



1 IN EVERY 10 WOMEN IN THE WORLD LIVES IN EXTREME POVERTY



UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous

Photo : UN Photo/Evan Schneider

MARCH 7, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): On International Women's Day, UN Women calls for the world to "Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress" as the best way to accelerate economic growth and build more prosperous, equitable societies.

This is particularly urgent when war and crisis are eroding the achievements of decades of investments in gender equality. From the Middle East to Haiti, Sudan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, women pay the biggest price for conflicts that are not of their making. The need for peace has never been more urgent. contd on page 36

I believe in America: Fired-up Biden uses State of the Union to skewer GOP, his predecessor

THE PRESIDENT MADE THE CASE FOR WHY HE DESERVES A SECOND TERM

MARCH 7, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): President Joe Biden delivered his State of the Union address at the U.S. Capitol on Thursday, March 7 night.

The speech provided Biden one of his biggest audiences of the year as he made his case for a second term and contrasted his vision of the country's future with Republicans ahead of what's expected to be a lengthy general election fight with former President Donald Trump.

Going into the evening, I think many viewers expected to hear something like a campaign speech from Biden, and that's what he delivered. While he did ask Congress to pass a bipartisan immigration bill and spent time on other policy issues like abortion, housing and foreign policy, it was less a policy laundry list than most State of the Union speeches.

CONTD ON PAGE 36



President Biden delivers State of the Union address at the US Capitol, March 7 night. Seated behind are Vice President Kamala Harris and Speaker of the House Mike Johnson

Electoral bonds disclosure: Contempt plea against SBI for 'defying' Supreme Court order



Electoral bonds disclosure: Contempt plea against SBI for 'defying' Supreme Court order Photo for representation

MARCH 7, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) on Thursday, March 7, moved the Supreme Court with a contempt petition against

the State Bank of India (SBI) for failing to disclose by March 6 details of electoral bonds encashed by political parties and instead seeking four months for it.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan mentioned the ADR's plea before a Bench led by CJI DY Chandrachud, which agreed to consider it after the petitioner completed the filing formalities. The matter was likely to be taken up on Monday.

Citing "certain practical difficulties", the SBI had on Monday, March 4, moved the Supreme Court seeking time till June 30 to disclose details of each electoral bond issued and encashed.

CONTD ON PAGE 36

Indian-American incumbents Ami Bera and Ro Khanna secured their seats

MARCH 5, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Ami Bera, a Democrat, secured his seventh term by advancing to the general election

Ro Khanna, seeking his fifth term, won decisively against Republican Anita Chen Ash Kalra, a Democrat, emerged as the top candidate in the 25th Assembly District.

It was a day of victories and defeats for Indian American candidates in the recent Super Tuesday primaries. The biggest day of this year's primary campaign in the US approached as 15 states - plus American Samoa - voted in contests.

Veteran Indian - American Congressmen Ami Bera and Ro Khanna



Democrats Ro Khanna (Left) and Ami Bera (Right) secure election victories in California Congressional Races. Photo / Instagram

successfully defended their positions against challengers.

Ami Bera, a Democrat, secured his seventh term by advancing to the general election with 53.6% of the vote in California's 6th Congressional District. contd on page 36

Indian-American Nikki Haley suspends her presidential campaign against Trump; says 'no regrets'

MARCH 6, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Indian-American politician Nikki Haley suspended her presidential campaign Wednesday after being "trounced" in 15 states across the US on Super Tuesday but stopped short of endorsing her only rival and former president Donald Trump, who is all set to be the Republican party's presumptive nominee in the November elections. contd on page 36



Nikki Haley suspended her presidential campaign Wednesday, March 6, after being "trounced" in 15 states across the US on Super Tuesday, March 5.

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GUEST COMMENT

Facts and statistics: On the national income data released by the National Statistical Office

GDP NUMBERS BRING CHEER IN ELECTION YEAR, AND MERIT MORE SCRUTINY

The latest national income data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) last week have generated a fair amount of excitement as well as bewilderment. While the markets have cheered the NSO's estimate of a robust 8.4% year-on-year growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) in the October-December quarter, some economists have been hard pressed to reconcile the sharp differences of well over a 100 basis points between the official estimates and their projections that many of them had made. The release also posits that real GDP grew by 8.2% and 8.1%, respectively, in the first and second quarters of the current fiscal, 40 and 50 basis points quicker than it had estimated earlier. Full-year real GDP growth too is now forecast at 7.6%, 30 basis points faster than the 7.3% growth it had estimated as recently as in January. A factor behind the upgrades in the current fiscal's income estimates is the NSO's revisions

to the estimates for 2021-22 and 2022-23. While the revisions to 2021-22 data have resulted in that year's real GDP growth being raised by 60 basis points to 9.7%, a fallout is the consequent scaling down of 2022-23's GDP expansion to 7%, from the earlier estimate of 7.2%. Given that revisions to a previous year's data automatically alter the year-on-year pace of growth, the base effect is a crucial element that has to be factored in while gauging the import of the headline number.

In real productive sectors of the economy, third-quarter gross value added (GVA) growth slowed to 6.5%, from an upwardly revised 7.7% pace in the preceding July-September period, as output in the key rural agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing sector contracted 0.8% year-on-year and growth momentum slowed sequentially across five of the other seven sectors that contribute to the GVA. That the GVA growth rate is a full 190 basis points

slower than the GDP's 8.4% pace is primarily because net indirect taxes are estimated to have surged 32% year-on-year in the last quarter, largely as a result of subsidy payouts, including on fertilizers, being drastically lower. To that extent, the GVA growth rate presents a truer picture of the health of the economy. And even on the demand or expenditure side, the data on private consumption spending and government consumption expenditure in the third quarter reveal a lack of traction. While private spending grew by a mere 3.5% year-on-year, government consumption spending actually shrank 3.2%. With the general election set to be announced any day now, the headlines around the NSO data serve as a poll-eve talking point. But there must be a sober analysis of the real state of the economy that draws on multiple statistical sets.

(The Hindu)

PM in Kashmir: Outreach laudable, but twin challenges remain

Playing his first visit to Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reached out to the valley residents with the slogan 'Viksit Bharat Viksit Jammu Kashmir'. His message is clear: the state-turned-UT's development will go hand in hand with that of the country. He launched and dedicated to the nation more than 50 projects worth Rs 6,400 crore, including initiatives in the tourism sector and a project for the integrated development of the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar.

The PM has asserted that J&K is touching new heights of development and 'breathing freely' after the 2019 abrogation. It goes to the credit of the

Union Government and the security forces that the count of terror-related incidents has come down significantly in recent years. The annual death toll - both of civilians and security personnel - has also been waning. No major terror strike has taken place in Kashmir after the Pulwama attack of February 2019. The government has been prioritizing development and employment in a bid to keep the youth off the perilous path of violence and extremism.

Amid all these confidence-building measures, there are two major challenges for the Centre: restoring J&K's statehood and holding the Assembly elections. An inordinate delay in undertaking these all-important

exercises is sending out the message that all is not well on the ground. This runs contrary to the government's claim that everything is hunky-dory in J&K. The resumption of the electoral process is the need of the hour to regain the trust of political parties and voters. Allowing democracy to wither is a recipe for disaster in a region highly vulnerable to cross-border terrorism. The simmering discontent over perceived disempowerment following the revocation of the special status as well as statehood must be addressed with timely remedial steps.

