indus rivers and completed a comprehensive satellite study of the length of their route.

1960 The world's largest frog (3.3 kg) was caught.

2008 The Government of Uttar Pradesh nominated 16 members in the State Women's Commission in 2008.

24 AUGUST

1908 The revolutionary Rajguru was born.

1600 The first ship of the East India Company, Hector, reached the coast of Surat.

1690 Calcutta city was established.

1969 VV Giri became the fourth President of India.

1974 Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed became the fifth President of India.

1999 Pakistan refused to consider the 8 prisoners of war captured by India during the Kargil operation as a prisoner of war.

1910 ITC Limited bought the third largest tobacco company in Kolkata, India.

1925 Social reformer Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar died.

1971 India beat England by four wickets in the Oval Cricket Test match to register their first win on the ground.

25 AUGUST

1957 India won the title of world winner by winning the final of the Polo World Championship in France.

1917 In 1917, 7 Indians serving in the British Indian Army received the Kigs Commission for the first time.

1957 India won the title of world champion by winning the final of the Polo World Championship in France.

2003 The 2003 car bombings near Mumbai's Gateway of India and Mumbi Devi Temple killed more than 50 people and injured more than 150.



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Indian Actress

SAMANTHA RUTH PRABHU



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INDEPENDENCE DAY EVE ADDRESS

President Murmu stresses on maintaining spirit of harmony, giving priority to deprived

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday, August 14, said that despite having diverse identities all Indians are equal citizens with equal opportunities, rights and duties and urged the people to move forward with the spirit of harmony and brotherhood.

In her address to the nation on the eve of 77th Independence Day, the President said each Indian has many identities but apart from caste, creed, language, region, family and profession, "there is one identity" that is above all as the "citizen of India".

"Each one of us is an equal citizen; each one of us has an equal opportunity, equal rights and equal duties in this land," she said.

"But it was not always so. India is the mother of democracy and since ancient times we had democratic institutions functioning at the grassroots. But long years of colonial rule wiped them out. On 15th August 1947, the nation woke up to a new dawn. We not only won freedom from foreign rule but also the freedom to rewrite our destiny," she said.

Underlining that the Constitution is the country's guiding document, Murmu said its Preamble contains the ideals of the freedom struggle.

"Let us move forward with the spirit of harmony and brotherhood to realise the dreams of our nation-builders," she said.

Recalling the role of women freedom fighters Matangini Hazra, Kanaklata Baruah, Kasturba Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu, Ammu Swaminathan, Rama Devi, Aruna Asaf-Ali and Sucheta Kriplani, the President said women are contributing extensively in every field of development and service to the country and are enhancing the nation's pride.

"Today our women have made their special place in many such fields in which their participation was unimaginable a few decades ago," she said.

Murmu said the economic empowerment of women is being given special focus in the country.

"Economic empowerment strengthens the position of women in the family and society. I urge all fellow citizens to give priority to women empowerment.

"I would like our sisters and daughters to overcome challenges with courage and move ahead in life. Development of women was among the ideals of our freedom struggle," she said.

The President also called for urgent attention of scientists and policymakers towards climate change and global warming which is resulting in frequent floods of drought situations, saying the "culture of greed" is taking the "world away from nature".

Murmu highlighted India's presidency at the G-20 summit this year and said the grouping represents two-thirds of the



world and India can nudge decision-making in trade and finance towards equitable progress. "Beyond trade and finance, matters of human development too are on the agenda. There are many global issues that concern all humanity and are not limited by geographical boundaries. "I am confident that with India's proven leadership in dealing with global issues, member nations will be able to advance effective action on these fronts," the President said.

The President said she has observed a new confidence in the India story. India is playing a crucial role in promoting developmental and humanitarian goals around the world.

Murmu said the world economy is passing through a delicate stage, as the pandemic has been followed by international events that have added to the air of uncertainty.

"Yet, the government has been able to navigate the stormy waters very well. India has converted challenges into opportunities and has recorded high GDP growth. Our 'annadata' farmers have contributed significantly to our economic growth. The nation feels indebted to them," she said.

The President said global inflation remains a cause for worry, but in India, the government and the Reserve Bank have managed to contain it.

"The government has succeeded in protecting the common people from high inflation while also providing a more extensive security cover to the poor. The world looks up to India for global economic growth," she said.

The President lauded the two-pronged strategy of the government - sustained push to enterprise and proactive and expanded welfare initiatives for the

needy - which is driving the economic progress of the country.

"Giving priority to the deprived remains the focus of our policies and actions that have lifted a large number of people out of poverty in the last decade," she said.

Murmu, who is the first tribal woman to become the President, appealed to tribal "brothers and sisters to enrich their traditions while embracing modernity".

She said there are specific programmes to improve the conditions of tribals that encourage them to join the journey of progress.

The President also highlighted that the National Education Policy of 2020 has started making a difference.

"From my interactions with students as well as educationists at various levels, I gather that the learning process has become more flexible.

"The visionary policy, which aims to merge ancient values with modern skills, will bring in unprecedented changes in the education sector over the years, leading to a great transformation of the nation," she said.

Appreciating recent projects of India in space research, she referred to ISRO's moon mission Chandrayaan-3, its lander 'Vikram' and rover 'Pragyan', which are slated to land on the moon in the next few days, and said the mission to the moon is only a stepping stone for our future space programmes.

"We have to go far ahead," she said.

Murmu said to foster the spirit of research, innovation and entrepreneurship, the Government is setting up the Anusandhan National Research Foundation, with an amount of Rs. 50,000 crore for the next five years.

"India is, of course, home to one of the oldest living civilisations. India is called the mother of democracy. As a modern Republic, however, we are young. In the early years of Independence, we faced countless challenges and adversities. Very high levels of poverty and illiteracy were just two of the many ill-effects of the long foreign rule. Yet, the spirit of India was undeterred. With hope and confidence, we began an experiment unique in the history of humankind. Such a vast and diverse multitude of people coming together as one nation remains unprecedented. We did so with a belief that we are, after all, one; that we are all Indians. We have succeeded as a democratic republic because so many creeds and so many languages have not divided us, they have only united us. That is the essence of India."

"Keeping the welfare of poor families paramount, the duration of this scheme was extended successively, benefiting about 81 crore fellow citizens. Further extending this assistance, the government has announced that even during the year 2023, the beneficiaries will get their monthly ration free of cost. With this historic move, the government has undertaken the responsibility of caring for the weaker sections while also enabling them to benefit from economic development."

"We have reasons to be proud of our achievements in the domain of science and technology. India has been among the handful of pioneers in space technology. As long-pending reforms in this sector are underway, private enterprises are now invited to join the quest. The 'Gaganyaan' program to carry Indian astronauts into the space is under progress. This will be India's maiden human space flight. Yet, even as we reach out to the stars, we keep our feet on the ground."

INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH

Modi lays out blueprint for India as a developed country by 2047

India will be a developed country by 2047, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his 10th Independence Day speech, juxtaposing that long-term goal with the more short-term objective of the country's economy becoming the world's third largest — it is currently fifth — which he said would happen during his third term. He highlighted democracy, diversity and demography as the structural advantages that would enable India's rise.

The vision, short- and long-term, and economic and political — if Modi wins a third consecutive term in 2024, he will, become only the second Indian Prime Minister after Jawaharlal Nehru to do so — has found mention in some of the his recent speeches, and continues a theme from last year: India as a developed nation by the 100th anniversary of its Independence.

Modi's speeches, in both 2022 and 2023 have been forward-looking, shifting the narrative itself, and the PM?referred to this — in a speech that lasted 90 minutes, among the longest he has made on the occasion. Modi said that if his first term was based on the promise of change, his second term was based on performance, then the third term would be based on “unprecedented development”.

But even as he looked ahead, Modi made sure he mentioned three things: corruption, which is widely held responsible for the drubbing of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance by his BJP in 2014; appeasement, which is widely seen by the BJP's support base as the reason for many of the country's ills; and nepotism (and dynastic politics), which he has repeatedly targeted, setting himself and his politics apart from his opponents.

Fusing governance and politics, with less than eight months to go for the Lok Sabha elections, Modi said that 135 million people have risen from being poor to joining the ranks of the middle-class during his term in office, and reached out to a range of social and demographic groups, particularly the young and women.

Optimism and determination

But the overall tone of the speech was laced with optimism and determination, with Modi repeatedly expressing confidence in Indian capabilities which, he suggested, was now recognised by the world “without ifs and buts”.

“After the Second World War, there was a new world order. And I can see that post-Covid, there is a new world order taking shape. Geopolitical equations are changing. And in this changing climate, your capabilities are being recognised,” Modi said. He added that at a time when powerful economies were collapsing and supply chains lay devastated, the world had seen India call for human values. “The ball is in our court. We shouldn't let go of this opportunity.”

Referring to citizens as “parivarjan”, or his wider family, throughout the speech, Modi said they were very fortunate to be living in today's era where the young had catapulted India into becoming a startup power, women-centric development had taken concrete form, the world had come to see India's diversity and capacity including during the G20 meetings hosted over the past year, there was widespread curiosity and interest in India's digital initiatives, rating agencies lauded India's progress, and India had become the voice for the Global South.

The government's report card

The PM then went back to 2014, the year he was first elected, and said that citizens had wisely, after three decades of uncertainty and political compromises, voted for a strong and stable government. Referring to himself in third person, Modi said, “You made a strong government in 2014. That's why Modi had the strength to reform. When Modi did one reform after another, my bureaucracy, across the country, performed. And when people joined it, it transformed,” playing up his



PM after addressing the Nation on the occasion of 77th Independence Day from the ramparts of Red Fort, in New Delhi on August 15, 2023.

governance mantra of “reform, perform, transform”.

Drawing a contrast with the pre-2014 situation, Modi said India now had a strong economy — and when the economy became strong, and the government spent money honestly, the country's capabilities increased.

“Ten years ago, the Centre used to release Rs 30 lakh crore to states. Now it gives Rs100 lakh crore. Ten years ago, it gave Rs70,000 crore for local development. Now it gives Rs 3 lakh crore. For homes of the poor, it spent Rs 90,000 crore; now, we have spent Rs 4 lakh crore. Rs 10 lakh crore is given for urea subsidy. We gave Rs 3.5 lakh crore to MSMEs (micro, small and medium sector enterprises) during the pandemic and didn't let them die,” Modi said, adding examples of the government spending on one rank one pension, Mudra loans, income support to farmers, health insurance, provision of piped water, and other schemes.

The PM said, “In five years, 13.5 crore (135 million) people have risen above poverty line to neo-middle class. There is no greater satisfaction in life than this.” Promising that he would elevate India to the world's three largest economies in his next term, Modi pointed to the interconnected nature of the economy and said, “When the purchasing power of poor increases, the commercial power of middle class increases. When purchasing power of rural areas increase, so do that of towns and cities.” He also announced new schemes of loans for housing for those in urban areas who lived in unauthorised colonies, slums, and on rent and wished to buy a house and another scheme for workers with traditional skills who work with their tools, such as goldsmiths, ironsmiths, washermen, hairdressers and masons who mostly come from the backward communities.

But recognising that inflation remains a concern among citizens, Modi said that after the pandemic, the war — in a reference to Russia's invasion of Ukraine — created new problems. As India imported goods, it also imported inflation. Claiming that the government has taken steps to address this, Modi said he wasn't yet satisfied and will do more to reduce prices.

Then, after acknowledging a pressing issue for citizens, Modi returned to the theme of progress in diverse domains, from renewable energy and green hydrogen to rail modernisation and electric buses, from internet penetration in rural areas to quantum computing, from farmer producer organisations to semiconductor manufacturing, from the opportunities

for the differently abled to special training for the young in sport, from the expansion of highways and waterways. “If we lay the foundation stone, we inaugurate it,” Modi said, suggesting that the government was efficient and met targets ahead of time. In the course of offering various examples to substantiate his point, Modi mentioned having made the new Parliament before time. “This is a new India. It is filled with self-confidence. It doesn't stop. It doesn't tire. It doesn't lose,” he added with rhetorical flourish.

Five pledges, three challenges

To make India a developed country by 2047, Modi spoke of five issues. The first was a commitment to unity. “Unity gives us strength, from the north to south, east to west, from men to women... We must not do anything or say anything to weaken unity.”

The second was the idea that viksit Bharat must also be shrestha Bharat, or developed India needs to be marked by quality — in terms of made-in-India products, Indian institutions, decision-making processes, services, and words.

The third was the importance of women-led development, where Modi spoke of India having the highest number of women pilots, its moon mission being led by women scientists, and girl students embracing science, technology, engineering and math disciplines. He also announced that the government aimed to support 20 million women become “lakhpatris” (with an income of over Rs 100,000); and begin a scheme to provide drones and offer drone repair training to women groups to aid in agricultural activities.

The fourth was balanced regional development.

And the fifth was incorporating global welfare as a part of national character. “After Covid, when we help the world, we are seen as vishwa mitra — friend of the world,” Modi said, a distinctive formulation, for many in government had preferred using “vishwaguru” or teacher of the world as India's self image. Modi referred to various ways in which India had shaped the global narrative and institutional landscape, with its emphasis on themes such as “one sun, one earth, one grid”, or “One earth, one health” or “One earth, one family, one future”, or embracing LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment) to battle climate crisis or its leadership of the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. *Source: HT*

PM Modi announces drone training for women, relief for urban poor, Vishwakarma Scheme

From the ramparts of the historic Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered his tenth Independence Day speech – he equalled the record of hoisting the tricolour for 10 consecutive times – in which he vowed that the country would become one of the top three economies of the world and that the nation now identified as a ‘Vishwamitra’.

Sporting a multicolor Rajasthani bandhani print turban with an off-white kurta and churidar, PM Modi in his Independence Day speech highlighted how his government had brought transformation to the nation and added that decisions and actions taken during the “Amrit Kaal” – the period until 2047, the centenary of India’s Independence – will impact the millennium to come. “The decisions we make in this Amrit Kaal, our actions and sacrifices, would pave the way for a glorious history spanning the next millennium,” PM Modi said, adding, “The events of this era will impact the next millennium.”

During his speech, Prime Minister Modi also spoke of the various schemes his administration has launched since coming to power and also made the announcement of a new scheme – the Vishwakarma Yojana.

Let’s take a closer look at what this new scheme entails and also the other ones he mentioned in his address to the nation.

Vishwakarma Yojana

Addressing the nation on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Vishwakarma Yojana for traditional workers and craftsmen with an initial allocation of Rs 13000- Rs 15,000 crore.

PM Modi said, “In the coming months we will launch Vishwakarma yojana for those who work with their tools, such as goldsmiths, ironsmiths, washermen, hairdressers and masons who mostly come from the OBC class.”

The scheme will be flagged on Vishwakarma Jayanti, 17 September and seeks to help workers from the OBC community such as barbers, tanners, and blacksmiths. The scheme, according to the prime minister, carries the objective to drive economic growth and social progress among individuals possessing traditional skills.

The Vishwakarma scheme was initially announced in this year’s Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. At the time, it was said that the scheme aimed at improving the quality, scale and reach of products and services of artisans and craftspeople and to integrate them with the domestic and global value chain.

The finance minister had said that this would result in the economic empowerment of such workers, especially those belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Communities, women, transgender and other weaker sections of the society.



The PM had hailed the scheme at the time of its announcement, saying: “There are many of them (artisans) who can become suppliers and producers for our MSME sector. The industrial world can increase production by linking these people with their needs.”

Drone training for women

Apart from the Vishwakarma Yojana,

will be provided with drones. These agricultural drones can be utilised effectively. The initiative will begin with the flight of drones by 15,000 women’s self-help groups,” he said.

Increase in Jan Aushadi Kendras

Speaking on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day, PM Modi said that his government is working to increase the number of ‘Jan Aushadi Kendras’ from 10,000 to 25,000. These centres are a part of the larger scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadi Pariyojana that aims to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.

PM Modi in his speech said that holistic healthcare was the demand of the hour after COVID-19, adding that his government had even established a separate Ayush department and now the world is taking note of Ayush and Yoga.

“The world is now watching us because of our commitment,” Modi said, adding that India has emerged as “Vishwa Mitra” (friend of the world) in the post-COVID period.

Earlier in March, Bhupender Yadav, a minister in the Modi government, had said that more than 9,000 Jan Aushadi Kendras had been opened across the country by the central government to make healthcare accessible to people.

Housing scheme

PM Modi also announced that his government was planning a scheme in which those who were living in substandard conditions would get receive relief on the interest that they would pay on debt that they would undertake towards proper housing.

Such beneficiaries would be those living in slums, unauthorised settlements, ‘jhopdis’ and ‘jhuggis’, largely in urban areas.

PM Modi already has the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana -Urban (PMAY-U), which was launched in 2015. Under this scheme, around 1.18 crore houses have already been sanctioned until 31 July, out of which 76.02 lakh have been delivered to the beneficiaries.

Prime Minister Modi also used the opportunity to highlight his government’s other achievements and his vision for the country. According to many poll pundits, this speech gains even more significance, as it his last before the 2024 general elections.

And Modi ensured that he spoke of his governance in his speech which also saw him ditching the regular ‘Mitron’ address and repeatedly referring to the people as ‘parivaarjan’, which means family members. In fact, at the end of his speech, he explained why he used ‘parivaarjan’, saying, “I am one of you. I have come from amid you. My sweat is for you. I work for you not because you entrusted me with the responsibility. I do it because you are my family members. And I can’t see your suffering, your dreams crashing.”

PM Modi also made mentions of other schemes and announced a new scheme for women in which they would be trained to operate and repair drones. Pitching the importance of technology in agriculture, he said that 15,000 women self-help groups would be given training to handle and repair drones.

“We will train them in operating and repairing drones. Many self-help groups

Indians across globe celebrate I-Day with national pride

Indians across the world enthusiastically celebrated India's 77th Independence Day on August 15 by gathering at the diplomatic missions, where they exchanged greetings and sang the national anthem and patriotic songs.

In Beijing, the Indian diaspora and officials of the Indian embassy jointly celebrated Independence Day.

India's Consul General in Shanghai, N. Nandakumar, hoisted the tricolour at the Consulate General of India in the eastern Chinese metropolis and read out President Droupadi Murmu's address to the nation.

"77th #IndependenceDay of India was celebrated in Shanghai with patriotic fervour & colourful cultural performances. On the occasion, CG Dr N. Nandakumar unfurled the flag & read out Hon'ble President's address to the nation," India in Shanghai posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

In Australia, High Commissioner Manpreet Vohra hoisted the tricolour flag, followed by President Murmu's address.

"On the occasion, Indian diaspora members from different corners of India shared stories of growing up in India and presented beautiful performances in Indian regional languages. HC also administered the #PanchPranPledge holding maati/diya in hand," the High Commission of India, Canberra, posted on X.

Also, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese sent his best wishes to communities across Australia that are celebrating India's 77th Independence Day.

"In 2023, India can reflect on the pride of its success in pursuit of Nehru's dream. Whether as students, entrepreneurs, professionals, or building families and communities, Australia is grateful for all the experiences and ideas you have shared. We are a richer country because you have made Australia your home," the message read.

"The warm friendship between Australia and India reflects the deep bonds between our people. My aim is to bring our two nations even closer together in the future. We will do that through the strength of Australian-Indian communities," it said.

