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The INDIAN PANORAMA

will bring out a profusely illustrated special edition on the occasion of Diwali on November 10, 2023.

Articles and advertisements may please be emailed to Salujindra@gmail.com by Tuesday, November 02, 2023.



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AS UKRAINE WAR DRAGS ON, US ARMS FIRMS MAKE A KILLING PAGE 8

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Biden requests \$105 billion in emergency funds for Israel, Ukraine and other crises



The national security adviser Jake Sullivan said the conflicts raging in Europe and the Middle East demonstrate why "we need Congress to urgently pass a budget that meets America's national security needs and those of our critical partners."

OCTOBER 20, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Biden administration formally asked Congress for \$105 billion in emergency funding on Friday, including \$10.6 billion in military support for Israel and \$61.4 billion to continue providing weapons and economic assistance to Ukraine as it battles Russia, New York Times reports.

The request also includes about \$9 billion in humanitarian assistance for Israel, Gaza and Ukraine. "These conflicts can seem far away," Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, CONTD ON PAGE 38

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appeals for aid trucks to be allowed into Gaza

EGYPTIAN STATE-LINKED BROADCASTER AL QAHERA NEWS SAID THE RAFAH BORDER CROSSING - THE ONLY ONE IN AND OUT OF BESIEGED GAZA NOT CONTROLLED BY ISRAEL

OCTOBER 20, 2023

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Israeli authorities announced plans to evacuate the northern city of Kiryat Shmona on Friday, October 20, after days of clashes with Hezbollah fighters along the border with Lebanon. "A short while ago, the Northern Command informed the mayor of the city of the decision. The plan will be managed by the local authority, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Defense," the Israeli military said in a statement.

President Joe Biden on Thursday, October 19, said Hamas and Russia are both out to "annihilate" democracies in an impassioned speech to the nation from the Oval Office, where he made the case for U.S. assistance to Ukraine and Israel. Mr. Biden exhorted the U.S.

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United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visits the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in Rafah, Egypt, October 20, 2023. Photo Credit/ Reuters

Hardeep Nijjar's killing: Australian intel chief says 'no reason to dispute' Canadian PM Trudeau's claim



Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) Director General Mike Burgess's comments came in California where he was present for a public gathering of Five Eyes intelligence partners. Photo Credit: X/@MikePBurgess

OCTOBER 19, 2023

MELBOURNE (TIP): Australia's domestic intelligence chief has said that he has "no reason to dispute" Canadian PM Justin Trudeau's claim of the Indian government's role in the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June this year, according to IANS.

The accusations, which came last month, kicked up a diplomatic row between India and Canada with both nations expelling a diplomat each and New Delhi dismissing the claims as "absurd". Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) Director General Mike Burgess told ABC News channel

CONTD ON PAGE 38

Consul General of India at New York Randhir Kumar Jaiswal has been appointed Spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs

I.S. SALUJA

OCTOBER 18, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, currently Consul General of India at New York, will succeed the current MEA spokesperson, Arindam Bagchi, who has been appointed as the next Ambassador / Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva.

A 1998 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, Mr. Jaiswal, during his diplomatic career spanning two decades, has served

CONTD ON PAGE 3



Consul General of India at New York Randhir Kumar Jaiswal will soon assume charge as Spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs

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GUEST COMMENT

Endless woes: On the Israel-Hamas conflict and Palestine

ISRAEL MUST STOP BOMBING AND FIND A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINE QUESTION

Thirteen days after Hamas carried out a brutal attack on Israel, killing some 1,400 people, Israel's air strikes on the besieged, defenseless Gaza continue with disproportionate ferocity, killing 3,785 Palestinians, including hundreds of children. As Israel is amassing troops and tanks on its border with Gaza in preparation for a ground invasion, after ordering some one million people to evacuate from the northern half of the land strip, U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak travelled to Israel to declare their support for the Jewish nation's "right to defend itself". Mr. Biden's visit came hours after an attack on a hospital in Gaza left at least 500 dead. The Palestinians say the hospital, which was sheltering thousands, was hit by Israeli jets, while Israel claimed that a rocket fired by Palestinian militants caused the explosion. While truth is the first casualty of war, a vengeful Israel's mindless bombing of a tiny, blockaded enclave is pushing its 2.3 million people

into an unimaginable struggle of life and death, even as the powerful nations are either looking away or busy backing Israel's campaign. Mr. Biden announced that Israel has allowed to let some 20 trucks of humanitarian aid into Gaza from Egypt. While any aid is welcome, 20 trucks of aid for two million people is, as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies put it, "a drop in the ocean".

The October 7 Sabbath attack that Hamas carried out in Israel should be condemned without any hesitation. At the same time, collectively punishing Gaza in the name of fighting Hamas and carrying out indiscriminate bombing that is killing hundreds a day do not make Israel any better than Hamas. Moreover, this approach of the Israeli state towards the Palestinians has neither improved Israel's security nor helped the stakeholders find a solution to the crisis. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on whose watch the country's biggest security crisis

unfolded, says he will "crush" Hamas. But Israel does not have easy options. Reoccupying Gaza would lead to a prolonged urban war of attrition. Hamas rose to prominence using the vacuum left by the failures of Fatah and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. If Israel manages to diminish Hamas's influence in Gaza, nobody knows what comes next as the Palestine question, which is the ongoing Israeli occupation, remains unaddressed. In an ideal world, the U.S., the most powerful country which is ruled by a President who has stated his commitment to "a foreign policy centered on human rights", should be enraged by what its ally is doing and apply pressure on Tel Aviv to stop the bombing and start talking, involving regional powers. But as that is a non-possibility as of now, Israel is set to continue the attacks with impunity, multiplying the woes of millions of Palestinians.

(The Hindu)

Merciless in Gaza

HOSPITAL TRAGEDY A WAKEUP CALL FOR THE WORLD

The loss of more than 500 lives in an explosion at Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza City has sparked global outrage and could well become a turning point in the Israel-Hamas war. Hamas has blamed it on an Israeli airstrike, while the Israeli military has claimed that the blast was caused by a misfired Palestinian rocket. According to a Hamas spokesperson, the hospital was housing hundreds of patients, including those wounded or displaced from their homes due to Israeli strikes. Tel Aviv's protestations of innocence have cut no ice with several countries in West Asia. Syria and Saudi Arabia have squarely blamed Israel for the tragedy, while Libya has accused it of 'war crimes and

genocide' in Gaza. Iraq has declared three days of mourning, even as Lebanon is witnessing protests.

In stark contrast, US President Joe Biden, who arrived in Tel Aviv on Wednesday on a solidarity visit, has hastily given the clean chit to Israel, thereby betraying his unwillingness to get to the bottom of the matter. PM Modi is right in demanding that those involved (in the hospital incident) should be held responsible, but that's easier said than done. Militarily unjustifiable attacks on buildings such as hospitals are regarded as war crimes, as per the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Hospitals and medical personnel are protected under international

humanitarian law, but the mechanism for fixing culpability in case of violations has time and again proved to be woefully inadequate.

As in the Russia-Ukraine war, the United Nations seems utterly helpless to reduce hostilities or prevent Israel and Hamas from riding roughshod over international law. With thousands of lives lost since October 7, the clamor for an immediate ceasefire is growing. The bloodbath at the Al-Ahli hospital is a wake-up call for the international community, which must go all out to break the vicious cycle of civilian deaths in Gaza.

(Tribune, India)

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Mayor Eric Adams hosts Diwali celebrations at his official residence - Gracie Mansion



Mayor Eric Adams lighting the traditional Diya. Seen from L to R : Dilip Chauhan, Deputy Commissioner, Mayor's Office for International Affairs, Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar, Mayor Eric Adams, and the priests

OCTOBER 18, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP) : Mayor Eric Adams welcomed over a thousand guests to a vibrant Diwali reception at Gracie Mansion, his official residence, on October 17th 2023.



Mayor Eric Adams speaks at the event as Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar (left) and Dilip Chauhan, Deputy Commissioner, Mayor's Office for International Affairs, look on.

Mayor Eric Adams emphasized the importance of celebrating diversity and fostering a sense of belonging in the City of New York, stating, "Diwali is a time of joy, illumination, and unity. It is a celebration that brings people from different backgrounds together to embrace cultural diversity and strengthen our community. We are honored to host this event and share the spirit of Diwali with New Yorkers."

The Diwali reception at Gracie Mansion served as a platform for unity, promoting intercultural understanding and respect. The event was a true



Mayor Eric Adams gets a feeling of Hanuman's Gada (Mace) at the event

testament to the City of New York's commitment to inclusivity, where all communities are valued and celebrated.

The highlight of the event was the presence of World Vegan Vision founded by H.K/ Malti Shah, a major coordinator and supporter, who provided plant-based vegan mithai (sweets) and savory delicacies. The conscious decision to offer vegan option was aligned with the event's theme of promoting environmental sustainability and plant-based lifestyles.

Several Indian vendors also participated in the celebration, showcasing the richness of Indian culture and introducing attendees to various aspects of Indian cuisine. Bru Coffee (Unilever) Market, managed by Lfa Kaushik Vyas, Salman Ali Vaqar, Janet Tinsay, Tejash Shah, Vadilal Industry USA, managed by Ashwin Pandya and Jigar Gandhi, Govinda Kitchen (ISKCON BROOKLYN) managed by Hansrupa Prabhu & Pragnessh Prabhu, Butala Emporium managed by Kilol & Bhadra Butala, Abha Deavrajan, president Kalindi Bakshi & V.P Neetu Jindal from world vegan vision and other vendors, brought a wide range of flavors and experiences to the event.

In particular, Nitin Vyas, Public Relations Director, played a major role in facilitating the connection between Mayor's office and the Indian vendors. His efforts helped establish a strong collaboration to ensure the seamless participation of these vendors in the Diwali celebration.

(Based on a report by Nitin Vyas, Public Relations Director)



Mayor Eric Adams honors with citations selected community leaders on the occasion. Seen, among others are Dr. Hari Shukla (2nd from left), Chandrika Tandon (6th from right), and Dr. Nirmal Mattoo, Chandrika Tandon with Citations. Also seen are Dilip Chauhan (1st from right) and Jenifer Rajkumar (3rd from right)

All photos: Jay Mandal /On Assignment

Sikh mayor of Hoboken city in New Jersey gets letters threatening to kill him, family

OCTOBER 18, 2023

HOBOKEN, NJ (TIP): The Indian-origin Sikh mayor of Hoboken city in the US state of New Jersey has opened up about being the target of a series of letters that threatened to kill him and his family.

The letters, which he received last year, first called on Hoboken Mayor Ravi Bhalla, who is a practicing Sikh, to resign, but then began threatening his and his family's life, targeting him for his Sikh faith, CBS News reported on Tuesday, October 17.

Bhalla, however, told CBS News in an interview that he and his family were standing strong and that hate was not welcome in his city.

Bhalla, who was first elected for the post of Hoboken mayor in 2017, said: "I'm very proud to lead this city as an American of Sikh background." He won again in 2021 after running unopposed.

For a man who always wears his turban with pride, Bhalla said he had been the target of threatening messages.

"Our family began receiving a series of letters in the mail," he said.

The first, more than a year ago, asked him to resign, and



'Last warning, if you don't ...': Ravi Bhalla, the Sikh mayor of Hoboken city in New Jersey got letters threatening to kill him and his family. Photo: @RaviBhalla

then a second letter threatened his life.

"The third threat, the most jolting, came soon thereafter and said, 'This is your last warning. If you don't resign immediately, we will kill you, we'll kill your wife, we'll kill your children,' he recounted.

One letter read: "It's time to kill you." "There was a lot of angst, anger, a lot of hate, combined with actual threats upon my life and the life of my children and my wife," Bhalla said.

It was enough for law enforcement agencies to provide the mayor with 24-hour security, including for his two

children at school.

"My biggest concern was for my kids. I signed up to be mayor, but my kids didn't sign up to this type of behavior," Bhalla said.

Bhalla said during the same time he was receiving these threatening emails, his neighbors, his brother and a few city colleagues began receiving packages with sexually explicit and threatening materials.

He said the person responsible for those was caught and charged, but the person behind the threatening letters is still out there.

Bhalla is well aware of the backlash Sikh-Americans endured after 9/11.

"As a Sikh-American, I'm a proud American and I want people to be treated equally," Bhalla said in response to a question on his experience as a Sikh politician 22 years after the attack that shook the entire country.

"There still is a strain of extremism in America, and it's just unfortunate to see that small strain is somewhere in Hoboken, as well. And I think that's what needs to be called out and that's what people need to know about so that we can eventually put an end to it through education and through love," he said. (Source: PTI)

Indian American senior official Maju Varghese named Principal at NEWCO Strategies



Maju Varghese has been named Principal at NEWCO Strategies, a woman and LGBTQ-led, majority-minority strategic consulting firm

OCTOBER 16, 2023

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Maju Varghese, a former senior official in the Biden and Obama administrations, has been named Principal at NEWCO Strategies, a woman and LGBTQ-led, majority-minority strategic consulting firm.

The son of immigrants from Kerala, India, has held senior positions on the staffs of two Presidents, Joe Biden and Barack Obama, presidential campaigns, dynamic non-profit organizations, and the legal industry.

Over the last two decades, Varghese has led teams across industries through adversity and change to achieve history-making results, according to his company profile.

Varghese most recently served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), an organization that supports democracy work around the world with a staff of 300 employees and a budget of over \$300 million.

In this role, Varghese spearheaded operational improvements, leveraging technology to make critical processes more efficient. He also led NED through the critical post-pandemic period by leading the work to finalize a hybrid return to office policy and the completion of NED's first collective bargaining agreement with its staff union.

Prior to that, Varghese served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Military Office, overseeing an organization of nearly 3,000 military and civilian personnel who provide essential services to the White House and ensure worldwide, daily, uninterrupted functioning of the presidency.

In this role, he managed the Presidential Airlift Group, the Marine Helicopter Squadron, Camp David, the White House Communications Agency, and the White House Medical Unit.

Before joining the Biden administration, Varghese was Executive Director of the 59th Presidential Inaugural Committee, navigating the Covid-19 pandemic and heightened security concerns following the January 6, 2021 attack on the US Capitol.

Varghese led the planning of all inaugural events, including driving the development of the "Field of Flags" on the National Mall which garnered international attention for its creativity and symbolism.

Varghese oversaw the logistics of inaugural programming, including a National Covid-19 Memorial Event at the Lincoln Memorial and "Celebrating America-An Inauguration Night Special"-an Emmy-nominated, nationally televised concert on Jan 20, 2021, that drew over 20 million viewers.

Varghese also served as Chief Operating Officer and Senior Advisor on the Biden Campaign, with oversight of national operations, personnel, travel, vetting, and compliance from the primaries through the general election.

When Covid-19 began, Varghese worked with health advisers to develop safety protocols for the campaign, including the shift of staffers to remote work and from in-person events to virtual formats.

He also led the negotiation of the campaign's collective bargaining agreement with the union representing the campaign's field organizers, the first such agreement for the staff of a major party nominee.

Prior to serving on the campaign, he was Chief Operating Officer of the Hub Project, a Washington, DC-based non-profit, and senior advisor at Dentons, a multinational law firm.

Previously in his career, Varghese was

a senior member of Obama's staff at the White House. He oversaw day-to-day White House operations, including oversight of the budget, personnel, and facilities as Assistant to the President for Management and Administration.

Varghese also served as Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Advance, helping to lead the team that coordinates the President's events and travel.

In this capacity, he worked closely with the National Security Council, the US Department of State, foreign governments, the White House Military Office, and the United States Secret Service to plan and execute the President's overseas travel.

Prior to his time at the White House, Varghese practiced law, serving as a litigation associate in a New York City law firm.

Varghese is an alumnus of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Economics, and the Maurice A. Dean School of Law at Hofstra University, where he earned his Juris Doctor.

Varghese was born in the US to parents who immigrated from Thiruvalla, Kerala. His mother, Saroja Varghese, came alone first as a nurse in 1972 after working with the Indian Air Force. She was later joined by her husband and elder daughter, Manju.

He lives in Arlington, Virginia, with his wife Julie and their son Evan.

Indian-origin 33-yr-old chef crowned winner of MasterChef Singapore season 4



Inderpal Singh has emerged as the winner of 'MasterChef Singapore' after winning a three-way competition in the finale.

OCTOBER 16, 2023

SINGAPORE (TIP): Inderpal Singh, a 33-year-old Indian-origin Singaporean, has emerged as the winner of 'MasterChef Singapore' after winning a three-way competition in the finale.

After weeks of intense competition, Singh won the fourth season of the cooking reality show in the finale aired on Sunday, October 15 according to media reports. Singh walked away with SGD 10,000 (approximately Rs 6.7 lakh) in cash and other gifts.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Sikh youth who was assaulted in New York bus says 'shaken' as his 'turban was specifically targeted'



Sikh youth who was assaulted in New York bus says 'shaken' as his 'turban was specifically targeted'. Photo for representation only.

OCTOBER 19, 2023

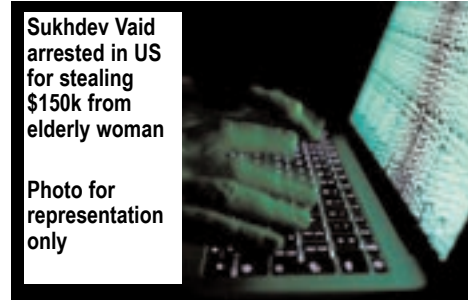
NEW YORK (TIP): A 19-year-old Sikh youth, who was attacked in a bus here, on Wednesday said he is "shaken and angered" by the assault and no one should be harassed because of how they look.

"I am shaken and angered by this attack. I believe that no one should be assaulted or harassed because of how they look, and everyone should be able to go about their business in public in peace," the young man said in a statement issued by advocacy and rights group The Sikh Coalition.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian hacker arrested in US for stealing \$150k from elderly woman

Kickerline: The fraud occurred because of a pop-up notice that appeared on Jane Doe's computer screen



Sukhdev Vaid arrested in US for stealing \$150k from elderly woman

Photo for representation only

OCTOBER 20, 2023

MONTANA (TIP): A 24-year-old Indian national has admitted to his role in stealing \$150,000 from an elderly woman in the US state of Montana through a computer-hacking scheme.

Sukhdev Vaid pleaded guilty on Tuesday, October 17, to wire fraud, and faces a maximum of 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and three years of supervised release.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American 42-yr-old man from Hoshiarpur killed in Indiana road crash



Sukhwinder Singh succumbed to his injuries on Friday, October 13

Image for representation only

OCTOBER 17, 2023

GREENWOOD, INDIANA (TIP): A 42-year-old Indian American man was killed and two others were seriously injured in a two-vehicle accident in rural Greenwood in Indiana last week.

Sukhwinder Singh, an Indianapolis resident who was driving a Honda Accord, veered into the opposite lane, colliding with a Cadillac Escalade last Thursday, October 12, according to local media reports.

Singh, who hails from Hoshiarpur district in Punjab, succumbed to his injuries on Friday at a local hospital.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Texas school named after an Indian American trailblazer teacher Sonal Bhuchar

OCTOBER 17, 2023

MISSOURI CITY , TX (TIP): In the heart of Texas, a vibrant elementary school has been named after an Indian American trailblazer educationist Sonal Bhuchar with a dedication ceremony Sunday, October 15, celebrating her profound impact on the community.

The school was named after Bhuchar by a unanimous decision of the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) Board of Trustees.

Sonal Bhuchar Elementary, nestled in the heart of Missouri City, Texas, celebrating Bhuchar, who passed away in 2019 at the age of 58 due to complications from cancer, opened its doors in August.

The school website describes "our namesake" Bhuchar, a former FBISD trustee as "a tireless servant with a long history of community leadership."

Bhuchar is described as a trailblazer in Fort Bend County and a leader in the field of education. After her long association with the Fort Bend Education Foundation, Bhuchar was elected to the FBISD Board of Trustees for six years and served as the Board President for two years.

Bhuchar was appointed to the One Star National Service Commission Board by Texas Governor Greg Abbott in 2015.

Up until her passing, she was actively



An elementary school in Missouri City, Texas has been named after an Indian American trailblazer educationist Sonal Bhuchar

involved as a board member with the Child Advocates of Fort Bend and Parks, Art, Recreation, Culture, and Streetscapes (PARCS).

She was a board member for the Literacy Council of Fort Bend, ACCESS Health, Sugar Land Cultural Arts Foundation, Sugar Land Heritage, the Indo-American Charity Foundation and the Texas Medical Association Alliance.

During her tenure with the District,

Bhuchar spearheaded many efforts including chairing the WATCH program (a healthy lifestyle education program for elementary school students), developing the concept for the Fort Bend Education Foundation's annual International Festival to promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the District, the Student Leadership Program and the Legislative Advocacy Program.

Bhuchar's journey began in Mumbai,

where she earned her bachelor's degree in physical therapy from Mumbai University. In 1984, she and her physician husband, Dr Subodh Bhuchar, embarked on a new chapter by immigrating to Houston, Texas.

The school's mascot, a majestic Bengal tiger named Royal, proudly embodies Bhuchar's Indian heritage. The acronym ROYAL, which stands for Resilient, Optimistic, Youthful, Admirable, and Leader, captures the very essence of her legacy.

A mural on a wall in the school has her image with a quote that guided her life, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Glowing tributes were paid by the speakers at the dedication ceremony, highlighting the contribution of Bhuchar in the community and how she encouraged them to serve for the betterment of the needy in the community.

Consul General of India D.C. Manjunath gifted the elementary school special books on India. Bhuchar's children gave an emotional speech about the lessons learned from their mother, and how she spent hours volunteering the community causes without any expectations in return as she believed in doing things for good without an ego.

Indian American information security professional Sarika Bansal faces runoff in Cary Town Council poll



Sarika Bansal faces a runoff in the race for a Cary Town Council seat in North Carolina

OCTOBER 16, 2023

CARY, NC (TIP): Indian American information security professional Sarika Bansal faces a runoff in the race for a Cary Town Council seat in North Carolina as she just missed the 50% plus one majority needed to win outright.

In the Oct 10 election, Bansal and Rachel Jordan finished first and second in District D with 49% and 28% votes respectively, ahead of incumbent Ryan Eades in third position with 23%.

Jordan announced Friday she has asked for a runoff, the media reported. The runoff will take place on Election Day, Nov 7. Cary is home to over 180,000 residents, and Asian Americans make up 20% of the population. District D consists of west Cary and parts of Chatham County. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American policy expert Shyla Raghav named as Chief Climate Officer by Times

OCTOBER 13, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Time magazine has appointed Indian American climate change expert and policy maker Shyla Raghav as its Chief Climate Officer based in New York.

"This promotion is not just a recognition of Shyla's great work to date, it's as much a proof point of TIME's dedication to climate action," TIME President of Sustainability, Simon Mulcahy wrote in note to staff on Tuesday.

"Shyla will focus on building on our momentum and expanding our climate programs and community, as well as further evolving TIME's own climate goals and journey."

"TIME is committed to the critical role of the media to inspire and enable climate action. To date, we have launched the TIME CO2 Earth Awards, our amazing Advisory Council and our Climate Futures Program," Mulcahy wrote.

After a full and exciting program of events across New York for Climate week, Time will be shortly rolling out a high-profile agenda for COP 28, he wrote.

"Shyla has spent her entire career working on climate solutions and advocating for climate action," Mulcahy wrote. "She brings 15 years of experience in climate change policy, international climate finance, coalition



Time magazine has appointed Indian American climate change expert and policy maker Shyla Raghav as its Chief Climate Officer based in New York

building, and nature conservation."

During her time at Time as Chief Portfolio and Partnership Officer of TIME CO2, Shyla has been instrumental in the design and launch of a groundbreaking product, the TIME CO2 Planet Portfolio, which blended climate, nature, and community projects into a single portfolio to help channel funding to high quality programs as an alternative to offsetting.

She has also successfully established a range of partnerships and an expert Advisory Council to guide TIME CO2's climate programs.

Prior to joining Time, she served as Vice President for Climate Change at Conservation International, where she was responsible for the organization's strategy on climate change and climate action coalitions. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Dev Awasthi among The 2023 NYC 40 Under 40



Dev Awasthi, Vice President, Corporate and Legislation, Kasirer. Photo / Dev Awasthi (@dev_awasthi8) / X

NEW YORK (TIP): Dev Awasthi's lobbying job at the top government relations firm Kasirer isn't exactly what the general public might think.

"It isn't all waiting in the lobby like the typical lobbyist does and hounding them and bothering them," he says. "A lot of the time, the job is relationship building and finding those mutual relationships."

Awasthi represents such clients as Mount Sinai and New York-Presbyterian, the Hotel Association of New York City and Google Cloud, assisting them on legislative engagement and building connections.

For example, when a massive fire in a Bronx apartment building killed 19 people in 2022, the surviving residents needed places to stay. The local New York City Council member contacted Awasthi, who in turn connected them with the Hotel Association of New York City. The survivors were immediately housed at hotels. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

FIA Executive Team for 2024 Announced



President - Dr Avinash Gupta,



Executive Vice President - Mr. Saurin Parikh,



Vice President - Ms. Smita Miki Patel,



2nd Vice President - Mr. Deepak Goel,



General Secretary - Ms. Priti Patel,



Jt. Secretary- Mr. Mahesh Dubal,



Treasurer - Mr Sanjeev Singh,



Jt. Treasurer- Mr. Haresh Shah,



Mr. Kenny Desai-
Immediate Past
President

OCTOBER 7, 2023
EDISON, NJ (TIP): FIA held its Annual General Meeting on October 4, 2023, at Akbar Restaurant in Edison, New Jersey and announced the Executive Team for the Year 2024. Present on the occasions were the FIA's board of trustees, Senior advisors Dr. H.R. Shah and Dr. Sudhir Parikh, and the executive team, along with others from different member associations.