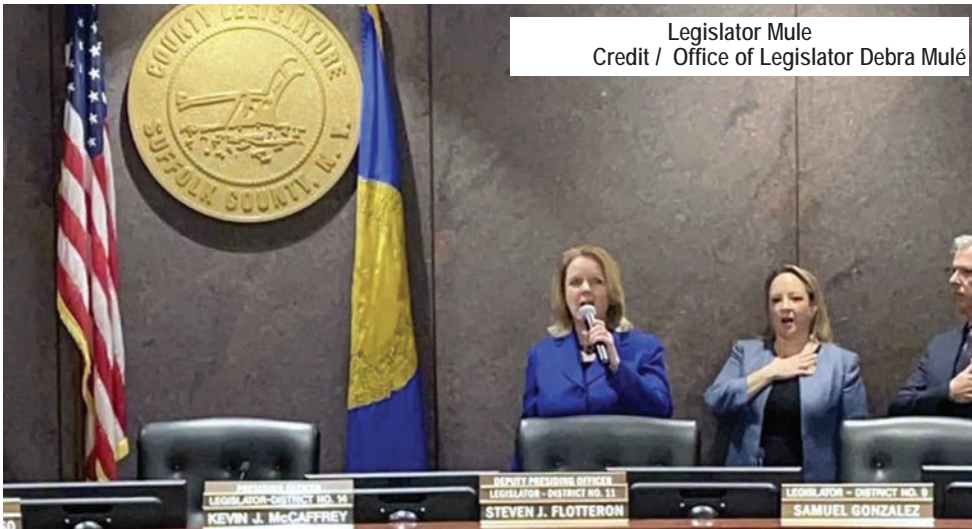
(Tribune, India)

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Legislator Mulé Sings National Anthem at Suffolk Legislature



Legislator Mule
Credit / Office of Legislator Debra Mulé

MARCH 6, 2024

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County Legislator Debra Mulé (D - Freeport) had the honor of singing the National Anthem to open the meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature on Tuesday, March 5. Legislator Mulé, a classically trained soprano vocalist who earned her Bachelor's Degree in Music from the College of William and Mary and currently serves as a cantor at Our Holy Redeemer R.C. Church in Freeport, accepted the invitation from Suffolk

County Legislator Rebecca Sanin (D - Huntington Station).

"It is always a privilege to honor our nation with the singing of the National Anthem, and I greatly appreciate Legislator Sanin's invitation to lead the Suffolk County Legislature in this cherished tradition," Legislator Mulé said. "I look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with Legislator Sanin and all of our Suffolk counterparts to tackle the most pressing issues facing our region."

Gobind Munjal elected again as National President of AIA

MARCH 7, 2024

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): Gobind Munjal has been elected once again the National President of the oldest Association of Indians in America (AIA) for his 2nd term 2024 & 2025.

ALONG WITH HIM, HIS FOLLOWING TEAM MEMBERS ALSO GOT ELECTED:

VICE PRESIDENTS:

1. Sushma Kotahwala, past president of AIA NY Chapter,
2. Uma Swaminathan, the founding member and past president of NJ chapter of AIA
3. Santosh Pandey from Chicago, past President of Illinois Chapter,

TREASURER:

Gobind Bathija, President of Asa Mai Temple in Hicksville and well known, community leader

SECRETARY:

Gunjan Rastogi, Past President of IALI

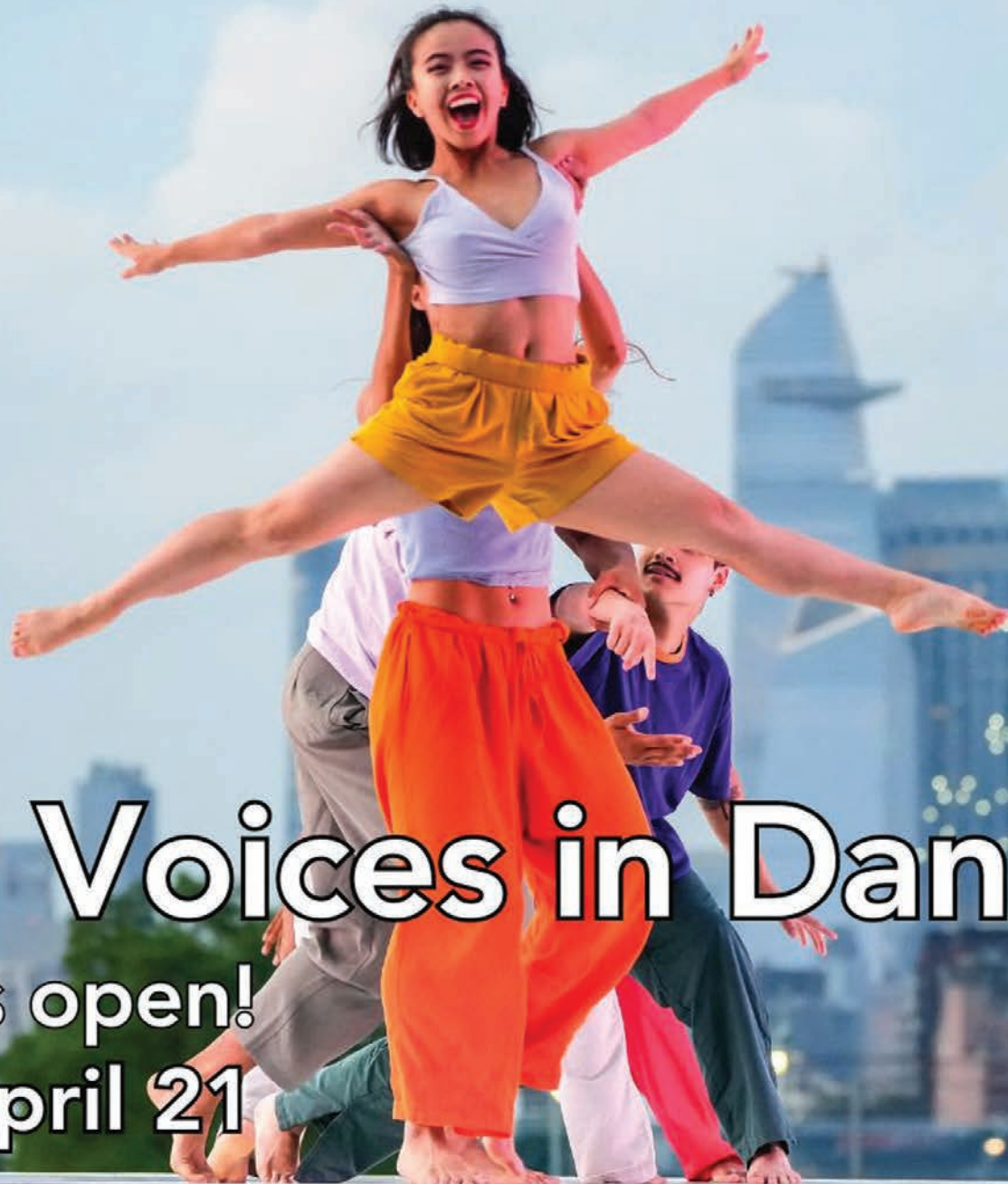
MEMBERS AT LARGE:

20 in number from various States



Gobind Munjal, National President, AIA

**43RD ANNUAL
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Young Voices in Dance
Applications open!
Deadline: April 21

Indian - origin classical dancer, MFA student shot dead during evening walk



Amarnath Ghosh, a Bharatnatyam and Kuchupudi dancer from Kolkata, pursuing a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, was shot dead during his evening walk in his neighborhood, Tuesday, February 27. File photo

MARCH 7, 2024 (UPDATED)

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) In a tragic incident, Amarnath Ghosh, a Bharatnatyam and Kuchupudi dancer from Kolkata, pursuing a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, was shot dead during his evening walk in his neighborhood, Tuesday, February 27, according to media reports.

Devoleena Bhattacharjee, a popular TV actress and friend of the deceased,

has reached out to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar for assistance in repatriating Ghosh's body. Devoleena expressed her grief on social media, highlighting the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of her friend and appealing for support in uncovering the motive behind the murder.