Albanese also said, "On the 76th anniversary of India's Independence, let us celebrate our shared democratic heritage." Also, French President Emmanuel took to X, formerly known as Twitter, to express France's solidarity with New Delhi.

"Congratulations to the Indian people on your Independence Day! A month ago in Paris, my friend Narendra Modi and I set new Indo-French ambitions all the way to 2047, the centenary year of India's Independence. India can count on France as a trusted friend and partner, always," Macron posted on X and also shared some glimpses of Prime Minister Modi's visit to France last month, where he took part in the Bastille Day Parade.



Independence Day celebrations at Consulate General of India in Hong Kong & Macau.



The day being celebrated at Indian High Commission in London.

In Singapore, Acting High Commissioner Pooja M. Tillu led more than 1,000 Indian diasporas and communities, along with crew members visiting INS Kulish, in celebrating Independence Day at the chancery.

The INS Kulish band played musicals and band members sang patriotic songs with students from local Indian schools.

INS Kulish arrived here on Monday for exercise with Singapore counterparts and the independence day celebrations.

Foreign Minister of Nepal NP Saud on X conveyed greetings on India's 77th Independence Day.

"As India celebrates its 77th Independence Day, I would like to convey warm greetings and felicitations to H.E. @DrSJaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India. Wish Happy Independence Day to the people and Government of India," Saud said.

In Sri Lanka, High Commissioner Gopal Baglay and officers of the High Commission of India paid homage to the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Memorial.

"High Commissioner and officers of High Commission of India pay homage at the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Memorial. The memorial is a #Shilaphalakm for the Veers of Indian soldiers of IPKF who made the supreme sacrifice defending peace & unity of Sri Lanka," the High Commission of India in Colombo posted on X.

The Burj Khalifa, the world's highest skyscraper, in Dubai lit up with India's Tricolor to commemorate India's 77th Independence Day. The official Instagram handle of Burj Khalifa shared a clip showing the skyscraper lit up in the colours of India's Tricolour — saffron, white and green.

Messages like "Happy 77th Independence Day To Mother India" and "Long Live India and UAE Friendship" were also projected on the skyscraper along with a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi.

"Tonight, #BurjKhalifa commemorates the Republic of India on their Independence Day. Wishing the people of India a day filled with celebration and pride as you celebrate the rich history and diverse culture of your nation. May India continue to shine brightly with progress, unity and prosperity. Happy Independence Day!" said the caption of the video.

The Day was celebrated by the High Commission of India in Bangladesh. A large number of Indian community members took part in the celebrations at the Chancery building in Dhaka. High Commissioner, Pranay Verma hoisted the national flag and read out excerpts from the President Droupadi Murmu's address to the Nation. Reports of Independence Day celebrations have also come from Indian Embassies in UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Hundreds of people of Indian origin gathered at the High Commission of India in London to celebrate the 77th Independence Day, with patriotic renditions and chants of "Vande

Mataram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai".

Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami arrived at the event riding a Ducati motorbike alongside a group of riders as a curtain raiser to the MOTO GP Bharat race, to be hosted in India for the first time next month.

The celebrations opened with the unfurling of the Indian national flag and singing the national anthem, followed by the High Commissioner delivering the customary extracts from the speech of President Droupadi Murmu broadcast overnight.

"Essentially, the idea was to give people more of a space to celebrate Independence Day and I believe today we had 400 people come, which is much larger than anticipated," Doraiswami told PTI.

"It was also nice to have some people to showcase, we wanted to showcase the visually impaired cricket team that's touring the UK. And then there's the first formal NCC [National Cadet Corps] tour of the UK. And, of course, India this year will host for the first time the Moto Grand Prix – the Motorcycle Grand Prix – in the Buddh circuit in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh. So, we got the organisers to have a small bike entrance also to showcase that," he said.

Spread out across a large courtyard towards the back of India House at Aldwych in central London, the aim was to make Independence Day even more of a celebration, particularly for young pravasi Indians to recognise that exciting things are happening in India, according to the envoy.

"So that was a 'Ducati Scrambler', it's one of the five fastest bikes on the planet. It's a terrific bike to ride on, it's light, it's got great acceleration. My only regret is that it wasn't my own because I think my wife would never let me buy one. But as anybody who likes motorcycles knows, the idea of being out in the open, generally the joy of being out in the countryside, the motorcycle is one of the nicest ways to do it," he shared, with reference to his own entry to the festivities riding a motorbike.

Referencing the 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' and 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaigns, Doraiswami noted that the intention behind the initiatives was to connect people of Indian origin to the idea of home.

"It's (Meri Maati Mera Desh) a powerful theme, particularly for the diaspora. And the 'Har Ghar Tiranga', young Indians want to be able to showcase who they are as a statement of pride and the flag is a really important part of that. So, it's intended to celebrate the fact that every Indian has the freedom and the right to feel their sense of identity by flying the flag," he added.

The High Commissioner felicitated members of the visiting National Blind Cricket Team and was also presented with a special beeping cricket ball by them. The visiting NCC cadets were also felicitated on the dais before the Bharatiya Vrund Gaan choir, led by British Indian musician Rakesh Joshi, performed a series of patriotic renditions.

Independence Day celebrations were held at India's missions in Canada.

Official celebrations were held in Calgary in the province of Alberta for the first time, with India's Consul General in Vancouver Manish flying there for the event. Alberta Premier Danielle Smith joined the celebrations and addressed a gathering of the Indo-



Officials of the Indian High Commission in Australia celebrating the Independence Day dressed up in the colors of India. They enjoyed morning tea with Tricolor-themed Australian dishes.



Celebrations in Toronto.



Celebrations in Nepal.

Canadian community. This was the first time official Independence Day celebrations were held in Calgary. Joining the event was Premier (the equivalent of Chief Minister) of Alberta Danielle Smith. In a statement issued by

the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau described India as "a key partner for Canada in the promotion of our shared values of democracy, pluralism, and progress."

"We are committed to building on this rich history of collaboration, including under India's presidency of the G20 this year. Looking ahead, as Canada strengthens its presence in the region under its Indo-Pacific Strategy, we will continue to work together to preserve the rules-based international order, promote multilateralism, and grow our economic ties to benefit people in both our countries as well as the region at large," it said.

Canada's minister of foreign affairs Mélanie Joly also took to Twitter to send her greetings. She said: "Canada and India's relationship is based on strong and longstanding ties between our people and our shared interests on the world stage."

Her cabinet colleague Anita Anand, president of the treasury board said, "As we sing Jana Gana Mana like my mom always did, we recognize and honour the many contributions of Indo-Canadians to our communities."

The Queenstown chapter of Bhartiya Samaj celebrated Indian Independence Day on Sunday, 13 August, at Lake Hayes Pavilion with the hoisting of the Indian flag and some inspiring performances by community members including a kids fancy dress show.

National MP for Southland Joseph Mooney attended the event, who in his brief speech, remembered the peaceful resistance that Mahatma Gandhi inspired during India's struggle for freedom and said, "This principle of empowerment of people to make decisions for themselves and to have an involvement in political decisions that affect their lives is really important and something that New Zealand and India share." Bharatiya Samaj Queenstown Charitable Trust also hosted a vibrant Haryali Teej celebration on Saturday, 12 August. The packed women-only event was a great success, with around 150 community members coming to enjoy the festivities.

World leaders extended their wishes as India celebrated its 77th Independence Day on August with President Emmanuel Macron saying New Delhi can count on France as a trusted friend while Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said India can reflect with pride on its success in pursuit of the dream of country's first elected leader Jawaharlal Nehru.

Macron referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Paris last month while congratulating Indians on the 77th Independence Day. In a post on X, he said the two set new Indo-French ambitions all the way to 2047, the centenary year of India's Independence. Modi thanked Macron for the wishes. "I fondly recall my visit to Paris and appreciate your passion towards boosting India-France ties," he said in response.

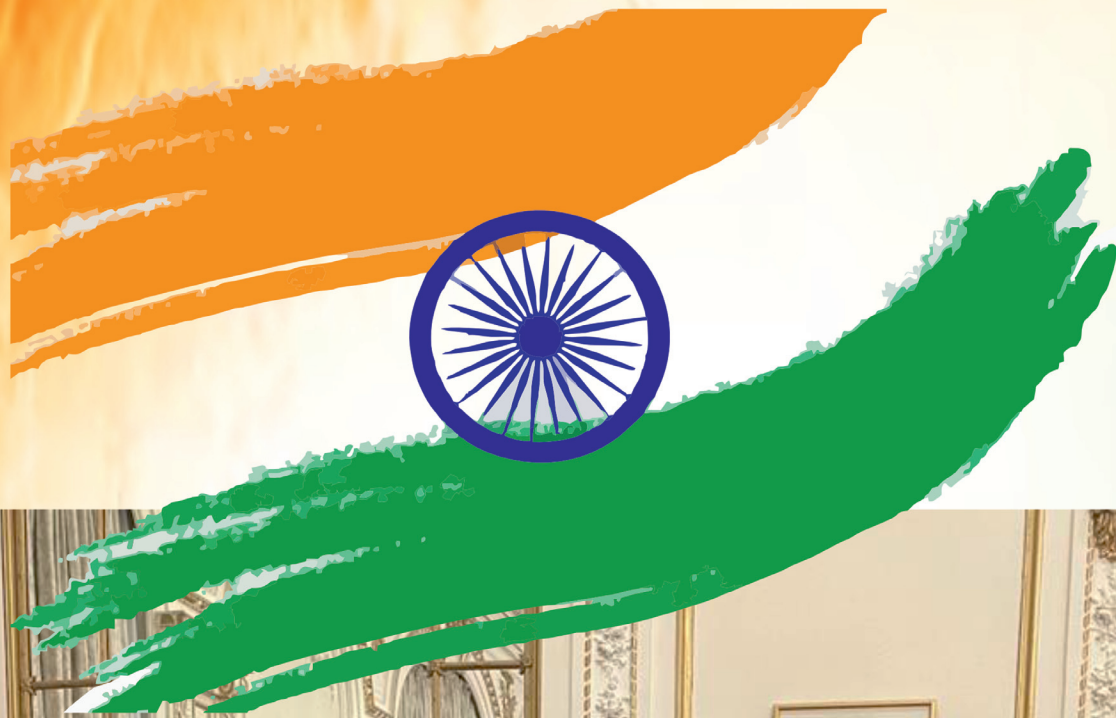
Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth congratulated Modi for taking India even further in its stride towards progress. "Mauritius is proud of our brotherly ties." He added Independent India has shown the world the unmatched resourcefulness, ingenuity, and resilience of its people.

In a post on X, Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih said his government and the people of Maldives join him in conveying best wishes to President Droupadi Murmu, Modi, and the Indian people. "May India always be blessed with lasting freedom and prosperity."

Afghan Sikhs in America

wish all Indians a

Happy 77th Independence Day of India



L to R: S. Santokh Singh Bajaj, S. Dyal Singh Vohra, Shri Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Consul General of India at New York, S. Balbir Singh Pahwa, S. Harcharan Singh Gulati , S. Kulraj Singh Logani

INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY HONORED AT TIMES SQUARE WITH CHAKRA SCULPTURE

BY MABEL PAIS

Let's honor the diversity that unites us and the creativity that sets us free.

Happy Independence Day!



Chakra Sculpture inaugurated in Times Square, NYC

Photo / iaac.us

In honor of India's Independence Day, August 15, The Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC), in partnership with The Consulate General of India (CGI) in New York and The City of New York (CNY), has inaugurated a Chakra Sculpture at Times Square, New York. The Inauguration Ceremony of The Indian Independence Exhibition took place at 10:30 a.m. on August 15 and was open to the public. The exhibition will be available for public viewing until August 22, 2023.

"We are honored to welcome Mayor Eric Adams to this remarkable exhibition, which pays tribute to the timeless cultural bond between India and the United States," expressed Rajeev Kaul, Board Member, IAAC. "The Chakra Sculpture's presence in the heart of Times Square is a testament to the enduring friendship and shared values that unite our two nations," he added.



Indian Consul General (NYC) Randhir Jaiswal speaks

Photo / iaac.us

"We are honored to bring the Konark Chakra to the heart of New York City to celebrate India's 77th Independence Day. The Chakra or wheel stands as a shining symbol of India's heritage, thought and timeless wisdom. Through the display of Chakra at Times Square, we not only celebrate the rich culture of India but also the enduring friendship that binds our two nations - United States and India. This

sculpture, a faithful replica of one of the twenty four Chakras that adorn the Konark Temple dedicated to Surya or the Sun God, carries with it the essence of India's history, resilience, and unity. It also symbolizes our deep reverence for nature, for the sun. We extend our warmest gratitude to The Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor of New York City, for joining us on this momentous occasion, to Mr. Vikas Khanna and to the Indo-American Arts Council Inc. for their partnership in the project. I also thank the State Bank of India for their support", said Consul General of India in New York, Randhir Jaiswal.



IAAC Board members & Staff

Photo / iaac.us

"I'm so proud to be representing India on August 15 to showcase the artisans and history and culture in this piece of stone which represents the wheel of time. I think this day is gifted to us by (our) ancestors, their sacrifices, their resilience, and the determination that the children will grow up in a free country where they can choose to be anything they want. And I chose to become a chef, and I'm so proud that the entire country supported me. This is the power of freedom. Today, on August 15, we salute all those who stood up for this power and also gave us the vision of (the) future of India", added Chef, Restaurateur, Writer and Filmmaker Vikas Khanna.



Surati dancers perform at Chakra Sculpture inauguration.

Photo / iaac.us

Following the inauguration, the public was invited to explore the Chakra Sculpture exhibit which will be open until August 22nd, 2023. This exhibition provides an opportunity for visitors to engage with the captivating history and symbolism that the Chakra represents.

THE CHAKRA SCULPTURE : The Chakra Sculpture, with dimensions of 8 feet x 6 feet and an approximate weight of 1800 kilograms (4,000 pounds), stands as a testament to the remarkable craftsmanship and artistic ingenuity. It is a faithful replica of the Konark Chakra, a revered emblem from the Sun Temple in Konark, Odisha. The original Konark Chakra is a meticulously carved stone wheel, one of 24 such wheels adorning the Konark Sun Temple. Built in the 13th century, the Konark Sun Temple endured challenges throughout history such as invasions and natural calamities, yet its resilient spirit persevered. The intricate carvings and symbolic representation of the Konark Chakra continue to captivate visitors, serving as a poignant reminder of India's architectural and cultural legacy. Despite facing adversity, the Chakra embodies the enduring power and movement of the Sun, a source of sustenance and life, underscoring the same values as embodied by the city of New York.

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

WHO WILL BE THE NEXT 'SASSY AWARD' WINNER?

BY MABEL PAIS

The search is on for the next great jazz singers!

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) is accepting submissions for its 12th Annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. Solo vocalists from around the world are encouraged to submit their entries before September 5, 2023, by visiting njpac.org/sarah-vaughan-international-jazz-vocal-competition.

In the Fall 2023, the Top Five Finalists will be announced followed by a star-studded final performance on the iconic NJPAC stage.

The Sarah Vaughan International Vocal Competition, also known as "The SASSY Awards", is open to singers over the age of 18, of all genders and nationalities, from anywhere in the world, and not signed by a major label. Entrants are judged on vocal quality, musicality, technique, performance, individuality, artistic interpretation, and ability to swing.

On November 19, 2023, the finalists will compete at NJPAC in front of a live audience and before a distinguished panel of judges including Grammy and TONY Award-winning jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater, singer-songwriter Madeleine Peyroux, acclaimed vocalist Lizz Wright, NJPAC's Jazz Advisor and multi-Grammy-winning bassist Christian McBride, and three-time Grammy Award-winning producer and executive vice president of Mack Avenue Records Al Pryor.

Hosted by WBGO Radio's Pat Prescott, this special event will also include performances by the 2021 winner of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition G. Thomas Allen. The first-prize winner of The SASSY Awards will receive a \$5,000 cash award, second-place \$1,500, and third-place \$500.

The competition recalls the humble beginnings of legendary jazz singer/NEA Jazz Master Sarah Vaughan (1924-1990) who, back in 1942, was a Newark teenager

and winner of an amateur singing contest at the Apollo Theater. That memorable night helped launch the



Sarah Vaughan

Photo / NJPAC

lifework of one of the most successful, influential jazz vocalists in the history of American music.

Past winners include Cyrille Aimée, Jazzmeia Horn, Ashleigh Smith, Arianna Neikrug, Deelee Dubé, Quiana Lynell, Laurin Talese, Samara Joy (Grammy winner for Best New Artist 2023), Gabrielle Cavassa and Tawanda Suessbrich-Joaquim, G. Thomas Allen, and Lucia



2023 Sassy Awards Judges Panel

Photo / NJPAC

Gutiérrez Reboloso.

What has become one of the top annual vocal

competitions in jazz, The SASSY Awards offers outstanding jazz singers a one-of-a-kind platform for embarking on a career in the music business and offers audience members a chance to discover the jazz stars of tomorrow. Gifted young contestants from around the world are evaluated on vocal quality, musicality, technique, performance, individuality, artistic interpretation, and ability to swing. For more information about The SASSY Awards, visit SarahVaughanCompetition.com.

NJPAC

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), located in downtown Newark, N.J., is America's most diverse performing arts center, and the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey - where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the state's and the world's best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city.

Through its extensive Arts Education programs, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has served more than 10 million visitors (including over 1.9 million students and families) since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents.

FOLLOW NJPAC ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org
Twitter: @NJPAC
Instagram: @NJPAC
Hashtag: #NJPAC
Facebook: facebook.com/NJPAC
YouTube: NJPACtv

FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org/takeastand
Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand
Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

NJS OFFERS A FREE PREVIEW CONCERT FOR NEXT SEASON

BY MABEL PAIS

Calling all lovers of Classical Music!



New Jersey Symphony

Photo / NJS

The New Jersey Symphony (NJS) invites you to a free preview of the 2023-2024 season.

Mark your calendars for the New Jersey Symphony's (NJS) free 2023-2024 season preview concert!

PROGRAM

Classical Favorites: Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and More!

Wednesday, August 30 at 2 pm
Victoria Theater

New Jersey Performing Arts Center in

Newark

Conductor: Tong Chen

Enjoy a delightful summer afternoon of orchestral favorites featuring overtures by Berlioz and Mendelssohn, excerpts from Beethoven and Tchaikovsky's symphonies and more! Conducted by former New Jersey Symphony Associate Conductor Tong Chen, this preview of the 2023-24 season delivers a lineup of beloved works you won't want to miss!

CONCERT INFORMATION

Tong Chen conductor
New Jersey Symphony
Berlioz Roman Carnival Overture
Mendelssohn Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream
Elgar "Nimrod" from Enigma Variations
Tchaikovsky "Valse" from Symphony No. 5
Beethoven "Finale: Allegro Molto" from Symphony No. 3, "Eroica"

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

The Emmy and Grammy Award-

winning New Jersey Symphony (NJS) is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. NJS is renewing its deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be new; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of its organization-all to better reflect and serve its vibrant communities.

Since 2021, Music Director Xian Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's Resident Artistic Catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey.