Immediate Past President - Mr. Kenny Desai and Chairman Mr. Ankur Vaidya thanked the Executive Team of 2023 for their hard work under the able leadership of President Mr. Kenny Desai and accorded a warm welcome to the new team.

The newly elected President, Dr. Avinash Gupta, said that he has learned a lot this year during his



Executive team for 2024, FIA Chairman, & FIA Board of Trustees

THE EXECUTIVE TEAM - 2024

PRESIDENT - DR AVINASH GUPTA,

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT - MR. SAURIN PARIKH,

VICE PRESIDENT - MS. SMITA MIKI PATEL,

2ND VICE PRESIDENT - MR. DEEPAK GOEL,

GENERAL SECRETARY - MS. PRITI PATEL,

JT. SECRETARY- MR. MAHESH DUBAL,

TREASURER - MR SANJEEV SINGH,

JT. TREASURER- MR. HARESH SHAH,

tenure as Vice President and thanked his team for all their support. He said that he looks forward to his tenure and would endeavor hard to take FIA to new heights in alignment with the support from his new executive team, and he was sure that all of them together will make their motherland, India, proud.

"I will work towards promoting the interests and welfare of the Indian diaspora in the US, fostering cultural exchange and understanding, advocating for the community's needs, and strengthening the organization's role as a non-profit grassroots umbrella organization, he said.

Dr. Gupta will work on various social welfare projects and humanitarian efforts to support not only the Indian diaspora but also the broader local community.



Board member of the Election Commission, Mr. Dipak Patel addressed the Executive Committee

Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar mourns the tragic death of School Crossing Guard Krystyna Naprawa

OCTOBER 20, 2023

QUEENS, NY (TIP):

Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar released a statement on the tragic incident this morning in which school crossing guard Krystyna Naprawa was fatally struck by a truck at Woodhaven Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue.

Assemblywoman's statement read : "I spoke with 102nd Precinct Commanding Officer Jeremy Kivlin about the tragic incident this morning in which school crossing guard Krystyna Naprawa was fatally struck by a truck at Woodhaven Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue. Ms. Naprawa was a beloved member of the community who devoted her life to the safety and education of our children. I am here for her family and offer them any help they need in this time of grief. I will continue to be in touch with the 102nd Precinct, Police Commissioner Edward Caban, and Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez about this incident, and investigate the need for any safety



Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar mourned the tragic loss of the precious life of school crossing guard Krystyna Naprawa, and called for the needed safety upgrades to improve visibility at "this dangerous intersection".

upgrades to improve visibility at this dangerous intersection."

Asian Columbia Alumni Association organizes Panel discussion titled Art and Identity: Navigating the Spaces In Between

OCTOBER 19, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Columbia alumni and students for a celebratory evening at the annual Asian Columbia Alumni Association (ACAA) Welcome Back Reception, on October 18, organized a panel discussion titled Art and Identity: Navigating the Spaces In Between.

The event was moderated by Mumbai-based Playwright/Director Isheeta Ganguly. The panel included the founder and CEO of Saarey Music, Faraan Ifran, Aroon Shivdasani, Founder and retired Executive and Artistic Director of the Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC), and Tim McHenry, Deputy Executive Director, and chief Programmatic Officer at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City.

During an hour-and-a-half-long interactive panel discussion, the participants had an engaging

conversation, emphasizing how artists, as "social doctors" draw inspiration from their individual and collective identities to create music, visual art, cinema, or novels that reflect their own histories and stories.

Panelists. (L to R) : Isheeta Ganguly, Tim McHenry, Aroon Shivdasani and Faraan Ifran. Photos : Jay Mandal/On Assignment



Isheeta Ganguly, Singer, Playwright/Director



NYC Under 'Heightened Threat Environment' Amid Israel War: NYPD

A CITYWIDE "ALL-OUT DEPLOYMENT" OF NYPD COPS WILL CONTINUE, POLICE OFFICIALS SAID WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, THOUGH THEY NOTED NO SPECIFIC THREATS.



Protests by Palestine and Israel supporters on October 13th at Times Square

OCTOBER 18, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): New York City is under a "heightened threat environment" amid the escalating war between Israel and Hamas, police officials warned.

A grim, if vague, warning from the NYPD Wednesday raised the specters of potential terrorism and violence within the city even as it noted there are no specific, credible threats.

A citywide "all-out deployment" of cops will continue and all training will be postponed until further notice, the statement read.

"The NYPD is doing everything we can do to forestall future violence in our city," the statement read.

The brutal Oct. 7 attack on Israel by Hamas has sparked daily protests, sporadic violence directed at both Jewish and Palestinian New Yorkers and growing security concerns.

Many city dwellers have also likely seen increased police presence around houses of worship and transit hubs.

But fears over protests last Friday, October 13 - which were inaccurately said to be part of a "global day of jihad" - largely turned out to be unfounded.

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As Ukraine war drags on, US arms firms make a killing

THE US SOLD MILITARY HARDWARE, SERVICES AND TECHNICAL DATA TO ITS CLIENTS WORTH \$153.7 BN IN 2022, UP FROM \$103.4 BN THE YEAR BEFORE

"WITH THE DETERIORATION OF GLOBAL SECURITY, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE UKRAINE WAR, US ARMS SALES HAVE BEEN ON THE RISE. LAST YEAR, US DEFENSE COMPANIES REAPED HUGE DIVIDENDS SELLING THEIR WEAPONS AND DEFENSE PLATFORMS TO THEIR CLIENTS IN ASIA, EUROPE AND AFRICA. LATEST DATA SHOWS THAT 2022 SAW AN INCREASE OF \$51.9 BILLION IN THE SALE OF WEAPONS. MOST OF IT IS LARGELY DUE TO THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR, WHERE THE US IS BACKING UKRAINE."

Russian President Vladimir Putin made a candid admission at Sochi in June. He acknowledged that Moscow's troops were experiencing a shortage of modern weapons and expressed hope that the country's military industry would soon be able to meet their growing demand amid the Ukraine war. One of the critical reasons



US weapons to Ukraine

Photo for representation only

for the shortage is the global sanctions that have imposed curbs on the acquisition of sophisticated parts used in the production of a variety of weapons and their auxiliary systems. This has led to a shortfall of main battle tanks and ballistic missiles. Besides, using cruise missiles is a costly affair. Thus, the recent visit by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to Russia attracted much attention. Apart from North Korea, Russia is getting help from Belarus, China and Iran in maintaining its ammunition stocks.

Manned and unmanned aircraft, missiles and electronic warfare equipment require modern, high-tech components such as microchips and ball bearings. Russia faces challenges in sourcing these components adequately from domestic suppliers and importing them - as it did before the present conflict - from North America and Europe due to the sanctions. Now, Russia is forced to replace imports of critical components with supplies from China or Malaysia, which do not match the quality standards of those from the West.

Another significant reason for Moscow's urgent need to go shopping for ammunition from sources other than the usual ones is the extensive and disproportionate use of artillery by the Russian military.

Swarms of Shahed 136 drones have been supplied to Moscow from Iran, and these have wreaked havoc on Ukrainian cities. China has repeatedly denied sending military equipment to Russia since Moscow's all-out invasion of its neighboring country, even though the two nations signed a 'no-limits' partnership in February 2022. The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken,

warned China earlier this year that there would be 'consequences' if Beijing were to provide materiel support to Russia for its conflict in Ukraine.

Russia can also fall back on its ammunition stocks and older weapon systems from the Cold War era. Battlefield losses and Western sanctions have left the Russian military in a state of decline, but Moscow will still have enough firepower to extend the war in Ukraine, according to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). It gives stark numbers of Russian military losses - almost 10,000 units of key equipment, such as tanks, trucks, artillery pieces and aerial drones, according to one estimate.

But it also says that Russia can utilize Cold War-era and older stocks on the frontlines to make up in numbers what it may have lost in terms of technology. "The quality of the Russian military in terms of advanced equipment will likely decline, at least over the near term," the CSIS report says. "Moscow is under pressure to adapt, often turning to less-reliable and costlier suppliers and supply routes, lower-quality imports, or trying to reproduce Western components internally. This is likely hampering the rate and quality of Russian defense production," the report says.

It cautions that Ukraine and its Western supporters should not expect a swift resolution to the hostilities due to these supply issues. Russia still retains numerical advantages over Ukraine, the report adds, because it has large inventories in reserve. "Russia's military capabilities still greatly outnumber those of Ukraine on most indicators of air, land and naval power," the report says.

"While an accurate count of Moscow's current military stocks is not available publicly, it has been roughly estimated that, as of February 2023, the total number of aircraft at the Kremlin's disposal has been 13-15 times more than Kyiv's. Russia has nearly seven to eight times more tanks and four times more armored fighting vehicles, while its naval fleet is 12-16 times larger than Ukraine's," it says. These numerical advantages will enable Moscow to run a war of attrition over the next year, throwing numbers on the battlefield until Ukraine, even with fewer losses, runs out of hardware, the report observes.

While Russia's military-industrial complex is struggling, its US counterpart is reaping the benefits. This can be ascertained by a recent report published by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) titled, 'US Security Assistance to Ukraine'. The United States has been a leading provider of security assistance to Ukraine, particularly since Russia launched its renewed and expanded invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. From 2014, when Russia first invaded Ukraine, to August 22, 2023, the US has committed more than \$46 billion in security assistance "to help Ukraine preserve its territorial integrity, secure its borders and improve interoperability with NATO", according to the State Department.

With the deterioration of global security, particularly after the commencement of the Ukraine war, US arms sales have been on the rise. Last year, US defense companies reaped huge dividends selling their weapons and defense platforms to their clients in Asia, Europe and Africa. Latest data shows that 2022 saw an increase of \$51.9 billion in the sale of weapons. Most of it is largely due to the Russia-Ukraine war, where the US is backing Ukraine.

Several European countries have started arming themselves as they perceive a threat from Russia. American defense companies are on a high. They have received new orders for military equipment as these nations strengthen their defenses. As the data shows, the US sold military hardware, services and technical data to its clients worth \$153.7 billion in 2022, up from \$103.4 billion the year before. The State Department data claims that the increase in the sale of defense products is attributed to the crisis in Ukraine, where the US government has authorized massive supplies. The Ukraine war has also caused huge insecurity among European nations like Germany, Poland and Spain, which have started arming their defense forces, fearing the unintended consequences of this long-drawn-out war could very well spill over to their borders.

(The author is a Strategic Affairs Analyst)



BY MAROOF RAZA

Prioritizing America: The Non-Desirability of American Intervention in Foreign Conflicts



BY
PROF. INDRAJIT
S SALUJA

THE NON-DESIRABILITY OF AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN FOREIGN CONFLICTS MUST BE VIEWED THROUGH THE LENS OF PRIORITIZING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND MAKING THE NATION STRONGER. THE COSTS OF MILITARY INTERVENTIONS, BOTH IN TERMS OF FINANCES AND HUMAN LIVES, ARE STAGGERING. THESE RESOURCES COULD BE BETTER USED TO ADDRESS PRESSING DOMESTIC NEEDS AND IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF AMERICAN CITIZENS.

American foreign policy has long been a subject of debate, and one of the most contentious issues is the desirability of American intervention in conflicts abroad. While the United States has a history of involvement in international affairs, it is crucial to question whether such interventions are truly in the best interest of the American people and the nation as a whole.

THE COST OF FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS

One of the most significant arguments against American intervention in foreign conflicts is the tremendous financial burden it places on the nation. The cost of deploying troops, maintaining military bases, and funding foreign aid programs in conflict zones is exorbitant. These expenses divert resources from critical domestic needs, such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social welfare programs. The American people should rightfully question whether such financial resources could be better allocated to address pressing domestic issues.

Furthermore, the human cost of intervention cannot be overlooked. American servicemen and women face physical and psychological trauma, and many make the ultimate sacrifice on foreign soil. The toll on military families and the broader community is immeasurable. Prioritizing the American people means considering the physical and emotional well-being of those who serve and their families.

UNDERMINING NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Another critical issue is the potential erosion of national sovereignty that can occur through foreign interventions. When the United States intervenes in another country's conflict, it often requires the establishment of military bases and the deployment of troops. This can lead to the perception that the U.S. is imposing its will on other nations, which can breed resentment and fuel anti-American sentiment.

Furthermore, interventions can disrupt the political stability of other countries, sometimes leading to unintended consequences, such as power vacuums, civil unrest, and terrorism. This, in turn, can pose security threats to the United States and its allies. By refraining from unnecessary interventions, America can maintain a strong stance on respecting the sovereignty of other nations and avoid unintended consequences that could harm its own interests.

THE EFFICACY OF NATION-BUILDING



US special forces in Afghanistan and Iraq

File Photo

One of the justifications for American intervention in foreign conflicts has been the notion of nation-building. The idea is that by intervening in a conflict-ridden country, the United States can help establish a stable government and a more peaceful society. However, history has shown that nation-building is a complex and often unsuccessful endeavor.

The American people should be concerned about the effectiveness of such endeavors. From Afghanistan to Iraq, and other examples, the track record of nation-building is mixed at best. The enormous resources expended in these efforts often yield limited results, and long-term stability remains elusive. American intervention can inadvertently create more problems than it solves, potentially dragging the nation into protracted conflicts that sap resources and erode national prestige.

SHIFTING FOCUS TO DIPLOMACY

Rather than relying on military intervention as a primary tool of foreign policy, the United States should place greater emphasis on diplomacy and international cooperation. Diplomatic efforts, such as negotiation, sanctions, and international alliances, can often achieve the same goals without the costly and destructive consequences of military intervention.

Promoting diplomacy is not only more cost-effective but also better aligns with American values and ideals. It demonstrates a commitment to peaceful resolution of conflicts and a respect for international law. By prioritizing diplomacy, the United States can strengthen its diplomatic corps, enhance its soft power, and foster positive relationships with other nations. This

approach not only serves the American people by reducing the human and financial costs of intervention but also enhances the nation's global standing.

BLOWBACK AND ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT

American intervention in foreign conflicts often results in blowback, where unintended consequences have a negative impact on U.S. interests. For instance, the United States' involvement in the Soviet-Afghan War in the 1980s led to the rise of extremist groups, including al-Qaeda. The consequences of such actions can reverberate for years, posing threats to national security.

Furthermore, American intervention can breed anti-American sentiment in the countries where it occurs and around the world. This sentiment can fuel recruitment for extremist groups and make it more difficult for the United States to build positive relationships with foreign nations. Prioritizing the American people means considering the long-term consequences of intervention and minimizing the risks of blowback.

RESOURCE REALLOCATION AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The United States faces a multitude of domestic challenges that require significant attention and resources. These challenges include healthcare reform, infrastructure investment, environmental sustainability, education, and economic inequality. Focusing on these domestic priorities is essential for ensuring the well-being of the American people and the strength of the nation.

By reducing foreign interventions, the government can reallocate resources to address these pressing issues. This not only improves the quality of life for

American citizens but also bolsters the nation's resilience and stability. A strong nation is one that can effectively address the needs of its citizens, and this can be achieved by shifting resources from foreign interventions to domestic priorities.

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Another approach to addressing global conflicts while avoiding direct American intervention is to strengthen international institutions and cooperation. The United Nations and other international organizations provide avenues for multilateral solutions to global problems. By investing in and reforming these institutions, the United States can play a leadership role in fostering peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to conflicts without resorting to unilateral military action.

Strengthening international institutions also aligns with the principle of shared responsibility. It ensures that the burden of addressing global challenges is distributed among many nations rather than being shouldered solely by the United States. This approach is more cost-effective, reinforces America's global leadership, and is consistent with prioritizing the American people and the nation's interests.

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

History provides valuable lessons on the non-desirability of American intervention in foreign conflicts. Examples such as the Vietnam War, where the U.S. became deeply entangled in a costly and protracted conflict with minimal gains, should serve as cautionary tales. It took decades for the United States to recover from the psychological, financial, and social scars of this conflict.

Similarly, the Iraq War in the early 2000s had far-reaching consequences, including destabilizing the Middle East and straining international relations. It demonstrated the perils of acting on incomplete or inaccurate information and highlighted the need for a more prudent and deliberative foreign policy.

The non-desirability of American intervention in foreign conflicts must be viewed through the lens of prioritizing the American people and making the nation stronger. The costs of military interventions, both in terms of finances and human lives, are staggering. These resources could be better used to address pressing domestic needs and improve the well-being of American citizens.

(The author is chief editor of The Indian Panorama)

The perils of social media messaging

ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP IS IMPORTANT, BUT DELHI HAS SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS IN WEST ASIA THAT CAN'T BE IGNORED



BY VIVEK KATJU

"THIS INCOMPREHENSION ABOUT INDIAN POLICY CONTINUED BECAUSE AFTER THE TWEET, INDIA MADE NO COMMENT ON THE SITUATION, WHICH WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CLEAR FROM THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 8, FOR THE NEXT THREE DAYS. ON OCTOBER 10, MODI AGAIN TWEETED AFTER RECEIVING A PHONE CALL FROM ISRAELI PM BENJAMIN NETANYAHU. MODI EMPHASIZED: "PEOPLE OF INDIA STAND FIRMLY WITH ISRAEL AT THIS DIFFICULT HOUR. INDIA STRONGLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY CONDEMNS TERRORISM IN ALL ITS FORMS AND MANIFESTATIONS." THIS TWEET, TOO, DID NOT REALLY GO BEYOND MODI'S FIRST ONE. THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (MEA) ISSUED A BRIEF PRESS STATEMENT, ESSENTIALLY REPRODUCING THE CONTENT OF THE TWEET. THUS, THE CONFUSION ON INDIA'S STAND ON THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE ISSUE WAS NOT REMOVED BY THE TWEET OR THE STATEMENT."

India's response to the Hamas terror attack starkly shows the changing nature of its diplomatic practice and articulation. These transformations are driven partly by the pressures exerted by the media, both mainstream and social, which have diminished response times of the political leadership as well as diplomats to evolving regional or global crises. At the same time, the predilection of the top leadership to take to social media, even as events are unfolding, is also a major factor.

Leaders' social media comments on global issues should be so crafted that



Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and India's Prime Minister Modi Photo credit / Israeli PM's office

they do not raise doubts about basic policy positions.

The problem is that while sometimes these social media comments are innocuous, on other occasions they give rise to confusion, especially in the case of complex issues with long histories. It is, therefore, essential that those who manage the social media accounts of the top leadership are aware of the complexities of foreign policymaking and the need for nuanced diplomatic comments.

The October 7 Hamas attack threw Israel's intelligence and military establishment into complete confusion for many hours. The New York Times, which has always had deep access in the Israeli governmental system, noted in a report: "The speed, precision and scale of the Hamas attack had thrown the Israeli military into disarray..." The report stated that Hamas fighters overwhelmed eight Israeli military bases. They also neutralized an intelligence center near Gaza, thereby compromising the army's 'communications and surveillance' systems. The terror attack killed 1,300 Israelis, including 286 military personnel. This number included those who fought the Hamas fighters. Around 150 Israelis and people of other nationalities were abducted and taken to Gaza by Hamas.

With communications down amid the confusion caused by an unprecedented attack, the Israeli authorities would have come to know the details of the destruction caused by Hamas only by the evening of October 7. If this was the situation within Israel, the outside world naturally had an incomplete picture of what was happening. Therefore, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted on the Hamas attack at 4.44 pm on October 7, he and his advisers would have mainly gone by media reports and such information that the Indian embassy in Tel Aviv and India's contacts

in Israel and elsewhere could have provided. Despite the limited information that would have been available to him, the PM decided to tweet. He expressed shock at the attack and stressed: "We stand in solidarity with Israel at this difficult hour."

This expression of solidarity was correct because of Hamas' savagery. While the tweet was fine as an expression against terrorism, the problem was that its narrow focus and brevity made it difficult for the diplomatic community and analysts to comprehend if it signaled a modified Indian approach to India's position on the larger Israel-Palestine issue. This was particularly so because unlike some Western countries, India has not designated Hamas as a terrorist organization.

This incomprehension about Indian policy continued because after the tweet, India made no comment on the situation, which was becoming increasingly clear from the morning of October 8, for the next three days. On October 10, Modi again tweeted after receiving a phone call from Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu. Modi emphasized: "People of India stand firmly with Israel at this difficult hour. India strongly and unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations." This tweet, too, did not really go beyond Modi's first one. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a brief press statement, essentially reproducing the content of the tweet. Thus, the confusion on India's stand on the Israel-Palestine issue was not removed by the tweet or the statement.

If anything, the confusion increased because by October 10, Israel's response to the Hamas attack had led to hundreds of civilian deaths in Gaza. Besides, the Indian statement, unlike those of many Arab and other countries, did not caution against an Israeli response that

LEADERS' SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS ON GLOBAL ISSUES SHOULD BE SO CRAFTED THAT THEY DO NOT RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT BASIC POLICY POSITIONS.

would cause a humanitarian disaster in Gaza. As India's focus was only on Hamas' terrorism, questions on India's broader policy on the Israel-Palestine relations became more urgent after October 10, but there were no answers from Indian officials.

The fact is that once the Prime Minister tweets, it becomes very difficult for diplomats or even ministers to clarify broader policy positions to avoid a dilution of the PM's message or intention. In the 'old' Indian diplomatic tradition, statements were made by the MEA. That left space for modifications, clarifications and even reversals without the political leadership, let alone the PM, getting publicly involved. All this ensured that any confusion could be addressed at the diplomatic level and it left the PM to make carefully crafted statements which took all aspects of a situation and Indian interests into account.

The broader questions were finally cleared at the media briefing given by the MEA spokesperson on October 12. He correctly reiterated that the October 7 incident was a terror attack and condemned it but did not take a position on the designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization. He said that issue was for the 'relevant' authorities. On the Palestine issue, the spokesperson said: "Our policy in this regard is long-standing and consistent. India has always advocated the resumption of direct negotiations towards establishing a sovereign, independent state of Palestine, living within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel. I think that position remains the same." Significantly, he also said: "There is a (sic) universal obligation, I think, to observe international humanitarian law."

It is doubtful if Israel would have been happy with these clarifications. Naturally, they would have been cleared at the highest levels of the government. India has to condemn terrorism and Israel has helped it at critical times. There is, therefore, no doubt that the Israeli relationship is important, but India has very significant interests in West Asia and they cannot be ignored.

If leaders cannot avoid social media comments on global issues, they should be so crafted that they do not raise doubts about basic policy positions even while stressing, as in this case, India's strong position on terrorism.

(The author is a former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs)

Dr Manohar Singh Gill, a doyen of Punjab and Punjabyat



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH



A doyen of Punjab and Punjabyat, Dr. Manohar Singh Gill passed away on October 16

Manohar Singh Gill, Former chief election commissioner and Union Minister of State has passed away. He was admitted to Max Hospital, New Delhi where he breathed his last on October 15.

He was a doyen of Punjab and Punjabyat. Farmers and farming were very dear to his heart. It was he who conceptualized "Apni Mandi", a marketplace, where farmers could bring and sell their produce directly to the consumers thus eliminating the commission agents. Once introduced, it spread rapidly and neighboring State of Haryana and the Union Territory of Chandigarh, too, adopted it.

Dr Manohar Singh Gill came from the Majha region of Punjab. His father, Colonel Partap Singh Gill (ret'd), was a great admirer of JP Narayan. And when the first non-Congress government was formed at the Centre under Morarji Desai, he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Goa. After his stint in Goa, Colonel Gill came and settled in Chandigarh. It was he who thought of uniting hundreds and thousands of families separated by the 1947 partition. Since the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharief, originally belonged to Taran Tarn - Jatti Umrah was his native village - Colonel Gill floated Jatti Umrah Parivar Milap Trust. On getting in touch with Nawaz Sharief, he started working on families that had suffered the pangs of partition. On completion of 50 years of Independence. Colonel Gill, with all back up support from his elder son, Dr Manohar Singh Gill, took a delegation to Pakistan to reunite 20-odd families after an agonizing and unending wait of 50-odd years. The delegation went as personal guests of Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharief.

Like his father, Punjab and Punjabyat were very dear to Dr Manohar Singh Gill. Not only Apni Mandi, but he also initiated several schemes, both as a bureaucrat and later as a Rajya Sabha member for the welfare of farming community of Punjab. He played a stellar role in the development of Khadoor Sahib, a Sikh historic town in the Majha region. As a Union Sports Minister, he sanctioned a couple of synthetic hockey surfaces for the border belt as hockey remained a major sport in the region. His initiative helped young girls to take to competitive hockey well.



Former Chief Election Commissioner Manohar Singh Gill inaugurates a library set up in the memory of Saadat Hasan Manto, at Paproudi village in Samrala, Punjab
File photo / Tribune



At a meeting in New Delhi. (L to R): MS Gill, PC Alexander, Atal Behari Vajpayee and Vilasrao Deshmukh
File Photo / Indian Express

The man, Dr Manohar Singh Gill, a hardcore bureaucrat, lived 87 years of distinguished life, getting into prestigious Indian Administrative Service (IAS) at the age of 22. After superannuating from the elite central civil service, he was appointed Chief Election Commissioner. He was the pioneer of introducing Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) besides the first CEC to head a team of Election Commissioners.