"My friend #Amarnathghosh was shot and killed in the St Louis Academy neighborhood in the US on Tuesday evening. Only child in the family, mother died three years back, father passed away during his childhood. Well, the reason, the details of the accused are not revealed yet, or perhaps no one is left in his family to fight for it except his few friends. He was from Kolkata."

She ended the note with her appeal: "Some friends in US are trying to claim the body but still no update about it. @IndianEmbassyUS kindly see to it if you could. At least we should know the reason of his murder. @DrSJaishankar @narendramodi"

Ghosh was an alumnus of Kalakshetra Foundation and Kuchipudi Art Academy, Chennai. According to a GoFundMe campaign set up in his honor, he also served as faculty at the Kuchipudi Arty Academy.

Described as an excellent dancer, he was interested in exploring his diverse

ethnic background and the unity of various cultures through the compositions of Rabindranath Tagore, according to his bio on the university website. His research aimed to showcase how dance could unite people from diverse backgrounds.

Atlanta-based Bharatnatyam dance guru Anupa Thakurta, founder and artistic director of Deeksha School of Performing Arts, who has known Ghosh since Covid times, expressed shock and anger at his tragic death.

"We met through an online performance and immediately became friends," she told NRI Pulse. "He had high aspirations to come to the US to perform. He had asked me multiple times to arrange for performances in the US. Considering the phenomenal artist that he was, he did make it to the US to do MFA in St. Louis, Missouri. He had a creative mind filled with splendid ideas. A very talented and humble artist and above all a very good human being."

"Ghosh came into this country with lots of dreams and aspirations, but this land took his life. Life is so unpredictable. Today you are here and tomorrow you are gone. This news shook me completely," she added.

In a heartfelt obituary, Amarnath Ghosh was remembered as more than just a dancer.

"Amarnath was more than just a dancer; he was a visionary artist whose passion and dedication breathed life into every movement," the obituary reads. "His performances were electrifying, captivating audiences with their raw emotion, technical precision, and sheer artistry. Whether he was portraying the agony of loss or the ecstasy of triumph, Amarnath had a rare ability to evoke deep and profound emotions, leaving spectators spellbound in his wake."

"At Battery Dance, we had the privilege of collaborating with Amarnath, and his presence on our stage was nothing short of transformative. His performances were a testament to his unparalleled talent and unwavering commitment to his craft, inspiring all who had the privilege of witnessing his artistry. We will forever cherish the memories of his electrifying performances and the joy he brought to our stage."

Indian Consulate in Chicago condoled the death of Ghosh.

"Deep condolences to family & friends of deceased Amarnath Ghosh in StLouis, Missouri. We are following up forensic, investigation with police & providing support. @IndianEmbassyUS @MEAIndia"

The circumstances surrounding the incident remain unclear.

Indian American coach Sean Desai joins Los Angeles Rams in senior defensive role



Sean Desai is expected to be hired by the Los Angeles Rams in a senior defensive role

MARCH 6, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian American coach Sean Desai, who was relieved of his duties after just one season as the Eagles' defensive coordinator, is expected to be hired by the Los Angeles Rams in a senior defensive role.

The son of immigrants, Desai, 40, was the first Indian American coordinator in NFL

history. He will face his former team when the Eagles come to Los Angeles during the 2024 season, according to CBS Sports.

Desai was let go after Philadelphia finished 30th in the NFL in points allowed during the 2023 season. While the unit struggles in most categories, the Eagles' defense did finish 10th in the NFL in both fewest rushing yards allowed and touchdown runs allowed, CBS noted.

Prior to his time in Philadelphia, Desai spent six seasons as the Bears' defensive quality control coach, two seasons as the team's safeties coach and was Chicago's defensive coordinator in 2021. That season, the Bears' defense finished third in the NFL in passing yards allowed.

In 2022, Desai served as the Seahawks' associate head coach and defensive assistant.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Republican candidate Vin Kruttiventi, vying for a seat in CA 14th district



Vin (Vinay) Kruttiventi is vying for a seat in CA 14th Congressional District which spans Lake, Napa, Yolo, Solano, and Sonoma Counties

MARCH 6, 2024

SACRAMENTO (TIP): Vin (Vinay) Kruttiventi is an Indian American Republican, who is vying for a seat in the 14th Congressional District, home to a large Indian American community.

Kruttiventi secured 17.8 percent of the vote in the March 5th primary and now faces incumbent Democrat Eric Swalwell, who is seeking his sixth term.

Kruttiventi, a businessman and entrepreneur, came to the United States after earning an engineering degree from Osmania University in India. He is the founder and CEO of A5 Services, a business and technology consulting firm.

Kruttiventi has made a substantial personal investment of \$500,000 into his congressional campaign.

The 14th Congressional District spans Lake, Napa, Yolo, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. According to the Cook Political Report PVI, the district leans heavily Democratic (+17).

If elected, Kruttiventi pledges to co-sponsor and advocate for a bill that will cap House members' terms at three and senators' terms at two.

Kruttiventi runs the Vinay Kruttiventi Foundation, dedicated to supporting nonprofit organizations in the Tri-Valley region.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Bank fraud accused having Interpol Red Notice against him repatriated from US

Rajiv Mehta, an accused in a 25-year-old alleged fraud case, where he intercepted the bank drafts which he used to encash later had been on the run since 2000

MARCH 6, 2024

WASHINGTON (TIP):

The CBI has successfully coordinated repatriation of an alleged fraudster, facing an Interpol Red Notice, from the United States on Wednesday ending his 23-year long run from the law, officials said.

Rajiv Mehta, an accused in a 25-year-old alleged fraud case, where he intercepted the bank drafts which he used to encash later had been on the run since 2000, they said.

The Global Operations Centre followed his trail using Interpol channels that resulted in National Central Bureau-Washington locating him in their jurisdiction, officials said.

"The Global Operations Centre of Central Bureau of Investigation has coordinated via Interpol channels with National Central Bureau-Washington for return to India from the US of a Red Notice subject today, that is, March 06. He was earlier geo-located by the US authorities through close follow-up through Interpol," a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

Interpol had issued a Red Notice against Mehta on June 16, 2000, on a request from the CBI.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Interpol had issued a Red Notice against Mehta on June 16, 2000, on a request from the CBI.

Credit / PTI

Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar, British Indian chef Asma Khan win India-UK Achievers Honours

THE AWARD RECOGNIZES THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF INDIAN STUDENTS AND ALUMNI WHO HAVE PURSUED AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME OF STUDY

MARCH 3, 2024

LONDON (TIP): Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar and British Indian chef Asma Khan were among the winners of the annual India-UK Achievers Honours in London, which recognizes the achievements of Indian students and alumni who have pursued an international programme of study.

The initiative, by the National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK, in partnership with the British Council in India and the UK government's Department for Business and Trade, was launched last year with the aim of celebrating bilateral educational ties.

At a ceremony earlier this week, the "Class of 2024" made up of high achievers across the arts, sports, entrepreneurship and medicine were honored following a day-long conference entitled 'The Future of Education'.

"I am pleased to see that for the second year, you are showcasing exceptional Indian talent that has been developed in the UK," said British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in a message for the event on Wednesday.

"I am extremely proud of the UK-India partnership and the Achievers Honours highlights the strong outcomes that can arise through partnership," he said.

Akhtar, the acclaimed writer-filmmaker behind box-office hits such as 'Luck By Chance' and 'Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara' and most recently 'The Archies', was conferred the Living Legend Award in recognition of her work in furthering an understanding of India on the global stage. She spoke of her degree in literature and sociology giving her a strong footing for her filmmaking career.