Internationally renowned Chinese American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current Music Director in 2016. Since her arrival at the New Jersey Symphony, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts. In its second century of bringing concerts to the people of New Jersey, the Symphony

will present audience favorites and exciting new works including Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, "From the New World," Orff's Carmina Burana, Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, violinist Joshua Bell leading the Orchestra and performing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, composer and pianist Gabriella Montero performing her own Piano Concerto No. 1, "Latin," pianist Daniil Trifonov playing Gershwin's Concerto in F, and the "classically trained garage band" Time for Three performing composer Kevin Puts' 'Contact.'

New Jersey Symphony co-commissions include works by internationally renowned living composers-Anna Clyne's Piano Concerto, Jessie Montgomery's New Work and Augusta Read Thomas' Selection from 'Jubilee.' Composers Rob Kapilow and Daniel Bernard Roumain will present world premieres on the season.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit njsymphony.org or email information@njsymphony.org.

For tickets to concerts, visit njsymphony.org or call 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

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



Fardeen Khan flaunts 'killer' body in shirtless selfie

After battling weight issues, Bollywood actor Fardeen Khan has shared a selfie flaunting his ripped body at the beach.

Fardeen took to Instagram, where he posted a shirtless picture of himself as he gave a glimpse of his beach day. In the image, he looked away from the camera with the sunset and the waves in the background.

For the caption, he wrote: "Sun sea sunset. A perfect end to a beautiful day."

His friends and social media users could not keep calm after looking at his perfect transformation picture.

Actress Dia Mirza dedicated a song to him: "Here comes the sun." She added: "Shine on my friend."

Zayed Khan said: "Well done FK."

An amazed Rohit Bose Roy said: "Look at you."

Actor Riteish Deshmukh commented: "Smashing FK."

Celebrity photographer Daboo Rantnani found the picture "Deadly."

Actor Abhishek Bachchan dropped a "fire" emoji.

A fan said: "The curious case of Benjamin Fardeen!! Reverse aging at its best."

Another said: "The Hulk baap re baap my superstar fav Feroz Khan's gem fardeen khan. Best handsome actor."

Kriti Sanon's maiden production Do Patti featuring Kajol goes to floors

Kriti Sanon's maiden production Do Patti went to floors today. Kriti Sanon, who is also a part of this project, shared an update on her Instagram profile. Kriti Sanon shared a picture with Kajol and Kanika Dhillon. In the picture, Kriti is seen showing victory signs. Kriti posted another picture with her parents. Kriti wrote in the caption, "DO PATTI begins...! This is ready to flyyyyyy! Need all your love and blessings!" In a post script, Kriti mentioned that she missed sister Nupur Sanon.

On this occasion, Kajol shared a picture with Tanvi Azmi on her Instagram story. Kajol wrote in the caption, "Mother and daughter are back in another film but still killing it." Kajol hasn't specified the film but in all probability she was talking about Do Patti.

Kriti Sanon launched her own production house Blue Butterfly Films in July. A day after announcing her production house, Kriti announced the project Do Patti. Announcing the project Kriti wrote in the caption, "Thrilled to announce DO PATTI! Alongside 3 very strong-headed, inspiring and immensely talented women! Monica, we couldn't have found a better platform than Netflix to tell this story! @netflix_in Ruchikaa Kapoor Super duper excited to reunite with Kajol ma'am after 8 years! Kajol. Kanika - I've always loved your writing & I'm so happy to be co-producing my first with you! Ufff.. this is a special one! Kanika.d @kathhapiictures." Kriti concluded the post with, "This one is gonna be a thrilling game with a lot of heart! A first for Blue Butterfly Films @bluebutterflyfilmsofficial."

Kriti Sanon and Kajol worked in Dilwale earlier. About teaming up with Kajol, Kriti Sanon said in a vlog, which was released on the production house's YouTube channel, "The energy and the vibe on the set was so chill and so cool that we sort of had to be fierce and strong. We were bursting out laughing. Of course, because Kajol ma'am was there." Kriti added, "I am shooting with her after so long. It's been about what, like, seven years or maybe eight? I remember shooting with her in Dilwale and that was my second film. I was such a baby. I didn't know anything. I was suddenly in front of these big stars. And, to now shoot after so long, you know where I am sure that I have evolved, grown, become a better version of myself... And, she [Kajol] is the same vibrant, looking even better with every passing year and every passing day. Her energy is infectious."



Gadar 2 box office collection: Sunny Deol's film enters Rs 300 crore club

Gadar 2, helmed by Anil Sharma, has entered the Rs 300 crore club in India. As per Sacnilk.com, the film earned nearly Rs 20 crore at the domestic box office on the second Friday of its release. Gadar 2 hit the theatres on August 11.

According to Sacnilk.com, Gadar 2 earned Rs 19.50 crore nett in India on its eighth day, as per early estimates. Gadar 2 earned Rs 284.63 crore during the first week of its release. So far, the film has earned Rs 304.13 crore at the domestic box office.

The film, which has turned out to be a blockbuster, stars Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel in the lead roles. Earlier this week, the Gadar 2 team held a press conference about the film's huge success.

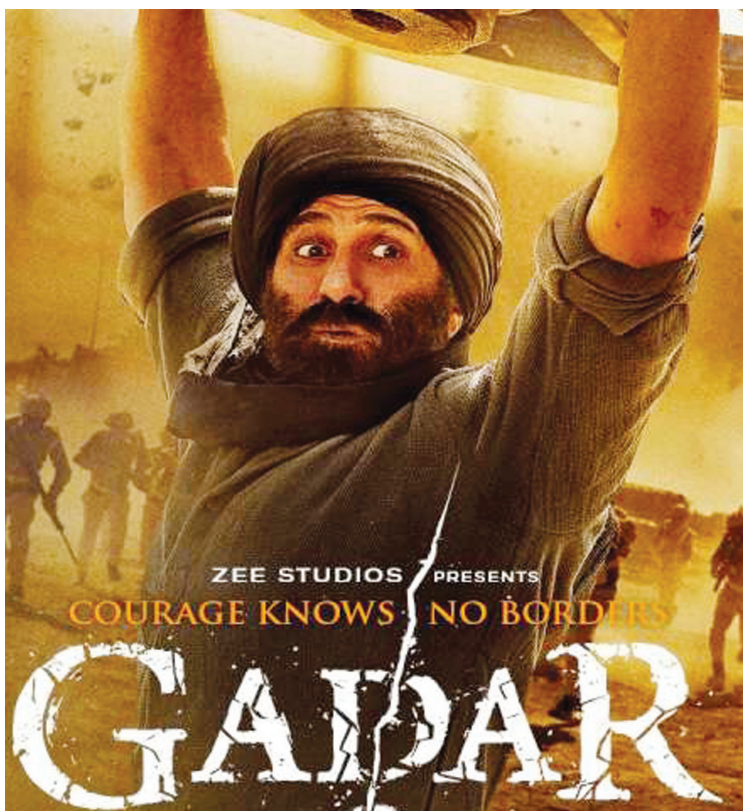
Sharing how he initially reacted seeing the audience's love for Gadar 2, Sunny had said, "I was quite stressed before the release of the movie. When the movie was released, I cried

and laughed the entire night. My father was around and he saw me. I told him, 'I have not had alcohol. Main khush aa main ki kara (I am happy, what can I do).'

Film director Anil Sharma spoke about Gadar 3. He had said, "You'll have to wait for that...Just like this one (Gadar 2). Some thoughts have come to me and Shaktimaan Ji's (writer of Gadar 2) minds. So just wait everything will happen."

Gadar 2 is the sequel to Gadar: Ek Prem Katha, which released in theatres in 2001. In the first film, Sunny played the role of Tara Singh, a truck driver, while Ameesha Patel played Sakeena. The film was set during the partition of India in 1947.

Gadar 2 follows Tara as he ventures across the border to rescue his son, portrayed by Utkarsh, who has been captured in Pakistan. It has garnered much love and appreciation from the audience.





Jennifer Lopez shares an adorable video wishing husband Ben Affleck

Jennifer Lopez marked her husband Ben Affleck's 51st birthday by sharing a lovely video of them singing together in a car.

The video showed Jennifer in the passenger seat, recording a selfie video, while Ben was driving and looking in a different direction. It's worth noting that Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck tied the knot on July 16th of the previous year.

Jennifer Lopez marked Ben Affleck's 51st birthday this Tuesday by sharing a video on Instagram. In the video, both of them were singing along to the romantic song "What a Wonderful World" by Sam Cooke, which was released in 1960.

The clip captured Ben driving while Jennifer enjoyed the breeze from the passenger seat, with her hair flowing in the wind. She captioned the video, "Dear Ben... Congratulations on your birthday! I love you!"

Natalie Portman And Benjamin Millepied separate after 11 years of marriage

Black Swan actor Natalie Portman and her husband Benjamin Millepied have parted ways after 11 years of marriage, according to a report by Us Weekly. The estranged couple are parents to a son Aleph (12) and a daughter Amalia (6). On their 11th marriage anniversary (August 4), Natalie Portman was spotted without her wedding ring during an Angel City FC event in Sydney, Australia and this incident sparked their separation rumours one more time after June. In June there were rumours that Benjamin Millepied was having an affair with Camille Etienne, a 25-year-old climate activist.

However, a source close to Us Weekly said back then that Natalie Portman wanted to give her marriage a chance despite Benjamin's alleged affair. Now Us Weekly quoted an insider who said, "After news of his affair came out, they've been trying to work on their marriage but are currently on the outs."

Us Weekly quoted a source who claimed, "Natalie believes Benjamin's affair was a brief and stupid liaison that means nothing to him," adding that Natalie was "humiliated" by the rumours. According to the source, Natalie was "willing to see if she's capable of rebuilding her trust" in Benjamin to ensure that their kids don't "grow up in a broken home." Another source added, "Right now, they are talking and working on it together for



the sake of their children," and also added that Benjamin "regrets" his actions.

Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied met in 2009 while working on Darren Aronofsky's thriller Black Swan, which hit theaters in 2010. Natalie Portman is known for movies

like Where the Heart Is, Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith, No Strings Attached, Black Swan, A Tale of Love and Darkness, to name a few. Benjamin Millepied, a professional ballet dancer, worked with his wife on choreography for the film Vox Lux.

Oppenheimer star Cillian Murphy says he freaks out when watching his own movies

Oppenheimer star Cillian Murphy has said he is a huge fan of the 2014 sci-fi movie Interstellar, which stars the likes of Matt Damon, Matthew McConaughey, Jessica Chastain and Anne Hathaway.

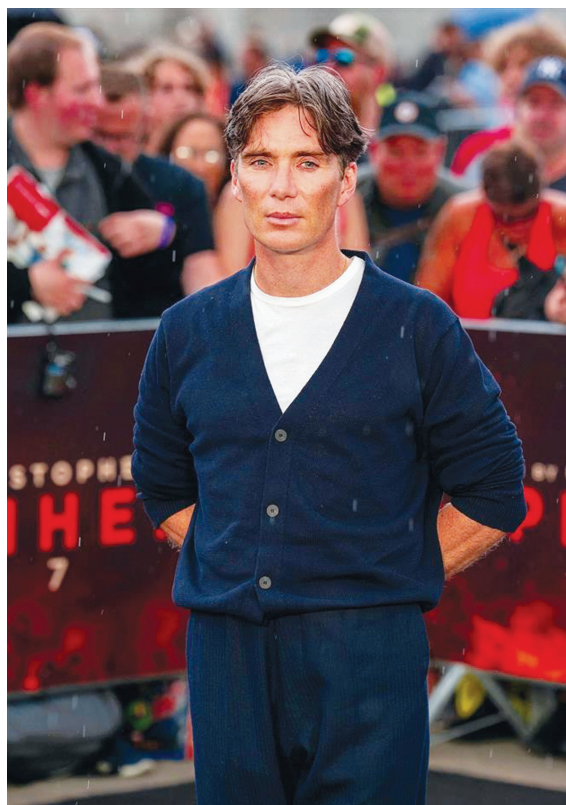
"I adore Interstellar just because I find it so emotional. I remember seeing it in the cinema when I had little kids. It just had a big impact on me. It broke my heart. I love watching his films when I'm not in them because you don't have to freak out about the size of your ears, or whatever," Cillian said.

Earlier this year, Cillian likened the Oppenheimer set to a 'laboratory'. The actor plays J. Robert Oppenheimer — the theoretical physicist who helped develop the first nuclear weapons — in the acclaimed movie, and Cillian heaped praise on the film's director for creating a 'safe environment' for the cast.

He told, "Christopher creates this really ... kind of like a laboratory, where you can just try stuff out and he just lets you off. And the other thing is, I was thinking about it, no scene ever gets left behind, do you know what I mean? No scene is less than another."

Oppenheimer boasted of a star-studded cast that also included Robert Downey Jr., Florence Pugh, Emily Blunt, and Matt Damon. Cillian also revealed that he relished the experience of working with Florence.

Source: IANS



Britney Spears, Sam Asghari file for divorce after 14 months of marriage

Britney Spears' husband Sam Asghari has filed for divorce after 14 months of marriage due to 'irreconcilable differences'.

Sam has alleged that Spears cheated on him as reported by TMZ, after which he proceeded to confront her and then walked out of the door. The estranged couple have kept most details secret, but reportedly the two got into a huge fight after which Sam decided to file for divorce and is now living

in a place of his own. TMZ further reported that Sam is asking for her to pay spousal support and attorneys fees, but his filing stated that he "has yet to determine the full nature and extent of the separate property assets and obligations of each party."

There's been some "deep trouble" brewing between the couple after their star-studded marriage for months now. Sam wasn't sleeping much at the house after the marriage, and it has also been reported that Britney has gotten physically violent with him, frequently indulging in fights that include frequent screaming, insulting and hitting as well.

Source: IANS



FEARS FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS AS SUDAN WAR SPREADS

WAD MADANI (TIP): Fighting between two rival generals has spread to cities in war-ravaged Sudan's south, witnesses said on August 18, raising concerns for hundreds of thousands who have fled violence in the Darfur region.

The vast western region has seen some of the worst bloodshed since the conflict erupted on April 15 between the army under General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Battles resumed late Thursday in the North Darfur state capital of El Fasher, witnesses said, disrupting nearly two months of calm in the densely populated city that has become a shelter from the shelling, looting, rapes and summary executions reported in other parts of Darfur.

"This is the biggest gathering of civilians displaced in Darfur, with 600,000 people in El Fasher," said Nathaniel Raymond of the Humanitarian Research Lab at the Yale School of Public Health.

One resident told AFP: "As night fell, we heard battles with heavy weapons from the city's east."

Witnesses also reported fighting in Al-Fulah, the capital of West Kordofan state which borders Darfur.

The conflict had already expanded to North Kordofan state, a commercial and transport hub between Khartoum and parts of southern and western Sudan.

'INDISCRIMINATE SHELLING'

Human rights groups and witnesses who fled Darfur have reported the massacre of civilians and ethnically



driven attacks and killings, largely by paramilitary forces and their allied Arab tribal militias.

Many have fled across the western border to neighbouring Chad, while others have sought refuge in other parts of Darfur, where the International Criminal Court is probing alleged war crimes.

The region has been the focus of deadly fighting since 2003 when the then government in Khartoum unleashed the feared Janjaweed -- precursors of the RSF -- on ethnic minority rebels and civilians suspected of supporting them.

On Friday, an armed group that in 2020 signed a peace agreement with Khartoum announced it was aligning with the RSF.

The so-called Tamazuj Front said it aimed "to fight the remnants of the old regime that use the army to reinstate their totalitarian power".

Several figures of former strongman Omar al-Bashir's regime, which was

toppled in 2019, have escaped from prison in recent months, with some voicing their support for the army.

Fighting in the latest conflict has concentrated on El Geneina, the capital of West Darfur state, where the UN suspects crimes against humanity have been committed.

Nyala, Sudan's second city and capital of South Darfur state, has been in the throes of recent fighting.

An emergency room set up in the city said Friday that it had been "living under catastrophic humanitarian conditions" as fighting raged for a seventh straight day.

"The clashes have resulted in the death of a large number of defenceless victims... and a countless number of injuries and humanitarian violations with all state hospitals out of service," it added.

The United States on Thursday urged the warring sides "to cease renewed fighting in Nyala... and other populated

areas".

"We are particularly alarmed by reports of indiscriminate shelling carried out by both" parties, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said.

'CHAOS'

Further east, a resident of Al-Fulah said "the RSF are confronting the army and the police, and public buildings have been set on fire during their fire exchanges".

"Shops were looted and there are dead on both sides, but no one can get to the bodies in this chaos," said another witness in Al-Fulah.

The conflict has killed at least 3,900 people nationwide, according to a conservative estimate by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

The actual toll is believed to be much higher, as the fighting restricts access to many areas.

UN experts voiced particular concern for women and girls caught up in the conflict, denouncing "rape and sexual violence" by RSF fighters.

"Men identified as members of the RSF are using rape and sexual violence of women and girls as tools to punish and terrorise communities," the independent experts said Thursday, citing survivors.

In neighbouring South Sudan, medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said more than 200,000 people, mostly women and children, had arrived from Sudan since the fighting erupted.

Many of them were "exhausted and extremely vulnerable" and require urgent aid, MSF said. (AFP)

Niger clashes leave 28 dead: Sources

NIAMEY (TIP): Violence erupted this week in a string of villages in remote southwest Niger leaving at least 28 civilians dead, sources told AFP on August 18.

"For now we have recorded at least 28 dead, but the toll could go up," a senior official in the Tillaberi region close to Mali, told AFP.

Some of the bodies had been "carried off" by the Niger river, he added.

The violence started at sunset on Tuesday and ended midday Wednesday, the official said.

In Ayorou, one of four departments affected, four people were killed and 26 injured by bullets and knives, according to a local source.

The military authorities who overthrew President Mohamed Bazoum on July 26 did not confirm the killings.

One security source said "about 100 civilians" had died in the latest violence near the borders with Burkina Faso and Mali where jihadists regularly strike.

A figure in the region's civil society said the violence was due to a "cycle of reprisals" between Peul herders and

ONE SECURITY SOURCE SAID "ABOUT 100 CIVILIANS" HAD DIED IN THE LATEST VIOLENCE NEAR THE BORDERS WITH BURKINA FASO AND MALI WHERE JIHADISTS REGULARLY STRIKE.

settled Djerma people who both populate the area.

"There was an attack against the herders so armed herder youths carried out reprisals ... and that was repeated in other villages," the civil society member said. The two groups clashed at the end of April and in early May in villages and hamlets along the river leaving dozens dead and wounded. Thousands were temporarily displaced.

A local radio journalist told AFP that the April-May clashes followed "several murders" of villagers by suspected jihadists who steal cattle and levy taxes.

Under President Bazoum the authorities have regularly run awareness campaigns warning people of attempts by jihadists to inflame communal tensions. (AFP)

British neonatal nurse found guilty of murdering seven newborn babies

LONDON (TIP): A British nurse was on August 18 found guilty of murdering seven newborn babies and trying to murder six others at the hospital neonatal unit where she worked with sick and premature infants.

Lucy Letby, 33, who has been on trial since last October, was accused of injecting her young victims with air, overfeeding them milk and poisoning them with insulin.

The jury at Manchester Crown Court in northern England reached its verdicts after deliberating for 22 days.

Letby was arrested following a string of baby deaths at the neonatal unit of the Countess of Chester Hospital in northwest England between June 2015 and June 2016.