Earlier in his career, he was Deputy Commissioner, Lahaul and Spiti, in undivided Punjab. It was here, he fell in love with the hills and mountaineering. He later served as Principal Secretary to the longest serving Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and Development Commissioner, Punjab. He held several other important positions, both in Punjab and at the Centre.

It was not the end of his long-distinguished career. He joined Indian National Congress and served two terms as Member of Upper House of Parliament, Rajya Sabha. When India played host to the 2010 World Cup Hockey and the Commonwealth games in New Delhi the same year, he was then Union Minister for Youth Affairs and sports. It was under his supervision that all stadia, including the historic Major Dhyani Chand National Hockey Stadium, were renovated in time for the two major sporting events held within a single calendar year.

And not many would know that Baldev Singh, who rose to the fame by producing a record of women and men hockey Olympians from a sleepy town of Shahabad Markanda on the Amritsar-Kolkata National Grand Trunk Road, was chosen for the prestigious Dronacharya award even without his applying for it. Dr Gill told Baldev Singh that he had been following his work and was highly impressed. Baldev Singh still recalls his meetings with Dr Gill saying that he would not have applied for or got the award but for Dr Gill.

Dr Gill was so attached to anything that was close to the hearts of Punjabis. When Punjab decided to organize the World Cup Kabaddi championships, he did not like the new rules. "There is no Kabaddi until the raider keeps chanting kabaddi, kabaddi till the break of his breath," lamented Dr Gill as the game does not require "kabaddi, Kabaddi" chants anymore.

He was a vociferous supporter of solving Punjab problems, including Rivers Water dispute through a dialogue or negotiations than taking the matter for legal adjudication. He vehemently criticized the reorganization of Punjab as he felt many speaking areas were left out of the 1966 partitioning of Punjab.

He was a scholar as he used to read and write a lot. Many, while praising his uprightness and initiative in promoting Punjab and Punjabyat thought he was too strong and outspoken and lived to the adage "while getting things done, I do not listen to anyone". And this applied to his political career also. He would speak out his mind even if his comments were contrary to the party line on sensitive policy matters. But that was the way Dr Manohar Singh Gill was.

(The author is a senior journalist. Read his columns at www.probingeye.com
https://www.facebook.com/PrabhjotSingh.Journalist/?ref=pages_you_manage)

Embassy of India in Guatemala Celebrates Hindi Diwas



Distinguished guests sharing their views on Hindi Diwas

OCTOBER 15, 2023

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): The Embassy of India in Guatemala celebrated Hindi Diwas with remarkable zeal and enthusiasm, fostering the rich cultural tapestry of India on 14 Oct 2023. The event was a resounding success, with a diverse array of participants, including local Guatemalan nationals, showcasing their passion for the Hindi language.

Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by over 260 million people around the world, making it one of the most spoken languages in the world. Hindi Day, observed annually on Sept 14, is a significant occasion for the promotion of India's national language and the culture it represents. This day is celebrated in India and around the world by Hindi speakers and enthusiasts as an opportunity to promote the language and its literature. The celebration of Hindi Diwas has its

roots in the early 20th century when Hindi was first recognized as an official language of India. In the years following independence, Hindi speakers around the world began to celebrate the language and its culture. Like many other languages, Hindi possesses a unique scientific and linguistic heritage. Hindi, an Indo-Aryan language, has a well-defined linguistic structure. It has a rich vocabulary, extensive grammar rules, and a clear phonetic system.

The Embassy of India in Guatemala consistently organizes a series of events to celebrate Hindi Day, with activities that promote the Hindi language and Indian culture. This year was no exception, as the Embassy conducted various competitions and events. Among the activities organized, the Embassy hosted an essay writing competition (Nibandh Lekhan), where participants submitted their entries online.



Indian community members and local Guatemalan participants enthusiastically participated in various Hindi Diwas Competitions



Winners from Indian community members in Guatemala receiving their certificates from Ambassador H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra



Winners from local Guatemalan participants receiving their certificates from Ambassador H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra

Additionally, the Embassy conducted events for Hindi writing (Sulekh) and poem recitals (Kavita Path). These events were not only well-received by the Indian community but also garnered an exceptional response from the local Guatemalan population. The enthusiasm displayed by the local Guatemalan participants in the Hindi writing competition was particularly remarkable. It is a sign of growing interest in Hindi language and Indian culture in the region.

Distinguished guests at the celebration, including notable figures from Guatemalan society like Congressman H.E. Manuel Conde, Congressman H.E. Herbert Figueroa, Congressman H.E. Estuardo Rodríguez Azpuru, Mayor of San Juan Sacatepequez H.E. Juan Carlos Pellecer, Ms. Silvia Estefanía Moscoso Arana Director CONJUVE and Ms. Carmen Reyes Director SOSEP shared their views on the value of Hindi as a language of heritage, culture, and communication. They appealed for the continued promotion and preservation of Hindi both in India and Guatemala.

The highlight of the event was Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra's address, in which he emphasized the importance of Hindi as a unifying force in a diverse nation like India. He read the message by the Hon'ble Home Minister of India delivered on the occasion of Hindi Diwas. He stressed that the promotion and practical use of Hindi in official work should be encouraged. While acknowledging that extensive use of Hindi in a foreign Mission might be

challenging, he emphasized the importance of using the language in administrative tasks. Ambassador Mohapatra encouraged the Guatemalan guests to explore the Hindi language, highlighting the benefits of being multilingual. He assured them of assistance, ranging from starting Hindi language classes to providing Hindi books for reading. He expressed his hope that more individuals would actively participate in various competitions organized during Hindi Diwas to promote the Hindi language. Prizes were awarded to the winners in different categories, highlighting the growing interest and proficiency in Hindi in Guatemala.

The Embassy's commitment to organizing such events underscores its dedication to promoting Hindi and strengthening cultural ties between India and Guatemala. Hindi Day celebrations serve as a platform for people from diverse backgrounds to come together, share their love for the language, and learn more about India's rich linguistic and cultural heritage. Hindi Diwas is also an opportunity for people around the world to learn more about the language and its culture. The Embassy of India in Guatemala remains committed to nurturing this linguistic and cultural connection for years to come. The Embassy of India in Guatemala expresses its heartfelt gratitude to all participants and attendees who made Hindi Day a resounding success. This celebration not only strengthens cultural ties but also enhances mutual understanding between the peoples of India and Guatemala.

Embassy of India in Guatemala Celebrates Gandhi Jayanti and UN International Day of Non-Violence on 2nd October 2023



Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra delivered a keynote address highlighting the enduring legacy of Mahatma Gandhi

OCTOBER 3, 2023

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): The Embassy of India in Guatemala marked the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, and the United Nations International Day of Non-Violence on 2nd October 2023. The event was held at the Embassy premises in Guatemala City, where Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, members of the Indian community, and embassy officials came together to pay tribute to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi Jayanti, celebrated annually on October 2nd, marks the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a global symbol of peace and non-violence. The day is also observed as the UN International Day of Non-Violence, reaffirming the universal relevance of Gandhi's principles of truth, tolerance, and non-violence in promoting a culture of peace and understanding.

Mahatma Gandhi, referred as the "Father of the Nation" in India, played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence from British colonial rule. His life was a testament to his unwavering commitment to truth, non-violence, and social justice. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, known as "Satyagraha," inspired millions and became a powerful tool for social and political change.

Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra delivered a keynote address highlighting the enduring legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and India's contributions to the world in politics, trade, and tourism. He emphasized the relevance of Gandhi's teachings in today's world, emphasizing the importance of non-violence, tolerance, and harmony in resolving global conflicts. Mr. Harshu Patel, a prominent member of the Indian community, delivered a heartfelt speech underscoring the profound impact of Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. He stressed that Gandhi's teachings continue to inspire people around the world to work towards a more peaceful and just society.



Floral tribute led by Ambassador Dr. Mohapatra, members of the Indian community, and embassy officials at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi

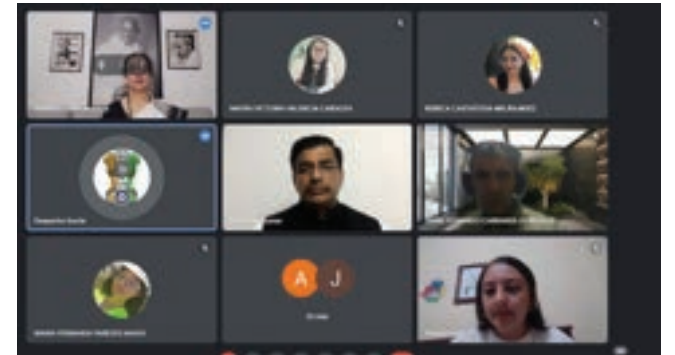
The event included a floral tribute led by Ambassador Dr. Mohapatra, members of the Indian community, and embassy officials at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi. This gesture symbolized the reverence and respect held for Gandhi's ideals of peace and non-violence. A cultural program was organized as part of the celebration, featuring captivating performances by Mr. Javier Anand who played 'Vaishnav Jan to Tene kahiye', a mesmerizing favorite Bhajan of Mahatma Gandhi.



Mr. Javier Anand played Vaishnav Jan to tene kahiye....., Bapu's favorite song, to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 154th birth anniversary

Ambassador Dr. Mohapatra expressed his gratitude to the Indian community in Guatemala for their active participation and support in commemorating this significant day. He highlighted the role of Mahatma

Gandhi as a guiding light not only for India but for humanity as a whole.



Dr. Shobhana Radhakrishna, a globally recognized speaker on Mahatma Gandhi's principles, delivered a virtual lecture titled Mahatma Gandhi's Transformational Leadership - An Inspiration for World Peace

In commemoration of Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Anniversary, the Embassy conducted a series of seminars in collaboration with San Carlos University, the largest university in Central America. Dr. Shobhana Radhakrishna, a globally recognized speaker on Mahatma Gandhi's principles, delivered a virtual lecture titled "Mahatma Gandhi's Transformational Leadership - An Inspiration for World Peace." This enlightening seminar drew extensive virtual participation, including students, faculty members, prominent figures from Guatemala, and members of the Indian community. It served as a platform to reflect on the enduring significance of Gandhi's teachings in fostering global peace and non-violence.



Mr. Harshu Patel, a prominent member of the Indian community, delivered a heartfelt speech underscoring the profound impact of Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence

The celebration of Gandhi Jayanti and the UN International Day of Non-Violence is a testament to the enduring impact of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings, which continue to resonate with people worldwide. As the world faces numerous challenges, the principles of non-violence, truth, and tolerance championed by Gandhi serve as a source of inspiration and a path toward a more peaceful and harmonious world.

Nithari killings: UP govt will approach SC if needed: Dy CM

The Uttar Pradesh government will review the Allahabad High Court's order in the Nithari serial killings case and approach the Supreme Court if required, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said on October 19.

The high court on October 16 acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the sensational 2005-06 case in which they were facing death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was botched up.

The judgment in the case brought back memories of the chilling crime targeting young children that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow, near Delhi, with the families of the victims claiming injustice.

"Certainly, the type of crimes that were registered in this case and the type of advocacy that should have been done by the government were done," Maurya told reporters during an official visit to Gautam Buddh Nagar.

"Certainly it (the Allahabad HC's order) will be reviewed at the government level and if necessary, the government will approach the Supreme Court," the deputy chief minister added.

Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the Allahabad High Court noted that the prosecution has failed to prove the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence and the probe was nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies."

Source: PTI

Appoint district officers to implement law on sexual harassment at workplace: SC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Supreme Court on Thursday, October 19, directed all states and Union Territories to appoint an officer in every district in four weeks to oversee effective implementation of the Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, to check sexual harassment faced by women employees.

Ordering the Women and Child Development Ministry of all states and UTs to consider identifying a "nodal person" within the department to oversee and aid in coordination with the Union Government as envisaged under the POSH Act, a Bench led by Justice S Ravindra Bhat asked them to submit a consolidated report on compliance of its directions to the Centre in eight weeks.

The Bench directed the Centre to consolidate various reports, identify any lapses in compliance by states and try to remedy it, before filing a consolidated affidavit of compliance — detailing the states' compliance, and the Centre's action taken in regard to the direction — in 12 weeks.

It ordered the Centre and states to set aside financial resources to develop educational, communication and training material for spreading awareness about the provisions of the Act.

A circular/bulletin containing the names of all district officers and their contact details along with a district-wise chart of various nodal officers and their contact details must be uploaded on the department's website in a conspicuous location in six weeks, the top court ordered.

The Bench, which also included Justice Dipankar Gupta, listed the matter for further hearing in the first week of February 2024.

The directions came on a PIL filed by 'Initiatives for Inclusion Foundation' and others in 2017 seeking directions to the Centre and states to take measures for proper implementation of provisions of the 2013 Act and the Rules framed under it. The top court asked the Centre to consider amending the Rules, so as



Asks states, UTs to act in four weeks

- The SC asks states and UTs to identify 'nodal person' in women & child development depts to oversee implementation, coordinate with Centre
- District officers be mandatorily trained regarding responsibilities and sensitised to nature of sexual harassment at workspace, the SC says
- States told to submit report on compliance to the Centre within eight weeks; the Centre to identify/remedy lapses and file affidavit of compliance in 12 weeks

to operationalise Section 26 of the Act, by recognising a reporting authority, and/or a fine collecting authority.

It also wanted the Centre to consider amending the Rules so as to identify one department (preferably the Women and Child Department), and creating a "nodal person" post within the department to be responsible for coordination. Source: TNS

'Cash for query': Businessman Hiranandani accuses TMC MP Mahua Moitra of making 'frequent demands'

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Darshan Hiranandani, the CEO of real estate-to-energy group Hiranandani, who has been at the centre of the 'cash for questions' scandal involving Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, appears to have turned approver. In a signed "affidavit", he said he used the Rajya Sabha MP's Parliamentary login to "directly" post questions for the BJP-led central government, news agency PTI reported Thursday, October 19.

The affidavit, reportedly to the Ethics Committee of Lok Sabha, comes ahead of the Friday hearing in the defamation case filed by Mahua Moitra against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey who had accused her of taking bribe from a business person in lieu of asking questions in Parliament as an MP. Dubey and advocate earlier this week alleged that Moitra took favours from Hiranandani to raise questions in Parliament. She responded by filing a defamation suit before the Delhi High Court against them.

In his 'affidavit', Darshan claimed that he used Moitra's Parliamentary login after state-owned behemoth Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) booked capacity at the Gujarat-based conglomerate's Dhamra LNG import facility in Odisha and not at his firm's planned facility, PTI reported citing the affidavit.

He claimed that Moitra "made frequent demands" including "expensive luxury items, providing support on



Mahua Moitra

renovation of her officially allotted bungalow in Delhi, travel expenses, holidays, etc, apart from providing secretarial and logistical help for her travels within India and to different parts of the world."

Hiranandani said he met Moitra at the Bengal Global Business Summit in 2017 when she was an MLA, and since then she became a "close personal friend" over the

years whom he had expected to use for getting business in states ruled by opposition parties, PTI reported, quoting the 'affidavit'.

"She shared with me her email ID as Member of Parliament, so that I could send her information, and she could raise the questions in the Parliament. I went along with her proposal," he said in the affidavit. She "provided me with her Parliament login and password so that I could post the questions directly on her behalf when required."

Hiranandani claimed that Moitra knew about IOC choosing Dhamra over his company's LNG terminal. "Based on this information, Moitra drafted a few questions that would have elements to embarrass the government by targeting the Adani group; questions that she could raise in Parliament," he said in the affidavit, reported PTI. "Moitra was very ambitious and wanted to make a name for herself at the national level," he said of her winning the Lok Sabha election from Krishnanagar in West Bengal in 2019.

"She was advised by her friends and advisors that the shortest possible route to fame is by personally attacking Modi." However, the prime minister enjoyed "an impeccable reputation and was not giving any opportunity to anyone to attack him in policy, governance or personal conduct," he said, according to PTI.

Rahul Gandhi promises caste census in Telangana

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on October 19 said his party would get a caste census conducted in Telangana if voted to power in the November 30 Assembly elections.

Targeting the state's ruling Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), he said a caste census would reveal how much Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's family had "looted" the state.

Addressing a rally in Telangana's Bhupalpally, Rahul said Congress governments in Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Karnataka had already taken initiative in this regard.

In the 2018 Assembly elections, the BRS had won 88 of the 119 seats with a vote share of 47.4 per cent while the Congress got 19 (28.7 per cent vote share). Rahul, on a three-day visit to the state, said caste census needed to be held urgently in the country. "When PM Narendra Modi and CM KCR address election meetings, people should ask them when caste census will take place in the state. Like an X-ray, caste census will reveal the percentage of backward castes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minorities, enabling proportionate budget allocation," he said.

Section 50 of PMLA does not give ED power to arrest: HC

The Enforcement Directorate's (ED's) power to issue summons under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) does not include the power to arrest a person and does not arise as a natural corollary of requiring a person's attendance, the Delhi high court has said, while holding that authorities "cannot take a person into custody on their whims and fancies".

The observations, made in a judgment on Thursday, comes at a time when the Supreme Court is contemplating a review of certain provisions of the PMLA. The top court in July last year, in the Vijay Madanlal Chaudhary case, upheld ED's powers relating to summons, arrest, property seizure and searches – a ruling that has since been challenged.

The high court bench of justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani was of the view that ED's power to issue summons "is different and distinct from the power of arrest". The power relates to Section 50 of the PMLA that deals with summoning witnesses and requiring them to give true information since providing false information attracts punishment under Section 63.

The 2022 judgment was criticised for a disquieting erosion of the safeguards to rights to life, liberty, property and against self-incrimination, especially at a time when a spate of ED raids and other actions against opposition leaders has mired the federal financial crime agency in allegations of politicisation.

Canada removes 41 diplomats after India threatens to revoke their immunity

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Canadian government announced on Thursday, October 19, that 41 of its diplomats in India have departed, a day prior to the deadline set by New Delhi for their withdrawal, failing which they were liable to lose diplomatic immunity. However, Ottawa is unlikely to escalate the diplomatic row, as Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly said Ottawa has "decided not to reciprocate" even as the development was defined as "expulsion" of the Canadian diplomats.

The diplomatic drawdown came after India sought "parity" in the strength of Canada's diplomatic presence by bringing down those stationed in the country from 62 to 21.

Speaking at a press conference in Ottawa on October 19, Joly said, "I can confirm that India has formally conveyed its plan to unilaterally remove diplomatic immunities for all but 21 Canadian diplomats and dependents in Delhi by tomorrow, October 20."

She added, "Given the implications of India's actions on the safety of our diplomats, we have facilitated their safe departure from India."

"This means that our diplomats and their families have now left and are on their way home," she said.

In a statement from the country's foreign ministry, Global Affairs Canada, Joly said, "India accredited each and every one of the Canadian diplomats they are now expelling. And all of those diplomats were carrying out their duties in good faith, and to the greater benefit of both countries."

The original deadline for bringing down the number of Canadian diplomats in India was October 10. But Canada had



let that deadline elapse, while engaging in private negotiations with India. However, those talks appear to have failed.

However, she added that Canada will "continue to engage" with India, as "Now more than ever, we need to have diplomats on the ground and we need to talk to one another."

Joly said, "Canada will continue to defend international law, which applies equally to all states. Canada will continue to engage India and remains committed to dialogue as we move forward."

She also said the decision by India was unprecedented. "A unilateral revocation of diplomatic privileges and immunities is contrary to international law. It is a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," she argued. She added that threatening to strip such immunity was "unreasonable and escalatory" since that allows "diplomats to do their work, without fear of reprisal or arrest from the country they are in."

Joly was joined at the press conference

by Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Marc Miller. Canada will have to "pause" in-person services at its consulates in Chandigarh, Bengaluru and Mumbai "until further notice". "The lower numbers of staff will have short-term repercussions, and I believe medium-term as well," Miller said. India accounts for the largest cohort of international students and permanent residents in Canada and those applications processes could be adversely impacted. India had already announced in September that it was indefinitely stopping issuance of visas to Canadian nationals.

The Global Affairs Canada statement said "this mass expulsion will impact our operations, and client service will be affected."

"India's decision will impact levels of services to citizens of both countries. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will continue to accept and process applications from India. However, certain application requirements will need to be completed locally or on-site in a secure environment. As a result, the reduction in the size of the IRCC team will affect service standards for residents of India," the statement elaborated.

Five IRCC staff will remain in India and focus on work that requires an in-country presence such as urgent processing, visa printing, risk assessment and overseeing key partners, including visa application centres, panel physicians and clinics that perform immigration medical exams. The rest of the work and staff will be reassigned across its global processing network.

Source: HT

Strain in INDIA bloc as Akhilesh Yadav accuses Congress of 'betrayal' in MP

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The first signs of friction in the anti-BJP INDIA bloc emerged on October 19 with Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav accusing the Congress of betrayal in Madhya Pradesh.

Akhilesh, whose party has so far announced 31 candidates for the 230-member Assembly elections due on November 17, said the Congress leaders first gave the SP an impression that they were interested in an alliance, held detailed strategy meetings and then "betrayed us".

The former UP CM also accused the Congress of "helping the BJP". "These people are aligned with the BJP," said a visibly upset Akhilesh after the Congress did not leave the desired seats for the SP, despite alliance talks. The Congress has so far named 144 candidates for the state polls.

Akhilesh said he had no idea until now whether the INDIA bloc understanding



Akhilesh Yadav

was limited only to the Lok Sabha elections. "Had I known earlier that there is no state-level INDIA alliance, we would never have gone to meet their leaders. We would not have shared our lists with them nor would we have answered the phones of Congress leaders," he said.

SP leaders earlier met former CMs and Congress veterans Kamal Nath and Digvijay Singh to discuss seat-sharing in the state.

Akhilesh said his leaders kept awake until 1 pm discussing with the Congress their strengths and weaknesses in the state. "We shared with them our lists, told them when our MLAs were elected and even told them where we stood second. They assured consideration of six seats but when the lists came, SP was given nil. Now, we know INDIA is not a state-level alliance. So when discussions happen for an alliance in UP for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, we will see. We will behave with them the way they behave with us," he said.

Earlier, AAP, another constituent of INDIA bloc, declared 39 candidates for MP where the Congress is directly pitted against the BJP. In 2018, the Congress, a few seats short of a majority, had formed the government in MP with support from SP and BSP MLAs.

Source: TNS

India in history this Week

OCTOBER 20, 2023, TO OCTOBER 26, 2023

20 OCTOBER

1568 The Mughal emperor Akbar attacked Chittorgarh.

1774 Calcutta (now Kolkata) was made the capital of India.

1961 Birja Sankar Guha, physical anthropologist and first director of the Anthropological Survey of India, died in Ghatshila Bihar.

1978 India's aggressive batsman Virender Sehwag was born. He scored 8,586 runs in 104 Tests and 8,273 runs in 251 ODIs in his career.

1947 The first war took place between India and Pakistan.

1962 China attacked India and attempted to sneak into the Indian border via Arunachal Pradesh.

1964 One of the revolutionaries of India, HC Dasappa died.



1991 A 6.8 magnitude earthquake in Uttarkashi, India killed more than 1000 people.

21 OCTOBER

1296 Alauddin Khilji took the throne of Delhi.

1934 Jayaprakash Narayan formed the Congress Socialist Party.

1951 Bharatiya Jana Sangh was established.



2012 Yash Chopra, who is called the romance king of Bollywood, passed away.

1931 Famous Hindi film actor Shammi Kapoor was born.

1934 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose founded Azad Hind Fauj in Singapore.

1939 Famous Hindi films actress Helen was born.

1954 India and France signed an agreement to include Pondicherry, Karaikal, and Mahe in the Indian Republic. The agreement entered into force from 1 November.

2007 Indian-American Bobby Jindal won the post of Governor of the Louisiana Province of America.

2008 Karwan-e-Tijas started after 61 years between India and Pakistan.

1830 Nain Singh Rawat was the first Indian to discover the Himalayan region.

1887 Krishna Singh the first Chief Minister of Bihar.

1680 Rana Raj Singh of Mewar passed away.

22 OCTOBER

1680 Rana Raj Singh of Mewar passed away.

1796 Death of Rana Raj Singh of Mewar.



1962 India's largest multipurpose river valley project 'Bhakra Nangal' dedicated to the nation

2008 Chandrayaan-1 was successfully launched from Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota.

1879 The first sedition case under British rule was against the great revolutionary Basudev Balwani Phadke.

2008 ISRO launched India's first moon mission Chandrayaan-1. This mission revealed the presence of water on the moon.

2016 India won the Kabaddi World Cup.

1933 The elder brother of Sardar Patel and the famous freedom fighter Vitthalbhai Patel died.

1893 Dalip Singh, the youngest son of Maharaj Ranjit Singh of Punjab, died.

23 OCTOBER

1623 The famous poet Tulsidas died.

1764 Mir Qasim was defeated in the battle of Buxar.

1934 Mahatma Gandhi resigned as the leader of the Indian National Congress.



1943 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose founded the 'Rani Brigade of Jhansi' of Azad Hind Fauj in Singapore.

2003 India and Bulgaria signed the Extradition Treaty.

1883 Mirza Ismail, Assistant Secretary to the Maharaja of Mysore was born.

1957 Sunil Mittal, an Indian industrialist, social worker and chairman of India's largest telecom company Airtel was born.

24 OCTOBER

1605 The Mughal ruler Jahangir ascended the throne in Agra.

1914 Freedom fighter and philanthropist Laxmi Sehgal was born.

1991 Famous Hindi writer Ismat Chugatai passed away.

1851 First telegraph line started between Calcutta and Diamond Harbor.

1579 Jesuit pastor SJ Thomas was the first Englishman to visit India. He arrived in Goa by

Portuguese boat.