Zoya Akhtar speaks after collecting her award. Credit / PTI

"I genuinely believe that literature and sociology have helped me immensely in making movies, and writing and telling stories," Akhtar said.

"However, I don't believe one size fits all when it comes to your career path in the film industry...today films can even be made on a phone. I do feel it's a lot easier these days. There is access to a lot more filmmaking tools today," she said.

The 51-year-old daughter of writers Javed Akhtar and Honey Irani addressed a session on Creative Economies at the conference, during which she reflected on her love of writing.

"I started writing at a very young age because I grew up in a home of writers, so it's just something that you imitate in a very organic way. You are surrounded by those kinds of discussions and narrations," she said.

Also recognized in the field of Arts, Culture and

Entertainment this year was UK-based chef Asma Khan, behind the women-led Darjeeling Express restaurant in London. The King's College London alumna started out in the field of law but has since made a mark for herself in the culinary space, including as a cookery writer behind bestselling recipe books on Indian cuisine.

"I never call myself a chef, I am a cook; and most of my cooking I learnt by watching," said Khan, who was recently also awarded an honorary Doctor of Science (Social Sciences) degree by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

The India-UK Achievers were also celebrated at the UK Parliament complex, where the finalists had an opportunity to interact with British members of Parliament, policymakers, and stakeholders in the education sector.

"These achievers are not just recipients of a prestigious honor, they are the embodiment of the profound transformation that education and cross-cultural experiences can engender in our societies," said NISAU UK Chair Sanam Arora, who is also a commissioner of the UK International Higher Education Commission.

"The progress and achievements of Indian students in the UK over the past year have been nothing short of remarkable. Their growing presence in the UK's universities is a testament to the enduring appeal of British education and the opportunities it offers," added Lord Karan Bilimoria, Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Students and President of the UK Council of International Student Affairs. (Source: PTI)

Indian-origin executives appointed to UK's Competition and Markets Authority board



Dharmash Mistry and Cyrus Mehta have been appointed to UK's Competition and Markets Authority board

MARCH 4, 2024

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin executives with years of experience in the field of law and finance have been appointed to the board of the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), a non-ministerial department responsible for strengthening business competition and curbing anti-competitive practices.

Dharmash Mistry, a venture capitalist specializing in technology, new business models and finance, was named among four new non-executive directors of the CMA by the British government's Department for Business and Trade last week.

Meanwhile, Cyrus Mehta - a former partner at international law firm CMS in London - was named on the CMA board as a Panel Member, Non-Executive Director.

"Our new board members will bring further fresh perspectives and expertise at a time when our responsibilities, and our positive impact on people, businesses and the economy, are growing significantly," said CMA Chair Marcus Bokkerink.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin UK based woman charged with murder of 10-year-old daughter



Picture of the victim, Shay Kang, as posted by Sandwell Police on X.

MARCH 6, 2024

LONDON (TIP): A 33-year-old Indian-origin woman on Wednesday, March 6, appeared before a UK court charged with the murder of her 10-year-old daughter, who was found dead at their home in a town in the West Midlands region of England.

Jaskirat Kaur, also known as Jasmine Kang, appeared before Wolverhampton

Magistrates Court charged with the murder of Shay Kang, described as "bright and fun-loving" in a tribute from her school. West Midlands Police said the girl had been found with injuries at an address in Rowley Regis on Monday and pronounced dead at the scene.

"Our thoughts remain with Shay's family and friends. Her tragic death has had a profound impact on those who knew her as well as the wider community. We ask that they are left to grieve in private as our enquiries continue," said Detective Inspector Dan Jarratt of West Midlands Police.

"The community has understandably been left shocked by what's happened, and we'll continue to have a police presence and offer our support in the area over the coming days," he said.

Kaur had been arrested on Monday from the residential property where her daughter's body was found.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Ramesh Singh Arora becomes Pakistan's first Sikh minister in Punjab

Belonging to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party, Arora has returned to the Lahore provincial assembly for the third term after winning the February 8 polls

MARCH 7, 2024

LAHORE (TIP): Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, an influential minority leader, has been sworn in as a provincial minister, making him the first Sikh to occupy a ministerial position in post-Partition Punjab.

Belonging to the former prime minister Nawaz Sharif-led Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, Arora has returned to the Lahore provincial assembly for the third term after winning the February 8 polls.

Arora, 49, was recently elected pardhan (president) of the Pakistan Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and also as the ambassador to the Kartarpur Corridor.

He was administered the oath along with 17 others on Wednesday, March 6.

Arora has been allotted the portfolio of minorities of Punjab province in the cabinet of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, incidentally, also the first woman to hold the post in the country. According to sources, Arora has close connections with the military establishment.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Ramesh Singh Arora is the first Sikh minister in Pakistan Punjab. He has been allotted the portfolio of minorities of Punjab province in the cabinet of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. Photo credit / www.pap.gov.pk

India Association of Long Island (IALI) Inducts Executive Council under the Leadership of President Pradeep Tandon



FEBRUARY 28, 2024

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): On a wet and rainy evening with a chill in the air, the India Association of Long Island witnessed a momentous occasion at the Hicksville Community Center in Hicksville, New York. Despite the challenging weather conditions, the members of the 46-year-old organization showed immense support, turning the evening into a glittering ceremony.

The induction ceremony was a testament to the enduring strength of the India Association of Long Island and the unwavering commitment of its members. The show of support from the community added an extra layer of warmth to the chilly evening, turning it into a celebration of unity, diversity, and shared

purpose.

As the organization enters a new chapter with the freshly inducted executive committee, the glittering ceremony symbolizes the continuity of a 46-year legacy and the anticipation of exciting new endeavors. The India Association of Long Island looks forward to continued growth, community engagement, and making a positive impact under the leadership of the new executive committee.

The evening unfolded with a harmonious start as the Oath Taking Ceremony commenced. The atmosphere resonated with patriotism as Karishma Pahuja, the granddaughter of Dr. Jagan Pahuja, President IALI 1987-1988, led the gathering in singing both the USA and Indian National Anthems.

Mr. Om Bhambri and Ms. Rita Bhateja, Election Committee members, took the stage to announce the results of the election. The air buzzed with anticipation as they revealed the names of the winning candidates. In a moment of triumph, the entire team emerged victorious with a landslide victory, marking a resounding mandate from the members.

The success of the election was not only a testament to the dedication and trust

bestowed upon the new executive committee but also a reflection of the unity and solidarity within the India Association of Long Island.

The event was attended by a remarkable turnout of esteemed guests. Among the distinguished attendees were Past Presidents, elected officials including Hon Joseph Saladino, Supervisor of the Town of Oyster Bay, Hon Jennifer DeSena, North Hempstead Town Supervisor, Harry Malhotra, Director of South Asian Business and Development of the Town of Oyster Bay, and Bobby Kalotee, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission Nassau County Advisory Board, alongside association members and their spouses.

The ceremony garnered extensive media coverage, with TV ASIA, ITV GOLD, and other prominent outlets capturing the essence of this significant event. The presence of such influential figures reflected the importance and impact of the India Association of Long Island in the community.

Dr. Krishan Jhaveri, a distinguished member of the association, took the stage to introduce Secretary Dr. Neeru Bhambri, a dedicated member for 35 years, who has held various positions within IALI. Dr. Bhambri, in her

welcoming address, expressed gratitude to all the guests for contributing to the success of the event. She pledged to serve with full motivation, professionalism, and transparency as the Secretary of IALI in 2024.

Dr. Jhaveri extended an invitation to Past President Ms. Gunjan Rastogi, who, in turn, delivered a captivating introduction to President Pradeep Tandon.