Described by the prosecution as a "calculating" woman who used methods of killing that "didn't leave much of a trace", Letby had repeatedly denied harming the children.

The court heard that colleagues raised concerns after noticing that Letby was

Described by the prosecution as a "calculating" woman who used methods of killing that "didn't leave much of a trace", Lucy Letby had repeatedly denied harming the children.

on shift when each of the babies collapsed, with some of the newborns attacked just as their parents left their cot sides.

Prosecutor Nick Johnson said Letby "gaslighted" her colleagues into believing the string of deaths were "just a run of bad luck".

Letby's final victims were two triplet boys, referred to in court as babies O and P.

Child O died after Letby's return from a holiday in Ibiza in June 2016 while child P died a day after their sibling.

Letby was also said to have attempted to kill the third triplet, child Q, but the jury was unable to reach a verdict on the charge. (AFP)

THOUSANDS FLEE WILDFIRES IN CANADA'S FAR NORTH

YELLOWKNIFE (TIP): Thousands were fleeing wildfires advancing on one of the largest cities in Canada's far north on August 17, as convoys snaked south to safety on the only open highway and evacuation flights took off from the airport.

The order to evacuate Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories marks the latest chapter in a terrible summer for wildfires in Canada. More than 20,000 residents of the regional capital have been given until noon Friday to leave.

Emergency responders were constructing firebreaks, installing sprinkler lines and water cannons, and laying fire retardant in an effort to prevent the blaze from reaching the city - which remained a real possibility in coming days, officials said.

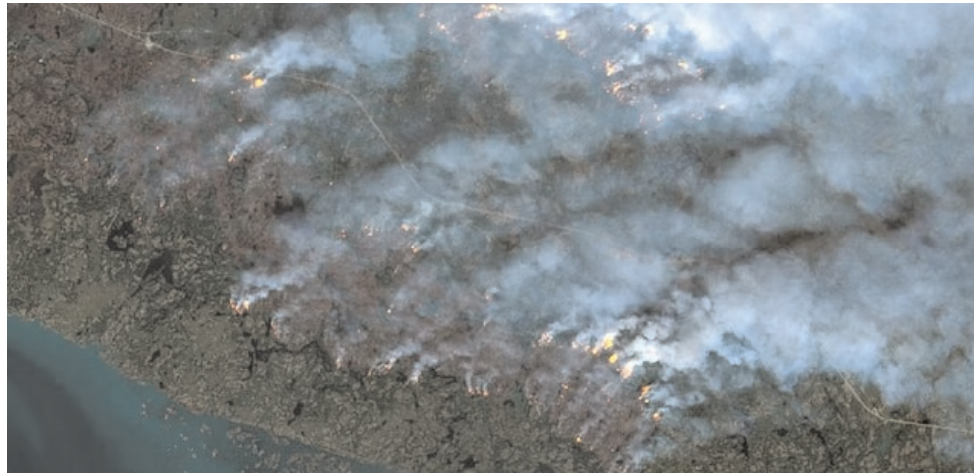
Northwest winds over the next two days will send the fire "in directions we don't want," said Mike Westwick, Northwest Territories' fire information officer.

Heeding Wednesday's evacuation order, Tiffany Champagne was one of many who crammed into the airport in Yellowknife awaiting flights -- the first departing at 1:00 pm (1900 GMT).

"I have asthma and the wildfire smoke was making it increasingly difficult to do anything," Champagne, wearing a face mask, told public broadcaster CBC.

Carriers WestJet and Air Canada announced they were increasing flights out of the city.

As of Thursday, more than 1,000 wildfires were burning in Canada, including about 230 in the Northwest Territories, where more than 8,100 square miles (21,000 square kilometres)



have been set ablaze.

In British Columbia in western Canada, an evacuation order was put in place for the city of West Kelowna, which was under threat of a different fire.

In addition to those travelling by car, some 5,000 had been evacuated on emergency flights as of Thursday night.

Yellowknife Mayor Rebecca Alty warned drivers being led out in kilometres-long convoys that the flames were skirting the edges of highways and they would encounter limited visibility as thick smoke turned the sky orange.

NORTH'S LARGEST EVER EVACUATION

Crews scrambled to erect fire barriers as one blaze got to within 16 kilometres (9 miles) of Yellowknife. Water bombers were seen flying low over the city, and swooping in to fill up at a nearby lake.

Resident Sylvia Webster said "a lot of trees were cut down and sprinkler lines were set up around the city" to bolster its defences.

"We might still lose everything, but

that's okay," she told AFP. "As long as our loved ones are safe, we can move on from there."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau interrupted his summer vacation Thursday to convene an incident response group.

Several military aircraft have already been dispatched, along with more than 120 soldiers to help beat back the flames.

In what had already been declared the Northwest Territories' largest-ever evacuation, the emptying of Yellowknife now means half the population of the near-Arctic territory will soon be displaced.

Several towns and Indigenous communities were already under evacuation orders.

On Monday, the Canadian military started airlifting residents of smaller far-flung communities in the region to safety after roads were engulfed in flames.

For many, it was the second time in recent months that residents were forced to evacuate. (AFP)

SOCIALIST WINS KEY SPANISH PARLIAMENT VOTE THAT COULD PAVE WAY FOR NEW CENTER- LEFT GOVERNMENT

MADRID (TIP): Spain's newly elected Parliament voted August 17 by a majority to elect a Socialist candidate as chamber speaker, breathing some life into acting Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's aspirations of forming another leftist government.

The crucial vote was won by Francina Armengol with 178 votes in the 350-lower house of parliament, against 139 for the main conservative Popular Party's candidate.

It was the first parliamentary vote since inconclusive national elections on July 23 left no group with an easy path to form government. Parties on the left and right have almost an equal number of seats.

It remains to be seen if Sánchez can round up the same support should he be called on by the king to try to form a government. If not, a new election could be around the corner.

The parliament was also to vote on eight members of the speaker's presiding council, a body that sets the agenda for parliamentary sessions.

Armengol won with the support of 14 votes from two separatist parties in the northeastern region of Catalonia, including seven from Junts (Together), a radical Catalan separatist party led by fugitive politician Carles Puigdemont, who resides in Brussels after fleeing Spain following his unsuccessful 2017 secession bid.

Junts were quick to point out that the vote was solely for the speaker position and did not indicate the party would back Sánchez. (AP)

China appears to be building an airstrip on a disputed South China Sea island

BEIJING (TIP): China appears to be constructing an airstrip on a disputed South China Sea island that is also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan, according to satellite photos.

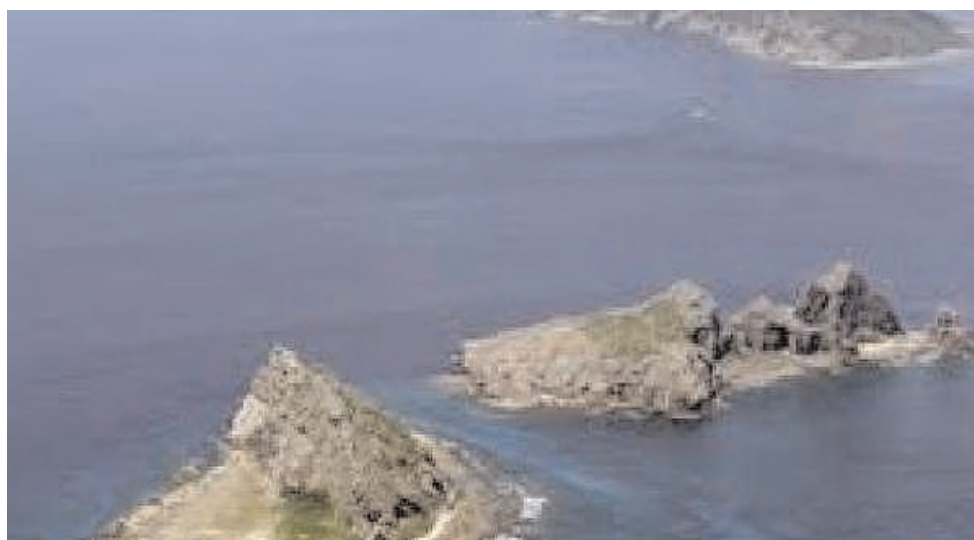
The work on Triton island in the Paracel group mirrors construction on seven human-made islands in the Spratly group to the east which have been equipped with airstrips, docks and military systems, although it currently appears to be somewhat more modest in scale.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea as its own, denying the claims of others and defying an international ruling invalidating its assertion.

Satellite photos from Planet Labs PBC analysed by the by The Associated Press show construction on the airstrip first visible in early August.

News website The Drive first reported on the satellite images Tuesday.

The runway, as currently laid out,



would be more than 600 meters (2,000 feet) in length, long enough to accommodate turboprop aircraft and drones, but not fighter jets or bombers.

Also visible are large numbers of vehicle tracks running across much of the island, along with what appear to be

containers and construction equipment.

Triton is one of the major islands in the Paracels, which is roughly equidistant from the coast of Vietnam and China's island province of Hainan.

The U.S. takes no stance on the sovereignty claims, but regularly sends

Navy ships on "freedom of navigation operations" near the Chinese-held islands.

Triton was the focus of one of those missions in 2018.

China has had a small harbour and buildings on the island for years, along with a helipad and radar arrays.

Two large fields on the island sport a star from the Chinese flag and a hammer and sickle representing the ruling Communist Party.

China has refused to provide details of its island construction work other than to say it is aimed at helping global navigation safety.

It has rejected accusations that it is militarising the crucial waterway, through which an estimated USD 5 trillion in trade passes annually, and says it has the right to do as it wishes in its sovereign territory.

China seized full control of the Paracels from Vietnam in a brief 1974 naval conflict. (AP)

TEN KILLED, INCLUDING TWO PASSING MOTORISTS AS LIGHT PLANE CRASHES ON STREET IN MALAYSIA



KUALA LAMPUR (TIP): A light plane crashed into a street in Malaysia's central Selangor state on August 17, killing eight people on board and two motorists on the ground, the local police chief said.

"For now, I can say at least 10 people were killed in the plane crash. Two passing motorists -- one in a car and one on a motorcycle -- also perished together with the eight on board the plane," Mohamad Iqbal Ibrahim told AFP.

Johari Harun, a state assemblyman in central Pahang state in charge of housing and the environment, was among the plane passengers killed, police said.

Malaysia's civil aviation authority said in a statement that six passengers and two flight crew were on board the aircraft when it crashed, although it did not confirm any casualties.

The plane took off from the northern resort island of Langkawi and was heading to Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, west of the capital Kuala Lumpur, civil aviation authority chief Norazman Mahmud.

"No mayday call was made," he said.

An investigation into the crash will be made by the Air Accident Investigation Bureau, he said.

Mohamad Syahmie Mohamad Hashim, a former member of the Malaysian air force, said he saw the plane flying erratically.

"Not long after that I heard a loud boom," he told reporters.

"I sped towards the location and saw the remains of an aircraft. I also saw (a) human body on fire. I couldn't do anything," he said.

Other witnesses said the Beechcraft Model 390 burst into flames as it hit the ground in Elmina Estate near the suburb of Shah Alam, which houses a mix of residential homes and factories.

An explosion was also heard, they said.

One user of X, formerly called Twitter, shared a brief video showing fire and black smoke billowing from the crash site, which was covered with dark soot.

Debris was scattered around and houses could be seen in the background.

In September 1977, a Japan Airlines plane bound for Singapore crashed into another housing estate. Forty-five people survived and 34 were killed. (AFP)

Imprisoned Imran Khan says ready for 1,000 years in jail if necessary: Report

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan on August 18 said he was ready to endure imprisonment even for 1,000 years and continue to stay incarcerated for his country, according to a media report.

Khan, 70, was sentenced to three years in jail by a sessions court on August 5 for hiding proceeds from the sale of state gifts (Toshakhana).

He is currently incarcerated in Attock Jail in Punjab province.

A division bench, comprising IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, will take up the hearing next Tuesday (August 22).

Speaking to reporters on Friday after meeting Khan in Attock jail, Umar Niazi, a member of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's legal team, said the former prime minister was in "good health, although he had grown a beard," The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

"He [Imran] was provided with a mirror and shaving kit today," the lawyer said.

Niazi asserted that among a team of six, only he was granted permission to meet Khan.

The lawyer expressed his intention to file a contempt of court petition against the "jailer's conduct" for denying the legal team access to the former premier, despite possessing court orders.

"I do not care about not being given facilities [in jail]. It does not matter even if I am kept in jail for 1,000 years, but I



am ready for it because [one has to] make sacrifices for freedom," Niazi quoted Khan as saying.

Khan is facing more than 140 cases across the country and faces charges like terrorism, violence, blasphemy, corruption and murder since his ouster in April 2022.

The lawyer confirmed that the Federal Investigation Agency questioned Khan in Attock jail regarding the cipher (confidential diplomatic cable) issue on Wednesday, during which the former premier reiterated his previous stance.

He said Khan also spoke about the "disappearance" of his nephew Barrister Hassaan Khan Niazi, the report said.

The Lahore High Court directed authorities to produce Hassaan before the court by August 18 with regard to a

plea seeking his recovery and an inquiry against officials over his "illegal detention".

Meanwhile, police have informed the Lahore High Court on Friday that Hassaan Niazi, Khan's nephew and his focal person on legal affairs, has been handed over to a military court for trial.

In a police report submitted to the court, Hassaan will be investigated and tried by the military after he was named as the prime suspect in the case pertaining to the Jinnah House attack in Lahore, which was triggered after Khan was arrested in Islamabad on May 9.

The police arrested Hassaan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

He was later handed over to the Quetta Police and then to the military at the commanding officer's request, Geo News reported. (PTI)

Afghanistan's Taliban government marks two years since return to power

KABUL (TIP): Afghanistan's Taliban government on August 17 marked the second anniversary of their return to power, with supporters celebrating as critics denounced ever-tightening restrictions on women's rights.

Flags of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan -- the Taliban's formal name for the country -- fluttered across the capital Kabul, which fell on August 15, 2021, after the US-backed government collapsed and its leaders fled into exile.

In the two years since, Taliban authorities have imposed their strict interpretation of Islam, with women bearing the brunt of laws the United Nations has termed "gender apartheid".

A statement from the authorities hailed a victory that was able to "pave the way for the establishment of the Islamic system in Afghanistan".

"The conquest of Kabul proved once again that no one can control the proud nation of Afghanistan" and that "no invader will be allowed to threaten the independence and freedom" of the country, it said.

Hundreds of Taliban supporters, from

elderly men to young boys, gathered near the abandoned US embassy building, one of the many that now stands empty -- the Taliban government is still not formally recognised by any other country.

US-made military vehicles, claimed by the new Taliban rulers when they were left behind by international forces after a weeks-long chaotic withdrawal, rolled past the ajar gates of the fortified embassy walls.

In the city of Herat in the west, a crowd of Taliban supporters chanted: "Death to the Europeans, death to the Westerners, long live the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, death to the Americans."

In Kandahar, the cradle of the Taliban movement and from where reclusive Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada rules by decree, a military parade was cancelled and then moved to a military compound, officials told journalists.

Kandahar resident Agha Sahib praised Akhundzada's leadership, saying he had unified the country.

"When he issues a decree from

(Kandahar), it is accepted... all over the 34 provinces of Afghanistan," said the 24-year-old who works for the interior ministry.

The decrees have not been welcomed equally by all Afghans, however, nor by the international community, which is divided over whether to engage with the Taliban authorities.

Restrictions on the rights of women -- squeezed from public spaces, employment and education -- have been key obstacles to recognition and aid, which was slashed as foreign nations were wary of dealing with Kabul's new rulers.

The country's economic and humanitarian crisis is a stark worry for many Afghans, even if, like Herat rickshaw driver Abdulwase Qadri, they express relief at the end of the fighting.

"Security has been provided in these two years," the 35-year-old said. "But the work environment is not favourable for young people."

Women in particular have seen avenues to work closed, most recently with the shuttering of thousands of beauty parlours across the country. (AFP)



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How to make your hair color last longer

Whether you have your hair professionally colored or you use an at-home hair coloring kit, you want your color to last as long as possible. Unfortunately, there are many things that can cause your color to fade, including as washing your hair the wrong way or failing to keep it moisturized. Environmental factors such as heat, sun, and pool or ocean water can also leach the color from your hair. By making small changes to your hair care routine, though, you can make the color last longer -- and if it starts to fade, you can use at-home treatments such as glazes or root touch-up kits to help freshen it up.

Washing Color-Treated Hair

Wait to wash your hair. To keep your hair color looking fresh as long as possible, the dye needs to settle in your hair. Washing your hair too soon after you color it can rinse some of the dye out so your hair color fades more quickly. For the best results, avoid washing your hair for at least 24 hours after you dye it. If you feel the need to clean your hair after dyeing it, just rinse it with cool water and scrub your scalp gently with your fingertips.

Wash your hair less often: Shampooing your hair every day can not only strip away its natural oils but the color as well. Keep your color fresh by washing every other day, every third day, or even just once a week if your scalp isn't naturally very oily. If your hair looks dirty, greasy, or limp between washes, use a dry shampoo designed specifically for color-treated hair to soak up excess oil at the roots and add volume.

This is particularly important when you want to protect dark or



bright shade, like black, purple or green.

Use a shampoo for color-treated hair: When you do wash your hair, it's important to use the right product. Opt for a shampoo designed specifically for color-treated hair to avoid stripping the color. The formula should be sulfate-free and contain silicones, which help preserve the color by sealing the cuticle.

Moisturizing Color-Treated Hair

Use a conditioner for color-treated hair: Just as you should use a shampoo for color-treated hair, it's important to use a conditioner designed to preserve color. Chemical treatments such as coloring can dry out your hair, making it more porous and more likely for the color to leach out. A conditioner for color-treated hair seals the cuticle and helps deliver moisture. Make sure to condition your hair every time that you wash it to ensure that it is properly hydrated.

Deep condition your hair weekly: For color-treated hair, a basic conditioner isn't always enough. Using a deep conditioner

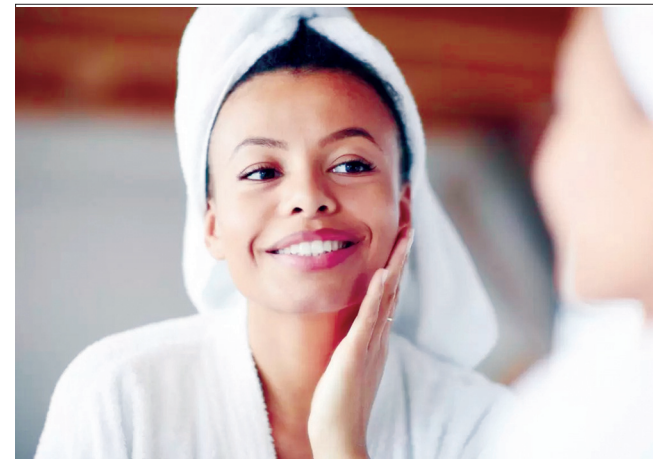
once a week after you shampoo can help moisturize your hair so it stays soft and shiny. It will also help keep your hair color from fading.

It's best to use a deep conditioner for color-treated hair. They're designed to prevent your hair color from fading or becoming brassy.

Apply your deep conditioner from the roots down to the ends if you have thick or coarse hair.