1947 The first President of Pakistan established Azad Kashmir in Pakistan.

1975 An ordinance was brought to end the bonded labor system and came into effect from the next day.

1982 Sudha Madhavan became the first Indian female athlete to run in a marathon.

1984 First underground metro train started between Esplanad and Bhawanipur in Kolkata.



2013 Renowned playback singer Manna Dey of Hindi and Bengali films in Indian cinema world passed away. In 2005, the Government of India honored him with the Padma Bhushan in the field of art.

25 OCTOBER

1924 The British arrested Subhash Chandra Bose and sent him to jail for two years.

2005 Hindi writer Nirmal Verma passed away.

1951 The first general election began in India.

1964 The first indigenous tank 'Vijayanta' was built at the Avadi factory.

1995 The then Prime Minister of India, Narasimha Rao addressed the 50th anniversary session of the United Nations.

1955 For the first time, a company called Microwave Oven was started by Tappan Oven for domestic use.

26 OCTOBER

1947 After the partition of India and Pakistan, after the attack from Pakistan, the Hindu king of the Muslim-majority state of Jammu and Kashmir Raja Hari Singh decided to go with India on this day.

1934 All India Rural Industries Association was established under the patronage of Mahatma Gandhi.



1947 Raja Hari Singh agreed to merge Jammu and Kashmir with India.

1969 The first astronauts to step on the moon, Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, came to Mumbai.

1775 Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last emperor of the Mughals was born in India.

1890 Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, who participated in the freedom struggle, was born.

1943 The cholera epidemic in Calcutta (erstwhile Kolkata) killed 2155 people in the third week of October.

1962 After the Chinese attack on India, the then President declared Emergency for the first time.

PULITZER PRIZE WINNING JOURNALISM ICONS SHARE

BY MABEL PAIS



(left) Bob Woodward & Carl Bernstein

Photo Credit / NJPAC

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of their landmark book, 'All The President's Men,' the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) welcomes journalism icons Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, The Washington Post journalists for a conversation moderated by Jonathan Alter.

'All The President's Men,' uncovered the real story behind the Watergate break-in and spurred Nixon's resignation. Join these Pulitzer Prize winners for an evening of conversation in honor of the 50th anniversary of their

landmark book on Thursday, Oct. 26, at 7:30 p.m.

Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein lead remarkable careers with decades of reporting experience in political news; they will share their stories and conversation about their newest books published just last year (Woodward's 'The Trump Tapes' and Bernstein's 'Chasing History'). This will be more than a look back-a look ahead. What lessons did America learn (and forget) from Watergate, and what parallels do we see in the headlines today?

In the early 1970s, Woodward and Bernstein broke the Watergate story for The Washington Post, leading to the resignation of President Richard Nixon. The story set the standard for modern investigative reporting, for which they and The Washington Post were awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

Born and raised in the Chicago suburbs, Woodward has written 18 books, with 12 of them becoming No. 1 best-sellers, and serves as an associate editor for The Washington Post. Woodward was the primary reporter for the Post's articles on the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks that won the National Affairs Pulitzer Prize in 2002. He won the Gerald R. Ford Prize for Distinguished Reporting on the Presidency in 2003.

Bernstein, the author of five best-selling books, including biographies of Hillary Clinton and Pope John Paul II, also is an on-air contributor for CNN and a contributing editor of Vanity Fair magazine. In the late 1970s, Bernstein spent a year investigating the CIA's

secret relationship with the American press during the Cold War for a groundbreaking Rolling Stone article.

TICKETS

Reserve tickets to see Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein on Thursday, Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. by visiting NJPAC.org or the NJPAC Box Office at 1 Center Street, Newark, New Jersey or calling 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

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MONTCLAIR FILM PRESENTS FILMMAKER TRIBUTE TO SCORSESE

BY MABEL PAIS



(left) Martin Scorsese & Stephen Colbert.

Photo Credit / NJPAC

The Montclair Film Festival presents its 2023 Filmmaker Tribute to Martin Scorsese with Stephen Colbert hosting Mr. Scorsese on the Prudential Hall stage at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in downtown Newark, NJ on Friday, October 27, 2023 at 8:00 PM.

They will sit down for an unforgettable evening of conversation celebrating Mr. Scorsese's legendary career as one of the cinema's greatest filmmakers.

"Over the course of his career as a filmmaker, preservation advocate, and film historian, Martin Scorsese has made an unparalleled impact on the art of cinema" said Tom Hall, Co-Head and Artistic Director of Montclair Film. "To honor him with our festival's 2023

Filmmaker Tribute is an absolute thrill, and we look forward to a delightful, celebratory evening of stories and conversation hosted by Stephen Colbert."

"All of us at NJPAC are delighted to partner with our friends at Montclair Film to host this extraordinary evening," said John Schreiber, President and CEO of NJPAC. "Stephen Colbert's insightful conversations with the artists who inspire us all have become an annual highlight of the Arts Center's fall season, and this celebratory event with the inimitable Martin Scorsese promises to be especially exciting."

MARTIN SCORSESE

Martin Scorsese is an Academy

Award-winning Director and one of the most influential filmmakers working today. In 2007, his film 'THE DEPARTED' won an Academy Award for Best Director and Best Picture. Scorsese also directed 'THE WOLF OF WALL STREET' and 'THE IRISHMAN,' which both received Academy Award nominations for Best Director and Best Picture. His latest feature, 'KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON' made its World Premiere at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival and will be released exclusively in theaters worldwide October 20, 2023 before streaming globally on Apple TV+.

Scorsese has directed numerous documentaries including the Peabody Award winning 'NO DIRECTION HOME: BOB DYLAN,' the Emmy Award winning 'GEORGE HARRISON: LIVING IN THE MATERIAL WORLD,' the Emmy nominated docuseries 'PRETEND IT'S A CITY' and the critically acclaimed feature docs 'THE LAST WALTZ' and 'PERSONALITY CRISIS: ONE NIGHT ONLY.'

STEPHEN COLBERT

(Host, Executive Producer and Writer, 'THE LATE SHOW with STEPHEN COLBERT') Stephen Colbert hosts the Emmy and Peabody Award winning, #1 show in late night 'The Late Show with Stephen Colbert.' From 2005 to 2014, he hosted 'The Colbert Report' on Comedy Central, following his seven years as a correspondent on 'The Daily Show.'

In addition to 'The Late Show,' Colbert previously served as Executive Producer on several television shows. In 2021, Colbert's Spartina Industries banner set a three-year first-look deal to develop television and streaming content for CBS Studios.

Colbert has also authored five books, the most recent of which, 'Whose Boat Is This Boat?,' reached #1 on the New York Times Bestseller List.

Follow him on Twitter and Instagram @StephenAtHome.

TICKETS

Tickets for the event are available online at njpac.org and ticketmaster.com, by telephone at 1-888-GO-NJPAC (1-888-466-5722), and at the NJPAC Box Office at One Center Street in downtown Newark.

MONTCLAIR FILM

CONNECT WITH MONTCLAIR FILM ONLINE:

Websites: montclairfilm.org and theclairidge.org
Twitter: @MontclairFilm
@TheClairidge
Facebook: facebook.com/MontclairFilm and /TheClairidge
Instagram: instagram.com /MontclairFilm and /TheClairidge
YouTube: youtube.com/montclairfilmfest

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

INDY SAINI RIDES AGAINST THE TIDE

BY MABEL PAIS

WOMEN IN THE FRONT SEAT
DIR/WRIT/CO-PROD/CINE: MANINDER K. (INDY) SAINI; 2023; DOC; 1H 14M

'Women in the Front Seat' from filmmaker Indy Saini captures the growing movement of women hitting the throttle and riding into the wind, breaking social norms and shattering

stereotypes about women and women riders. The film is about the filmmaker's cross country ride with female motorcycle riders and their singular sisterhood. Learn more at womeninthefrontseat.com.

AVAILABLE: Now streaming on Amazon, Tubi, Google Play, and YouTube



Women In The Front Seat

Photo Credit / womeninthefrontseat.com

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE PRESENTS DEBUT OF 'PROOF' FEST

BY MABEL PAIS



Confessions

Photo Credit / americancinematheque.com



Unbound

Photo Credit / americancinematheque.com

The American Cinematheque (americancinematheque.com) presents the film lineup and events for the debut of PROOF: Proof of Concept Film Festival, taking place October 20-22. The innovative new film festival will present a dozen thematically curated programs featuring 42 official selections, filmmaking labs and panels - all taking place at the Culver Theater (9500 Culver Boulevard, Culver City, CA 90232). PROOF will be one of the first-ever film festivals dedicated solely to the presentation of proof-of-concept short films, looking to be expanded into feature-length productions or series.

There will be 46 proof-of-concept shorts screened, with filmmaker workshops and panels during a three-day event dedicated to the presentation and

development of new work created as a first step for new feature films and series.

The festival, programmed and produced by American Cinematheque, will look to spotlight a slate of innovative films from up-and-coming filmmakers, as well as panel conversations on the art and business of filmmaking, the ultimate goal being to help filmmakers make inroads to the industry with access to mentorship workshops, professional development opportunities and more.

American Cinematheque Film Programmer and Proof Film Festival Founder, Imani Davis, said, "Short films are often the way we are introduced to new talent and voices. Many times, filmmakers have a further vision to expand the world they have created in the short into a feature film or even an episodic series. Though this film festival is specifically for those types of films and goals, the American Cinematheque hopes to create an effective platform for that work, as well as foster connections with filmmakers that will lead connections to further their vision, and even help build industry relationships that will serve as the foundation of their career."

Four juried awards will be presented at the festival's end, along with one audience choice award, with the jury consisting not only of filmmakers, but also creative executives, managers, agents and more.

The 'Black List' will provide the winning filmmakers with free script hosting on their website, with 'ShotDeck' to provide free yearlong subscriptions to their services, and a \$60K camera package will go to the grand jury award winner, courtesy of Panavision, as they look to flesh out a larger project from their proof-of-concept.

The 2023 Proof Film Overview

OPENING NIGHT PRESENTATION

LIMITLESS: BLOCK #1
BLOCK #1 INCLUDES 4 SHORTS.

DISCOVERY: BLOCK #2
BLOCK #2 INCLUDES 5 SHORTS.

INDEPENDENCE: BLOCK #3
BLOCK #3 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

AGE OF CHANGE: BLOCK #4
BLOCK #4 INCLUDES 4 SHORTS.

AN EXAMINATION OF LEARNING: BLOCK #5
BLOCK #5 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

DARING: BLOCK #6
BLOCK #6 INCLUDES 5 SHORTS.

BUMP IN THE NIGHT: BLOCK #7
BLOCK #7 INCLUDES 6 SHORTS.

CHICAGO FILMMAKERS: BLOCK #8
BLOCK #8 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

NOT AS THEY SEEM: BLOCK #9
BLOCK #9 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

SELF-ASSURED: BLOCK #10
BLOCK #10 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

FISH OUT OF WATER: BLOCK #11
BLOCK #11 INCLUDES 3 SHORTS.

Special Out-of-Competition Program

ALTER & DUST PRESENT LATE NIGHT SCI-FI AND HORROR SHORTS

This category presents 4 shorts.

PROOF

PROOF is a short film festival in Los Angeles dedicated to showcasing the best in proof-of-concepts. Providing a highly competitive and unique festival experience, as well as opening the door for fruitful future filmmaking opportunities, PROOF is a one-stop-shop for the newest emerging talent.

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE

The American Cinematheque believes that cinema is a communal experience with the power to entertain, enlighten and inspire. Learn more at americancinematheque.com.

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

ARTIS-NAPLES INVITES YOU TO 15TH ANNUAL FILM FEST

BY MABEL PAIS

Artis-Naples, Florida presents for its 15th annual edition the Naples International Film Festival (NIFF), October 26-29, 2023.

This year, NIFF will include 57 films (12 narrative features, 10 documentary features and 35 short films) representing eight countries, with several of those films including in-person post-screening filmmaker Q&A conversations. Select filmmakers will also participate in panel discussions during the festival. All screenings and associated events will be held in-person in Hayes Hall or Norris Garden on the Artis-Naples Kimberly K. Querrey and Louis A. Simpson Cultural Campus or at the festival's new venue partner, Paragon Theaters - Pavilion.

"We are thrilled to unveil this exceptional lineup of films that promises to captivate and inspire our audiences during the 15th anniversary of the Naples International Film Festival. These offerings are a testament to our unwavering commitment to the art of independent film and to the community," said Artis-Naples CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen. "We have pulled out all the stops with this selection of films reflecting the diverse and compelling breadth of stories from around the world, and we are eager to share these cinematic treasures with our patrons."

"We strive every year to unite the world of cinema, the creativity of filmmakers and the enthusiasm of our audiences," explained David Filner, executive vice president, artistic operations. "Whether we're spotlighting documentaries that resonate with our artistic mission or sharing profound narratives about the highs and lows of life, NIFF is a unique forum where filmmakers and our vibrant community of cinephiles converge, embracing the multidisciplinary vision that defines Artis-Naples."

Themes for the Naples International Film Festival's curated short film programs include True Stories, Family Affair, Journeys, Viewpoints, Unexpected Outcomes and the recurring Student Filmmaker Showcase.

Films in the Naples International Film Festival's competition categories will vie for more than \$10,000 in cash prizes, including the Audience Awards for Best Narrative Feature, Best Documentary Feature and Best Short as well as the Focus on the Arts Award, given to a feature-length narrative or documentary film with an emphasis on one or more of the visual or performing arts. For the fifth consecutive year, NIFF will also present juried awards in the Narrative Feature and Documentary Feature categories.



E.T.

Photo Credit / artisnaples.org/niff



Pianoforte

Photo Credit / artisnaples.org/niff

The 2023 Naples International Film Festival (NIFF) Film Lineup

OPENING NIGHT FILM

HARD MILES - EAST COAST PREMIERE
DIR: RJ DANIEL HANNA; USA; 108M

'Hard Miles' takes a page from the heartfelt, humor-filled coming of age sports dramas that graced our screens in the '80s and '90s.

CLOSING NIGHT FILM

E.T. (1982)
DIR: STEVEN SPIELBERG; USA; 105M

After a gentle alien becomes stranded on Earth, the being is discovered and befriended by a young boy named Elliott (Henry Thomas).

NARRATIVE FEATURES JURIED COMPETITION

ALL HAPPY FAMILIES - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: HAROULA ROSE; USA; 90M

THE PROBLEM OF THE HERO - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: SHAUN DOZIER; USA; 85M

SCRAP - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: VIVIAN KERR; USA; 105M

MAESTRA - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: MAGGIE CONTRERAS; USA; 88M

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

GEOFF MCFETRIGE: DRAWING A LIFE - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: DAN COVERT; USA; 81M

HAPPY CLOTHES: A FILM ABOUT PATRICIA FIELD - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: MICHAEL SELDITCH; USA; 100M

IMMEDIATE FAMILY - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: DENNY TEDESCO; USA; 102M

KAREN CARPENTER: STARVING FOR PERFECTION
DIR: RANDY MARTIN; USA; 110M

THE LONGEST GOODBYE - EAST COAST PREMIERE
DIR: IDO MIZRAHY; CANADA, ISRAEL; 87M

OUT THERE: A NATIONAL PARKS STORY
DIR: BRENDAN HALL; USA; 75M

PIANOFORTE
DIR: JAKUB PI?TEK; USA; 91M

SHORT FILMS

There are 27 short films and 8 student (short) films.

TICKETS

Tickets for all screenings and activities at Paragon Theaters - Pavilion go on sale September 27. Tickets for the Opening Night Film and Party; the Closing Night Awards Ceremony, Film and Wrap Party; and E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial in Concert are currently on sale. For more information, visit artisnaples.org/niff.

ARTIS-NAPLES

Home of The Baker Museum and the Naples Philharmonic, Artis-Naples is unique among cultural institutions nationwide, equally dedicated to both the visual and performing arts featuring artists of global distinction. Learn more about the KIMBERLY K. QUERREY and LOUIS A. SIMPSON CULTURAL CAMPUS, the NAPLES PHILHARMONIC, THE BAKER MUSEUM, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY at Artis-Naples, Florida at artisnaples.org.

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

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURES

DUELERS - WORLD PREMIERE
DIR: CHRISTIAN CICERONE; USA; 99M

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE LOVED
DIR: KATHARINA WOLL; GERMANY; 80M

GREY MATTER - U.S. PREMIERE
DIR: ARABELLA BURFITT-DONS; UK; 100M

HEIGHTENED - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: SARA FRIEDMAN; USA; 98M

KARAOKE - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: MOSHE ROSENTHAL; ISRAEL; 100M

LA SYNDICALISTE
DIR: JEAN-PAUL SALOMÉ; FRANCE; 122M

LONG DECEMBER - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: THOMAS TORREY; USA; 80M

MR. BLAKE AT YOUR SERVICE! - EAST COAST PREMIERE
DIR: GILLES LEGARDINIER; FRANCE; 110M

DOCUMENTARY FEATURES JURIED COMPETITION

ART FOR EVERYBODY - FLORIDA PREMIERE
DIR: MIRANDA YOUSEF; USA; 99M

FULL CIRCLE
DIR: JOSH BERMAN - FLORIDA PREMIERE; USA; 103M



Salman Khan is thrilled with the positive response to the trailer of 'Tiger 3'

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is thrilled with the positive response to the trailer of Tiger 3 and said that he has been fortunate to have movies in his career that have given him a lot of love.

Salman said: "I think what we are witnessing today as a response to the Tiger 3 trailer is simply outstanding. I have been fortunate to have films in my career that have given me a lot of love. But to get this volume of appreciation and to see this amount of frenzy after a trailer launch is truly special and a rare feeling."

He added: "I'm happy that our trailer has hit all the right notes and people are supremely excited to watch Tiger 3 in cinemas! I'm also really touched by how people have reacted to seeing Katrina and me back as Zoya and Tiger."



Karishma Tanna talks about winning award for 'Scoop'

Actress Karishma Tanna, who bagged the 'Best Lead Actress' award for her work in Netflix's series Scoop at the Busan Film Festival 2023, said she would not keep changing her parameters of choosing roles according to the projects. Karishma also picked the trophy for 'Best Series' for Scoop at the Busan Film Festival, which is one of Asia's most celebrated cinematic events. "It started with the series category, and straight away I am hearing Scoop, so it was a very good start for me. Nervous, because I was the first one to go on the stage among the artistes. I was representing Netflix, the entire show, Hansal Mehta sir. People from all walks of life were sitting there. It was very surreal," Karishma said.

National Awards: Alia Bhatt, Kriti Sanon, Allu Arjun feted

The prestigious 69th National Film Awards ceremony was held at New Delhi's Vigyan Bhavan on Tuesday, October 17, (October 17). The event celebrated the outstanding achievements of talented individuals in the film industry. President Draupadi Murmu presented the awards in various categories and also conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Lifetime Achievement Award for the year 2021 on Waheeda Rehman.



Actor Alia Bhatt was conferred with the Best Actress Award for her performance in the film Gangubai Kathiawadi. (ANI)



Actor Kriti Sanon was also conferred with the Best Actress Award for her performance in the film Mimi. (ANI)



Telugu star Allu Arjun was honoured with the Best Actor Award. (ANI)



Veteran actress Waheeda Rehman was conferred with the Dadasaheb Phalke Lifetime Achievement Award. (ANI)



Singer Shreya Ghoshal received the Best Female Playback Singer award for the song 'Mayava Chayava' from the Tamil film 'Iravin Nizhal'. This marks Shreya's fifth National Film Award. (PTI)



Actor Pallavi Joshi bagged the Best Supporting Actress award for her performance in the film The Kashmir Files. (PTI)



Actor Pankaj Tripathi received the Best Supporting Actor award for his performance in the film Mimi. (ANI)



Actor R Madhavan's directorial project Rocketry: The Nambi Effect bagged the Best Feature Film. (PTI)



Britney Spears writes of abortion while dating Justin Timberlake

Britney Spears wrote that she had an abortion while dating Justin Timberlake more than 20 years ago, according to a peek inside her hotly anticipated memoir.

"If it had been left up to me alone, I never would have done it," she writes of the procedure, according to the excerpt from "The Woman in Me" published in People magazine. "And yet Justin was so sure that he didn't want to be a father."

The pregnancy "was a surprise, but for me, it wasn't a tragedy," she wrote in the excerpt, saying that she had wanted to start a family with Timberlake — it was just earlier than expected.

"But Justin definitely wasn't happy about the pregnancy. He said we weren't ready to have a baby in our lives, that we were way too young," she wrote. The couple broke up in 2002. It's unclear when the pregnancy happened.

Representatives for Spears declined to offer further comment. Representatives for Timberlake did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press. The AP has not been able to independently review a copy of the "The Woman in Me" yet.

Millie Bobby Brown can't wait to say goodbye to 'Stranger Things'

Actress Millie Bobby Brown, who plays Eleven on the hit sci-fi series 'Stranger Things', shared that she is ready to say goodbye to the show, which will end with its upcoming fifth season.

Speaking with Glamour, the actress insinuated that she wouldn't be mourning the fifth and final season of 'Stranger Things' that is set to air once the SAG-AFTRA strike ends, reports [aceshowbiz.com](#). "When you're ready, you're like, 'All right, let's do this. Let's tackle this last senior year. Let's get out of here,'" Millie shared in an interview published on Monday.

The 'Enola Holmes' actress added that 'Stranger Things' blocked her from doing what she wants to do in her acting career. " 'Stranger Things' takes up a lot of time to film and it's preventing me from creating stories that I'm passionate about," she divulged.

"So I'm ready to say, 'Thank you, and goodbye!'"

Millie went on to share that she will keep in touch with her co-stars on the series.

"When it ends, I'm going to be able to still see these people," she shared, noting that "no one is dying."

Elsewhere in the interview, Millie reflected on her fame after playing Eleven on 'Stranger Things'.

She slammed trolls who criticised her for talking loudly during interviews with fellow 'Stranger Things' cast members, including Finn Wolfhard, Noah Schnapp, Sadie Sink, Caleb McLaughlin and Gaten Matarazzo.

"We're kids - we talk over each other. I was just penalised for overtalking and oversharing and being too loud," she said.

She recalled how people accused her of "trying to steal the thunder" of her castmates and adults would call her "an idiot", "stupid" and "a brat".

"It's hard to hear that at 13. You're like, 'I don't want to ever talk again. I don't want to be the loud person,'" she said.

"In interviews I couldn't help but think of all the comments. So I just remembered to stay silent and speak when I was spoken to, even though I was dying to join in. I just felt it wasn't my turn."

Source: IANS



Will Smith's kids feel bad for him after Jada Pinkett Smith revelations

From the moment Jada Pinkett Smith began promoting her new memoir, *Worthy*, she has been making headlines. Nothing was more shocking than the revelation that she and her husband, actor Will Smith, have been separated since 2016. In a new report, a source tells Entertainment Tonight that their kids Willow Smith and Jaden Smith 'feel bad for their dad' as their mom continues to make bombshell revelations about her marriage.

"They know he has been going through a lot lately and this isn't helping," a source told the portal of 'all the recent headlines' about the couple's secret separation. They wish 'some of their family's private matters remained private', the source added, claiming that Will has been trying to stay busy by 'hanging out with his good friends and his kids', which also includes Trey Smith, whom Will shares with his ex-wife, Sheree Zampino.

The source said about Will, "He's trying not to let any outside noise impact him. Will loves Jada and feels like he has always had her back and always will. He has been trying to be supportive, while also taking care of himself."

In *Worthy*, Jada Pinkett Smith provides a lot of

new insight into her complicated relationship with Will Smith, as per her interview with People. She said that she and Will first began dating around the time, when she lost two of her closest friends — Tupac Shakur and a friend named Maxine Rennes, who died by suicide. She also said that she had been on antidepressants, but went off them when she began dating Will.

In 2016, she says, they decided to separate 'every way but legally'. Will's resistance to emotional connection, she seems to imply throughout the book, was at the root of their separation — as well as the unresolved wounds they both carried, and her own lack of love for herself.

Her and Will Smith's relationship is far from the only topic that her book *Worthy*, which released on October 17, takes an honest look at. In her memoir, Jada is opening up about everything from her early days dealing drugs to her PTSD and dissociative disorder diagnoses later in life. She gave an intimate look into her childhood, opening up about her grandmother, who helped shape her worldview, as well as her father's inconsistent presence and her parents' struggles with addiction.



UK PM RISHI SUNAK TRAVELS TO EGYPT FOR CRISIS TALKS

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak travelled to Egypt on October 20 as part of his Middle East tour for crisis talks to prevent the Israel-Gaza conflict spilling over across the region.

In Cairo, Sunak held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, during which he reiterated the UK's long-standing commitment to the two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians.

According to Downing Street updates on the talks in the Egyptian capital, the leaders agreed on the need for all parties to take steps to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure and minimise the loss of innocent lives. "The Prime Minister (Sunak) underscored his commitment to opening up humanitarian access to Gaza to alleviate the suffering of thousands of people who desperately need food, water and medicine," a Downing Street spokesperson said of the talks with Abbas.

"They condemned Hamas' terrorism and stressed that Hamas do not represent the Palestinian people. The Prime Minister reiterated the UK's long-standing commitment to the two-state solution and to achieving a future where Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and security," the spokesperson said.