The administration of the oath was a solemn moment led by Hon. Jennifer DeSena, the Supervisor of the Town of North Hempstead in Nassau County, Long Island.

The ceremony commenced with the swearing-in of Pradeep Tandon as the President of IALI, a moment marked by significance and celebration. Two captivating pictures capture the essence of this pivotal moment, showcasing the commitment of President Tandon to lead IALI into a new era.

Following President Tandon's oath, the stage was set for the induction of two other key officers. Dr. Neeru Bhambri took the oath of office as the Secretary, while Anjana Kashyap assumed the responsibilities of Treasurer.

Mr. Sushil Khanna, Vice President, did not take the oath as he was on vacation.

Nassau County Democratic Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton comments on County Executive Bruce Blakeman's Lawsuit Against Attorney General Tish James



Nassau County Democratic Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton

MARCH 6, 2024

MINEOLA, NY (TIP): Nassau University Medical Center is quickly running out of the money needed to operate, a situation that demands immediate and focused attention. Instead of addressing this, County Executive Blakeman has decided to

engage in political theatrics that serve no purpose other than to distract from his administration's failures. County Executive Blakeman's choice to pursue this lawsuit over the welfare of Nassau County's residents is a dereliction of duty. His job is to serve the taxpayers of this county, not to engage in costly and unnecessary legal fights on issues that distract from his fundamental responsibilities. I am baffled that County Executive Blakeman is standing idly by while his appointed hospital chair is declining \$83 million in emergency State funding that could save the hospital in exchange for common sense reforms. This mistake puts every taxpayer on the hook for nearly \$120 million in hospital debt Nassau County has guaranteed. It's time for the County Executive to cease his grandstanding and begin the work he was elected to do—focusing on the urgent needs of our community and ensuring the stability of the County's only safety net healthcare system.

NYS INSPECTOR GENERAL ANNOUNCES THE SENTENCING OF MONROE COUNTY MAN WHO FRAUDULENTLY OBTAINED \$16,000 IN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS

MARCH 06, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): New York State Inspector General Lucy Lang announced the sentencing of Brian Simpson, 55, of Monroe County, who defrauded the State Workers' Compensation System of more than \$16,000. Simpson, who had previously pled guilty on December 20, 2023, to one count of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the Second Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor, was sentenced yesterday by the Honorable Thomas J. DiSalvo in Webster Town Court to a term of three years' probation and ordered to pay full restitution.

"This outrageous abuse undermines the integrity of the Workers' Compensation System - a critical safety net designed to enable injured workers to provide for themselves and their families," said Inspector General Lucy Lang. "My office will continue to proactively root out fraud and other abuses of this system to ensure that these crucial funds will remain available for those truly in need."

The Inspector General's investigation established that between April 11, 2022, and March 3, 2023, Simpson made multiple misrepresentations to examining physicians and submitted inaccurate paperwork to the New York

State Insurance Fund (NYSIF) regarding his inability to work during the covered period. More specifically, despite asserting that he was not working since sustaining an alleged workplace injury, the investigation established that Simpson was in fact actively working as a bus driver for First Transit, Inc. while collecting workers' compensation benefits.

As a result of his misrepresentations, Simpson fraudulently obtained benefits in the amount of \$16,764.78.

Inspector General Lang thanked the members of her staff responsible for handling this investigation, including Investigator Erynn Migaj, former Investigator Mark LaMonte, Investigative Auditor Kaitlyn Gibbons, and Investigative Counsel Phil Druss, under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General Jeffrey Hagan and Chief Investigator Martin Stanford.

Inspector General Lang also expressed her gratitude to the New York State Insurance Fund for its partnership in the investigation, the New York State Police for assisting with Simpson's arrest, and Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley and her office for their diligent work prosecuting this matter.

Former NYS correction officer pleads guilty after fraudulently collecting more than \$35,000 in workers' compensation benefits

MARCH 07, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): New York State Inspector General Lucy Lang announced the guilty plea of Charles Epps, a former New York State Correction Officer who collected over \$35,000 in workers' compensation indemnity benefits to which he was not entitled.

Epps, 56, of Buffalo, pleaded guilty yesterday in Erie County Court before Honorable Paul B. Wojtaszek to Insurance Fraud in the 3rd degree and Grand Larceny in the 3rd degree, both of which are class D felony charges under NYS Penal Law.

Prompted by a referral from the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), the Inspector General's investigation established that on May 8, 2020, Epps claimed to have been injured while working at the Wende Correctional Facility in Alden, NY. He subsequently made a claim for workers' compensation benefits and in July 2020 went out of work claiming a disability from the May injury. Epps received lost wage payments from DOCCS and the New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF) from July 2020 to November 2022.

While he collected indemnity benefits, Epps completed NYSIF Work Activity

Reports and Independent Medical Examination questionnaires which falsely represented a lack of work activity. The Inspector General's investigation revealed, however, that Epps began working as a motor coach operator for New York Trailways during this time period and was regularly assigned to operate a roundtrip bus route between Buffalo and New York City.

As a result of his misrepresentations to NYSIF, Epps fraudulently obtained \$35,544.67 in workers' compensation benefits. Additionally, a related investigation by the Social Security Administration's Office of the Inspector General (SSA OIG) uncovered that Epps also fraudulently collected \$16,907.40 in Social Security Disability benefits through concealment of his employment as a bus driver.

Epps was terminated from DOCCS during the investigation.

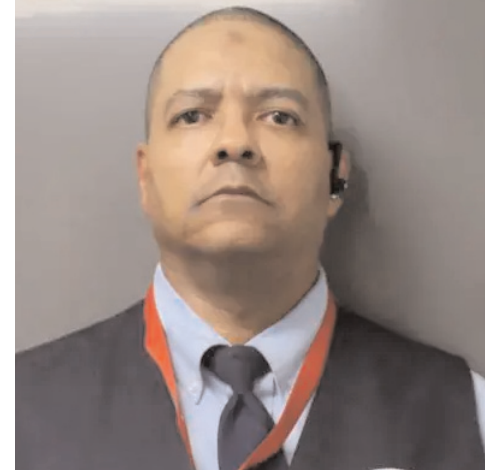
"All New Yorkers should be outraged that DOCCS is facing a daily staffing crisis due in large part to abuses of the Workers' Compensation system," said Inspector General Lucy Lang. "That this correction officer was uniquely situated to understand the impact that his unjustified absence posed to the safety of staff and incarcerated individuals alike,

but still prioritized his own self-interest is unconscionable."

"In addition to pleading guilty yesterday, I am pleased to announce that this defendant has been ordered to pay back the money he stole from the taxpayers of New York," said Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn. "I would like to thank the New York State Inspector General's Office and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision for their work on this investigation and their partnership with my office. Together, we will continue to uncover the criminals who defraud the state systems that help the injured and disabled and hold them accountable for their crimes."

Inspector General Lang thanked the members of her staff responsible for handling this important matter, including Investigator Erynn Migaj, Senior Investigator Maren Robinson-Traber, former investigator Mark LaMonte, and Investigative Counsel Jill Florkowski, under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General Jeffrey Hagen and Chief Investigator Martin Stanford.

Inspector General Lang also thanked



New York State Inspector General Lucy Lang announced the guilty plea of Charles Epps, a former New York State Correction Officer

the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General for their partnership on this case, the DOCCS Office of Special Investigations for their referral, and the New York State Insurance Fund for their cooperation. Lang also thanked Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn and his office for their diligent work prosecuting this matter.