Apply your deep conditioner from mid-strand down to the ends if your hair is fine, thin, or oily. To receive the full benefits, allow the deep conditioner to sit on your hair for at least 10 minutes. Sitting under a heated dryer or putting a shower cap over your hair while the mask is on can help generate heat that allows it to penetrate your hair more effectively.

Treat your hair with jojoba oil: Even with regular use of conditioner for color-treated hair and a deep conditioner, your hair may get dry from time to time. Hair oils can help moisturize both dry and wet hair to help preserve the color. Jojoba oil is the best option because it most closely resembles natural hair oils.



Natural ways to look beautiful without makeup

While makeup is a great tool to enhance your features, it, in no way, must have the power to restrict your beauty. Stick to small changes and you'll end up feeling confident without a layer of cosmetics.

Work on Being Healthy Inside

The first step to having glowing skin naturally without makeup is to take care of your overall health. If you lead a healthy lifestyle, you won't even need to use makeup to look beautiful. Having a healthy diet and drinking plenty of water can help you have better skin. Your collagen level increases by consuming foods rich in vitamin C, such as citrus fruits, kale, broccoli, and bell peppers. Include foods rich in antioxidants in your diet: sweet potatoes, pomegranates, apples, tomatoes, etc.

Add fresh fruit juices and vegetable juices to your daily diet. Green tea, coconut water, lemon water and turmeric milk are some of the other options.

Say No to Stress

Keeping a healthy mind is yet another important component of having beautiful skin. Change in hormonal levels because of stress and anxiety can intensify acne and outbreaks. Stress can also cause hair loss. You'll radiate happiness from your face if you're feeling good within. Practice mindful living, meditation, and breathing exercises to stay calm and control your stress. The best makeup you can put on is positivity.

Follow a Skincare Routine

Maintaining a daily skin care regimen is important. Use the CTM (Cleanser, Toner, Moisturizer) routine every night before bed. Applying moisturizer deeply nourishes your skin and enhances its texture. Do not skip sunscreen during the day because the sun's rays can be quite damaging to your skin. Get rid of the dead skin cells on your face and enhance your glowing complexion by exfoliating it once a week. A DIY face mask or sheet mask is another option for an instant glow. Natural products like honey, tomato juice, Dahi and gram flour work as great ingredients for your DIY face mask. Ensure the items you use are chemical-free and appropriate for your skin type. Also, don't forget to do a patch test to check if you are allergic to the product.

Care for Your Hair

Overall beauty increases with healthier and shinier hair. Hair maintenance is just as vital as maintaining your skin. Make sure to use a good shampoo and a conditioner after each wash. Applying a serum will also make your hair shine.

Depending on the hair length, try experimenting with different hairstyles. Remember, hair gets easily damaged over time with excessive heat-based styling techniques like blow-drying and curling. Well-maintained and groomed hair helps you look beautiful naturally without makeup.

FOOD CORNER

Dum Paneer Kali Mirch

Ingredients

1 tsp Oil, 4 Cloves, 4 Green cardamoms, 1 inch piece Cinnamon, 1 Onion (fried till brown and blended with little water to make paste), Paste of 1 tsp ginger and 1 tsp garlic with 4 green chillies, 3 Tbsp Dahi / Yogurt, 1 tsp Dhaniya / Coriander powder, 1 tsp Pepper powder, 3/4 tsp Cumin powder, 1 tsp Salt, 2 Tbsp Cream, 1/4 tsp Rang mirch / Paprika, 1/4 tsp Haldi / Turmeric, 1/4 tsp Garam masala, 250 Gram Paneer, To garnish Coriander, To garnish Fresh mint leaves

Method

- Heat oil and add the cloves, cardamoms and cinnamon till it's nice and fragrant.
- Now add onion paste and cook well.
- Add ginger, garlic and green chilli paste. Saute.
- Add yogurt / dahi.



- Cook and add coriander powder, cumin powder, pepper powder, haldi and rang mirch / red chilli.
- Add salt. Cook and add cottage cheese cubes and cream as well as 1/2 cup water.
- Seal the pan with foil and put a lid on top.
- Reduce flame to low and let it simmer for 15 minutes.
- Now open it and cook further if you like to dry it up.
- Check for salt adding more if needed, serve garnished with coriander and mint leaves.

Digital puzzle games can boost memory in older adults: Study

Older adults who play digital puzzle games have the same memory abilities as people in their 20s, a new study has shown.

The study, from the University of York, also found that adults aged 60 and over who play digital puzzle games had a greater ability to ignore irrelevant distractions, but older adults who played strategy games did not show the same improvements in memory or concentration.

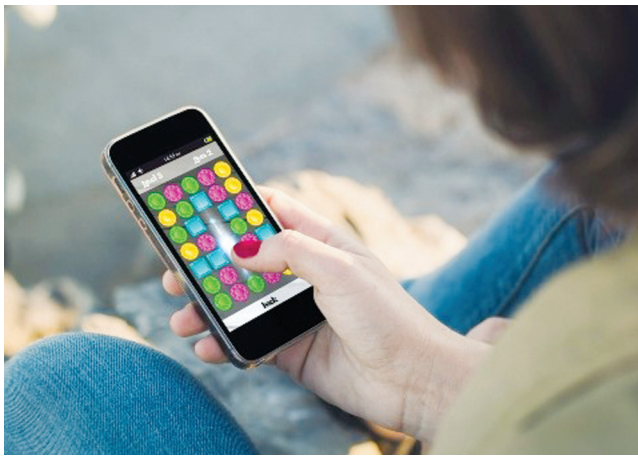
Working memory is thought to peak between the ages of 20 and 30 before slowly declining as a person gets older.

"A lot of research has focused on action games, as it is thought that reacting quickly, keeping track of targets and so on helps attention and memory, but our new analysis shows that the action elements do not seem to offer significant benefits to younger adults," said Dr Fiona McNab from the University of York's department of Psychology.

The study, published in the journal *Heliyon*, included older and younger adults playing digital games that they would normally play in their 'real lives'.

This resulted in a wide range of games to be tested alongside a digital experiment that required participants to memorise images, whilst being distracted.

"Puzzle games for older people had this surprising



ability to support mental capabilities to the extent that memory and concentration levels were the same as a 20 year-olds who had not played puzzle games," said Dr Joe Cutting from the University of York's Department of Computer Science.

Older people were however more likely to forget elements committed to memory whilst being distracted if they only played strategy games, and young people were less successful at focusing attention if they played only puzzle games. *Source: IANS*



People with low levels of vitamin K have less healthy lungs: Study

According to a study published in *ERJ Open Research*, people with low levels of vitamin K in their blood are more likely to have impaired lung function and to suffer from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and wheezing.

Vitamin K is found in leafy green vegetables, vegetable oils and cereal grains. It plays a role in blood clotting, and so helps the body to heal wounds, but researchers know very little about its role in lung health.

Researchers say their new findings do not alter the current advice on vitamin K intake, but they do support further research to see if some people could benefit from taking vitamin K supplements.

The study was by team of Danish researchers at Copenhagen University Hospital and the University of Copenhagen. It involved a group of 4,092 people aged between 24 and 77 years living in Copenhagen.

Study participants took part in lung function testing, called spirometry, gave blood samples and answered questionnaires on their health and lifestyle. The blood tests included a marker of low levels of vitamin K in the body called dp-ucMGP. Spirometry measures the amount of air a person can breathe out in one second (forced expiratory volume or FEV1) and the total volume of air they can breathe in one forced breath (forced vital capacity or FVC).

The researchers found that people with markers of low levels of vitamin K had lower FEV1 and lower FVC on average. People with lower levels of vitamin K were also more likely to say they had COPD, asthma or wheezing.

Researcher, Dr Torkil Jespersen said: "We already know that vitamin K has an important role in the blood and research is beginning to show that it's also important in heart and bone health, but there's been very little research looking at vitamin K and the lungs. To our knowledge, this is the first study on vitamin K and lung function in a large general population. Our results suggest that vitamin K could play a part in keeping our lungs healthy."

"On their own, our findings do not alter current recommendations for vitamin K intake, but they do suggest that we need more research on whether some people, such as those with lung disease, could benefit from vitamin K supplementation." *Source: ANI*

Osteoporosis: How to stay safe while exercising for better bone health

Osteoporosis is one of the most common health conditions affecting the elderly in India. This medical condition causes your bones to become weak and brittle, resulting in fractures if any stress is caused. Besides taking a proper diet to maintain a healthy bone structure, one also has to resort to specific exercises to increase strength, stimulate bone growth, increase bone density and prevent future bone thinning. However, there are specific considerations before you begin a workout regime, if you have osteoporosis. According to the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, people with osteoporosis have a high risk of developing broken bones and major fractures, especially in postmenopausal women and older men, when exercising.

What are the exercises you should avoid for osteoporosis?

Aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity cardio and muscle-strengthening activity each week can be helpful for most people.

There are three main exercises you should avoid when you have osteoporosis as they could be dangerous and cause bone thinning.

Which are the best exercises for osteoporosis?

Exercises best known for osteoporosis stimulate bone growth. "Bone growth is stimulated through applying a load on the bone as a result of body weight or the pull of a muscle during resistance exercise, such as exercises using light weights or resistance bands," as per Dr Johnson. These exercises include: walking, climbing, bodyweight exercises like push-ups, squats, lunges and planks, elliptical training, dancing, pilates, yoga, and resistance band moves.

However, according to Mayo Clinic, swimming and cycling might have plenty of perks, they don't have enough body-bearing load to build bone density.



What to eat for strong bones

Besides milk, there are other plant-based sources of calcium that can help you maintain healthy bones. These are turnip greens. One cup of it contains 200 mg of calcium.

One tablespoon of sesame seeds contains 146 mg of calcium. Other foods that contain calcium are soybeans, mustard greens, and okra. Apart from calcium, other nutrients are also important for bone health.

Magnesium: "Your body needs magnesium to maintain bone health and not getting enough magnesium in your diet could increase your risk of developing osteoporosis," wrote Lovneet Batra.

Vitamin K: This vitamin is necessary for the function of proteins involved in bone formation and maintenance.

Zinc: The dietician wrote, "Zinc is needed for proper bone growth and maintenance, and it also promotes bone regeneration. Low levels of zinc have been associated with postmenopausal osteoporosis."

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ChatGPT's answers to software engineering questions were 52% incorrect

OpenAI's ChatGPT answered about 52% software engineering questions incorrectly, according to a study, raising questions about the popular language models accuracy.

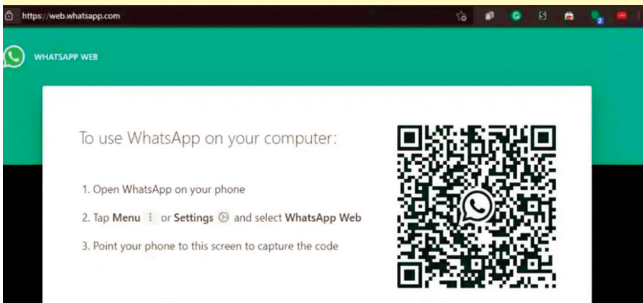
Despite ChatGPT's popularity, there hasn't been a thorough investigation into the quality and usability of its responses to software engineering queries, said researchers from the Purdue University in the US.

To address this gap, the team undertook a comprehensive analysis of ChatGPT's replies to 517 questions from Stack Overflow (SO).

"Our examination revealed that 52 per cent of ChatGPT's answers contain inaccuracies and 77 per cent are verbose," the researchers wrote in the paper, not peer-reviewed and published on a pre-print site.

Importantly, the team found that 54 per cent of the time the errors were made due to ChatGPT not understanding the concept of the questions.

Even when it could understand the question, it failed to show an understanding of how to solve the problem, contributing to a high number of conceptual errors, they said. Further, the researchers observed ChatGPT's limitation to reasoning. "In many cases, we saw ChatGPT give a solution, code, or formula without foresight or thinking about the outcome," they said.



WhatsApp Web to get 'screen lock' feature soon

For its web version, Meta-owned WhatsApp is reportedly bringing a 'screen lock' option, with the aim being to enhance user privacy. This is according to WhatsApp news tracker WABetaInfo, which also noted in its report that the messaging platform began developing the feature in November last year.

How does 'screen lock' work?

WhatsApp Web is locked due to screen lock. If the feature is enabled on your device, you will need a password to unlock WhatsApp Web. Also, as per WABetaInfo, people can configure screen lock by choosing when to be prompted by the password.

Additionally, if users forget the password, they can sign in by scanning the QR code, which is the existing facility to open WhatsApp Web.

How to check if 'screen lock' is enabled

For this, open your account on the messaging platform and go to Settings. If activated, you will see a screen lock entry point here.

Advantages of 'screen lock'

The report stated that one of the advantages of this option comes in terms of privacy; if someone gains access to an individual's computer when the latter is away, the former will not be able to access WhatsApp chats and messages as they do not have the password. That the push notifications will not appear when the screen is locked is another advantage, the story said.

Availability

It is being tested with select beta testers, with the feature being available to only those who use WhatsApp Web's latest beta version. The ability will be rolled out for even more people over the coming weeks.

Researchers use cloud to replicate supercomputer for heart disease study

A scientist at Harvard used Google's cloud platform to clone a supercomputer for a heart disease study, in a novel move that other researchers could follow to get around a shortage of powerful computing resources and speed up their work.

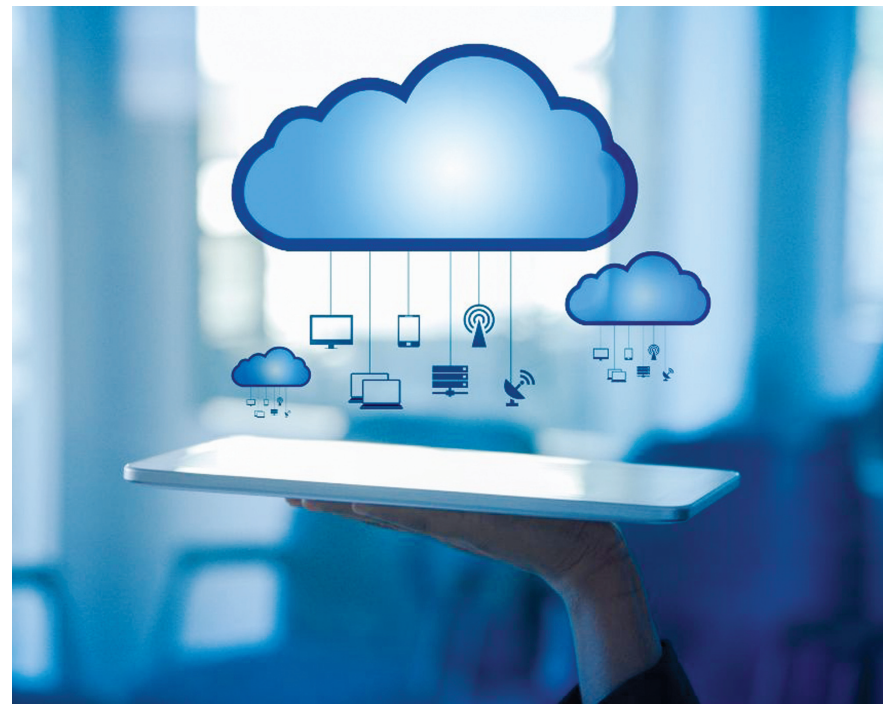
The study simulated a therapy that aims to dissolve blood clots and tumor cells in the human circulatory system that required an enormous amount of computing power that typically can be harnessed with a supercomputer, according to Harvard professor Petros Koumoutsakos.

"The big problem that we had (was) we could run one simulation using a full scale supercomputer," Koumoutsakos said, adding that refining or optimizing the simulation required further access to the supercomputer.

In the U.S., there are only a handful of supercomputers that are capable of running the billions of calculations to accurately mimic the conditions in Koumoutsakos's study.

The small number of machines capable of performing the research has created bottlenecks in the scientific process, according to Citadel Securities research platform head Costas Bekas.

To eliminate the bottlenecks researchers and companies such as Citadel that need an enormous amount of computing resources only found in supercomputers



have begun to turn to the public cloud.

But cloud computing operations aren't designed to handle the demands researchers have. They are designed for millions of individual, relatively small computing tasks – things such as streaming video, serving webpages or database access. The cloud is usually built for reliability and resilience.

"Folks are realizing the potential for cloud to solve problems and technical scientific

engineering computing to really unlock productivity and get to better answers, better insights, faster," said Bill Magro chief high performance computing technologist at Google Cloud.

Modifying cloud infrastructure to behave like a supercomputer requires changes in the software, networking and physical design of the hardware, Magro said.

Citadel helped sponsor Koumoutsakos's research with Alphabet Inc subsidiary Google.

Source: Reuters

X, the former Twitter, to get video calling feature, announces CEO Linda Yaccarino

X, the social network formerly known as Twitter, will soon get a video calling feature, company CEO Linda Yaccarino has revealed, adding that the feature will be a part of the platform's transformation into an 'everything app.'

While making video calls, people will not have to give their phone number to anyone on X, Yaccarino further stated.

"Think about what's happened since the acquisition," she told CNBC's Sara Eisen, referring to billionaire Elon Musk purchasing X in October last year, when the tech giant was still called Twitter.

Yaccarino, who took over as the CEO in June this year and succeeded Musk in that role, then said: "You look at video, and you'll soon be able to make video chat calls without having to give your phone number to anyone on the platform."

This was the former NBCUniversal executive's maiden TV interview as the CEO of X.

A 'hint' from X employee?

On Thursday, Andrea Conway, a designer at X, put out a post – hours before the interview – possibly hinting about a video calling feature being under development. "just called someone on X," Conway noted.

On Sunday, she put out another post. It read: "design



on-call."

Other features coming to X

Meanwhile, Yaccarino, in her CNBC interview, listed other features that will be introduced to the former Twitter. These, she said, are long-form videos, creator subscriptions, as well as payments.

Economy gathering momentum in Q2, inflation a concern, says RBI

Indian economy is gathering momentum in the second quarter, though inflation would continue to average above the central bank's comfort zone of 6%, said an article in the RBI's monthly bulletin released on Thursday, August 17.

The consumer price index (CPI) based retail inflation shot up significantly to 7.44% in July, from 4.87% in the preceding month, mainly due to soaring prices of tomato, vegetables and other food items.

The uptick in inflation in its June reading mutated in July, with the unprecedented shock to tomato prices spilling over to prices of other vegetables, said the article on 'State of the Economy'.

"While core inflation witnessed a moderation, headline inflation is expected to average well above 6% in the second quarter," it said.

Foxconn to make iPhone 15 in India

In another push to its India manufacturing dream, Apple iPhone maker Foxconn is all geared up to start the local production of the next-generation of iPhone 15 at its Sriperumbudur facility near Tamil Nadu faster than ever, as the company doubles down on the 'Make in India' initiative.

Sources said Apple aims to deliver locally-assembled iPhone 15 as soon as it is launched globally in the middle of next month, in order to narrow the launch-to-availability gap and increase its exports from India to other nations. According to sources, a small set to 'Make in India' iPhone 15 units are likely to be exported to other countries within a short span of time from its global launch. Other Apple suppliers in India like Pegatron and Wistron (being acquired by the Tata Group) will also assemble iPhone 15 as soon as possible, they added.