In his earlier discussions with El-Sisi, Sunak welcomed efforts by Egypt to reopen the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza as soon as possible. "He said that the UK was committed to playing its part in helping the civilians of Gaza and alleviating the dire humanitarian situation there," Downing Street said.

The talks with the Egyptian President follow "productive" discussions with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Saudi Arabia on Thursday.

"I had an important and productive meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. We agreed on coordinated action to prevent further escalation in the region, provide vital humanitarian aid in Gaza and support stability, both now and in the long-term," tweeted Sunak after the meeting. Sunak "encouraged the Crown Prince to use Saudi's leadership in the region to support stability, both now and in the long-term", Downing Street said.

His stop at Riyadh followed a visit to Israel for talks with President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during which he addressed a joint press conference with the latter to reiterate that the UK stands with Israel in its "darkest hour".

"In all these conversations the Prime Minister has stressed the imperative of avoiding regional escalation and preventing the further unnecessary loss of civilian life," said Downing Street. (PTI)

Italy's Prime Minister Meloni announces separation from partner after sleazy remarks

ROME (TIP) : Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni announced on October 20 she was separating from her partner, with whom she has a daughter, after he was recorded making sleazy comments.

The announcement came after Andrea Giambruno, a television presenter, was caught making overtly sexual and sexist comments to female colleagues off-air.

"My relationship with Andrea Giambruno, which lasted almost 10 years, ends here," Meloni wrote on social media, saying their paths had "diverged for some time".

"How do you do, darling?" Giambruno is heard telling a female colleague on the sidelines of his talk show on the Rete 4 channel, owned by Mediaset.

"Do you know that (name redacted) and I are having an affair? All of Mediaset knows it and now you do too," he tells the woman, who is also off camera

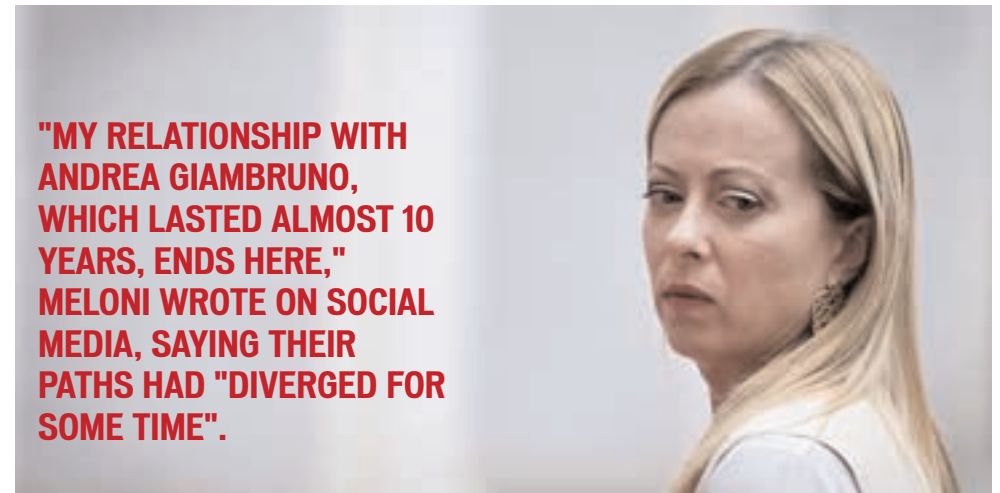
"But we're looking for a third person, as we do threesomes. Foursomes too. Would you like to be part of our working group?" he says in remarks broadcast by a different television channel on Tuesday and Thursday.

In another comment, he says: "Can I touch my balls while I talk to you?"

On Friday afternoon, a spokesman for Mediaset, which is owned by the Berlusconi family, told the ANSA news agency Giambruno had been suspended as a presenter while the company looked into the situation.

FAMILY VALUES

The news of the break-up coincides with the one-year anniversary this weekend of Meloni's accession to power



"MY RELATIONSHIP WITH ANDREA GIAMBRUNO, WHICH LASTED ALMOST 10 YEARS, ENDS HERE," MELONI WROTE ON SOCIAL MEDIA, SAYING THEIR PATHS HAD "DIVERGED FOR SOME TIME".

at the head of a hard-right government which strongly defends traditional family values.

The pair never married but Meloni always brushed off suggestions that her marital status was at odds with her position on family, which is that children should have a mother and a father.

Giambruno, who she met in a broadcast studio while giving an interview, has increasingly become a source of headlines for his controversial comments.

In August, he was accused of victim blaming for remarks he made while discussing two gang rapes this summer that had shocked Italy.

On his talk show, he said: "If you avoid getting drunk and losing your senses, you might also avoid running into certain problems and coming across a wolf."

He had also hit back when a German minister on holiday in Italy complained about the heat, saying: "If you don't like

it, stay at home."

In her social media post on Friday, Meloni thanked Giambruno for "the splendid years we spent together, for the difficulties we went through and for giving me the most important thing in my life, our daughter Ginevra".

Meloni has previously spoken of the challenges of juggling family life with running the government, and takes Ginevra, seven, on official trips wherever she can.

She did not mention the recordings of Giambruno's remarks in her statement.

But she warned anyone who hoped to use her personal life against her: "While the drop may hope to hollow out the stone, the stone remains a stone and the drop is just water".

Meloni's coalition allies rallied around her. Matteo Salvini, of the far-right, anti-immigration League, told her: "Go forward with your head held high!" (AFP)

Israel army orders evacuation of northern city of Kiryat Shmona after Lebanon clashes

JERUSALEM (TIP): The Israeli army announced plans to evacuate the northern city of Kiryat Shmona on October 20, after days of clashes with Hezbollah fighters along the border with Lebanon.

"A short while ago, the Northern Command informed the mayor of the city of the decision. The plan will be managed by the local authority, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Defence," the military said in a statement.

Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah and allied Palestinian factions have traded cross-border fire with Israel for days, after Hamas gunmen attacked communities in southern Israel on October 7, killing at least 1,400 people, most of them civilians, according to Israeli officials.



More than 3,700 Palestinians, mainly civilians, have been killed across the Gaza Strip in retaliatory Israeli bombardments, according to figures from its Hamas-run health ministry.

Israel's military said its forces continued to target Hezbollah targets as tensions grew along the border.

"The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) carried out a number of attacks against Hezbollah infrastructure, including observation posts," the

army said early Friday.

"In addition, IDF fighter jets struck three terrorists who attempted to launch anti-tank missiles toward Israel."

Israeli authorities have been steadily evacuating communities across the northern frontier, as reservists and columns of tanks and armoured vehicles poured into the area.

The Shiite Muslim Hezbollah movement, Lebanon's only armed faction that did not disarm after the 1975-1990 civil war, last fought a major conflict with Israel in 2006.

That war left more than 1,200 dead in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 160 in Israel, mostly soldiers, in a conflict that left deep scars and the border bristling with guns. (AFP)

Britain's opposition Labour Party wins 2 big prizes in momentum-building special elections

LONDON (TIP): Britain's main opposition Labour Party decisively won two special elections on October 20, snatching seats in Parliament that long were rock-solid bastions of the governing Conservatives.

Voters in Tamworth, central England, and Mid-Bedfordshire, located north of London, switched from the Conservative Party to Labour in almost unprecedented numbers. The outcome solidified Labour's status as the front-runner ahead of a national election next year and piled more pressure on Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to turn his party's fortunes around.

Labour leader Keir Starmer claimed his party was "redrawing the political map."

"People are fed up to the back teeth after 13 years of decline under this government. They want a fresh start," Starmer said as he visited Tamworth to congratulate winning Labour candidate Sarah Edwards.

Along with Edwards' victory in Tamworth, where the Conservatives won by almost 20,000 votes in 2019, Labour candidate Alistair Strathern took Mid-Bedfordshire by overturning a 25,000-vote Tory margin.

John Curtice, a polling expert at the University of Strathclyde, said the "exceptional swings" to Labour could be compared to the collapse in Conservative support that took place under Prime Minister John Major in the 1990s.

"And we all know how that ended," Curtice said — in a landslide 1997



election victory for Labour under Tony Blair.

Others cautioned that turnout in Thursday's voting was low, with turnout at 36% in Tamworth and 44% in Mid-Bedfordshire, and the elections were unusual because they were held to replace lawmakers who both resigned under a cloud.

Chris Pincher, who represented Tamworth, quit after Parliament's standards watchdog recommended his suspension for "completely inappropriate" behavior. Pincher was accused of groping two men at a London private members' club. Then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson's reluctance to sanction the Conservative legislator when the allegations emerged helped trigger Johnson's ouster at the hands of his own party last year.

Mid-Bedfordshire member of Parliament Nadine Dorries resigned

over the treatment of Johnson and her own failure to be appointed to Parliament's upper chamber, the House of Lords. Dorries is a strong ally of Johnson who has blamed Prime Minister Rishi Sunak for helping to topple the former leader.

Conservative Party chairman Greg Hands blamed the losses on "legacy issues" and said people were "happy with the job Rishi Sunak is doing as prime minister."

The results add to pressure on the governing party, which has lost several byelections since Sunak took office just under a year ago. He replaced Liz Truss, who announced her resignation a year ago Friday after her plan for unfunded tax cuts sent financial markets into turmoil and rocked the economy.

Truss spent just seven weeks in office after winning a party leadership contest to replace Boris Johnson, who quit after

three years in office when scandals over money and ethics turned party lawmakers against him.

Sunak steadied the economy but has not managed to boost the party's rating in opinion polls, where it consistently lags between 10 and 20 points behind Labour. A national election must be called by the end of 2024.

The Conservatives have been in power nationally since 2010, years that saw austerity following the world banking crisis, Britain's divisive decision to leave the European Union, a global pandemic and a war in Ukraine that has triggered the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades.

Sunak has tried to rally support by arguing he has a long-term vision and is prepared to make tough decisions to change Britain. But Friday's results confirmed polls showing the Conservatives losing support across the country, from affluent southern voters turned off by Brexit to working-class northern towns where voters switched from Labour in 2019 after Johnson promised to spread prosperity to long-neglected areas.

Starmer, who has moved his social democratic party toward the political center since becoming leader in 2020, said former Conservative voters had "put their trust and their confidence in us."

"We we accept this victory humbly, knowing that we have to earn the votes of voters across the whole of the country, and we do that by putting our positive case to the country," he said. (AP)

China sends an envoy to Middle East in a sign of its ambition to play larger role

BEIJING (TIP): China has sent an envoy to the Middle East to push for a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas in the latest sign of its ambition to play a larger role in the region.

Envoy Zhai Jun's first meetings included one in Qatar with a Russian counterpart on October 19 as the two countries stake out a position at odds with the American approach.

The two sides confirmed their "unwavering focus on closely coordinating efforts for the political settlement of this and other crises in the Middle East and North Africa region," Russia's Foreign Ministry said, according to the country's Tass state news agency.

"We believe that when dealing with hot-spot issues in the international community, major powers should be objective and impartial," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Friday.

Analysts say that China wants to position itself as a mediator and exert its influence in the region as the US shifts its global attention elsewhere. But the latest Gaza war has drawn the US back



in, with President Joe Biden visiting Israel this week.

Zhai held meetings in Qatar with Mikhail Bogdanov, the Russian president's special representative for the Middle East and Africa, and with Qatar's minister of state for foreign affairs, Mohammed Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi, Mao said.

She added that Zhai would travel to other Mideast countries but did not give any details on which ones or when.

Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa

Madbouly told Chinese leader Xi Jinping this week that "Egypt and other Arab countries highly appreciate China's consistent and just position on the Palestinian question and expect China to play a bigger role in solving the current crisis," according to a Chinese statement on their meeting.

Xi told Madbouly, who was in Beijing to attend a forum on China's Belt and Road infrastructure-building initiative, that the top priority is to stop the fighting and prevent it from causing a

CHINA, WHICH SEES THE US AS TOO PRO-ISRAEL, HAS SAID IT OPPOSES ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS BUT HAS NOT CONDEMNED THE INITIAL HAMAS ATTACK THAT STARTED THE LATEST WAR. INSTEAD, IT HAS CALLED FOR AN IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE TO PROTECT CIVILIANS AS ISRAEL BOMBARDS GAZA BEFORE A POSSIBLE GROUND INVASION.

severe humanitarian crisis.

He said China "stands ready to strengthen coordination with Egypt and other Arab countries to work for a comprehensive, just and enduring solution to the Palestinian question," the Chinese statement said. (AP)

NAWAZ SEEKS PROTECTIVE BAIL BEFORE RETURN TO PAK

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Ahead of his return to Pakistan on October 21, ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's legal team has filed two protective bail petitions in the Islamabad High Court to restrain authorities from arresting the PML-N supremo, according to a report that emerged on October 19.

The 73-year-old politician was convicted in the Avenfield and Al-Azizia cases and was declared a proclaimed offender in the Toshakhana vehicle case, which is pending before an accountability court in Islamabad. Nawaz was on bail in these cases when he left for the United Kingdom in 2019 on the grounds of seeking medical treatment. Nawaz's legal team has sought protective bail in Al-Azizia and Avenfield cases.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo is scheduled to return to Pakistan on October 21. (PTI)

SRI LANKA ARRESTS 27 INDIAN FISHERMEN FOR 'POACHING'



COLOMBO (TIP) : Twenty-seven Indian fishermen were arrested for allegedly poaching in Sri Lanka's territorial waters, the island nation's navy said on October 18. The fishermen were arrested off the coast of Mannar in the northeast and Delft and Kachchativu islets in the north on Saturday, it said.

The Sri Lankan navy held two Indian trawlers that continued to remain in island waters off Mannar, with 15 Indian fishermen aboard while three Indian trawlers with 12 fishermen aboard were apprehended near the Delft and Kachchativu Islands, officials said.

The arrested fishermen were handed over to the authorities for further legal action, they said.

In September, 17 Indian fishermen were arrested off the coast of Jaffna's Kakarathivu island. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with the Lankan navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats frequently. (PTI)

Four Pak soldiers, wanted terrorist among 12 killed in restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

PESHAWAR (TIP): Four Pakistani soldiers and eight terrorists were killed in two separate encounters during cleanup operations in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, the army said on October 20.

Six terrorists and four soldiers were killed in the ensuing gun battle when forces raided a terrorist's compound in Garyum area of North Waziristan tribal district, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the



Pakistan Army said.

"Wanted terrorist Hazrat Zaman alias Khwaray Mulla was also assassinated in

the operation," it said.

In another incident, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants attacked a police party in Nowshera district and two terrorists were killed.

The police party was on its way to recover explosives dumped underground after a tip-off by a detained militant.

Earlier on October 17, two Pakistani soldiers and two terrorists were killed in two fierce encounters between troops and militants in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. (PTI)

Sri Lanka and IMF reach staff-level agreement for disbursement of second tranche of bailout package

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka and the IMF have reached a crucial staff-level agreement to release the second tranche of about USD 330 million out of the USD 2.9 billion bailout package which will help in the cash-strapped country's economic recovery.

The International Monetary Fund in March this year approved a 48-month, USD 2.9 billion extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to support Sri Lanka's economic policies and reforms.

The IMF mission that visited Sri Lanka for the first review of the global lender-supported Extended Fund Facility programme for the country noted that despite early signs of stabilisation, full economic recovery is not yet assured.

"Sri Lanka will have access to SDR 254 million (about US\$330 million) in financing once the review is approved by IMF Management and IMF Executive Board," the IMF said in a release on Thursday.

The release of the second tranche at the conclusion of the first review of the facility approved in March is subject to approval by the IMF executive board in the period ahead, it said.

The IMF however said despite showing early signs of stabilisation the "full economic recovery is not yet assured".

It stressed, "Sri Lanka's external position has weakened as a result of prolonged debt restructuring discussions and reserve accumulation has slowed in recent months".

It said Sri Lanka needed to "increase revenues and signal better governance by adopting needed tax measures".

The IMF has urged for agreement with creditors for debt treatment.

It said that delays in debt restructuring risk worsening the economic outlook for the country.

"We urge all official creditors to move forward and agree on an appropriate debt treatment in line with financing assurances they provided", the statement said.

The IMF has noted that "inflation is down from a peak of 70 per cent in September 2022 to 1.3 per cent in September 2023, gross international reserves increased by 1.5 bn dollars during March-June this year, and shortages of essentials have eased".

While addressing reporters, Peter Breuer, senior IMF Sri Lanka mission chief, said Sri Lanka needed to perform more enabling the staff-level agreement to be submitted at the IMF executive committee meeting.

"The first Implement by the authorities of the prior action that had been agreed in line with the programme's objectives.

Second, is the completion of the so-called financial assurance reviews which includes confirming whether adequate progress has been made with debt restructuring to give confidence that this restructuring will be concluded in a timely manner and also in line with the program debt targets".

Breuer said Sri Lanka suffered a revenue shortfall in 2023.

"So clearly the objective is not to let that happen next year. To make up for that shortfall one of the objectives is to get to revenue that exceeds 12 per cent of the GDP. Accordingly, measures will have to be implemented to achieve that objective, Sri Lanka is a country with one of the lowest tax takes in the world - that was a key contributor to the crisis especially when taxes were even lowered in 2019." (Reuters)

Bangladesh Officials Risk Inciting Violence

DHAKA (TIP): At a "Peace and Development Rally" organized on October 9 by Bangladesh's ruling Awami League, a government official responded to perceived criticism over the government's recent import of Russian uranium by reportedly threatening to "pour the Russian uranium on the heads of those" opposition members.

"We won't calm them by beating," media reported him saying. "Rather we'll pour uranium over their heads to make them quiet."

Threats of violence by Bangladesh political leaders are common, and they often instigate attacks. A minister reportedly warned during a recent rally, "Awami League knows what to do if someone gives threat." However, while the authorities are quick to prosecute critics and opposition members, ruling party leaders are not prosecuted for inciting violence.

Indeed, even Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has threatened violence. Last year, the prime minister reportedly stated that opposition leaders "should be taken to Padma bridge and dropped into the river." Ahead of protests in December 2022, Hasina directed her party members, reportedly saying "The hands that would be raised against us have to be broken." In response to calls to allow Khaleda Zia, the leader of the main opposition party, to go abroad for medical treatment, the prime minister recently lamented that "she is over 80, it is time to die."

Such statements have succeeded in further chilling free speech as Bangladesh fast approaches the January 2024 national elections. In a country where much of the election violence is carried out by party supporters, such threats by party leaders could help lead to further attacks. Hundreds have died due to election violence in Bangladesh.

If the government is serious about its repeated promises of peaceful elections, party leaders can start by deescalating threats of violence and urging peaceful participation. (AP)



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Easy ways of styling wide-leg jeans

With skinny jeans being officially out of the fashion, it's time to make space for roomier and wide-leg jeans! Do you know wide-leg jeans were a vibe in the 1970s and they are again a force of nature? This trend is all the rage so we thought of using it for styling different looks.

Casual look

From being at the airport or going grocery shopping, casually dressing up can be your go-to look. Simply take an oversized t-shirt and tuck in one half of the t-shirt under the wide-leg jeans, this ensures to not divide your body in half and also makes you look a tad bit more stylish. To add a little chic twist, simply tie a knot to your oversized t-shirt and you are good to go.

Party look

For a party look, pair your wide-leg jeans with a crop top or a corset, the same outfit can become a little formal if you just layer a blazer over it.

With a staple white shirt

One can never go wrong with a white shirt and a pair of denim, the only thing is that now your denims has wide silhouettes in the bottom. This classic look can be dressed up or down, depending on how you style it. For a professional sophisticated look, simply tuck in only one side of your shirt and leave out the other half. It's effortless and classic. The other way to turn this outfit from a day-to-night look is by wearing a



bralette or corset under it and layer your white shirt as a cover-up over it.

With an off-shoulder top

Contrary to the voluminous wide silhouettes at the bottom, an off-shoulder blouse that shows some skin works very well with the jeans. It looks more aesthetically pleasing and well-balanced.

With a Kurti

To add a little touch of Indianness to your outfit, pair your wide-leg trouser with a knee-length kurti. A chikankari kurti would work best

with some oxidised jewelry pieces.

Look hot and sexy without showing too much skin

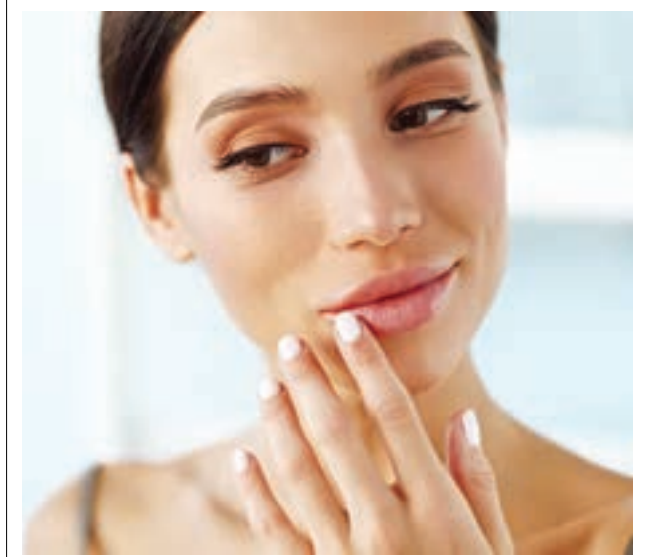
Go Monochromatic: What better way to look more put together and elegant other than dressing in one tone from top to bottom. Adorning a dark hue of monochromatic look like a black on black or brown on brown can also add a little more dimension because of its deeper hue.

Sheer and lace fabric: The power of sheer and lace outfits are so under-rated. The seductive fabric can keep you feeling all secured but at the same time make the on-lookers guess what's underneath. The fabric is right amount of tease and distinctly feminine that's rich at the same time.

Leather: This fabric screams hotness at top notch. Having the connotations of toughness and strength, black leather is used as a favourite staple of fashion to exude hotness.

Satin : Being a delicate and romantic fabric, its soft and feminine aesthetics is not a only a great way to look more dressier but also add the right amount of oomph factor.

White Shirt and red accessories: One combination that can never go out of fashion is your staple white button down. Simply pair a white button down with an jeans and to add little colour pop to the entire look, add red lipstick or pumps to elevate the entire ensemble. You are all set to spark any irresistible fire.



Get pink lips naturally in a week at home

Having pink lips is a sign of healthy, hydrated lips. However, there are many things that can cause lips to become dry, chapped, and discolored. Some of the most common causes include exposure to the sun, dehydration, smoking, eating spicy foods, and licking your lips. Here are 10 home remedies for pink lips naturally in a week.

Exfoliating your lips with a sugar scrub will eliminate dead skin cells. To make a sugar scrub, combine equal parts sugar and honey. Apply the scrub to your lips and massage in circular motions for a few minutes. Rinsing should be done with warm water. The scrub's sugar crystals gently exfoliate dead skin cells from your lips, while the honey moisturizes and nourishes them.

Lip masks will hydrate and nourish your lips. Lip masks are widely available, but you can make your own by combining honey, aloe vera gel, and coconut oil. Place the lip mask on your lips and leave it on for 15-20 minutes. Rinsing should be done with warm water. The lip mask will help to keep your lips soft and smooth by locking in moisture. This mask can be used once or twice a week.

Using a lip balm with SPF protects your lips from the sun's harmful rays, which can cause them to become dry and discolored. Look for a lip balm with an SPF of at least 30. Even on cloudy days, apply SPF lip balm on your lips every day.

Staying hydrated is essential for overall health, including the health of your lips. Consume at least eight glasses of water per day. Water keeps your lips nourished and keeps them from drying out.

Licking your lips may appear to keep them moist, but in fact does the opposite. The saliva on your lips might dry them out even more. Instead of licking your lips when they are dry, use a lip balm.

By adding moisture to the air, a humidifier can help keep your lips moist. This is especially crucial in the winter because the air is dry. To help keep the air moist, keep a humidifier in your bedroom or living room.

A healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can help keep your lips hydrated and healthy. All of these meals are high in vitamins and minerals, which are necessary for healthy lips.

When you don't get enough sleep, your body is deprived of the chance to properly heal itself. This can cause chapped, dry lips. Attempt to get 7-8 hours of sleep per night.

Quitting smoking can assist in enhancing your lips' health. Smoking depletes the collagen and elastin in your skin, resulting in dry, chapped lips. If you smoke, the best thing you can do for your lips and overall health is to quit.

If your lips are excessively dry, chapped, or discolored, consult a doctor. Your lip problems could be caused by an underlying medical ailment. A doctor can help you figure out what's causing your lip problems and offer treatments.

FOOD CORNER

Bharuchi Dal

INGREDIENTS

250 gm urad dal, 1/2 teaspoon turmeric, 2 medium tomato, 2 medium onion, 1/2 tablespoon dried ginger powder, 1/2 tablespoon chilli powder, 1/2 teaspoon garam masala powder, 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds, 1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder, salt as required, 1/2 tablespoon garlic powder

Method

- Take a chopping board and chop one onion in cubes and chop tomatoes. Cut the other onion into thin slices.
- Now take a pressure cooker and add cleaned dal and cubed onions into it. Cook until the dal and onions become soft and tender.
- Now, put a saucepan on medium flame and add ghee in it. When the ghee is hot enough, add the sliced onion pieces into it and saute until light brown. Next add all the spices: green cardamom, cinnamon, jeera, cloves, mace



- powder, and fry until the jeera turns a little brown and the essence starts coming. Once the spices leave their aroma, add the fresh methi leaves in the pan.
- Then add the chopped tomatoes in the saucepan along with turmeric, chilli powder, red chilli powder, dried ginger powder along with garlic powder. Let the tomato absorb all the spices and saute for a minute or two until the oil begins

to separate.