Get to the Point

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The limits of India-US strategic partnership

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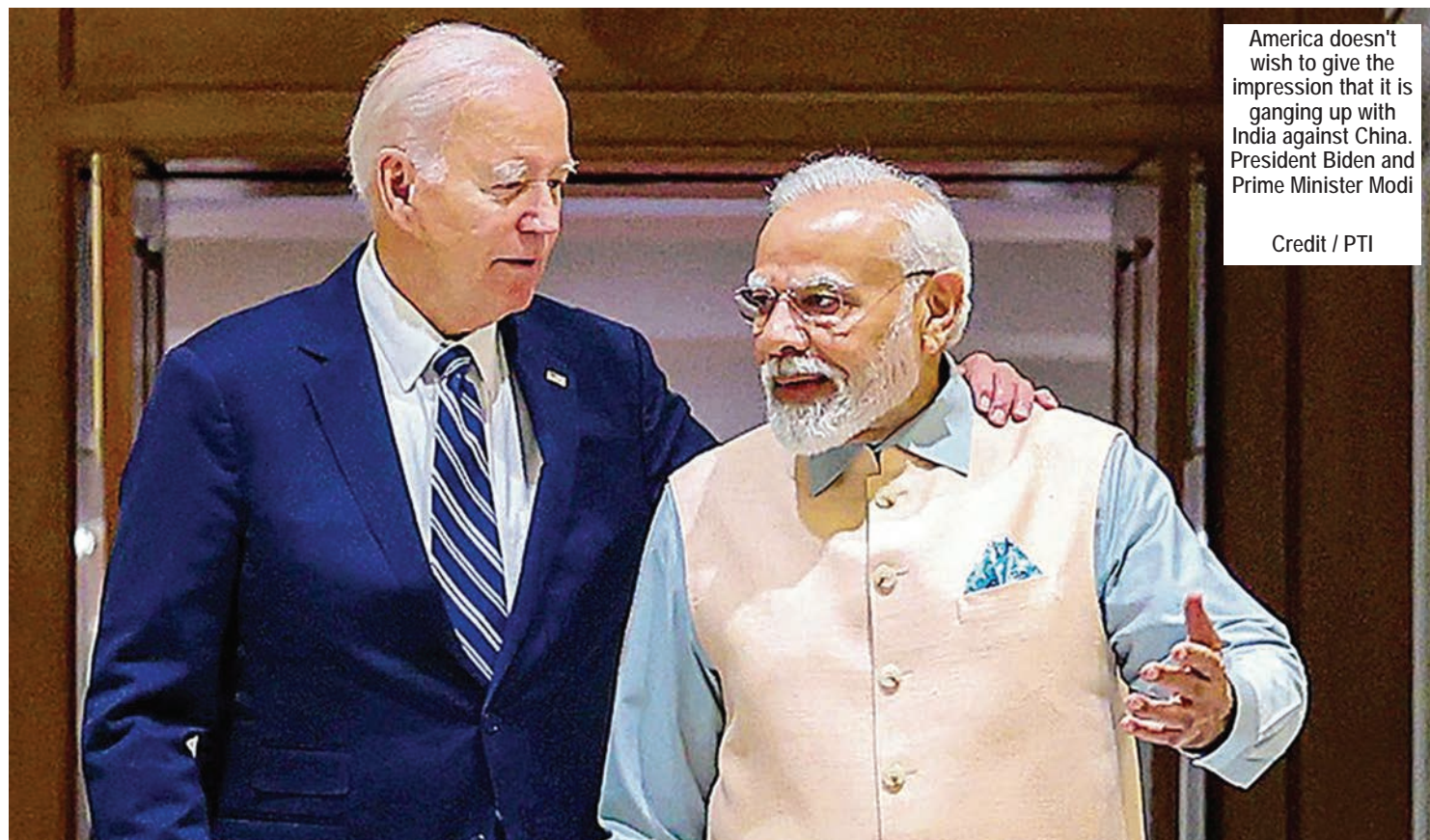


BY SHYAM SARAN

"The US is vulnerable as it is involved in two wars, one in Europe and the other in West Asia. While it is engaged in a rivalry with China in the Indo-Pacific, there is as yet no 'hot war' there and the US would prefer to keep a lid on that possibility. For this to work, there must be a lessening of tensions with China. China faces its own economic headwinds and is willing to respond positively to US moves towards a limited détente. Public expressions of an anti-China front with India would run counter to this. The postponement of the New Delhi Quad summit, which would have brought President Biden to India, points in the same direction - of not alienating China at this critical juncture."

When India and the US concluded the historic Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008, their bilateral relations were launched on a positive trajectory. Since then, there has been an across-the-board expansion in virtually all dimensions of the relationship - security, technology, defense, economy and commerce. There is today a broader and deeper relationship of unprecedented magnitude. This is undoubtedly anchored in enduring strategic convergence, particularly with respect to maintaining a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific but not limited to it. If there is a 'quadrilateral' platform which groups India together with the US and its military allies Japan and Australia in the Indo-Pacific, there is the I2U2 in the Gulf, bringing together India and Israel as well as the US and the UAE. A shared concern over the expansion of Chinese power on both the eastern and western flanks of India makes these security arrangements valuable to the country.

These remarks, which appear to



America doesn't wish to give the impression that it is ganging up with India against China. President Biden and Prime Minister Modi

Credit / PTI

openly solicit US support as a supplicant in helping India cope with the military standoff with China on the border, are unusual.

From the US standpoint, building up India's economic, military and technological capabilities makes sense even if India is not its formal ally because New Delhi, for its own reasons, will pursue policies to deter the exercise of coercive power by China. This will reinforce the US objective of constraining Chinese power. Furthermore, India is the only country which has a scale matching China's and can emerge as its peer rival. But it has always been clear that India is unlikely to participate in possible hostilities which might erupt between the US and China, say over Taiwan. Nor will the US put boots on the ground to support any Indian armed operations against China. These limits are well understood by both sides. Neither the US nor India, in their public pronouncements, suggest otherwise. It is also true that while China is a key component in the India-US strategic partnership, it is not the only one. The sheer breadth of the relationship has a logic of its own and India is right in asserting this.

It is against this background that one was intrigued by the remarks attributed to India's Defense Secretary Giridhar Aramane on the occasion of the convening of the second INDUS-X defense meeting with the head of the US Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral John C Aquilino, on February 21. He was quoted as saying: "In navigating the complex dynamics of this region, India and the US find themselves as key stakeholders, bound by shared values and common interests."

This was fine, but then he brought in the military standoff with China in

Ladakh into his public remarks: "India is giving a face-off to our neighbor in almost all the fronts we have with them. Wherever there is a mountain pass, we are stationed there to face any eventuality. Wherever there is a road, we have to be ready there also. So, we are standing against a bully in a very determined fashion."

While this may have been conveyed in confidential deliberations in the past, it is the first time such remarks have been made publicly.

It was even more surprising to read the Defense Secretary's subsequent remarks: "And we expect our friend US will be there with us in case we need their support. It is a must for us and we have to do it together. We greatly appreciate the support and resolve from our friends in supporting us during such an event. The strong resolve that we will support each other in the face of a common threat is going to be of critical importance to us."

These remarks, which appear to openly solicit US support as a supplicant in helping India cope with the continuing military standoff with China on the border, are unusual. They may not have been appropriate to the occasion and even convey, perhaps inadvertently, that India is not capable of dealing with the Chinese threat on its border on its own. The US Department of Defense's readout on the meeting contains neither a reference to these remarks nor any reaction from the US Indo-Pacific Commander. There may even have been some embarrassment on the US side over this public statement.

Some days later, there was a media interview of Richard Verma, a former US ambassador to India and currently Deputy Secretary of State in charge of management and resources. The interviewer asked him whether in the

backdrop of the Indian Defense Secretary's reported remarks, "... Is the US standing with India?" His reply is most revealing and supports the view that the Indian official's remarks may have embarrassed the Americans, who do not wish to give the impression that the US is ganging up with India against China. Listing all the principled reasons why the US-India relationship "stands on its own", he added that "... this isn't about any third country. When I think about this relationship, I think about it in bilateral terms and what we can do to strengthen the international architecture."