RBI launches portal to access details of unclaimed deposits

The Reserve Bank on Thursday launched a centralised web portal UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits - Gateway to Access information) to help people search and claim unclaimed deposits.

The portal, launched by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, has been developed by the central bank to help the public to facilitate and make it easier for them to search their unclaimed deposits across multiple banks in one place.

Presently unclaimed deposits from seven banks—State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Central Bank of India, Dhanlaxmi Bank, South Indian Bank, DBS Bank India and Citibank—are available on the portal.

US weekly jobless claims fall as labor market remains tight

NEW YORK (TIP)

The number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment benefits fell last week, pointing to a still tight labor market. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped 11,000 to a seasonally adjusted 239,000 for the week ended Aug. 12, the Labor Department said on Thursday, August 17. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 240,000 claims for the latest week.

Claims surged in the week ending Aug. 5, with applications in Ohio accounting for a big chunk of the increase. The state has previously experienced fraudulent filings, leading most economists to shrug off the rise in claims. Although the labor market is slowing, with job gains in July the second smallest since December 2020, conditions generally remain tight. The unemployment rate is at levels last seen more than 50 years ago. There were 1.6 job openings for every unemployed person in June.

Minutes of the Federal Reserve's July 25-26 meeting published on Wednesday showed that while policymakers acknowledged "signs that demand and supply were coming into better balance," they "judged that further progress toward a balancing of demand and supply in the labor market was needed, and they expected that additional softening in labor market conditions would take place over time." The U.S. central bank has since March 2022 raised its benchmark overnight interest rate by 525 basis points to the current 5.25% to 5.50% range. Most economists believe the Fed's fastest rate hiking cycle in more than 40 years is likely over, given the recent moderation in inflation.

Labor market resilience is underpinning the economy, by driving retail sales and homebuilding. Economists have dialed back their forecasts for a recession this year, and are increasingly warming up to the idea that the Fed could guide the economy to a "soft landing."

The claims data covered the period during which the government surveyed business establishments for the nonfarm payrolls component of August's employment report. Claims rose slightly between the July and August survey period. Data next week on the number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid, a proxy for hiring, will offer more clues on the health of the labor market in August.

The so-called continuing claims increased 32,000 to 1.716



million during the week ending Aug. 5, the claims report showed. At current levels, continuing claims are still low by historical standards, indicating that some laid-off workers are experiencing short spells of unemployment.

US 10-yr Treasury yield hits highest since October, drags on shares

The U.S. 10-year Treasury yield on Thursday, August 17, reached its highest in 10 months, underpinned by fears that U.S. interest rates might stay higher for longer, contributing, along with China's economic woes, to world stocks languishing at five-week lows. Benchmark 10-year yields reached 4.312%, testing October's 4.338%, a break past which would be its highest since 2007.

"The reason behind the rise is the strong data on U.S. domestic demand. The minutes (from the Fed's July meeting, released Wednesday), feel really dated, they are talking about a gradual slowdown in the U.S. economy, but when you look at the data we are not even in a slowdown," said Samy Chaar, chief economist at Lombard Odier. Those minutes showed policy makers were divided over the need for more interest rate increases, with some citing the risk to the economy of pushing hikes too far.

Source: Reuters

China's Evergrande files for bankruptcy protection, has debts of \$300 billion

NEW YORK (TIP)

China Evergrande Group, the real estate giant whose default two years ago accelerated a broader property debt crisis in the country, sought Chapter 15 bankruptcy protection in New York on Thursday, August 17.

The move protects it from creditors in the US while it works on a restructuring deal elsewhere. The Chinese homebuilder's Chapter 15 petition references restructuring proceedings being carried out in Hong Kong and the Cayman Islands.

International debt-restructuring deals sometimes require a Chapter 15 filing in the course of finalizing a transaction. Last year, Beijing-based developer Modern Land China Co. also filed for Chapter 15 bankruptcy after failing to repay a \$250 million bond and saying it would go forward with an offshore debt restructuring deal.

Evergrande's fate has broad implications for China's \$60 trillion financial system, and could send ripples across banks, trusts and millions of home owners, in what would be one of the nation's largest-ever restructurings. The sheer size of its liabilities of more than \$300 billion mean that the



process is sure to be long.

Sentiment toward Chinese markets has been shaken this month after one of the country's biggest property developers, Country Garden Holdings Co., lurched toward a possible first default, amid record debt failures by builders. The situation worsened in recent days when financial conglomerate Zhongzhi Enterprise Group Co. raised alarm after affiliated firms missed payments on some investment products.

Source: Bloomberg

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - AUGUST 21 TO AUGUST 27, 2023

ARIES



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be extremely attentive and receptive to novel ideas. This week, you'll be really useful in the development of a program at work. This week, your imagination will come in handy. This week, make the most of your cognitive abilities. Some will try to fill your ears by portraying your mate as a bad guy. Stay away from folks who attempt to bring out the worst in you. Pay no heed to what others have to say and do what you want. This week, your health may require modest care since you may be experiencing occasional headaches.

TAURUS



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be more responsible. You'll split your time between resting at home and having a good time with friends. If you're in a relationship, you'll notice that the flame has been reignited. You will embark on a new era in your social life, one that will be more vibrant. Your hectic schedule will prevent you from taking a break in the second part of the week. You'll be able to relax if you don't overcommit yourself everywhere. Your partner will have to be more careful as their health is likely to be affected. your health will be fine this week.

GEMINI



Ganesha says, you'll be in the desire to see unfamiliar communities this week. You will explore your love for wilderness and you will be able to spend some time with it this week. Nature will be your instructor this week! In the latter half of the week, you and your family will have a good time. This week, your children could prepare a treat for you. This week is not a good week to spend money since you will be tempted to overspend and squander money on frivolous purchases. Your romantic fronts will be affected by the presence of Rahu in your zodiac, try to keep yourself away from negative things.

CANCER



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be in a generous mood. This week, you'll be doing charitable work and spending more time with youngsters. You have a natural ability to make a positive impact on people's lives, and this week you will seek good fortune for doing so. It's possible that your competition may try to drag you down. Without a doubt, you will transcend this and prove yourself more deserving of people's regard. They will assist you in becoming a better person. Your fitness goals will take a backseat for a while. You'll be alright by the end of the week.

LEO



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be a people pleaser, seeking out new amusing friends to keep your attention piqued. This week, sentiments will dominate your thinking. On the professional front, you will make significant achievements. In the latter half of the week, you may not receive the recognition you believe you need for your accomplishments. This should not detract from your sense of self-worth. Your partner will bring goodness and happiness to your life this week. they will try to solve the issues you have been facing this week. your health will not go through any major drawback; take good care of your children's health.

VIRGO



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be soaring and in the limelight at work and in your human society. This will encourage you to make judgments that you will stick to. This week will bring you invites and accolades. This week, you may experience a dip in your vitality. Do not lose hope; you will soon regain your composure. Your partner will give you a chance to rectify your mistakes this week; take this chance to make your relationship better. your health will be fine this week! stay Calm.

LIBRA



Ganesha says, this week will provide you lots of opportunities to bask in the glow of appreciation. Friends will bring you joy and raise your spirits. This week, you'll be more upbeat about life. Your loved ones' kind efforts will keep you in a good mood. If you're having a difficult time at home, don't say anything to maintain the peace. Avoid becoming involved in any type of conflict. Your partner will help you fight your professional difficulties this week. you will also join a new fitness regimen this week.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says, you'll be the centerpiece, and your nearest and dearest will be delighted to shower you with affection. Your individual circumstances will improve, allowing you to indulge in a delightful pleasure. If you harness your energies for your own good, it will be more beneficial. There may be some ambiguity surrounding one strong relationship, requiring you to second-guess what's going on. Your relationship looks better than last week. you will also think about engagement/ marriage and discuss the same with your partner. Your health will be alright but you will find it difficult to adapt to the new atmosphere.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says, you'll be bold and vocal this week. You'll be in the desire to get started on anything productive. You'll be open to meeting new folks. You might also start a new business or start anything from scratch. You'll be tempting fate things since you'll be thinking about the repercussions. Just stay calm and collected. Your relationship looks strong this week. You will have to be more careful if you are married as your seventh house will not align well with the position of Venus. Your health fronts also look strong as you will recover from your old ailments this week.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be more likely to solve complicated challenges. This week, a money-making possibility is likely to arrive at your gate. This week, you'll make new interactions. Your children will make you pleased and provide you with delight. The first part of the week is not a good time to participate in funds pursuits since you may lose a lot of money. Before you stand united, carefully select your companions. Your relationship fronts will stay all good and fine. Your health will not need any attention at all this week and hence you will be more carefree and comfortable.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be in a fantastic mood. For those on the lookout, a new relationship might be on the way. This week, you'll create some very memorable memories. You'll also be emotionally inclined, which will pull out the greatest in you. If the moon's adverse influences impact you, try not to glance back over your shoulder and keep going forward. Make and stick to healthy objectives. Your relationship fronts will be stable and you will be all settled end your partner will try to support you in all your emotional meltdowns this week. You might face minor hindrances in your health as you will have to go through problems in the latter half of the week.

PISCES



Ganesha says, this week, you'll be in a powerful and fervent mindset. Your self-assurance will skyrocket. This week, you'll be able to use the enchantment to relieve any anxiety. You'll be incredibly busy, which might lead to a few angry exchanges. Overall, your romantic fronts will settle down things for you. Your partner will support you in everything you do this week. Your health will be affected in the first half of the week. Take good care and you will be fine.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : AUGUST 21 TO AUGUST 27

BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

AUGUST 21

Ganesha says you will embark on a path that leads to enlightenment and self-discovery. Your innate leadership characteristics will be increased, and as a result, people who are looking for direction will look to you as a light. You've always been a dreamer, but now is the moment to put those dreams into motion and make them a reality. The stars indicate that there will be a substantial shift in either your professional or personal life, one that will bring you closer to the meaning of your existence. Change is inevitable, so you might as well get used to it since it's the universe's way of telling you that you're ready for the next chapter.

AUGUST 22

Ganesha says today is the day of master builders, and the day that is about to begin is a day of construction and creation. You will discover the tools and the motivation you need to make your visions into reality, whether it be a new endeavor, a new relationship, or a personal goal. Your capacity for analysis will improve to an unprecedented level, making it much simpler for you to handle difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, it is important to set aside time for leisure.

Your health and well-being are of the utmost importance; thus, make sure you get enough rest and appreciate the straightforward joys that life has to offer.

AUGUST 23

Ganesha says that you will be active and adaptive in your approach to life. Your capacity for communication will reach an all-time high, and as a result, you will be the talk of every meeting you attend. Today is the perfect time to meet new people and broaden your horizons. There is a possibility that you will get the opportunity to travel, which will allow you to learn and develop. Make sure you have your feet on the ground by engaging in some self-reflection when you're out on an adventure. If you keep the lines of communication and understanding open with the people in your personal life, those connections will flourish.

AUGUST 24

Ganesha says, you that you have always been the rock of stability for a lot of people. Your hard work is being recognized by the cosmos today, and as a result, you will experience an abundance of good fortune. Your caring demeanor will garner praise and admiration in unexpected places, such

as the workplace and the comfort of your own home. Even if you're used to looking out for the needs of others, today is the day to put your own needs first. Engage wholeheartedly in pastimes and pursuits that make you happy. In terms of money, stability is on the horizon, but you should avoid making rash choices in the meantime.

AUGUST 25

Ganesha says brace yourselves for a tornado of inspiration today. Because of this, now is the best time for you to engage in artistic pursuits because your imaginative faculties will be more active than ever. You are encouraged by the universe to break free from traditional ways of thinking and to embrace the singular viewpoint that you possess. Today, the importance of one's connections with others cannot be overstated. Whether you're renewing old friendships or forging brand-new ones, you should make it a priority to surround yourself with positive people. Keep in mind that other people's energy can catch from you, so try to radiate joy wherever you go.

AUGUST 26

Ganesha says prepare for a successful day today. Your doggedness will be unrivalled, and it will propel you closer

to achieving your objectives. Even though your professional life is the focus of your attention, you shouldn't ignore your mental and emotional health. Take some time off and savor the time you spend with those you care about. The constellations point to the arrival of an advisor or mentor in your life who can provide you with wisdom and direction. Maintain an attitude that is receptive to new information and keep in mind that every event, whether positive or negative, contributes to your personal growth narrative.

AUGUST 27

Ganesha says today is all about one's own personal development and transformation. Your attractive personality will draw in opportunities as well as people who have similar goals in life. Spiritual activities will provide you with clarity and direction if you immerse yourself in them deeply. There is a possibility that difficulties will develop, but they are only opportunities to demonstrate your resiliency. Your capacity to perceive things in context will be of great assistance to you as you go through them. This is also a day for giving something to others. Your generosity, in the form of time, resources, or knowledge, will make a difference in this situation.

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Sikh History This Week

AUGUST 18, 2023, TO AUGUST 24, 2023

18th August

1887 Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhwalia, the chief of Sri Guru Singh Sabha movement, and a chief proponent of Khalsa Raj, passed away. SINGH SABHA, a reform group of Amritdhari GurSikhs who objectively sought the eradication of the wrong practices in re-establishing the true traditions of GurSikhism. Their initial efforts for religious propagation and education resulted in the establishment of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Amritsar, in 1872. Sardar Thakur Singh Sandawalaia was the first chief, while the temporary offices and gathering facilities were organized at Guru Ka Bagh. The objectives of Singh Sabha, Amritsar, were to inculcate the principles of Sikh religion as preached by the Sikh Gurus among the Sikhs with a view to restoring Sikhism to its pristine purity, preach the principles of Sikh religion by word of mouth, by publication of historical and religious books, and through magazines and newspapers, encourage propagation of Punjabi, reclaim apostates and attract the sympathies of those highly placed in public administration to the educational progress of the Sikhs. The Singh Sabha was to shun politics.

1922 Karam Singh of Jhingar, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal and Kishan Singh Gargaj visit Montgomery jail to meet Master Mota Singh.

20th August

1922 Babbars call to plunder treasuries through the Babbar Akali Doaba newspaper.

1942 Protection of Sikh interests again came up in British mind. British, while preparing to leave Indian subcontinent were conscious of the fact that the Sikhs have a rightful claim to a Sikh State but did not want to create one. Mr. Amery, Secretary of State, in his letter to Viceroy linked the Sikh concern for a degree of autonomy sufficient to protect them from Muslim domination in the context of Pakistan scheme and sought to explore the various possibilities they suggest in advance of any further constitutional discussions. He came to the conclusion that a separate Sikhdom is really unworkable without extensive transfer of population, and wanted the reform department to work out contingency plans in complete secrecy.

1944 All Party Sikh Conference passed resolution for the creation of an independent Sikh state.

1947 PEPSU established through a combination of eight regions.



1980 Harchand Singh Longowal was elected President of the Shiromani Akali Dal. Gently spoken and mild-mannered, he was assisted by a well-informed and sharp-witted writer and political commentator, of exactly his own age, Rajinder Singh, Editor of Kuami Ekta. Harchand Singh Longowal had chosen him to be his team-mate as one of the general secretaries of the party.

1982 Sardar Manjit Singh alias Musibat Singh was killed at Rajasansi airport, Amritsar. He was shot at a point blank range by D.S.P. Bachan Singh when Manjeet Singh surrendered and came out of the plane.

Subsequently, D.S.P. Bachan Singh with all the members of his family was killed except his daughter.

1982 Gurmit Singh's nails pulled out and hands burnt by Indian Police.

Gurmit Singh of the village Dhulkot (Ludhiana) was arrested on by the police. He was taken to Rahon (Jullundur) police station where the nails of his hands and feet were pulled out by the police and both hands burned over candles. When police failed to get any information from him, he was killed in a fake encounter.

21st August



1664 Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visits Kiratpur.

1982 Sardar Gurmit Singh of Dhudkot was martyred in a false police encounter.

1982 Gurmit Singh Rahon killed in fake encounter after a bomb attack on Darbara Singh, the terrorist Chief Minister of Punjab.

22nd August

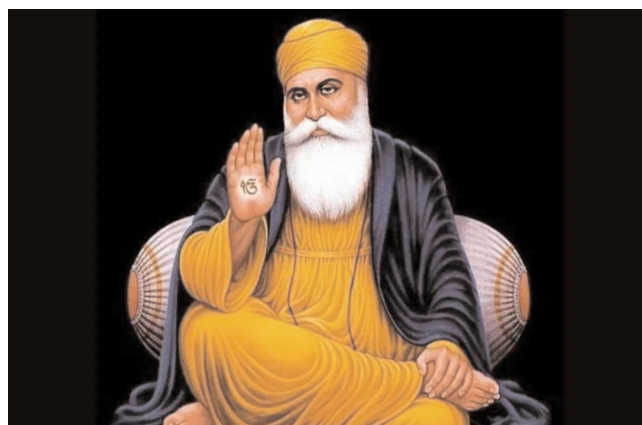
1922 Guru Ka Bagh Morcha was initiated. GURU KA BAGH gurudwara was under the control of Mahant Sundar Dass. He had agreed to serve under a committee of eleven members appointed by the SGPC on August 23, 1921, but the land remained under his possession. The Sikhs used to hew wood from the land for common kitchen and Mahant, under instigation from others, lodged a complaint against the Akalis. The government was on the outlook for opportunities to retrieve its prestige, lost in the Key's affair. On Aug. 9, 1922, five Akali Sewadars were arrested for cutting wood for Guru Ka Langar from Guru Ka Bagh. Subsequently a morcha was launched to seek the release of the five GurSikhs.

1922 Lamentation in Babbar Akali Doaba, over the arrest of Sikh leaders like Master Mota Singh.

1936 Gandhi labels the proposed conversion of 5 million untouchables to Sikhism as A Dangerous Proposal. He brought into recirculation the term Harijan, children of God, for depressed classes.

1986 Sobha Singh, the renowned painter, passed away.

23rd August



1507 Guru Nanak visits the house of God from river Bein.

In the morning, Guru Nanak went to the river Bein to take a bath but didn't return. Everyone thought he had drowned. But apparently, he visited the house of God where he spent three days before returning to our world. While there he was offered a cup of nectar and was ordered to drink it. Guru Nanak was terrified. All he could see was the blinding light and all he could hear was God's commanding voice. God ordered Guru Nanak Dev to return back to the world and spread the message of love and peace. God said he had appointed Guru Nanak Dev as His messenger. He returned at the same place he had disappeared from three days earlier. The people were horrified by the miracle of his disappearing in the river and reappearing from the same place three days later.

1922 Babbars appeal for Panthic unity through Babbar Akali Doaba newspaper.

1978 Baba Nischal Singh Ji, a devoted member of Panthic Saewaks, passed away.



24th August

Gur Gadhvi, Fifth Patshah, Guru Arjan Dev Ji. GURU ARJAN DEV (1563-1606) Guru Arjan, the 'Prince of Martyrs' and the 'Prophet of Peace', proffered his precious life to nurture the glory that was to be the Sikh Panth. The Fifth Master's life was marked by divine bliss and sublime sacrifices, born of a sweet acceptance of God's Will. Gifted with a quintessential poetic afflatus, and immeasurable imaginative sympathies, the Guru gave the movement of Sikhism a definite direction, perspective and program. He made the new faith coeval or coextensive with the whole gamut of existence and raised its exquisite edifice on values for which there is neither death nor change.