- Now add the dal and onions mixture into the pan and mix well. Cover with a lid and let them cook for about 7-8 minutes. Once the dal is cooked, stir nicely and add the garam masala and salt as required.
- You can serve this delicious dal with hot chapati or steamed rice. Garnish with freshly chopped coriander leaves.

Natural treatment for PCOS: Herbal teas to manage symptoms

Polycystic ovary syndrome, more commonly known as PCOS, is a condition caused by hormonal imbalance. In this condition, the ovaries produce excessive amounts of androgen, which is the male sex hormone and is found in women in faint amounts. It can lead to irregular periods, fertility challenges, excess facial or body hair growth, weight issues, acne or skin. While there is no cure for PCOS, lifestyle modifications can effectively manage the condition. Herbal teas have also demonstrated potential in aiding PCOS management.

Herbal teas that can help

Chamomile Tea

The tea is generally known for its calming and relaxing effect. But do you know it can also help you with PCOS? Not only that but is also believed to help you with cold and stomach aches.

Green Tea

Green tea helps in reducing insulin resistance and the level of free testosterone in overweight and obese women suffering from PCOS. Best to replace Indian chai with a cup of green tea to control PCOS symptoms naturally.

Ginger Tea

Ginger tea helps is widely known for its myriad health benefits, one of which is regarding PCOS. It works incredibly due to its anti-inflammatory quality and also aids in the regulation of female hormones. The best time to consume this herbal tea is either in the morning empty stomach or evening.

Spearmint Tea

This effective antioxidant tea can be a great addition to your daily routine. It promotes ovulation, reduces androgens and elevates testosterone and hirsutism. Sip on it first thing every morning.



Licorice root Tea

Wonderful herb for reducing elevated testosterone levels, it also keeps the cravings at bay and helps in managing the symptoms naturally. This also helps in controlling blood sugar and helps lose weight with ease.

Research in recent years has also shed light on a surprising link between PCOS and gut health, particularly the role of prebiotics and probiotics in managing this condition.

Women with PCOS often exhibit a higher prevalence of gut-related issues, such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and gastrointestinal discomfort. Researchers have begun to explore whether these gastrointestinal disturbances are a consequence of PCOS or a contributing factor to its development.

Studies have suggested that incorporating prebiotic-rich foods into your diet, such as garlic, onions, asparagus, and chicory root, may help support gut health and potentially alleviate some PCOS symptoms.

Fluctuating BP a warning sign for dementia, heart disease: Study

Fluctuating blood pressure can increase the risk of dementia and vascular problems in older people, a new study by Australian researchers has warned.

Short blood pressure (BP) fluctuations within 24 hours as well as over several days or weeks are linked with impaired cognition, according to University of South Australia (UniSA) researchers who led the study.

Higher systolic BP variations (the top number that measures the pressure in arteries when a heart beats) are also linked with stiffening of the arteries, associated with heart disease.

It is well known that high blood pressure is a risk factor for dementia, but little attention is paid to fluctuating blood pressure.

“Clinical treatments focus on hypertension, while ignoring the variability of blood pressure,” lead author Daria Gutteridge said in the paper published in the journal *Cerebral Circulation – Cognition and Behaviour*. “

Blood pressure can fluctuate across different time frames – short and long – and this appears to heighten the risk of dementia and blood vessel health,” Gutteridge added.

To help explore the mechanisms that link BP fluctuations with dementia, the researchers recruited



70 healthy older adults aged 60-80 years, with no signs of dementia or cognitive impairment.

Their blood pressure was monitored, they completed a cognitive test, and their arterial stiffness in the brain and arteries was measured using transcranial doppler sonography and pulse wave analysis.

“We found that higher blood pressure variability within a day, as well as across days, was linked with reduced cognitive performance. We also found that higher blood pressure variations within the systolic BP were linked with higher blood vessel stiffness in the arteries,” the authors wrote. *Source: IANS*



Buckwheat flour can help shed fat during Navratri

The festive season binge is here. With Navratri festivities on the go, a variety of special food is being prepared and being devoured. Kuttu ka atta or buckwheat flour is a common variety that is highly consumed during this time. In general, people have started looking for alternative flours that are more healthy and have less calorie content and buckwheat is one of them.

BENEFITS OF KUTTU KA ATTA

Weight Loss: Kuttu ka atta is dense in proteins but doesn't contain calories. Hence, it is digested easier, is gluten-free, and sits on the stomach more easily than the commonly used wheat flour. What's more, it improves the absorption of other nutrients and boosts metabolism, which means faster fat burn.

Loaded with Nutrients: Buckwheat is packed with all the essential nutrients, It is a good source of carbohydrates, protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. It helps one feel satiated for a longer duration and lowers food cravings.

Anti-oxidant Rich: Kuttu ka atta is known to contain several bioactive compounds with rich anti-oxidant properties- quercetin and tannins, rutins. It further helps to protect cells from free radicals.

Blood Sugar Spike: It is low in glycemic index as to other traditional flours used. Therefore, it makes up for an ideal flour for people living with diabetes. It can also lower the risk of blood sugar spikes.

Heart health: The bioactive compound rutin is found in kuttu. It is known to help protect the heart health. It may help to boost the blood vessels, lower the risk of heart aattack and also reduce blood pressure.

Digestive Health: Buckwheat flour's high fibre content aids digestion and promotes gut health. The soluble fibre acts as a prebiotic, nourishing beneficial gut bacteria and supporting a healthy microbiome.

Kuttu ka atta or buckwheat flour can be a great addition to everyday meals. There is a variety of meals that can be prepared with it – kuttu ki pakodhi, puri, chilla and any other thing you can imagine. This dark-colored flour is super healthy and promotes staying on weight loss course even during the festival time.

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X will start charging new users \$1 per year: Elon Musk

Elon Musk on Wednesday said that in order to tackle bots, new X users will need to pay \$1 per year to post on the platform, although they can read other posts for free.

The company is rolling out the test of this new programme in New Zealand and the Philippines, before it launches it globally.

X will require new users in New Zealand and the Philippines to pay \$1 to create accounts.

"Read for free, but \$1/year to write. It's the only way to fight bots without blocking real users," Musk posted.

"This won't stop bots completely, but it will be 1000X harder to manipulate the platform," he added.

According to X, this was done in order to fight bots and will be piloted in these countries.

The new move, part of a so-called 'Not A Bot' programme, is designed to "bolster our already significant efforts to reduce spam, manipulation of our platform and bot activity," X said.

New users who opt out of subscribing will only be able to take 'read only' actions," such as viewing posts and watching videos.

This new programme is in addition to X's main subscription with verified at \$8 for month.

X is also reportedly planning to split its premium paid subscription service into three membership tiers to earn more money and become profitable by 2024.

According to reports, X would split the current \$8 Premium subscription into three different plans: Basic, Standard, and Plus, at various price points.

WhatsApp rolls out passwordless logins with passkeys on Android

Meta-owned WhatsApp has announced to roll out support for a password-less passkey feature to all Android users.

The move will help WhatsApp users on Android bid goodbye to insecure and even annoying two-factor SMS authentication. "Android users can easily and securely log back in with passkeys. Only your face, finger print, or pin unlocks your WhatsApp account," the company posted on X (formerly Twitter).

Passkeys were previously being tested by WhatsApp in its beta channel, but it's now coming to regular users. There is still no information on support for WhatsApp passkeys on iPhones.

Android support will roll out over the coming weeks and months, according to the company. Passkeys can replace traditional passwords with your device's own authentication methods.

Apple and Google already support passkeys for their users. Google last week prompted users to shun passwords on their accounts in favour of passkeys.

To use passkeys, you just use a fingerprint, face scan or pin to unlock your device, and they are 40 per cent faster than passwords, and rely on a type of cryptography that makes them more secure.

"But while they're a big step forward, we know that new technologies take time to catch on, so passwords may be around for a little while," Google had said in a statement.



Google earlier this year rolled out support for passkeys, a simpler and more secure way to sign into your accounts online, and received positive feedback.

WhatsApp's New Audio and Video Menu Feature

The messaging and calling platform WhatsApp has recently rolled out a new feature for beta testers called 'Audio and Video Menu.' Currently, WhatsApp beta for iOS 23.21.1.71 has been marked compatible for this new update, however, soon more people would be able to employ this feature.

Recently, it was announced that WhatsApp would soon include improved control for quick video messages. Through this option, WhatsApp gave users more control over this function by

enabling them to turn off video messaging. Due to multiple complaints from customers who felt that the instant video messaging functionality didn't work efficiently, it looks like WhatsApp is abandoning this feature. One of the main reasons behind this is that users had to manually enable this option, and everyone was not aware about this. However, with new Audio and Video Menu feature, users can instantly switch between the audio and video mode without doing any manual setting in the application. The WhatsApp New Audio and Video Menu allows users to instantly use audio or video message option depending on the requirement. This is more user-friendly and provides more control and flexibility.

'Ice And Fire': NASA shares fascinating photo of 'cosmic reef' taken by hubble telescope



Space agency NASA routinely captures stunning images of our universe, leaving space lovers mesmerized. The Instagram handle of NASA is a treasure trove for those who love to watch educational videos and fascinating images showcasing Earth and space.

On Monday, NASA shared two images captured by its Hubble telescope showing a "cosmic reef" 163,000 light-years from Earth in the constellation Dorado. NASA called it the "cosmic reef" for its resemblance to a coral reef in Earth's oceans.

Notably, the telescope captured two neighbouring clouds of cosmic dust and gas, the giant red nebula NGC 2014 and a smaller blue nebula nearby called NGC 2020. These nebulae are part of a vast star-forming region, the Large Magellanic Cloud, a satellite galaxy of the Milky Way full of massive stars.

As per NASA, the stars near the center of the image are around 10 to 20 times the size of our Sun, and their intense radiation heats surrounding dense gases like oxygen seen in light blue to 20,000°F (11,000°C). The nebula in the lower left was created from a star 200,000 times brighter than our Sun, which ejected gas in a

series of eruptive events.?

Describing the image, NASA wrote, "An image is split in two. In the bottom left of the first image, a bright blue ring appears, slightly fading in all directions, with a small blue dot in the middle. Red and orange waves of gas ripple, arcing from top left to top right. A light blue center appears out of the sea of red, and several bright white dots shine through. In the top right, dark blue gas emanates from the blackness of space.?"

As per Space.com, the image was taken by Hubble's Wide Field Camera 3 to mark the telescope's 30 years in space.

Reacting to the image, one user wrote, "Awesome capture. Colors are beautiful." Another commented, "That's beautiful!!!" A third wrote, "Ice & Fire."

NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, which was launched on April 24, 1990, has made more than 1.4 million observations of nearly 47,000 celestial objects. It was named after American astronomer Edwin P Hubble, who confirmed that our universe was constantly expanding. In its 30-year lifetime, the telescope has racked up more than 175,000 trips around our planet, totaling about 4.4 billion miles. *Source: NDTV*

Maruti to buy 100% stake in SMG from parent Suzuki

Maruti Suzuki India has said its Board has approved a proposal to execute a share purchase agreement to acquire 100% equity capital of Suzuki Motor Gujarat (SMG) from Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC).

The auto major has executed the share purchase and subscription agreement (SPSA) with SMC and SMG to acquire 12,84,11,07,500 shares of Rs 10 each, representing 100% equity capital of SMG owned by SMC, for a total purchase consideration of Rs 12,841.1 crore, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said in a regulatory filing.

The consideration payable by the company for such purchase of 100% of SMG's equity shares shall be discharged by way of issue and allotment of 1,23,22,514 equity shares of the company having face value of Rs 5 each to SMC, at a price of Rs 10,420.85 per share, on a preferential basis, it added.

Voting for shareholder approval begins on Wednesday and will go on for a month. In August, the company's Board had approved issuance of shares on a preferential basis to SMC as consideration for acquisition of 100% stake in SMG.

Wholesale inflation in negative zone for sixth month

Wholesale Price Index-based (WPI) inflation remained negative for the sixth straight month in September due to easing prices of food items, especially vegetables. The WPI was at (-) 0.26% in September as against (-) 0.52% in August. In September last year, it was 10.55%. Inflation in food articles eased to 3.35% in September, after remaining in double digits in the previous two months. It was 10.60% in August. In vegetables, inflation was (-) 15%, as against 48.39% in August. In potato, it was (-) 25.24% in September, as against (-) 24.02% in the previous month. However, some hardening in inflation was seen in food items such as pulses, onion, milk and fruits during the month under review. Inflation in pulses was 17.69% while in onion it was at a high of 55.05% during the month.

Fuel and power basket inflation was at (-) 3.35% in September, against (-) 6.03% in August. In manufactured products, inflation rate was (-) 1.34%, as against (-) 2.37% in August.

"Deflation in September 2023 is primarily due to fall in prices of chemical and chemical products, mineral oils, textiles, basic metals and food products as compared to the corresponding month previous year," the Commerce Ministry said.

Oil settles up 1% on nagging worries about Middle East

NEW YORK (TIP)

Oil prices settled higher on October 19 as traders remained nervous that Israel's military campaign in Gaza could escalate to a regional conflict.

Brent futures for December settled up 1%, or 88 cents, at \$92.38 a barrel while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures for November, which expire on Friday, settled up \$1.05, or 1.2%, at \$89.37 a barrel. At their session lows, both benchmarks were down more than \$1 a barrel.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant told troops gathered at the Gaza border that they would soon see the Palestinian enclave "from inside", suggesting an expected ground invasion with the aim of annihilating Hamas could be nearing.

Egyptian aid trucks moved closer to the only crossing into Gaza not controlled by Israel, but still had not passed through despite a request from U.S. President Joe Biden to allow the aid.

"We are still very much in flux and the potential to escalate, particularly from the Arab world, is an issue," said John Kilduff, partner at Again Capital LLC in New York.

U.S. forces in Syria brought down two drones that were targeting them, leading to some minor injuries, U.S. officials said.

Prices were supported later in the session after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said that the U.S. central bank would be "proceeding carefully" on future interest rate hikes, which could slow the economy and dent fuel demand.

Fed funds futures traders are pricing in a 39% probability the Fed will raise rates again by December, but only a 6% chance of a hike in November, according to the CME Group's FedWatch Tool.

Gains were limited after the U.S. issued a six-month licence authorising transactions in the energy sector of OPEC member Venezuela, whose



government reached an agreement with the political opposition there to ensure fair 2024 elections.

The deal is not expected to quickly expand Venezuela's oil output but could return some foreign companies to its oilfields and provide more cash-paying customers for its crude, experts said.

Easing of U.S. oil sanctions on Venezuela is unlikely to require any policy changes by the OPEC+ producer group for now as a recovery in production is likely to be gradual, OPEC+ sources told Reuters.

On October 18, oil prices climbed about 2% on concerns about disruptions to global supplies after OPEC member Iran called for an oil embargo on Israel over the conflict in Gaza and after the U.S., the world's biggest oil consumer, reported a larger-than-expected inventory draw, adding to already tight supplies.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is not planning to take any immediate action on Iran's call, sources told Reuters.

Saudi Arabia had said it would keep its voluntary output cut until year end. Japan, the world's fourth-largest crude buyer, urged the Saudis and other oil producing nations to increase supplies to stabilise the global oil market which could be roiled by the conflict.

U.S. crude oil and fuel inventories dropped last week on rising demand for diesel and heating oil, according to data from the Energy Information Administration (EIA). Distillate fuel stockpiles fell by 3.2 million barrels in the week to Oct. 13 to 113.8 million barrels, EIA data showed.

Crude inventories fell by 4.5 million barrels to 419.7 million barrels, while gasoline fell by 2.4 million barrels to 223.3 million barrels. *Source: Reuters*

Dabur India subsidiaries face cases in US, Canada over cancer allegations

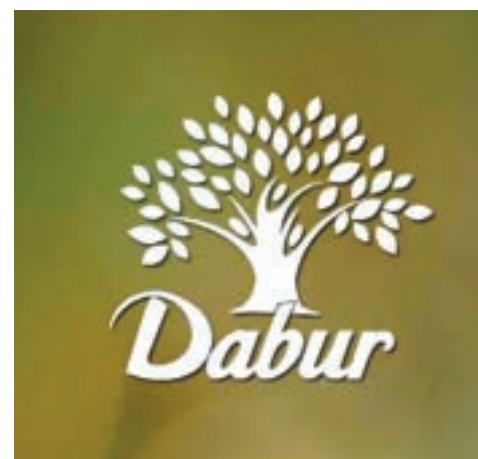
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Homegrown FMCG major Dabur on Wednesday said its three foreign subsidiaries are facing cases in federal and state courts in the US and Canada.

The three Dabur India subsidiaries facing cases are Namaste Laboratories LLC, Dermoviva Skin Essentials Inc. and Dabur International Ltd, according to a regulatory filing.

As per the filing, certain consumers in the hair relaxer product industry have alleged that some industry players/defendants sold and/or manufactured hair relaxer products that contain certain chemicals and that the use of the hair relaxer product has caused ovarian cancer, uterine cancer and other health issues.

"Cases have been filed in both federal and state courts in the United States and



Canada. The federal cases were consolidated as a Multi-District Litigation, also referred to as MDL, before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois," it

said.

Currently, there are approximately 5,400 cases in the MDL, which named Namaste, Dermoviva and DINTL as defendants, along with certain other industry players, it added.

"The cases are in the pleadings and early discovery phases of litigation, which means the parties are challenging the adequacy of the plaintiffs' complaints and, in some cases, exchanging requests for information and documents. There are various motions pending as well," it added.

"At this stage of the litigation, any financial implication due to settlement or verdict outcome cannot be determined," it added.

However, the company said defence costs for the litigation are expected to breach the materiality threshold in the near future.

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - OCTOBER 23 TO OCTOBER 29, 2023

ARIES



Ganesha says this week, your fiery soul is operating at full strength, Aries. Embrace the rush of vitality and ardour that is heading your way. On the horizon are new prospects, and a casual meeting could result in an event that completely changes your perspective. Put your faith in your gut instincts, gamble responsibly, and keep an eye out for opportunities to present themselves. Your zeal is admirable; nevertheless, you should not forget to give some thought to where you are going in order to be sure you are heading in the proper direction.

TAURUS



Ganesha says be steady this week since there could be some unexpected turns in store for you. Although you place a high priority on consistency, you recognize that growth often requires embracing change. Embrace the uncharted territory and take solace in the fact that each new experience will only serve to bolster your resolve. Keep an eye out for any money opportunities that may come your way, and always go with your gut instinct. Keep in mind that stepping outside of your comfort zone on occasion is perfectly acceptable.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week, your dual nature will be brought to the forefront as you balance a number of different duties, Gemini. Your capacity for communication is one of your greatest strengths, and it will be an important factor in both your personal and professional lives. It's possible that an old buddy will get in touch, which will bring back happy memories. Maintain your flexibility but avoid taking on too much at once. Make taking care of yourself a top priority despite the hectic pace.

CANCER



Ganesha says your feelings are likely to run high this week, Cancer. It's possible that you'll find yourself thinking about previous experiences and relationships. Your life goals will become more crystal clear when you have completed this exercise in self-reflection. There will be a substantial contribution from family in the form of love and support. Keep in mind the importance of expressing thanks and appreciating these relationships. Your attention might also be piqued by a creative endeavour, which would be an effective way to channel your feelings.

LEO



Ganesha says this week, Leo, your magnetic personality is in full force and displayed. You should expect to be the centre of attention and garner awe and respect from others in your immediate environment. Even if it's easy to bask in the spotlight all by yourself, make sure you also remember to bring others up. You can be presented with a leadership position that requires you to direct the efforts of a group. Have faith in your ability, and guide others with compassion.

VIRGO



Ganesha says you are known for your meticulous attention to detail. This week, the fact that you are quite thorough will work to your advantage, especially at work. It's possible that a project or activity will demand your knowledge, giving you the opportunity to showcase your skills. However, you shouldn't place too much emphasis on being perfect. It is necessary to take a step back and look at the wider picture at times. Taking care of your body and maintaining your health should also be a priority, so make sure you give yourself breaks and eat healthily.

LIBRA



Ganesha says maintaining a steady equilibrium is essential for you, Libra. During the course of this week, you could find yourself settling disputes or making significant decisions. Your mode of reasoning is one that many people will admire and respect. Your schedule might be filled with social engagements, which provide opportunities to connect with others and network. Keep in mind that you should also schedule time for some relaxation and introspection.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week promises to be a particularly intense one for you, Scorpio. Because you are a passionate person by nature, you will be driven to fiercely seek your ambitions. It's possible that secrets will be revealed, which will bring light to certain circumstances. Put your faith in your gut instinct, and dig deep into the topics that pique your interest. Relationships will also be front and centre, so maintain clear lines of communication with those you care about.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says you have a need for excitement and new experiences. This week, you might get the need to go to uncharted areas or brush up on your knowledge of a new subject. Because of the way you choose to think, good things-including people and experiences-will come into your life. Remember to keep your feet on the ground and appreciate what is happening in the here and now even while you pursue new horizons. There is a possibility that you are in for a shock, which will make this week quite exciting.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says you are the epitome of determination. This week, you could face obstacles that put your resilience to the test. Your method will help you overcome challenges with grace thanks to its realistic nature. There is a possibility that you will need to focus on problems pertaining to finances, so be as frugal as possible with your spending. Always keep in mind that adversity presents us with an opportunity for personal development, and approach it with self-assurance.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says you excel at coming up with original ideas. During this week, you may discover ideas and motivation in the unlikeliest of places. Your unorthodox ideas will be valued, and as a result, you will be invited to participate in some fascinating collaborations. There is a possibility that social causes will pull at your emotions and encourage you to make a difference. Maintain your commitment to your values while still continuing to push the limits.

PISCES



Ganesha says you need to let your imagination run wild this week since it will be your greatest strength. Your artistic activities will be fruitful, which will enable you to express yourself to the fullest. There is a possibility that your emotions will run high; thus, it is important that you practise meditation or go for walks in the park. You might find yourself reminded of a past dream and feeling compelled to act on it. Have faith in the process, and let your gut instinct steer you.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : OCTOBER 23 TO OCTOBER 29 BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA

OCTOBER 23

Ganesha says today, the cosmos appears to be in perfect agreement with your desires. The 23rd day of the month. The planets and stars have come together in a way that will bring about opportunities that you have been hoping for. Today is a day to put your faith in your gut feelings, be brave, and take some chances. Your ferocious nature is your greatest asset, and it will point you in the direction of routes that were before unknown to you. Participate in dialogues because they may provide you with new perspectives that you had not previously considered. You are surrounded by an energy that is alive and brimming with possibilities.

OCTOBER 24

Ganesha says on this day you may find yourself confronted with obstacles that put your mettle to the test. Your inner tenacity is your greatest strength, and the universe may throw curveballs at us to teach and shape us, but you can't let that stop you. Embrace the difficulties, for they are nothing more than stepping

stones on the path to your development. Seek the advice of people in your life whom you respect, as the viewpoints they provide may offer options that you had not considered. Keep in mind that what truly defines you is not the difficulty of the task at hand, but rather how you rise to meet it.

OCTOBER 25

Ganesha says you're encouraged to reconnect with your inner circle. The connections you've made over the years serve as your anchor, bringing not only support but also happiness. Not only will sharing your innermost thoughts and emotions with them make your heart feel lighter, but it will also provide you with insights that you may have missed otherwise. You will be able to make judgments that are in alignment with the wishes of your soul if you take their advice and combine it with the innate intuition you were born with.

OCTOBER 26

Ganesha says the energy in the world today is electric. It's a day for getting things done, for challenging yourself and

for accomplishing any goals you set for yourself. Your level of vitality is at an all-time high, which means that now is the ideal moment to take on undertakings or problems that you have been putting off. If you can harness this energy and direct it in a positive direction, you'll discover that impediments vanish, providing you with a clear route to achievement.

OCTOBER 27

Ganesha says You are receiving a gentle nudge from the universe to reflect on the path that you have been on thus far, to look inward, and to take a step back. It is a day to reflect on the things you've accomplished, take stock of the lessons you've learned from your mistakes, and plot out your plans for the future. Your activities should be in line with your genuine purpose, and this introspection will help you gain clarity to ensure that this is the case.

OCTOBER 28

Ganesha says you that you have a responsibility to serve as a source of optimism and motivation for the people in your immediate environment. Your

inherent characteristics of leadership shine brightly, making you an attractive choice for individuals who are looking for direction. When you assist people and actively listen to what they have to say, you will discover that you are also assisting yourself, which will start a cycle of positive and progress in your life. You are going to come out on the other side of today more powerful and more experienced because to your ferocious spirit and your unyielding determination.

OCTOBER 29

Ganesha says as the month draws to a close, it's a day of celebration for you. Your perseverance, your enthusiasm, and your achievements are all worthy of praise from the cosmos. Just for a little while, let yourself soak up all the love and praise that is emanating from everyone around you. If you want to make memories that will last a lifetime, you should try to share the happy times you have with the people you care about. If you learn to harness it, you'll discover that doors you previously believed to be closed are suddenly invitingly open.

॥ SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ॥



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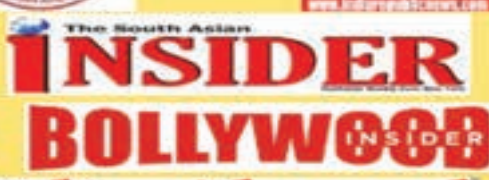
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Dussehra and Vijay Dashmi represent different names for the same Hindu festival, observed on the tenth day of the Ashvin month in the Hindu calendar. This significant festival symbolizes the triumph of good over evil and is alternatively referred to as Dasara, Dashain, and Navratri Puja in different regions. It is going to be celebrated across the country on October 24 this year.