For good measure, he added: "And each of us will take our own path that I think fits what's right for our people and for our societies. I would leave it at that." This is more the kind of careful language India usually uses.

The US is vulnerable as it is involved in two wars, one in Europe and the other in West Asia. While it is engaged in a rivalry with China in the Indo-Pacific, there is as yet no 'hot war' there and the US would prefer to keep a lid on that possibility. For this to work, there must be a lessening of tensions with China. China faces its own economic headwinds and is willing to respond positively to US moves towards a limited détente. Public expressions of an anti-China front with India would run counter to this. The postponement of the New Delhi Quad summit, which would have brought President Biden to India, points in the same direction - of not alienating China at this critical juncture.

We should have read the runes correctly and avoided displaying our vulnerability to shifts in US geopolitical postures. This may also send a wrong message to China.

(The author is a former Foreign Secretary of India)

Trump's Unchallenged Rise: Analyzing His Dominance in the Republican Field



BY PROF. INDRAJIT S.
SALUJA

As the political landscape of the United States gears up for the upcoming 2024 presidential elections, the Republican Party finds itself under the undisputed shadow of one man: Donald J. Trump. The dynamics of the GOP race have proven to be a one-sided affair, with no Republican able to match the charisma and influence that Trump wields. Even formidable contenders like Nikki Haley and long-time adversary Mitch McConnell have had to bow to the overwhelming popularity of the former president.

THE ROAD TO TRUMP'S UNCONTESTED DOMINANCE:

The political landscape of the Republican Party has undergone a significant transformation since the tumultuous years of Trump's presidency. Despite facing impeachment and contentious moments, Trump has retained a formidable grip on the party's base, solidifying his status as a political force to be reckoned with. The lack of a viable challenger within the GOP has only further highlighted Trump's influence, and the recent withdrawal of Nikki Haley from the race underscores this dominance.

NIKKI HALEY'S WITHDRAWAL:

Nikki Haley, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, was considered one of the potential challengers to Trump's hold on the Republican Party. However, her decision to end her campaign reflected the harsh reality that Trump was far ahead in the race. Despite her credentials and experience, Haley recognized the uphill battle she faced against the towering figure of Trump. His loyal following and unmatched popularity within the party made it evident that challenging him would be an arduous task.

MITCH MCCONNELL'S ENDORSEMENT:

Mitch McConnell, a seasoned politician and a prominent figure within the GOP, has had a tumultuous relationship with Trump. However, even McConnell, known for his strategic political maneuvers, had to concede to the overwhelming support for Trump within the party. His endorsement of Trump highlighted the pragmatic realization that opposing the former president would be futile. McConnell's move further solidified the perception that Trump is, as of March 8, the de facto choice of Republicans.

TRUMP'S CHANCES OF WINNING THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION:

Given the current landscape, it seems increasingly likely that Donald Trump will secure the Republican nomination for the 2024 presidential race. The lack of a formidable opponent and the widespread support within the party make Trump the default candidate for Republicans. However, the question

remains: What are his chances of winning the presidency if he officially enters the fray?

FACTORS FAVORING TRUMP'S VICTORY:

LOYAL BASE: Trump's unwavering support among the Republican base is a significant advantage. His charisma and connection with his followers have created a fervent and dedicated voter base that remains steadfast in its allegiance.

POPULIST APPEAL: Trump's populist appeal resonates with a considerable section of the American electorate. His 'America First' approach and promises to prioritize domestic interests strike a chord with many voters who feel disenfranchised by globalization and establishment politics.

ECONOMIC RECORD: Trump can tout a pre-pandemic strong economy during his presidency. The emphasis on



Donald J. Trump, the undisputed leader of Republicans

Screenshot/ CBS News

job creation, tax cuts, and deregulation could appeal to voters concerned about economic stability and growth.

MEDIA PRESENCE: Trump's ability to dominate media coverage is unparalleled. His provocative statements and unfiltered communication style ensure that he remains in the public eye, a factor that played a significant role in his previous electoral success.

FUNDRAISING PROWESS: Trump has demonstrated a remarkable ability to raise funds, tapping into a network of enthusiastic donors. Financial strength is crucial in modern political campaigns, and Trump's fundraising prowess gives him a significant advantage.

MOBILIZATION OF RURAL AND CONSERVATIVE VOTERS: Trump has successfully mobilized rural and conservative voters who may feel overlooked by mainstream politics. His focus on issues like gun rights, immigration, and traditional values resonates strongly with these demographics.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES FOR TRUMP:

POLARIZATION: Trump's divisive rhetoric has polarized the American

electorate. While this approach energizes his base, it also alienates a significant portion of voters who may be crucial in a general election.

HANDLING OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC: Criticism of Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic could be a significant obstacle. While his supporters appreciate his emphasis on economic reopening, opponents may point to perceived missteps in the initial response.

LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONCERNS: Trump's presidency was marked by legal controversies and ethical concerns. Opposition may leverage these issues to tarnish his image and question his suitability for a second term.

AGE AND HEALTH: Trump, born in 1946, would be 78 years old by the time of the 2024 election. Questions about his age and health may arise, especially

electorate.

POLICY CONTINUITY: Voters who align with Trump's policies, especially on issues like immigration, trade, and foreign relations, may see him as a consistent advocate for their values and priorities.

The dynamics of American politics have always been shaped by the concerns and priorities of the common citizens, and it seems that the everyday struggles of employment, healthcare, education, and social security are taking center stage. In this context, we delve into how Biden's perceived shortcomings have indirectly contributed to the strengthening of Trump's position, especially among independent voters who prioritize practical issues over grand geopolitical narratives.

BIDEN'S LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE:

President Joe Biden entered the White House with promises of unity, healing, and an ambitious agenda for the American people. However, as his presidency unfolds, there is a growing sentiment among common Americans that his administration has fallen short in addressing their most pressing concerns. The focus on achieving greatness on the world stage, while commendable, has not resonated strongly with the everyday worries of the average citizen.

ECONOMIC CONCERNS: One of the primary drivers of discontent is the perceived lack of progress on economic fronts. Despite promises of job creation and economic recovery, many Americans find themselves grappling with concerns about job security, inflation, and rising living costs.

HEALTHCARE: The global pandemic highlighted the importance of robust healthcare systems. While the Biden administration has made strides in combating COVID-19, concerns remain about the accessibility and affordability of healthcare for all Americans.

EDUCATION: Parents across the nation are concerned about the quality of education their children receive. Debates around school reopenings, remote learning, and educational disparities have heightened these concerns.

SOCIAL SECURITY: The Biden administration's focus on social justice issues, while crucial, has not entirely alleviated concerns about the broader social security net for the average American. Questions about retirement benefits, affordable housing, and social safety nets persist.

COMMON AMERICANS' PRIORITIES:

Amidst the complexities of global geopolitics, the average American's primary concerns revolve around their immediate well-being and that of their families.

considering the demands and stress associated with the presidency.

THE INDIAN PANORAMA'S PREDICTION:

The Indian Panorama, having closely studied the mood of Americans, boldly predicts Donald Trump as the President in 2024. This foresight is grounded in several factors:

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT: Trump has already demonstrated his ability to defy conventional political wisdom. His unexpected victory in 2016 serves as a precedent for overcoming the odds.

POPULIST APPEAL: The resonance of Trump's populist appeal, combined with a lack of a strong, unified opposition within the Republican Party, positions him favorably in the eyes of many voters.