Guru Arjan Dev adorned the sacred throne of Guru Nanak from Sept. 1, 1581 to May 30, 1606. Born at Goindwal on April 15, 1563, he was the youngest and noblest son of Guru Ram Das and Mata Bibi Bhani. On 23 Hadh sunmat 1636, he married Ganga Devi, daughter of Krishan Chand of Mau village. He had an innate poetic sensibility which was exquisitely displayed in the epistles that he sent to his father from Lahore. They are deeply expressive of the pangs of separation and the exuberance of Love. The Fourth Master's decision to make Guru Arjan his spiritual heir was bitterly opposed by Prithvi Chand who contended that being the eldest son, he alone was entitled to the Guruship. Thus, he could never reconcile himself to his younger brother's installation as Guru.

1820 Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa reaches Kashmir and was appointed Nazim (Governor). He remained in this position for less than two years. During his reign, he freed agricultural labour from Begar and encouraged the shawl and wood carving industries by giving loans in cash and kind. He encouraged cultivating of saffron. The land revenue was reduced from Rs. 61 lakhs to Rs. 13 lakhs. It was enhanced later when agriculture production improved. Kashmiri shawls and woowork were exported to Europe.

Nag Panchami

Panchami of Shukla Paksha of Shravan month is known as Nag Panchami. Snakes are worshiped on this day. On this day, snakes are fed with milk. On this holy festival, women worship the serpent god and offer milk to snakes. On this day, women also pray for the safety of their brothers and family. It has been suggested in the Garuda Purana that on the day of Nagpanchami, the idol of Nag should be worshiped on both sides of the house. According to astrology, the lord of Panchami Tithi is Nag. That is, Panchami should be worshiped in Sheshnag etc.

Significance of Nag Panchami

On this day, the Lord of Nagalok is worshipped. Apart from India, it is celebrated in many countries around the world including our neighbouring country Nepal. On hearing the name of the snake, a feeling of fear comes into our minds. Moreover, Snake is also considered a direct form of Kaal. But, worshipping the snake on the day of Nag Panchami removes all the fears. On the day of Nag Panchami, worshipers offer milk to the snake deity. At the same time, in many regions, a picture of a snake is hung or made at the entrance of the house.

On the day of Nagpanchami, women worship Nag as their brother. You will find about the reason in the story of Nag Panchami. Also, worshipping Lord Shiva on this day offer many benefits. The worship of Mahadev in the month of Sawan is considered to be of greater importance. It is also believed that if someone in your house has died due to a snake bite, then you should fast on Panchami for a year i.e. twelve months. Hence, there will never be any fear of snakes in future.

There are also temples of Nag Devta in many parts of our country including Maharashtra, Karnataka, where devotees offer special worship to Nag Devta on the day of Naga Panchami. This festival is also known for protecting serpents. This inspires us to save snakes from unruly trade, where they are either illegally traded to different lands or killed for various reasons.

Nag Panchami Puja Vidhi

- On the day of Nag Panchami, wake up early in the morning and take a bath.
- Sprinkle Ganges water in your house.
- Fasting on the day of Nagpanchami is also considered very important.
- In order to worship, either take the portrait of the Snake god or make a statue of a snake from clay and stand it on the wooden platform. Also, at the same time, you can make a picture of a snake on both sides of the door of the house.
- After that, offer turmeric, roli (kumkum), rice, and flowers.
- Mix ghee and sugar in raw milk and offer it to the snake.
- Perform the aarti of the snake deity, and send him away by giving Dakshina to a snake charmer.
- You should listen to the story of Nangpanchami.
- Apart from this, Rudrabhishek is also an important part of the Nag Panchami.
- This day is also known as Garuda Panchami, hence Garuda should also be worshipped on the day of Nag Panchami.

Nag Panchami Katha

Many stories related to Nag Panchami are prevalent in different parts of India. It is believed that after worshipping Nagpanchami, listening to its story gives more benefits. We tell you about the most popular of these stories.

In ancient times a rich man had seven sons. Among them, the wife of the youngest son had no brother. One day their wives had gone to get the soil to cover the house. While digging the soil, the eldest daughter-in-law saw a snake, on seeing the snake, she started killing it. Then the youngest daughter-in-law stopped her and said that this is an innocent animal. Hearing this, the elder daughter-in-law did not kill her and the snake crawled away at one side and sat down.

The youngest daughter-in-law told the snake not to go anywhere until she comes back. The snake remained in its place, but the daughter-in-law forgot everything and went home. When she realised this the next day, she ran to the snake, addressed him as her brother and apologised. Snake told her that as she called him brother, he would forgive her, and said that as she has saved his life, she can ask for anything she wants.



Important information

Nag Panchami 2023

Monday, 21 August 2023

Start Panchami Date - 21 August 2023 at 00:21 AM

End Panchami Date - 22 August 2023 at 02:00 AM

Thereafter, the daughter-in-law requested the snake to become her brother. The snake, fulfilling her wish, accepted to be her brother.

The snake took her to his house to give her presents. The daughter-in-law was too surprised to see the wealth and opulence, as the house was full of diamonds and jewels. The snake sent the sister away by giving her many ornaments and a necklace studded with diamonds. When she returned home with the necklace, the word spread like fire throughout the state.

The news of the necklace of the younger daughter-in-law reached the queen of that kingdom. The queen expressed her desire to have that necklace. On getting the king's order, the servants brought a necklace studded with diamonds and pearls from the younger daughter-in-law. The younger daughter-in-law became very sad when the king snatched away the necklace gifted by his brother. She called out to his brother, saying that whenever the queen wore the necklace, the necklace should become a snake, and when removed, it should return to its original form when she took it off.

Now whenever the queen tried to wear the necklace, it would become a snake. When the king came to know about this, he immediately sent a word to summon the younger daughter-in-law, and asked her what's the reason behind the necklace's transformation. Then the younger daughter-in-law politely informed me that the necklace is made like that only when it is around someone's neck other than her, it becomes a snake. The king asked her to show her practically. So, when the younger daughter-in-law wore the necklace, it remained as a necklace only.

The king believed her and returned the necklace. When the family members of the younger daughter-in-law got to know about this, they also expressed their

desire to know about the reason. She daughter-in-law told about her snake brother. But, unfortunately, no one believed her. So, she called her brother. Hearing the call of his sister, Nagraj appeared and told the truth to everyone. Since then, the festival of Nag Panchami has been celebrated.

Nag Panchami From the Scientific Point of View

The festival of Nag Panchami is not just celebrated for religious reasons. There is also a scientific reason behind it. There are many species on our planet, which are becoming extinct nowadays. So, we need to protect and save them. Many people kill snakes out of fear of their attack. Whereas, it is seen that as long as you do not tease a snake, it does not bite.

Furthermore, farmers also benefit from snakes. Usually, in fields, snakes destroy pests like rats that damage the crops. Hence, crops are not destroyed. Worshipping snake deities on Nag Panchami can create awareness among people and spread awareness about trying to save them.

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

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

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

San Francisco launches driverless bus service following robotaxi expansion

AUGUST 18, 2023

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): San Francisco has launched an autonomous shuttle service - less than a week after California regulators approved the expansion of robotaxis despite traffic and safety concerns, AP has reported.

The free shuttle will run daily in a fixed route called the Loop around Treasure Island, the site of a former U.S. Navy base in the middle of San Francisco Bay. The Loop makes seven stops, connecting residential neighborhoods with stores and community centers. About 2,000 people live on the island.

The all-electric vehicle, which doesn't have a driver's seat or steering wheel, is staffed with an attendant who can drive the bus with a handheld controller if necessary. The county is offering the shuttle service as part of a grant-funded pilot programme to assess how autonomous vehicles can supplement the public transit system.

"Having the attendant on board makes everyone feel comfortable," said Tilly Chang, executive director of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority. "This is just a demonstration for now to see, what does it look like and how does it work to have a driverless shuttle in a low-volume, low-speed environment?"

San Francisco is one of a growing number of cities worldwide that are testing the safety and potential of self-driving vehicles to transform public transportation.

The shuttles are operated by Beep, an Orlando, Florida-based company that has run similar pilot programs in more than a dozen U.S. communities, including service at the Miami Zoo, Mayo Clinic and



Yellowstone National Park.

"These shuttles are built for first-mile, last-mile, short connectivity routes. They're not intended to take the place of a bus system," said Beep project manager Shelley Caran. "The autonomous vehicle will have a better reaction time than a human and it will offer a more reliable service because they won't be distracted."

During a test ride Wednesday, the shuttle drove slowly and cautiously in autonomous mode. An attendant manually steered the vehicle around a utility truck that blocked part of the road.

"I didn't feel unsafe," said Dominic Lucchesi, an Oakland resident who was among the first to ride the autonomous shuttle. "I thought that it made some abrupt stops, but otherwise I felt like I was riding any other bus for the most part."

The boxy shuttle, which can seat up to 10 passengers, will operate 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day and circle the Loop every 20 minutes. The city has two shuttles - one can charge while the other ferries passengers.

The autonomous shuttle pilot project was launched after the California Public Utilities Commission voted to allow two rival robotaxi companies, Cruise and Waymo, to offer around-the-clock passenger service in San Francisco.

The approval came despite widespread complaints that the driverless taxis make unexpected stops, cause traffic backups and block emergency vehicles. On Wednesday, the city asked the commission to pause the robotaxi expansion.

Cruise, a subsidiary of General Motors, reported on social media that one of its robotaxis crashed into a city fire truck Thursday night, sending one passenger to the hospital.

Experts don't anticipate the same problems with driverless buses because they're expected to be staffed with drivers or attendants for the foreseeable future.

"Trained operators are going to be required even as we increase automation," said Nikolas Martelaro, autonomous-vehicle researcher at Carnegie Mellon University. "So, the question there may not be how worried should someone be about losing their job versus what should they be thinking about the potential training that's required."

Autonomous driving technology could make buses safer, but requiring drivers or attendants on-board could undermine one of their perceived advantages: reduced labor costs.

"We still have to find a market for them," said Art Guzzetti, vice president at the American Public Transportation Association. "We're doing it to make the trip better, more efficient, not to take the worker's job."

IRS encourages truckers to e-file by August 31 tax payment deadline



AUGUST 17, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Internal Revenue Service today encouraged all those who have registered, or are required to register, large trucks and buses with a taxable gross weight of 55,000 pounds or more to e-

file Form 2290, Heavy Highway Vehicle Use Tax Return, by the Aug. 31, 2023, payment deadline for vehicles first used in July 2023.

The heavy highway vehicle use tax is an annual federal excise tax on heavy highway motor vehicles operating on public highways.

The filing deadline is not tied to the vehicle registration date. Taxpayers must file Form 2290 by the last day of the month following the month in which the taxpayer first used the vehicle on a public highway during the taxable period, regardless of the vehicle's registration renewal date.

Taxpayers that have 25 or more taxed vehicles registered in their name must e-file Form 2290 and pay the tax. However, on vehicles they expect to use for 5,000

miles or less (7,500 for farm vehicles), they're required to file a return, but pay no tax. If the vehicle exceeds the mileage use limit during the tax period, the tax becomes due. Vehicles first used on a public highway during the month of July 2023 must file Form 2290 and pay the appropriate tax between July 1, 2023, and August 31, 2023. For additional taxable vehicles placed on the road during any month other than July, the tax should be prorated for the months during which it was in service. IRS.gov has a table to help determine the filing deadline.

FILE AND PAY THE EASY WAY

GET THE FACTS

Visit the Trucking Tax Center on [IRS.gov/trucker](https://www.irs.gov/trucker).
Review the Frequently Asked Questions for Truckers who e-file (also available in Spanish).
Use "Do I Need to Pay the Heavy Highway Vehicle Use Tax?" online tool if unsure about filing.
Gather the required information

VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER(S).

Employer Identification Number (EIN) - not a Social Security number. It can take about four weeks to establish a new EIN. See How to Apply for an EIN.

Taxable gross weight of each vehicle.

FILING OPTIONS

All Form 2290 filers are encouraged to e-file, a list of IRS-approved e-file providers is on [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

E-file is required when reporting 25 or more vehicles on Form 2290.

A watermarked Schedule 1 is sent within minutes after acceptance of an e-filed return.

If filing by mail, ensure that the correct mailing address is used.

Mail filers will receive their stamped Schedule 1 within 6 weeks after the IRS receives the form.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Credit or debit card or digital wallet is an option. E-filing makes paying with electronic funds withdrawal an easy part of the process.

Electronic Federal Tax Payment System requires advanced enrollment.

Mailed in check or money order payments using Form 2290-V, Payment Voucher, mailed to: Internal Revenue Service, P.O. Box 932500, Louisville, KY 40293-2500.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

contd form page 12

Indian-origin college student Rejani...

"I am not a politician, and I do not want to be a politician," said Raveendran, "I'm a regular person who knows the situations in regular people's lives."

Raveendran said her campaign will focus on securing the border and cracking down on illicit drugs like fentanyl, stopping illegal immigration and advocating for "medical freedom," suggesting she is opposed to vaccine mandates.

In a flyer detailing her candidacy, Raveendran said that she decided to run because she felt the political system needed "new people with new ideas" and to "bring the perspective of regular people and regular moms to Washington."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Hawaii wildfire victims qualify for...

Calendar-year partnerships and S corporations

whose 2022 extensions run out on Sept. 15, 2023.

Calendar-year corporations whose 2022 extensions run out on Oct. 16, 2023.

Calendar-year tax-exempt organizations whose extensions run out on Nov. 15, 2023.

In addition, penalties for the failure to make payroll and excise tax deposits due on or after August 8, 2023, and before September 7, 2023, will be abated as long as the deposits are made by Sept. 7, 2023.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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Multi-Talented Singer and Performer Raghav to Rock the Stage at Diwali Dance Fest, Creating Magic at Walt Disney World® Resort



Raghav is an internationally acclaimed singer, songwriter, and dancer known for his fusion of various musical genres and his ability to captivate audiences with his energetic performances

AUGUST 17, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Lake Buena Vista, FL - Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is set to illuminate Walt Disney World® Resort as the sensational performer, Raghav, takes center stage at the highly anticipated Diwali Dance Fest On Saturday, October 28th in Orlando, Florida.

Raghav, the internationally acclaimed singer and songwriter, is renowned for captivating audiences worldwide with his mesmerizing performances and hit singles. Drawing from his rich cultural heritage and infusing modern elements, Raghav will be closing out the 2.5-hour Dance Showcase set to be held at Disney's Animal Kingdom® Theme Park.

Diwali Dance Fest will be the 1st Ever Youth Event Celebration of Diwali at Walt Disney World® Resort! The event will feature an official parade at Disney Springs®, a dance showcase at Disney's Animal Kingdom® Theme Park, and a VIP party to follow.

"We wanted to make sure that the 1st Ever Diwali Dance Festival was going to be a

memorable one for all those that will be attending," said Jeanie Beri, Director of Jashn Productions. When I saw my daughter dancing to Raghav's new hit "Desperado" I was reminded of myself when he had come out with "Teri Baaton" & "Angel Eyes" some years ago and I said to myself, he's the perfect fit for our event. We can't wait to experience the energy he will bring to the Walt Disney World stage."

Raghav's performance will feature a blend of his popular chart-topping hits along with traditional and contemporary dance routines, making it a spectacle that promises to enthrall both Indian and international audiences. With his dynamic stage presence and soulful voice, Raghav is sure to leave a lasting impression, creating cherished memories for attendees of all ages.

"I'm looking forward to this gig more than any in recent memory, the magic of Diwali combined with Disney magic. said Raghav. "It's going to be very special. I'm privileged to have been invited and thank Jashn Productions for both organizing this one-of-a-

kind event and thinking of me"

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit <https://shopdiwalidancefest.com>.

About Jashn Productions:

Jashn Productions was created by dancers for dancers, bringing mainstream exposure and opportunities for South Asian performing artists. Jashn is led by Jeanie Beri, an award-winning South Asian American dancer with over 35 years of dance training and teaching from her New Jersey-based studio Rhythmic Arts to her various credits including Walt Disney World, NBA, and the Broadway stage!

<https://jashnproductions.com/>

About Raghav

Raghav is an internationally acclaimed singer, songwriter, and dancer known for his fusion of various musical genres and his ability to captivate audiences with his energetic performances. Born in India and raised in Canada, Raghav's music reflects a diverse cultural background and has garnered him a massive global fanbase.

Middlesex County Clerk raises awareness about recent passport scams and warns veterans of fraudulent schemes



AUGUST 17, 2023

MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ (TIP): In response to a surge in passport and veteran scams, Middlesex County Clerk

Nancy J. Pinkin is taking proactive measures to alert all County residents to enhance vigilance and provide accessible resources.

"The threat of scams is widespread, and unfortunately even our revered veterans are being targeted," said County Commissioner Director Ronald G. Rios. "Staying informed about scams and deceptive tactics, along with understanding when and how to seek assistance, is the most effective shield against fraud. On behalf of myself and my colleagues on the Board of County Commissioners, I urge all residents to exercise caution, and be mindful of misleading information."

"As misinformation spreads readily across social media and various platforms, it is imperative that our

residents, of all ages remain well-informed about recent scams to safeguard themselves from potential harm. The spread of scams, specifically aimed at our aging communities and veterans, is a growing concern that demands our attention," said Middlesex County Clerk Nancy J. Pinkin.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON PASSPORT APPLICATION FEES

The U.S. Department of State has issued a clear directive to all prospective passport applicants that there are no exemptions or waivers for passport fees. A mandatory fee applies to all passport applications without exception.

Read full story at www.theindianpanoramanews.com

A New World of Peace CONCERT
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Sri Chinmoy

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New York, NY 10023
ADMISSION FREE, but reservations required.
Please call 212-380-8153 www.anewworldofpeace.com

contd from page 1

Peace returning to Manipur...

world order that was emerging in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, Mr. Modi said on August 15 and assured the countrymen of a "New India" with a bright future in next five years. The Prime Minister said the government will launch 'Vishwakarma Yojana' next month with an allocation of ₹13,000 crore to ₹15,000 crore for those with traditional skills. The scheme will be launched next month, on Vishwakarma Jayanti.

He added that the government will soon launch a scheme to provide relief in bank loans to those dreaming of their own house in cities. Mr. Modi said his government will soon launch the scheme for middle-class families living in cities but do not own a house. While it was his last Independence Day speech ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election, Prime Minister Modi exuded confidence that he will address the nation from the Red

Fort next year to list out the progress on the promises he had made to the people.

Chandrayaan-3's first...

By August 23, Vikram will have to reach a perilune (closest point to Moon) of around 30 km, from where the final descent by the 1,750 kg lander will be attempted with the deboosters working as brakes to slow down its descent. After achieving soft-landing on the lunar surface, the rover (26 kg) inside the lander would come out through a ramp and explore the area around it. The rover has two payloads. While one (Alpha Particle X-Ray Spectrometer or APXS) will study the chemical and mineralogical composition of lunar surface, the second payload (Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy or LIBS) will study elemental composition of lunar soil (Mg, Al, Si, K, Ca, Ti, Fe) and rocks around the landing site. (Source: TNS)

Coorg: The Scotland of India

Better known as Kodagu, Coorg is only six hours away from the busy city of Bangalore and a popular getaway during the monsoon. The rains add a certain charm to this district, even though it experiences a high amount of rainfall because it is situated on the eastern side of the Western Ghats. Madikeri is the most sought-after destination in Coorg. Endowed with a number of things to do and places to see, the drive to Madikeri is not only scenic but probably the brightest green you will ever see in any part of Karnataka. With freshly flushed coffee plantations on either side, the mist of Coorg is likely to call you once again.