Dussehra or Dusshera is celebrated to mark Lord Rama's victory over the demon Ravana that signifies the triumph of good over evil. On Dussehra, huge effigies of Ravana are burnt with fireworks which symbolize the quelling of darkness by light. Dussehra also paves the way for the next big festival of Diwali (the festival of lights) which is celebrated across India with great pomp and fervour. Diwali is celebrated twenty days after Dussehra and signifies the return of Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshman to Ayodhya after killing the demon Ravana.

The word 'Dussehra' signifies the meaning of the festival itself. The word is formed from two words – Dus and Ahara. 'Dus' means ten and 'Ahara' means day, so tenth day. Another meaning comes from the mythology of the festival where 'Dus' signifies the ten heads of Ravana or bad or evil and 'hara' means to defeat or removal. In the northern and western states of India Dussehra is celebrated in the honour of Lord Rama who was an avatar of Lord Vishnu. Plays based on Ramayana and Ramcharitmanas called Ramlila are performed at outdoor fairs by theatre troupes. Dussehra is also celebrated as Vijaydashami and also signifies the killing of demon Mahishasura by Goddess Durga on the tenth day of Navratri.

Victory of Ram over Ravan

On this day Ram (the seventh avatar of Vishnu) killed Ravan, who had abducted Ram's wife Sita to his kingdom Lanka. Ram, his brother Lakshman, their disciple Hanuman and an army fought a battle to rescue Sita. The story is recorded in the Hindu epic, the Ramayan.

On the day of Ashvin Shukla Dashami, Ram defeated Ravana and rescued Sita. Based on inferences from Valmiki's Ramyan, Kalidas's Raghuvasa, Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas and Keshavdas' Ramchandrika, Ram, Sita and Lakshman returned to Ayodhya on the 30th day of Ashwin (19–20 days after Vijaydashami). To celebrate Ram's return, in the evening the city's residents lit millions of earthen lamps (deepak); the day is celebrated in India as Deepawali.

Durga's victory over Mahishasur

Some of the demigods (asurs) were powerful and ambitious, and tried to defeat the devs and capture heaven. One asur, Mahishasur, grew powerful and wreaked havoc on earth. Under his leadership, the asurs defeated the devs. The devs combined into Shakti (a mass of incandescent energy) to kill Mahishasur. A bolt of lightning emerged from the mouths of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and a young, beautiful female virgin with ten hands appeared. The gods gave her their weapons, and Shakti coalesced to form the goddess Durga. On a lion who assisted her, Durga fought Mahishasur for nine days and nights; on the tenth day, Mahishasur was killed. Durga, as Shiv's consort, represents two forms of female energy: mild and protective, and fierce and destructive.

Durga's homecoming

Daksha (Brahma's son) and his wife, Prasuti, had a daughter named Sati. As a child, Sati worshiped Shiva as her would-be husband. Shiva, pleased with her worship, married her. Although Daksha opposed the marriage, he could not prevent it. He arranged a yajna, to which everyone but Shiva was not invited. Sati, ashamed of her father's behavior, killed herself. Shiva, anguished when he discovered this, lifted Sati's body on his shoulders and began dancing; the world was on the verge of destruction.

Pandav exile

In the age of Dvapara Yuga, the pandavs (the five sons of Pandu with his wife, Kunti) lost to the Kaurav in a dice game and were exiled in the forest for twelve years. The brothers hid their weapons in a hole in a Shami tree before they entered the kingdom of Virat to complete their final year of exile. After that year, on Vijaydashmi they recovered the weapons, declared their true identities and defeated Kauravas, who had attacked King Virat to steal his cattle. Since that day, Shami trees and weapons have been worshiped and the exchange of Shami leaves on Vijaydashmi has been a symbol of good will.

Dussehra: Triumph of good over evil



Kautsa's gift

Kautsa, the young son of a Brahmin named Devdatt, lived in Paithan. After completing his education with Rishi Varatantu, he insisted that his guru accept a present. The guru said, "Kautsa, to give dakshina in return for learning wisdom is not appropriate. Graduation of the disciple makes the guru happy, and that is the real Guru Dakshina."

Kautsa was not satisfied, since he still felt it his duty to give his guru something. The guru said, "All right, if you insist on giving me dakshina, then give me 140 million gold coins—10 million for each of the 14 sciences I have taught you." Kautsa went to King Raghu, an ancestor of Rama who was known for his generosity. However, at that time he had spent all his money on the Brahmins. Raghu asked Kautsa to return in three days, and left to get gold coins from Indra. Indra summoned Kuber, the god of wealth. Indra told Kuber, "Make gold coins rain on the Shanu and Aapati trees around Raghuraja's city of Ayodhya." The rain of gold coins began. King Raghu gave the coins to Kautsa, who offered them to Varatantu Rishi. Since the guru had requested only 140 million, he returned the rest to Kautsa. Kautsa, considering honour more valuable than wealth, asked the king to take the remaining gold coins. The king refused, since kings do not take back a daan (gift). Kautsa distributed the gold coins to the people of Ayodhya. To commemorate this, leaves are plucked from the Aapati tree and given as gifts.

Celebrations

In Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand and western Bihar, it is tradition to plant barley in earthen pots on the first day of Navratri. On the day of Dussehra, the nine-day-old sprouts (called noratras or nortas) are used for luck; men place them in their caps or behind their ears.

In most of northern India and some parts of Maharashtra, Dasha-Hara is celebrated in honour of Rama. Plays based on the Ramayana (Ramlila) are performed at outdoor fairs, and large parades with effigies of Ravana (a king of ancient Sri Lanka), Kumbhakarna and Meghanada are held. The effigies are burnt on bonfires in the evening. After Dasara, the hot summer ends (especially in North India) and the onset of cold weather is believed to encourage infections. The burning of the effigies, filled with firecrackers containing phosphorus, supposedly purifies the atmosphere.

In the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, Dasara begins with the performance of a Ramlila based on theatrical traditions begun by Uday Shankar during his stay in

Almora and elaborated by Mohan Upreti and Brijendra Lal Sah. Known as the Almora or Kumaon style, the Ramlila was recognised by UNESCO in its 2008 report as a representative Indian style.

Kullu Dussehra, celebrated in the Kullu valley of Himachal Pradesh, begins on the tenth day of the rising moon and continues for seven days. Its history dates back to the 17th century, when King Jagat Singh installed an idol of Raghunath on his throne as a gesture of penance. After this, Raghunath was declared the ruling deity of the valley.

Mysore Dussehra as is the Nadahabba (state-festival) of the state of Karnataka in India. It is also called Navaratri (Nava-ratri = nine-nights) and is a 10-day festival with the last day being Vijaydashami, the most auspicious day of Dasara. Dasara usually falls in the month of September or October. According to a legend, Vijaydashami denotes the victory of truth over evil and was the day when the Hindu Goddess Chamundeshwari killed the demon Mahishasura. Mahishasura is the demon whose slaying by the Goddess gave the name Mysore. The city of Mysore has a long tradition of celebrating the Dasara festival with utter grandeur and pomp to mark this day and the festivities there are an elaborate affair, attracting a large audience including foreigners.

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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."

Sikh History This Week

OCTOBER 20, 2023, TO OCTOBER 26, 2023

20th October

1759 Sikh Misl leaders gathered to face the Ahmad Shah Durani's onslaught.



1783 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia passed away suddenly while enroute to Amritsar.

1920 Mahatma Gandhi remarked in his speech "India rose through Jallianwala Bagh" massacre.

1922 Leaflets are distributed by the Babbar Akalis in the "Parkarma" of the Golden Temple, rediculing non-violence. The SGPC as well as the Mahants are severely criticized by Babbars through the "Babbar Akali Doaba" newspaper.

21st October



1989 Puna court imposes the death sentence (by hanging) upon Harjinder Singh and Sukhdev Singh for killing general Vaidya.

22nd October

1710 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur), escaped Bahadur Shah's forces.

1718 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was born.



1893 Maharaja Dalip Singh, the last prince of Maharaja Ranjit Singh passed away in exile.



1909 The Anand Marriage Act was passed.

1983 Classes for Khalsa College started as a middle school in a house near Hall gate in the city of Amritsar.

1981 Akali leaders met Narsimha Rao, representing the Prime Minister.

1987 Sarbat Khalsa stopped by the Indian Government.

23rd October



1506 Janam Utsav, Baba Budha Ji. Baba Budha Ji was born at Kathunangal, Amritsar. BABA BUDHA JI: born on 7 katak sanmat 1563 at Kathunangal (Dist. Amritsar) to father Sudhae and mother Gora. Parents named the child as Buddha. In sanmat 1574, Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Kathunangal village. While grazing cattle, Buddha met Guru Nanak and served milk in sewa. During their conversation, Guru Nanak declared that though young in age, he was "Budha" in terms of understanding and wisdom. Since then he came to known as Budha.

24th October

1605 Jahagir was throned the Mughal emporer.

1781 Khalsa Dal attacked Anup-Shehar (UP) and arrested the British Commander, Lt. Col. Stuart as a prisoner of war.

1953 Punjabi Suba Convention at Amritsar inaugurated by Dr. Lanka Sundram.

1974 The "Khalsa Council" was established.

25th October



1708 Jotti Jot, Tenth Patshah, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. GURU GOBIND SINGH JI (1666-1708), tenth Patshah of the Sikh faith, was born on Saturday, Dec. 22, 1666 at Patna Sahib to father Guru Tegh Bahadur Patshah

and Matta Gujri. On, Nov. 11, 1675, he assumed Guruship at Anandpur Sahib.

Since early childhood, Guru Sahib was keen on weapons and their use. It is for this reason, that Guru Sahib became a scholar on weapons and mastered their usage, at a very early age. Guru Sahib continually emphasized scholarly works throughout his life. As a results, scholars around the world traveled long distances to participate and receive honors in his courts. He was always surrounded by renowned scholars. One of Guru Sahib's objective was to translate all scholarly works in Gurmukhi and commissioned several such translations. His vision of Sikh Kaum included a communion of scholars. In an attempt to turn Anandpur Sahib as the center of knowledge, Guru Sahib actively encouraged and sent Sikhs to study at various renowned institutions in the world.

To uplift the suppressed people, Guru Sahib instituted the tradition of Amrit during Vaisakhi diwan of sunmat 1756 at KeshGadh Sahib. Further he established a communion of Amritdharis (who received Amrit) and called it "Khalsa". Guru Sahib, himself was the sixth member of the Khalsa order. Witnessing the false practices and prevalent injustices, Guru Sahib propogated the message of Guru Nanak so vigorously that the neighboring hill rulers felt threatened. Without understanding either his message or appreciating his objectives, these rulers suddenly turned enemies and attacked on several occasions. Each time Guru Sahib had to fight for his defense.

In sunmat 1761, the Turk forces sought Guru Sahib to leave Anandpur Sahib under promises that were proven false through subsequent events. Once Guru Sahib was out of Anandpur Sahib, he was attacked and suffered heavy losses. The hard work of 52 poets, accumulated over the years, along with several commissioned translations was burned by the enemies of knowledge. However, Guru Sahib patiently but bravely faced the enemy and escaped into the neighboring forest. Here with his influence, Guru Sahib turned this ghost land into Saint land and the forest into civilized Malwa. With his message of patience and valor, Guru Sahib preached the importance of sacrifice and true knowledge.

1710 Bahadur Shah received news, of Khalsa army's advances, at Sonapat.

1922 Babbar Amar Singh of Dhaliwal, Kapurthala, led the first Jatha of military pensioners furing Guru Ka Bagh morcha. He was arrested on July 22, 1923 and tried for his connection with Babbar Akali movement but was acquitted on Feb. 28, 1925.

1923 Dhanna Singh Behbalpuri, a Babbar Akali revolutionary, exploded a bomb and died while fighting the police at Mannanhana.

26th October

1619 Guru Hargobind was released along with 52 rajas from the Gwalior fort. Naik Hari Ram, Daroga, son of Naik Harbans Lal, Chandsbansi Jadav, Barhtian Kanawat, did deep mala (lighting small lamps all over the house) in honour of release of "bandi chhor" Guru Hargobind from imprisonment, on the date of Diwali. The term "bandi chhor", deliverer from prison, was first used for Guru Hargobind immediately after the release of 52 Rajput princes by Naik Hari Ram, Daroga of Gawalior fort, who had the first hand knowledge of the goings on leading to their release.





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Alwar: The Tiger Gate of Rajasthan

Alwar is the first major city that comes while travelling from Delhi to Rajasthan and is uniquely located at 150 km south of Delhi and 150 km north of Jaipur. Alwar is a hub of tourism with forts like the Bhangarh fort, lakes, nature reserves like Sariska Tiger Reserve and heritage havelis. Apart from being a popular tourist centre, Alwar also draws pride from its reputation of being featured in a number of Bollywood movies. It is also famous for the Mega Alwar Trade fair held at Dussehra Ground every year and handmade Papier-mâché (literally 'chewed paper'). Alwar is also famous for Alwar ka Mawa, a sweet preparation.

Surrounded by Aravali hills, Alwar is a pretty city of rich culture and heritage. The majestic fort, beautiful City Palace and the colorful markets make Alwar one of the most interesting cities in Rajasthan. Alwar has been one of the oldest of Rajasthani Kingdoms and one of the first Rajput states to align itself with the British empire. The city becomes a great weekend getaway from New Delhi.

Sariska National Park

Nestled in the Aravali Hills over an area of about 800 sq. Km covering the grasslands, dry deciduous forests, cliffs and rocky landscape, lays the Sariska National Park, now known as The Sariska Tiger Reserve. This area was once hunting preservation of The Maharaja of Alwar. The Reserve is known for its majestic Royal Bengal Tigers. It was declared as a national park in 1982. The protected area is a part of the Aravali Range and the Kathiawar-Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion. In 1978, it was given the status of Tiger Reserve under the Project Tiger. It is the first tiger reserve to relocate the Tigers (from Ranthambore) successfully. As it lies in the lap of Aravali Hills, it holds an abundant amount of mineral resources like copper.

Bhangarh Fort

Famous for the historical ruins and the ghost stories, Bhangarh has been regarded as the most haunted place in the country. It is located on the way between Jaipur and Delhi. The Bhangarh Fort is a 17th Century fort in the Alwar district of Rajasthan. It was built by Bhagwant Das for his son Madho Singh I. It was named by Madho Singh after his grandfather Man Singh or Bhan Singh. As soon as you enter through the main gate of the ruined fort city, also known as Bhoot Bangla, it gives a chill down your spine. Within the fort, there are temples, palaces, and Havelis. Apart from that, there are also four more gates for the entry to the fort: the Lahori Gate, the Ajmeri Gate, the Phulbari Gate and the Delhi Gate.

Bala Quila Fort

Bala Quila Fort or the Alwar Fort is situated in the Aravalli Ranges, above the

town of Alwar. Built in 15th century by Hasan Khan Mewati, it has been under the rule of the Marathas, Yadavas, and the Kachwaha Rajputs. 'Bala Quila' means Young Fort. Laxman Pole is the only metalled road which connects the Fort to the Alwar city. The silver pages of history speak that Pratap Singh, the founder of Alwar state, entered the Fort through this metalled way only.

In 1775 A.D. Kachhwaha Rajput Pratap Singh captured the fort and laid the stones of Alwar city. With a distance of 595 m, the massive fort is visible from the city itself. It gives a majestic view of the town as it is perched on a 300m high cliff. It spreads over an area of 5 km from North to South and 1.6 km from East to West. The forts have six gates which are Jai Pol, Suraj Pol, Laxman Pol, Chand Pol, Krishen Pol and Andheri Gate. The walls are finely crafted with ancient scriptures and sculptures.

Siliserh Lake Palace

Spread over a large area of 7 square kilometres, Siliserh Lake is an amazing tourist attraction with Siliserh Lake Palace bordering the water reservoir. The lake is a famous picnic spot in the region. Having recently been converted into a heritage hotel by the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), the Siliserh Lake Palace now serves as an esteemed royal getaway amidst the rolling hills of the Aravalli range and the spectacular Siliserh Lake. Activities such as boating and fishing are popular crowd attractors along with the huge number of migratory birds that vacation in during peak seasons.

Source: *Holidify*



contd from page 1

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appeals for aid trucks to be allowed into Gaza

Congress to approve urgent military support for Israel and Ukraine, saying the aid would boost U.S. security "for generations."

Meanwhile, Palestinians in war-torn Gaza on Thursday, October 19, eagerly awaited the arrival of aid trucks promised in a deal struck by U.S. President Joe Biden, as Israel's military kept up its bombardment of targets in the Hamas-run enclave.

Egyptian state-linked broadcaster Al Qahera News said the Rafah border crossing - the only one in and out of besieged Gaza not controlled by Israel - would open on Friday, October 20.

Gaza has been hit by a relentless barrage of Israeli fire in retaliation for a Hamas militant attack on October 7, which Israel said killed at least 1,400 people, most of them civilians. (With inputs from Agencies)

Biden requests \$105 billion in emergency funds for Israel, Ukraine and other crises

said in a call with reporters Friday, October 20 morning. "But the outcome of these fights for democracy against terrorism and tyranny are vital to the safety and security of the American people."

The fate of the funding request in Congress is likely to be a test of the argument for global engagement that President Biden made to the American people in a speech to the nation Thursday night. In that address, he said that coming to the aid of allies, even when expensive, will "pay dividends for American security for generations."

But Mr. Biden's request comes as House Republicans struggle to pick a speaker, leaving Congress unable to act. And it already faces deep skepticism from some members in both parties who have raised doubts about the about the need for the United States to provide military assistance to either Ukraine or Israel.

Anticipating those criticisms, Mr. Sullivan said the conflicts raging in Europe and the Middle East demonstrate why "we need Congress to urgently pass a budget that meets America's national security needs and those of our critical partners."

The funding request included \$12 billion for more agents and facilities along the U.S. border with Mexico, and \$7.4 billion for security to support Taiwan and other allies in the Indo-Pacific.

Administration officials said the \$10.6 billion in security aid for Israel will be used primarily to enhance that country's air and missile defense abilities, such as the Iron Dome system, and to restock American supplies after sending ammunition and equipment to Israel. An

additional \$3.7 billion will be used to enhance security at the American embassy in Israel, officials said. Shalanda Young, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, said some of the administration's request for \$9 billion in humanitarian aid would be used to help the victims of the violence in Israel and Gaza.

"You've already seen a commitment from this administration in making sure humanitarian aid gets to those in Gaza," she said. "That aid will continue robustly as Congress funds more humanitarian aid."

The administration's request for Ukraine would be in addition to the \$113 billion in assistance that the United States already has provided to that country since Russia's full-scale invasion.

Mr. Sullivan said that the money for Ukraine is necessary to help that country's military advance on the battlefield even as winter arrives and as Russian forces attempt an offensive.

"We have to send the unmistakable message that in the 21st century, a dictator cannot be allowed to conquer or carve up his neighbor," Mr. Sullivan told reporters, in reference to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

Hardeep Nijjar's killing: Australian intel chief says 'no reason to dispute' Canadian PM Trudeau's claim

that "it is a serious allegation" and he would have "no reason to dispute what the Canadian government said in this matter".

"There's no doubt any allegation of any country being accused of carrying out an execution of a citizen in that country, it's a serious allegation, and something that we don't do and something that nations should not do," he said. Burgess' comments came in California where he was present for a public gathering of Five Eyes intelligence partners, which includes Australia, US, UK, Canada, and New Zealand as its members.

The intelligence chief did not confirm whether the issue was being discussed at the gathering but a national security source told ABC that Burgess was briefed on the matter before last month's G20 summit in New Delhi.

Quoting Western-allied officials, The New York Times reported last month that US intelligence agencies provided information that led Canada to hold India responsible for Nijjar's killing.

After claiming that Indian agents played a role in the murder of its citizen Nijjar on Canadian soil, Trudeau has called on India to cooperate on the investigation, and said that he shared evidence on killing with India before going public with his claims.

"Whether or not it will happen here, I wouldn't publicly speculate, I don't think that's appropriate," Burgess said when asked if Australia could be the next target for Indian agents.

"I can assure you that when we find governments interfering in our country, or planning to interfere in our country,

we will deal with them effectively," he told ABC.

The Khalistan menace picked up in Australia beginning this year with close to half-a-dozen Hindu temples being attacked in quick succession, leaving the Indian community, which forms three per cent of the country's population, enraged, scared and dismayed.

In the month of January alone, between 12 to 23, three Hindu temples in Melbourne were defaced with anti-India graffiti and pro-Bhinderanwale slogans by Khalistani supporters, and later, temple priests received threatening calls to raise 'Khalistan Zindabad' slogans.

Indians were attacked with sticks at the Federation Square in Melbourne during a referendum call in January this year by banned Khalistan outfit, Sikhs For Justice (SFJ).

Sikhs number over 2,10,000 and account for 0.8 per cent of Australia's population as of 2021, forming the country's fifth-largest and fastest-growing religious group. A small but influential number of Sikhs support the idea of Khalistan, but politically, it has found little support. (Source: IANS)

Consul General of India at New York Randhir Kumar Jaiswal has been appointed Spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs

with distinction in various capacities within and outside India.

In India, he served in the external affairs ministry as deputy secretary, looking after relations with the US and as joint secretary managing ties with countries in western Europe.

In mid-2017, he was deputed to serve the President of India as the joint secretary responsible for international relations.

His assignments abroad took him to Portugal, Cuba, South Africa and New York at India's permanent mission to the UN. He was appointed Consul General at New York in July 2020.

Mr. Jaiswal has also been part of the Indian delegation at climate change conferences.

Speaking with The Indian Panorama, Mr. Jaiswal said he was very much excited to have been appointed to a challenging position and was looking forward to assuming the charge soon.



During the three years that Mr. Jaiswal has been in New York as Consul General, he is credited with introducing systems within the Consulate to ensure ease for everyone seeking consular services. From cutting down wait time to quick resolution of people's problems, he ensured people got satisfactory services. Also, he made the Consulate a welcoming place to all sections of people who organized various types of events aimed at promoting fraternity, cultural values, education, information, trade and commerce, etc.

Mr. Jaiswal worked tirelessly across the ten States in his jurisdiction to introduce the best of India and to promote better and stronger ties between Indian Americans and the non-Indian Americans in almost every sphere. His outreach to American lawmakers, intellectuals, professionals, businesses contributed a lot to a better understanding about India and promoted better relationship between them and the Indian American community. People are surely going to miss him. But, as they say, somebody's loss is somebody's gain.

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Messi earns \$20.4 million under contract with Major League Soccer's Inter Miami

Lionel Messi's annualised compensation from his Major League Soccer contract with Inter Miami is just over \$20.4 million, the MLS Players Association said.

Messi earns more than the entire payroll of all but three other MLS teams and twice as much as every player combined on Orlando City.

The 36-year-old star has a \$12 million base salary and total guaranteed compensation of \$20,446,667, the players association said in its 2023 salary update.

Those figures cover what Messi receives from his MLS deal, which runs through the 2025 season, including any marketing bonus and agent's fees. They do not account for any additional agreements with the team or its affiliates, or for any performance bonuses.

He has the highest total compensation in MLS, followed by Toronto's Lorenzo Insigne at \$15.4 million, Chicago's Xherdan Shaqiri at \$8,153,000, the LA Galaxy's Javier Hernández at \$7,443,750, Toronto's Federico Bernardeschi at \$6,295,381 and Austin's Sebastián Driussi at \$6,022,500.

Miami tops the league with a \$39.4 million payroll based on total guaranteed compensation, followed by Toronto at \$32.3 million, the LA Galaxy at \$25 million and LAFC at \$20.8 million.

Messi earns more than twice the \$9.6 million payroll of Orlando City, which has the lowest in the league. He accounts for 4% of MLS's total compensation of \$501.9 million.

Messi has made three league starts and five appearances for Miami, totaling 283 minutes and scoring one goal. He also helped the team win the inaugural Leagues Cup, scoring 10 goals in seven games.

Source: AP

ICC WORLD CUP

Kohli sniffs at Tendulkar's record as India slay Bangla Tigers by 7 wickets

PUNE (TIP)

The legend of Virat Kohli continued to grow exponentially as he reached within handshaking distance of Sachin Tendulkar's world record of 49 hundreds during India's walk-in-the-park seven-wicket victory over Bangladesh in a World Cup game on October 19.

Kohli, who plans 50-over chases with a precision of a surgeon, remained unbeaten on 103 off 97 balls as India knocked off the 258-run target with 51 balls remaining. India have now made it four wins out of four games and one more win would virtually put them in semi-finals.

While Kohli hit six fours and four sixes, it was his exemplary running between the wickets in pursuit of his 48th hundred that would be etched in the memory for the longest time.

But credit should also go to Ravindra Jadeja (2/38 in 10 overs) and Jasprit Bumrah (2/41 in 10 overs), who were exemplary covering all bases in absence of Hardik Pandya, who hobbled off the field after twisting his left ankle.

"Sorry for stealing it (the player of the Match award) from Jaddu. I wanted to make a big contribution. Have made fifties in World Cups, wanted to finish it off this time," Kohli said after the match.

While skipper Rohit Sharma (48 off 40 balls) and Shubman Gill (53 off 55 balls) added 88 in just 12.4 overs to set up the chase, it was a cakewalk for Kohli at a venue, with which he shares an intimate relation.

If Rohit rattled the Bangladeshis with an all-out attack, Kohli bled them with thousand cuts, running those twos in the 90s with effortless ease, another testimony to his fitness.

Earlier, as has been the case with each of India's opponents in the World Cup so far, scoring runs against arguably the best bowling attack in the competition proved a big ask for Bangladesh too, who managed a modest 256/8 on a batting-friendly surface.

In fact, Bangladesh squandered a terrific start which had them placed formidably at 90 for no loss after 14 overs, but India's bowling once again came to fore on a featherbed here.

India lost Pandya as early as in the ninth over, when he tried to stop a straight drive off Litton Das' bat with his right foot and fell on the ground. Pandya received initial treatment on the field but as he began moving to his bowling mark, it became clear he would not continue and left the field subsequently.

With all options at his perusal, the fact that Rohit Sharma chose Virat Kohli to complete the injured



Virat Kohli scored his 48th ODI century and hit the winning runs for India with a six as the hosts recorded a dominant 7-wicket win over Bangladesh to make it four wins out of four matches in the 2023 World Cup. (REUTERS)

Pandya's over — with India still in search of first breakthrough — showed how assured India are with their bowling attack in this competition.

Kuldeep Yadav provided the first breakthrough and Ravindra Jadeja the second, as it was India all the way with Bangladesh going at under five runs per over after a robust beginning.

In fact, Jadeja's was the standout performance with the all-rounder producing a measly 10-0-38-2 and a superb diving catch to dismiss Mushfiqur Rahim.

But the initial exchanges belonged to the young Tanzid Hasan, who struck a dazzling maiden fifty scoring 51 off 43 balls (5x4s, 3x6s). Litton Das made 82-ball 66 (7x4s), whereas Rahim's 38 and a late charge from Mahmudullah (46, 36 balls, 3x4s, 3x6s) brought the Tigers their runs.

With no assistance from the surface, the task to make early inroads with the new ball appeared challenging even though Jasprit Bumrah (2/41) found some movement in the air.

After a watchful start Das took on Mohammed Siraj (2/60) in the sixth over, hitting two fours to get a move on and Tanzid pulled Bumrah over fine leg for the first six of the innings in the next.

The Bangladesh openers immediately pressed on the scoring rate as 53 runs came off the last five overs in the powerplay.

Source: PTI

Pandya's injury throws a spanner in India's plans

PUNE (TIP)

When the television camera zoomed into the Indian dressing room during the drinks break after the 17th over of the India innings, it captured the worried face of captain Rohit Sharma sitting next to his allrounder Hardik Pandya, surrounded by coach Rahul Dravid, batting coach Vikram Rathour and other members of the support staff.

The grim picture was a result of a freak ankle injury Pandya suffered while bowling the ninth over of the Bangladesh innings on Thursday. Every team has a few irreplaceable players and in the Indian cricket team, Pandya is that player. The home side's game plan for the World Cup has been based on his batting at No 6 and chipping in with crucial overs too.

But Pandya appeared to twist his ankle in his follow-through while trying to stop a straight drive off Litton Das. He did not return to the field for the remainder of



the innings and in their update posted on social media platform X (Twitter) by the BCCI stated: "Hardik Pandya's injury is being assessed at the moment and he is being taken for scans."

In a chat just after the seven-wicket win, Rohit revealed: "He pulled up a bit sore. There is no major damage, that is good for us. But obviously with an injury like that, we have to assess every day and we will do whatever is required."

Coming in place of Jasprit Bumrah from the Press Box end, Pandya's third ball was driven straight down the ground by Litton Das, and almost by reflex, the bowler stuck his right foot out to stop it, but he got into a tangle and ended up overstretching his left leg and twisting his ankle.

After getting treatment from the physio, Pandya tried to go back to his bowling mark but was visibly hobbling and was forced to leave the field. Virat Kohli stepped in to complete the last three balls of the over.

Given how important his role is to the team's cause, the India camp will be desperately be hoping that he recovers quickly.

Source: HT

Consulate General of India in New York Hosts Panel Discussion on Reimagining STEM Education and Research in India



Consul General Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, addressing the attendees, expressed the importance of such initiatives in strengthening the knowledge & research ties between the two nations and fostering innovation and excellence in STEM education.

OCTOBER 13, 2023

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The Consulate General of India in New York, in collaboration with Plaksha University, U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), and Indiaspora, organized a thought-provoking Panel Discussion on the topic "Reimagining STEM Education and Research in India" on October 12. The event emphasized the critical need to transform STEM education in India and explored opportunities for collaboration between Indian and US educational institutions.

Plaksha University is a not-for-profit private research university situated in Mohali, Punjab, India. Founded by visionary businessmen and tech entrepreneurs from India and USA. Plaksha University is dedicated to creating a revolutionary higher education model that combines academic



Mr. Neeraj Aggarwal, Chair of the Board of Trustees at Plaksha University and Chair for Asia Pacific at the Boston Consulting Group, moderated the panel discussion. Panelists included Prof. S. Shankar Sastry, Founding Chancellor of Plaksha University and NEC Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences at the University of California, Berkeley; Ms. Chandrika Tandon, Founder and Chair of Tandon Capital Associates, and Chair of the Board at NYU Tandon School of Engineering; and Mr. Mukesh Aghi, President and Chief Executive Officer of the USISPF.

excellence with industrial relevance.

At the event, Mr. Neeraj Aggarwal, Chair of the Board of Trustees at Plaksha University and Chair for Asia Pacific at the Boston Consulting Group, moderated the panel discussion. Esteemed panelists included Prof. S. Shankar Sastry, Founding Chancellor of Plaksha University and NEC Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences at the University of California, Berkeley; Ms. Chandrika Tandon, Founder and Chair of Tandon Capital Associates, and Chair of the Board at NYU Tandon School of Engineering; and



A view of the attendees

Mr. Mukesh Aghi, President and Chief Executive Officer of the USISPF.

During the discussion, panelists shared their insights on promoting STEM education in India and expanding opportunities for diverse STEM-related courses. The event highlighted the possible ways to reshape the educational landscape and foster greater collaboration between educational institutions in India and the United States.

Consul General Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, addressing the attendees, expressed the importance of such initiatives in strengthening the knowledge & research ties between the two nations and fostering innovation and excellence in STEM education.

The event marked a significant step toward redefining the future of STEM education in India and fostering international partnerships that will contribute to the advancement of knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Study of NYS agency advertising practices reveals lack of transparency that leaves community media business sector and audience overlooked

OCTOBER 19, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Over the past year, the Center for Community Media's (CCM) Advertising Boost Initiative (ABI) has investigated the advertising expenditure trends of New York State agencies.

This in-depth study of \$216 million spent across 90 advertising campaigns by six key state agencies revealed an alarming trend: a paltry 2.6% of these funds, amounting to \$5.6 million, has reached community media since 2015.1 This despite community media's audience size in the millions, their robust coverage of local issues and the trust they have earned from underrepresented communities.

This disparity is particularly glaring when compared to New York City's 2019 executive order and subsequent legislation, which channeled a notable percentage of city agencies' print, digital and broadcast advertising budgets into community media. This strategic allocation reinvigorated community outlets as potent instruments for civic engagement.

Our findings strongly suggest that New York State would benefit from adopting an approach similar to New York City's successful model. This would be pivotal toward creating more inclusive, diverse, and engaged media ecosystems across the state. A comprehensive policy would work toward increasing not just the amount of advertising funding that would go to community media but also the number of outlets receiving ad dollars. This, in turn, would broaden the reach of ad campaigns to residents across the state from a variety of backgrounds and spur increasing transparency in the ad distribution process, making



A newsstand in Queens, NY

Photo / Anokha Venugopal

agencies accountable for their spending.

It's important to emphasize that these community news outlets are not just media organizations; they are small businesses. Supporting them stimulates small, independent, locally owned businesses and employers that contribute to the local economy, and boost civic engagement by reporting on important issues such as education, local elections and other underreported local matters. By advertising in community media, state agencies can target and reach underrepresented communities left out of state messaging critical to New Yorkers civic, social, and economic lives.

HERE ARE SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS:

NYS agencies spent over \$905 million on state-contracted advertising agencies from FY 2012 to 2022.

CCM analyzed \$216 million spent on 90 advertising campaigns by six New York State agencies.

Community media only received 2.6% (\$5.6 million) of the \$216 million spent on media buys.

Of the \$216 million, traditional media received the most dollars at \$133 million or 61.5% of the total.2

In media placements we analyzed, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance spent 0% of the \$3.9 million budget directly on community media outlets.

The Office of Children & Family Services spent only 0.8% (\$17K) of \$2.2 million on community media outlets, based on media placements we analyzed.

State agencies' combined spending on media placements in social media, tech and advertising/targeting companies amounted to \$42.4 million, or 20% of the total ad dollars - almost eight times the amount that community media received.3

The Department of Labor spent 29% (\$144K) on community media outlets, based on the \$497K in media placements we analyzed. Of the six agencies who gave us records, the DOL spent by far the most on community media.

New York state is home to a substantial concentration of community and ethnic media. Many organizations have their own directories for the community and ethnic media they serve. These include:

CCM's Many Voices, One City directory which has more than 300 outlets based in the New York City region.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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SPECIAL THANKS TO PRAMILA LOHIA, RITA GILL, MRS. RANJANKAR, MRS. SARVADE, PANCHESHILA GAIKWAD

SHRADHAA FOUNDATION : A NJ NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO HELP THE WIDOWS AND CHILDREN OF SOLDIERS OF INDIAN DESCENT



Shradhaa Foundation organized its Annual Gala Dinner where they raise funds to help the widows and children of soldiers of Indian Descent on 08th October 2023 at King's Palace, Edison NJ. Every year Shradhaa Foundation brings one battle presentation to show to the audiences the valor of our brave hearts, who make supreme sacrifice in the service of the Nation. This year a presentation of Battle at Galwan on 15-16 June 2020 was shown to the guests. Excellent work was done by Ms. Neeta Ramekar who prepared a video presentation under the guidance of Col Virendra Tavathia the Co-Founder and Trustee of the organization. It was followed by some patriotic songs and then the entertainment by local professional singers. Ms. Seema Jagtiani Co-Founder and Trustee and Maj Krishna Chari, the President of the foundation ensured that guests were taken care of and looked after. The senior most member of the Team and Trustee Mr.

Rati Lal Patel received the guests. Sqn Leader R N Vishwanathan, a 99-year-old Veteran was the chief guest at the occasion. Col Wembu Shankar SC of project Sambandh had come from India to tell the audience about the efforts of Indian Government to help the orphan children of our soldiers.

The presentation on Galwan, and the story of our martyrs won the heart of the audiences. Shradhaa Foundation's activities across the nation were given out by the Master of Ceremony for the event, Mrs. Tarang Soni. The guests donated generously for the cause with Mr. Atul & Mrs. Lata Shah leading the list. Mr. Shah appreciated the work done by the foundation and promised his continued support for it. The youngest participant of the event Master Riyansh a student of Satrangi School of Fusion presented a memorable patriotic dance.

The event was also attending the visiting guest from

India, Mr. Awdesh Pratap Singh, principal secretary of the Madhya Pradesh Government in India. He spoke to attendees and promised them all the help if someone was keen to establish a business in India.

The entertainment program was coordinated by Mr. Rantik Parikh assisted by Mrs. Tarang Soni. We have so much local talent that diaspora really does not have to depend on the artists from India. Dinesh Mirchandani started with the Patriotic Song. Irfan Ali, Dr. Smita Ohri, Shibhu Ghosh, young Neeti Gupte and Krishna Bhatt and Rantik himself set the stage on fire with guests dancing past dinner. Overall, it was a very successful event, well organized, attended by a packed house, excellent ambiance, mouthwatering food, and excellent hospitality of the venue all for a sacred cause to help the families of our brave hearts back home. TV Asia and Radio Zindagi covered the event. The Trustees thanked everyone for supporting the cause.

Supreme Court of India refers electoral bonds case to 5-judge Constitution Bench, to start hearing on October 31

OCTOBER 17, 2023

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a quick turn of events, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on October 16 referred the challenge to the validity of the electoral bonds scheme, which facilitates anonymous donations to political parties, to a Constitution Bench of five judges.

During the oral mentioning hour, the Chief Justice said the court had received a plea to refer the case from the current three-judge Bench to a larger Bench of at least five judges.

He said the case would now go before a five-judge Bench due to "importance of the issue".

THE COURT SAID THE CASE WOULD, AS SCHEDULED IN AN EARLIER HEARING ON OCTOBER 10, BE LISTED BEFORE A FIVE-JUDGE BENCH ON OCTOBER 31. BY REFUSING TO DELAY THE HEARING FOR THE FORMATION OF A FIVE-JUDGE BENCH, THE COURT HAS SENT A CLEAR MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT IT DOES NOT INTEND TO DELAY THE HEARING ANYMORE. THE CASE HAS BEEN PENDING IN THE SUPREME COURT FOR OVER EIGHT YEARS NOW.



"We are here to decide the case," Chief Justice Chandrachud had observed in the October 10 hearing. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, for petitioner NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, had pressed the court to hear and decide the electoral bonds issue before the Lok Sabha election in 2024.

The court has agreed to the petitioners' urging to focus primarily on two issues concerning the electoral bonds scheme, that is, the legalization of anonymous donations to political parties, and the violation of citizens' right to information about the funding of political parties, promoting corruption. The two issues concern violation of Articles 19, 14 and 21 of the Constitution.

The five-judge Bench may also not wade into the legal question concerning the passage of the electoral bonds scheme as a Money Bill. It may,

instead, wait for a seven-judge Bench to deliver an authoritative pronouncement on "when a Bill could be designated a Money Bill". The electoral bonds scheme was passed as a Money Bill, circumventing the Rajya Sabha.

Advocate Shadan Farasat, for a petitioner, said the scheme had completely "anonymized" and "sanitized" political donations, giving scant information to the public. He said even amendments were introduced in the Companies Act by which a company could throw a cloak of anonymity to its donations to political parties via purchase of electoral bonds.

Advocate Bhushan had argued that amendments made via Finance Acts of 2016 and 2017, both passed as Money Bills, had through the electoral bonds scheme, "opened the floodgates to unlimited political donations".

"The amendments have removed the caps on campaign donations by companies and have legalized anonymous donations. The Finance Act of 2017 has introduced the use of electoral bonds which are exempt from disclosure under the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, opening doors to unchecked, unknown funding to political parties," Bhushan had argued.

The Finance Act, 2016, had also amended the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010, to allow foreign companies with subsidiaries in India to fund political parties in India, effectively, "exposing Indian politics and democracy to international lobbyists," the petitioners contended.

“Filmmaker Neha Lohia, Bollywood Star Rituparna Sengupta, and Singer Swapnali Gaikwad Unveil ‘Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess’ - A Global Empowerment Anthem”

OCTOBER 20, 2023

NEW YORK (TIP): Universal Music India, one of the world's leading music labels, is thrilled to introduce Neha Lohia's 'Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess - A Journey of Empowerment,' a groundbreaking musical project that transcends boundaries and empowers women worldwide. Conceptualized, Produced and Directed by visionary filmmaker Neha Lohia, this phenomenal work marks a historic collaboration between Universal Music India and an artistic visionary truly making this a global project.

'Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess' is an extraordinary musical and visual journey, led by the indomitable protagonist Shakti, portrayed by the celebrated Bollywood actress Rituparna Sengupta. This global anthem and music video delve deep into the multifaceted nature of the feminine spirit, serving as an inspiration for all women. Filmed in Bravo Studios in New York with support of incredibly diverse talent from Hollywood and under the production banner of Apple Productions Inc by Tirlok Malik who is also the co-producer for this project along with Neha and Swapnali.

The core of this project lies in the intricate portrayal of Shakti's inner self. A remarkable international ensemble brings to life different facets of her character, making 'Devi Song' a true global collaboration. From Switzerland's TV sensation Ankita Makwana to Hollywood actress Holly Zuelle, award-winning classical dancer Nirupama Chandrashekar, the venerable 93-year-old Indranila, and the young prodigy Elina Annmary Kurian, each artist breathes life into Shakti's transformative journey.

At the heart of this musical masterpiece is a powerful composition, a testament to the synergy between gifted singer Swapnali Gaikwad and musician Rajan Sarvade, who have flawlessly captured Neha Lohia's artistic vision. 'Devi Song' was filmed at Bravo Studios in New York, supported by an incredibly diverse cast and produced by Tirlok Malik, who co-produces alongside Neha and Swapnali. Ankita Makwana and Christine Mendes also serve as associate producers, while After Dream Entertainment, an independent music label from India, presents the project to the world.

This mesmerizing music video paints a vivid picture of Shakti's inner journey. It deftly addresses the struggles faced by women as she confronts her inner demons, shadows of abuse, and self-doubt. Ultimately, Shakti emerges as a stronger, more empowered version of herself, delivering a powerful message about the resilience and strength of the human spirit.

'DEVI SONG: Unmasked Goddess' is a tribute to the Adi Shakti, the divine mother who resides in every woman. It extends an invitation to women around the world to shed their masks and embrace the boundless power of the all-encompassing feminine spirit. Through captivating music and stunning visuals, the project encourages women to walk in this world with grace, bringing healing and transformation to themselves and the world.

Universal Music India's collaboration with 'Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess' is a historic moment in the world of music and empowerment. This monumental release reminds us all to unmask the goddess within, and we invite you to join this global phenomenon.

For media inquiries, please contact: Filmwithher@gmail.com



UNMASK YOUR INNER SHAKTI: A JOURNEY OF EMPOWERMENT

As 'Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess' takes the world by storm, the message is clear: it's time to unmask yourself and integrate all the parts of your inner realm to awaken the Shakti within you. This monumental collaboration by Universal Music India, Neha Lohia, and the brilliant ensemble of artists is an anthem for women's empowerment, transcending borders and inspiring women worldwide. Let 'Devi Song' serve as a reminder that each woman possesses the strength to face her inner demons and emerge more empowered. It's time to embrace your multifaceted power.

ABOUT NEHA LOHIA: Neha Lohia is an award-winning filmmaker and director deeply committed to women's empowerment and upliftment of Consciousness.

Her acclaimed work bridges cultural divides and inspires women to embrace their innate strength. With notable projects like "Yashodhara: The Buddha's Wife" and upcoming endeavors such as the animated film "The Voice of Spirit" and the documentary "Who Am I," featuring luminaries like Deepak Chopra and Krishnadas, Neha showcases her dedication to powerful storytelling. Her latest venture, "Devi Song: Unmasked Goddess - A Journey of Empowerment," epitomizes her mission to celebrate the multifaceted power of femininity. Through unique global collaborations, Neha crafts films, anthems and music videos that resonate with audiences worldwide. Her creative vision encourages individuals to unmask their inner strength and bring healing and grace to the world through their fully integrated selves. www.nehalohia.com

History This Week

OCT 20 - OCT 26

OCTOBER 20

October 20, 1935 - Mao Zedong's 6,000 mile "Long March" ended as his Communist forces arrived at Yanan, in northwest China, almost a year after fleeing Chiang Kai-shek's armies in the south.



October 20, 1944 - During World War II in the Pacific, General Douglas MacArthur set foot on Philippine soil for the first time since his escape in 1942, fulfilling his promise, "I shall return."

October 20, 1968 - Jacqueline Kennedy married multi-millionaire Greek businessman Aristotle Onassis, ending nearly five years of widowhood following the assassination of her first husband, President John F. Kennedy.

October 20, 1973 - The 'Saturday Night Massacre' occurred during the Watergate scandal as President Richard M. Nixon fired Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox and Deputy Attorney General William French Smith. Attorney General Elliot Richardson resigned. A firestorm of political protest erupted over the firings leading to widespread demands for Nixon's impeachment.

Birthday - British architect Christopher Wren (1632-1723) was born in Wiltshire, in southwestern England. Considered one of the greatest minds of his time, he designed St. Paul's Cathedral and 52 churches for the City of London. His secular buildings included the "new" wing of Hampton Court near London and Greenwich Hospital, now the Royal Naval College.

OCTOBER 21



October 21, 1879 - Thomas Edison successfully tested an electric incandescent lamp with a carbonized filament at his laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey, keeping it lit for over 13

hours.

October 21, 1915 - The first transatlantic radio voice message was made by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company from Virginia to Paris.

October 21, 1944 - During World War II in Europe, American troops captured Aachen in western Germany after a week of hard fighting. It was the first large German city taken by the Allies.

October 21, 1967 - Thousands of anti-war protesters stormed the Pentagon during a rally against the Vietnam War in Washington, D.C. About 250 were arrested. No shots were fired, but demonstrators were struck with nightsticks and rifle butts.

Birthday - Jazz great Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993) was born in Cheraw, South Carolina (as John Birks Gillespie). He was a trumpet player, composer, band leader and one of the founding fathers of modern jazz, known for his trademark puffed cheeks and bent trumpet.

OCTOBER 22



October 22, 1962 - President John F. Kennedy appeared on television to inform Americans of the existence of Russian missiles in Cuba. The President demanded their removal and announced a naval "quarantine" of Cuba. Six days later, the Russians announced they would remove the weapons. In return, the U.S. later removed missiles from Turkey.

October 22, 1979 - The exiled Shah of Iran arrived in the United States for medical treatment. A few weeks later, Iranian militants seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took 66 Americans hostage. They demanded the return of the Shah for trial. The U.S. refused. The Shah died of cancer in July of 1980. The hostages were freed in January of 1981.

Birthday - Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was born in Raiding, Hungary. He was a brilliant pianist best known for Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2, Liebestraum No. 3, and his Faust and Dante symphonies.

OCTOBER 23

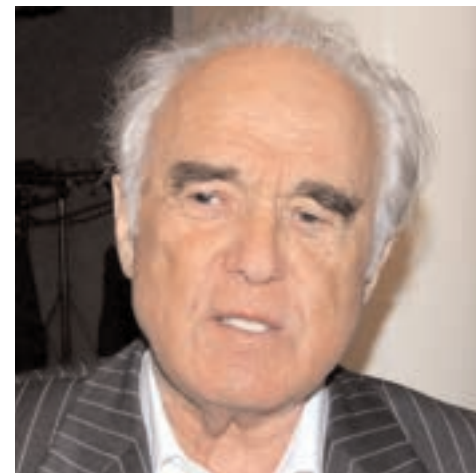
October 23, 1942 - British General Bernard Montgomery launched a major offensive against German forces under Erwin Rommel at El Alamein, Egypt.

October 23, 1956 - A Hungarian uprising against Communist rule began

with students and workers demonstrating in Budapest. Soviet Russians responded by sending in tanks and put down the revolt after several days of bitter fighting.

October 23, 1983 - Terrorists drove a truck loaded with TNT into the U.S. and French headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon, exploding it and killing 241 U.S. Marines and 58 French paratroopers.

October 23, 1989 - Hungary declared itself a republic 33 years after Soviet Russian troops crushed a popular revolt against Communist rule.



October 23, 1990 - Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitaly Masol resigned after mass protests by students, becoming the first Soviet official of that rank to quit under public pressure.

OCTOBER 24

October 24, 1922 - The Irish Parliament voted to adopt a constitution for an Irish Free State, which formally came into existence in December.

October 24, 1929 - "Black Thursday" occurred in the New York Stock Exchange as nearly 13 million shares were sold in panic selling. Five days later "Black Tuesday" saw 16 million shares sold.



October 24, 1931 - Chicago gangster "Scarface" Al Capone was sentenced to 11 years in jail for Federal income tax evasion. In 1934, he was transferred to Alcatraz prison near San Francisco. He was paroled in 1939, suffering from syphilis. He retired to his mansion in Miami Beach where he died in 1947.

October 24, 1980 - Communist authorities in Poland granted recognition to the trade union "Solidarity." It was subsequently outlawed in 1981 after the government imposed martial law. In 1989, it was re-

legalized.

October 24, 1994 - For the first time in 25 years, British troops were absent from the streets of Londonderry, Northern Ireland, following cease-fires by Irish Republican Army (IRA) and pro-British forces.

OCTOBER 25

October 25, 1955 - Austria reassumed its sovereignty with the departure of the last Allied forces. The country had been occupied by the Nazis from 1938-45. After World War II, it was divided into four occupation zones by the U.S., Russia, Britain and France.

October 25-30, 1983 - The Caribbean island of Grenada was invaded by the U.S. to restore "order and democracy." Over 2,000 Marines and Army Rangers seized control after a political coup the previous week had made the island a "Soviet-Cuban colony," according to President Ronald Reagan.



Birthday - Artist Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) was born in Malaga, Spain. He was an experimental painter and also became a fine sculptor, engraver and ceramist.

OCTOBER 26



October 26, 1951 - Winston Churchill became Britain's prime minister for a second time, following his Conservative Party's narrow victory in general elections. In his first term from 1940-45 he had guided Britain through its struggle against Nazi Germany.

October 26, 1955 - Ngo Dinh Diem proclaimed South Vietnam a republic and declared himself president.

Birthday - Hillary Rodham Clinton was born in Park Ridge, Illinois, October 26, 1947. She was First Lady from 1993-2001 during the presidency of her husband Bill Clinton. In 2000, she became the only First Lady ever elected to the U.S. Senate, serving as a Democrat from New York. She was re-elected in 2006 and then began a presidential campaign, hoping to become America's first female president. She lost the Democratic nomination to Barack Obama who went on to win the general election and appointed her as U.S. Secretary of State in 2008.



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Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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