RAJA'S SEAT

Raja's Seat is a prominent tourist spot in the centre of Madikeri town. It is a garden where the kings of Kodagu are believed to have spent their sunsets enjoying the scenic change of the sky colours. It was also their recreational space, where they spent time with their queens. It now stands as a big, open-air garden, overlooking the green hills and valleys of Coorg. Whether you want to walk around the space or sit and watch the spectacular changing colours of the low-hanging clouds, this is the perfect spot to enjoy a beautiful evening.

HIKE AROUND MOJO PLANTATION

Mojo Plantation is blessed with some of the best routes for hiking and treks. This part of the Madikeri witnesses more rainfall than the other parts and grows cardamom extensively. After two decades of organic farming, they have a thriving diverse rainforest which grows coffee, vanilla, pepper, pineapple, oranges, passion fruit, mango and kokam. The hike up to the beautiful Shola forests is just a few minutes away. In the correct season (and if nature approves), you can see the rare Nilgirikurinji blossom here. Other hikes include climbing to the Kaloor Ridge and crossing the Kaloor village and river (through scenic rice and spice fields). For more serious trekkers, the climb to Galibeedu forest towards the Sacred Grove may be worth a try. Covering a distance of approximately eight km, this stretch has a varied terrain, with a high probability of interacting with local communities.

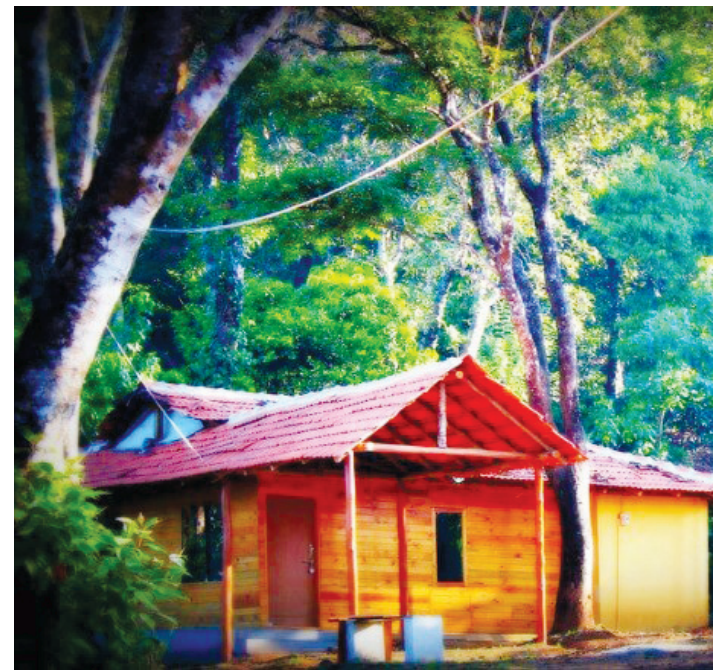
SHOP AT COORG GREENS

Coorg is synonymous with coffee and chocolates. Due to its popularity as a tourist destination, shopping in Madikeri is a little more expensive than the other regions of the district, but you are sure enough to find everything you want. Coorg Greens has a number of branches across the district, and stocks miscellaneous products in their shop opposite the KSRTC Bus Stand. Here, you can buy Coorgi coffee, either filter or instant. They also have spices, dry fruits, oils and handmade soaps. If you want to take small souvenirs, their assorted box of spices is a good choice. The chocolates on the first floor come in many varieties. The flavours include coffee, vanilla, pan masala and nuts. They are homemade and come in a variety of packages and sizes.

WALK AROUND THE COFFEE PLANTATIONS

Coffee plantations are the most visited places in Coorg. Most homestays and resorts organise a walk around their own plantations where you can see the most popular type of coffee grown here—coffee robusta. The harvest season is in the first week of November, and in case, you would like to see and experience the processing of coffee, this is a good time to visit. Unlike tea plantations, coffee does not grow as disciplined and well-trimmed. Good shoes and good rain cover are definitely recommended. Many of these plantations also grow spices such as pepper and cardamom. Apart from the smaller homestays and lodges, Orange County, Tata Coffee and Bombay Burmah organise tours around their plantations.

Source: Happytrips

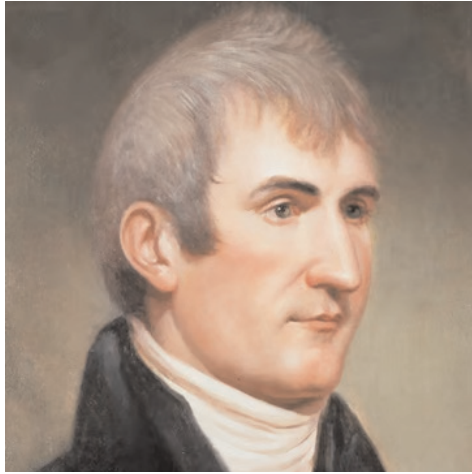


History This Week

AUG 18 - AUG 24

AUGUST 18

August 18, 1920 - The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting women the right to vote.



Birthday - American explorer Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809) was born near Charlottesville, Virginia. Along with William Clark, he explored the American West, and in 1805, after a journey of over 18 months, reached the Pacific Ocean.

AUGUST 19

August 19, 1934 - In Germany, a plebiscite was held in which 89.9 percent of German voters approved granting Chancellor Adolf Hitler additional powers, including the office of president.



August 19, 1991 - Soviet hard-line Communists staged a coup, temporarily removing Mikhail Gorbachev from power. The coup failed within 72 hours as democratic reformer Boris Yeltsin rallied the Russian people. Yeltsin then became the leading power in the country. The Communist Party was soon banned and by December the Soviet Union itself disintegrated.



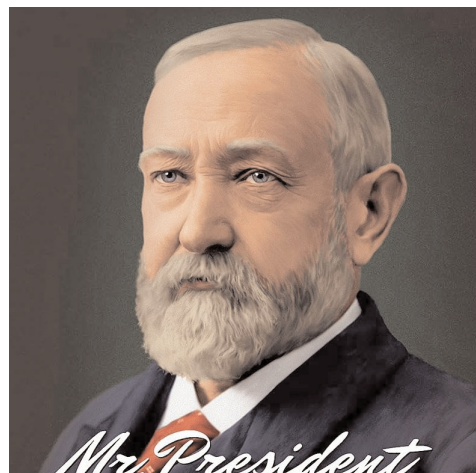
Birthday - Aviation pioneer Orville

Wright (1871-1948) was born in Dayton, Ohio. In 1903, Orville and his brother Wilbur achieved the world's first successful sustained and controlled flight of a motor-driven aircraft, following years of experimentation with kites and gliders.



Birthday - Bill Clinton, the 42nd U.S. President was born in Hope, Arkansas, August 19, 1946. He was the first President elected who was not alive during World War II.

AUGUST 20



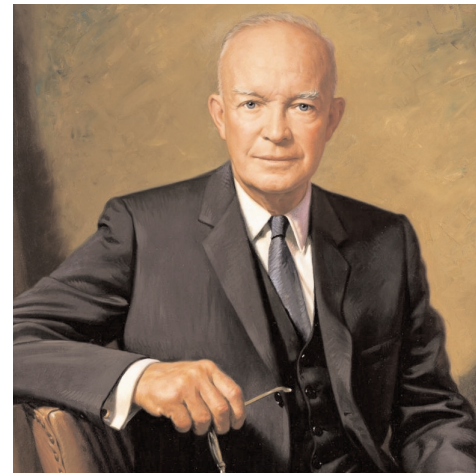
Birthday - Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901) the 23rd U.S. President was born in North Bend, Ohio. He was the grandson of William Henry Harrison, the 9th President.

AUGUST 21



August 21, 1863 - During the American Civil War, William Quantrill led 450 irregular Confederate raiders on a pre-dawn terrorist raid of Lawrence, Kansas, leaving 150 civilians dead, 30 wounded and much of the town a smoking ruin. In 1862, Quantrill had been denied a Confederate commission by the

Confederate Secretary of War, who labeled Quantrill's notions of war as 'barbarism.'



August 21, 1959 - President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a proclamation admitting Hawaii to the Union as the 50th state.



August 21, 1983 - Filipino opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., was assassinated at the Manila airport while leaving his plane. Public outcry over the killing ultimately led to the collapse of the government of Ferdinand E. Marcos and the inauguration of Corason C. Aquino, widow of the slain man, as president.

AUGUST 22

August 22, 1986 - Deadly fumes from a volcanic eruption under Lake Nios in Cameroon killed more than 1,500 persons.



Birthday - French composer Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was born in St. Germain-en-Laye, France. His unusual chords, based on the whole-tone scale, laid the groundwork for a new style of music called impressionism.

AUGUST 23



ACCO AND VANZETTI PAY SUPREME PENALTY—Nicola Sacco, Massachusetts shoemaker, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, fisherman and philosopher, were put to death early today in the electric chair at the Charlestown, Mass., state prison. After arrest

August 23, 1927 - Italian immigrants Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were electrocuted inside a prison at Charlestown, Massachusetts. They had been convicted of a shoe factory payroll robbery during which the paymaster and a guard had been killed. Following their convictions, all appeals for a new trial had failed, despite the lack of hard evidence and a later admission by a known criminal that he had participated in the robbery with an organized criminal gang. The days and weeks leading up to their execution aroused worldwide protests amid accusations of unfair treatment because they had radical political views and were Italian.

AUGUST 24

August 24, 79 A.D. - Vesuvius, an active volcano in southern Italy, erupted and destroyed the cities of Pompeii, Stabiae and Herculaneum.



August 24, 1572 - Thousands of Protestant Huguenots were massacred in Paris and throughout France by Catholics, in what became known as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.



August 24-25, 1814 - During the War of 1812, Washington, D.C., was invaded by British forces that burned the Capitol, the White House and most other public buildings along with a number of private homes. The burning was in retaliation for the earlier American burning of York (Toronto).

World Championships: Neeraj eyes only title missing from his collection

A World Championships gold is the only medal missing from Neeraj Chopra's decorated cabinet and the Indian javelin thrower will fancy his chances as no clear-cut favourite has emerged ahead of the event.

The 25-year-old has won gold medals in Olympics (Tokyo in 2021), Asian Games (2018) and Commonwealth Games (2018), besides becoming the Diamond League champion last year.

He won silver in last year's World Championships in USA. If Chopra wins gold, he will become only the second Indian after shooter Abhinav Bindra to win both the Olympics and World Championships titles in individual sport.

Going by the current form of the top javelin throwers, there is no hot favourite to stand on the top of the podium after the August 27 final. The qualification round will be held two days earlier. Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch, who won silver behind Chopra in Tokyo and bronze in the 2022 World Championships, Germany's Julian Weber and defending champion Anderson Peters would be among the gold medal contenders.

Chopra competed in only two top-class competitions this season, winning gold in both of them — Doha and Lausanne Diamond League meetings on May 5 and June 30, respectively. He had an injury layoff of one month in between the two events after straining his muscles while training.



India pip Ireland by two runs in DLS Method, take 1-0 lead

DUBLIN (TIP)

Pace sensation Jasprit Bumrah ticked all the boxes on his much-anticipated return to lead India to a two-run win over Ireland by DLS Method in a rain-interrupted first T20I of the three-match series, here on Friday, August 18.

Leading the side on his return after an 11-month injury layoff, Bumrah claimed 2 for 24 with nine dot balls and formed a formidable pair with T20I debutant Prasad Krishna (2/32) to restrict Ireland to 139 for 7 after opting to bowl.

Things looked bleak for the hosts after they were down 59 for 6 in the 11th over but their No 8 Barry McCarthy produced an amazing recovery, blazing his way to a 33-ball 51 not out (4x4, 4x6) to lift their total to a respectable 139 for 7.

He stitched a seventh wicket 57-run partnership with Curtis Campher (39) as Ireland reeled off 54 runs in the last five overs, losing just one wicket.

McCarthy was the stand out batter for the hosts as he reached his maiden half-century with a last-ball six off Arshdeep Singh who leaked 22 runs in the last over with McCarthy going hammers and tongs with two sixes and a four.

Chasing the tricky target under overcast conditions, India were off to a fluent start with Yashasvi Jaiswal (24; 23b) and Ruturaj Gaikwad (19 not out) putting together 46 runs in 6.2 overs.

But Craig Young produced a double blow, taking the left-handed duo of Jaiswal and Tilak Varma who was out for a golden duck.

India vice-captain Gaikwad, however, showed maturity and watched through the tricky phased, well aware that they were ahead of the DLS par score.

There was no stopping rain as umpires decided to call off the game at 6.15pm local time with India taking a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The victory also saw India return to winning ways after they went down 2-3 in the T20I series in the West Indies.

The second T20I is slated here on Sunday.

All eyes on Bumrah, the Indian pace sensation did not disappoint.



He bowled with rhythm, accuracy and a lot of venom. His rhythm was a lot better, he ran fast in his run-up to generate momentum and slowly ramped up the speed gun and went on to clock 140kph in the penultimate over when he conceded just one run.

He leaked 13 runs in just one of his four overs -- 16th. Bumrah bowled up front only to see Irish opener Andy Balbirnie nudging his fuller delivery for a boundary behind square boundary.

Bumrah was quick to bounce back and knocked over Balbirnie's off-stump with a searing inswinger.

He grabbed in-form wicketkeeper-batter Lorcan Tucker in his fifth delivery to get his campaign up and running.

Source: PTI

U20 Wrestling world championships: Antim creates history by defending 53kg title

AMMAN (JORDAN) (TIP)

Antim Panghal created history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to win back-to-back U20 world titles as she defended her 53kg crown, combining her tremendous agility and strength for a stupendous feat.

Antim, who hails from Hisar, dominated her Ukrainian rival Mariia Yefremova in her facile 4-0 win. She fought with such authority that she conceded only two points in the entire tournament.

Antim had become the first Indian woman grappler last year to win a junior world championships title and has already had a smooth transition to the senior circuit.

She did not give an inch to Yefremova, foiling her leg attacks with remarkable presence of mind. Antim was quick with her movements, and her double-leg attacks, employed with her tremendous strength, had the Ukrainian gasping. She sealed the bout with a right-leg attack which she converted into a take-down move.

Team title for women

Savita (62kg) also became a world champion as the Indian women won the team title for the first time. Priya Malik had won the 76kg title yesterday. Antim Kundu (65kg) won silver, while Reena (57kg), Arju (68kg) and Harshita (72kg) won bronze.

In the 62kg final, Savita set the mat on fire with a convincing technical superiority win over Venezuela's Paola Montero Chirinos. The wrestler from Rohtak scored points at will. By the end of first period, Savita had raced to a 9-0 lead and finished contest soon after the start of the second period.

Antim Kundu did not look in her elements in her final, losing 2-9 to local favourite Eniko Elekes.

Reena took the 57kg bronze with a 9-4 win over Kazakhstan's Shugyla Omirbek. She was leading 5-0 and survived last-minute drama to seal her place on the podium. Earlier in the day, she won two repechage rounds to get to the medal round.

Harshita brought curtains on India's campaign in a befitting manner, pinning Emilia Creciun, her rival from Moldova.



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**Message from
Peter J. McDonnell,
M.D. Director Wilmer Eye
Institute, Johns Hopkins
University, USA on the
occasion of laying the
foundation stone on
December 10, 2020**



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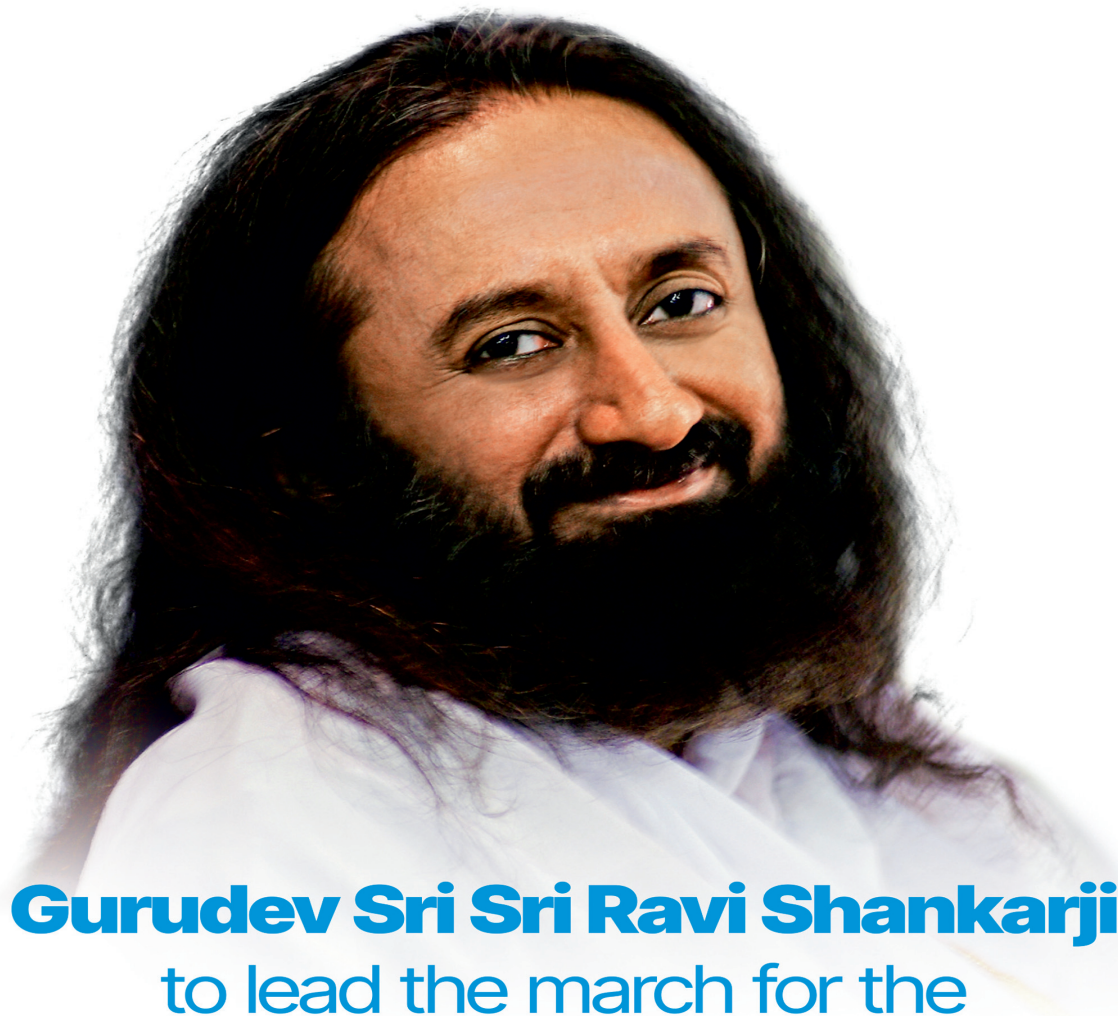


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