PARTY LOYALTY: The Republicans' decision to rally behind Trump, even those who were once critical of him, signifies a unified front that could contribute to a formidable campaign.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION: Trump's public image, despite controversies, remains resilient among his supporters. His larger-than-life persona continues to captivate a significant portion of the

Former President Donald J. Trump dominates Super Tuesday



BY DAVE MAKKAR

"Former President Trump's resounding triumph on Super Tuesday marks a remarkable political comeback following a significant defeat in 2020. This situation draws parallels with the victory of India's late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1980, after facing a humiliating defeat in 1977. It is crucial to acknowledge, however, that although there may be some general similarities, every political scenario is distinctive, with varying contexts, issues, and political dynamics. Comparisons should be approached with caution, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding each leader's political trajectory and resurgence."

The Super Tuesday primaries represent the most substantial voting day in the United States, second only to the November general elections. Nearly one-third of all delegates for the presidential nominating conventions are up for grabs on Super Tuesday, surpassing any other single day in significance. Consequently, the outcomes on Super Tuesday serve as a robust predictor of the probable presidential nominee for each political party.

On Super Tuesday, March 3rd, 2024, former President Trump asserted his influence across America by securing victories in 14 out of the 15 states where Republican Presidential Primaries or caucuses took place. He garnered substantial support, polling over 50-60% in several states and even reaching over 70-80% in others. Ambassador Nikki Haley, Trump's sole opponent, managed to secure the lone liberal state of Vermont, preventing Trump from achieving a clean sweep on Super Tuesday. Notably, Trump's 11-point win in New Hampshire marked his narrowest victory since the commencement of the primary season in January 2024.

The Associated Press was the sole news reporting agency that declared Trump the winner in 14 states shortly after polls closed. Trump led Haley by a substantial margin of three or four to one in certain places.

REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CONTESTS IN 15 STATES WITH 854 DELEGATES AT STAKE

STATE-RUN PRIMARIES (13): Alabama (50 Delegates), Arkansas (40), California (169), Colorado (37), Maine (20), Massachusetts (40), Minnesota (39), North Carolina (74), Oklahoma (43), Tennessee (58), Texas (150), Vermont (17), Virginia (48).

PARTY-RUN PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE VOTES AND CAUCUSES (2): Alaska Caucuses (29 delegates), Utah Caucuses (40)

TRUMP, % OF VOTES POLLED IN THE WINNING STATES: Alabama (83.2%), Alaska (87.6), Arkansas (76.9), California (78.5), Colorado (63.3), Massachusetts (60), Maine (72.8), Minnesota (69.1), North Carolina (73.9), Oklahoma (81.8), Tennessee (77.3), Texas (77.9), Utah (56.4), Virginia (63.1).

Haley, % of votes polled in the winning states: Vermont (50.2)

IN THE RUN-UP TO SUPER TUESDAY, THE DELEGATE COUNTS FOR THE CANDIDATES AS FOLLOWS:

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| 1. Donald Trump | : 1,044 |
| 2. Nikki Haley | : 89 |
| 3. Ron DeSantis | : 9 |



Donald Trump at an election rally Screen shot / ABC News



India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at an election rally in India in 1980

4. Vivek Ramaswamy : 3

No other candidate managed to secure any delegates. To clinch the Republican nomination, a candidate requires 1,215 delegates. Given the absence of any opposition to former President Trump, it is reasonable to assume that he is the presumptive nominee for the upcoming Presidential Elections in November 2024 for the Republican Party.

If a candidate secures victories in 14 out of 15 states during the Super Tuesday Presidential Primaries, and in several of these states, attains an overwhelming majority, winning over 80% of the votes, it denotes robust and widespread support for that candidate among the voters. This performance suggests a strong appeal and resonance with a diverse range of voters across different states. The high percentage of wins in specific states indicates not only success but also a significant mandate from the electorate in those regions. Such outcomes often position the candidate as a frontrunner and establish a formidable foundation for their campaign as they head into the subsequent stages of the election, potentially ensuring their victory in the general election.

All the pollsters, analytical experts, and mainstream media pundits who had prematurely written obituaries for Presidential Candidate Trump were compelled to retract their statements after the

Super Tuesday results. None of these pundits attempted to compose an obituary for Ambassador Haley's candidacy, funded by Democrats, by drawing parallels to John McCain's 2012 campaign. Senator McCain sought the presidency based on his qualification of having spent five and a half years as a prisoner of war, a considerable portion of that time in solitary confinement in Vietnam.

Ambassador Haley's key argument was her relative youth compared to the Democratic and Republican frontrunners. She emphasized her two terms as governor of South Carolina and her role as the Ambassador to the UN in the Trump administration. However, throughout her campaign, she never articulated specific plans detailing how her presidency would differ from those of past presidents. Therefore, there is no reason to express sympathy for Haley's withdrawal from the race.

Former President Trump's resounding triumph on Super Tuesday marks a remarkable political comeback following a significant defeat in 2020. This situation draws parallels with the victory of India's late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1980, after facing a humiliating defeat in 1977. It is crucial to acknowledge, however, that although there may be some general similarities, every political scenario is distinctive, with varying contexts, issues, and political dynamics. Comparisons should be approached with caution, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding each leader's political trajectory and resurgence.

HOWEVER, I CAN OFFER SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS BASED ON HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

- Charismatic Leadership:** Both Donald Trump and Indira Gandhi are known for their charismatic leadership styles. They have the ability to connect with a significant portion of the population and rally support around them.
- Populist Appeal:** Both leaders had a populist appeal, speaking to the grievances and aspirations of a broad section of the population. They positioned themselves as champions of the common people and tapped into populist sentiments.
- Political Resilience:** Indira Gandhi faced a significant defeat in the 1977 elections but made a political comeback in 1980. If Trump were to make a political comeback, it would also demonstrate a level of political resilience, overcoming setbacks and regaining popular support.
- Political Strategy:** Successful comebacks often involve strategic political maneuvers. Both leaders might have employed astute political strategies to rebuild their image, connect with voters, and navigate the political landscape.
- Changing Political Context:** In both cases, the political context played a crucial role. Indira Gandhi's return in 1980 was influenced by changing dynamics in Indian politics. Similarly, any potential Trump's comeback would likely be influenced by the political landscape at the time.

Only time will reveal whether the remarkable momentum garnered by former President Trump in contrast to his rival, the incumbent President Biden, will prove sufficient to secure victory in the November 2024 election. The question lingers: will this momentum propel him to reclaim the presidency of the United States, the most powerful country on Earth, for another four years?

(Dave Makkar is a social activist and a political analyst. He can be reached at davemakkar@yahoo.com)



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THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS NY-NJ-CT-NE

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Indian American Forum organizes 13th Outstanding Women's Achievements Award Gala 2024

MARCH 3, 2024

GLEN COVE, NY (TIP): Celebrating the theme of 'Inspire Inclusion', with the aim of Inspiring others to understand and value women's inclusion to forge a better world, Indian American Forum honored several dignified and accomplished women of substance at their 13th Annual Women's Achievements Awards Gala this past weekend at the Metropolitan Caterers in Long Island.

Under the leadership of Chairperson Indu Jaiswal and Gala Chair Shammi Singh, known for their strong commitment and dedication to the community cause, along with the entire team of IAF, were the organizing force behind the GALA, celebrating the success of the outstanding achievements by these distinguished personalities in the presence of many accomplished guests and community leaders. The honorees were presented special citations from The Nassau County Hon. Bruce A. Blakeman's office, Certificates of Recognition from The Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Jennifer S Desena, and Town Clerk Hon. Ragini Srivastava's office, Town of Hempstead Hon. Donald X. Clavin's office, Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino and Office of The Nassau County's Comptroller Elaine Phillips office.

Several Officials including North Hempstead Town Supervisor Hon. Jennifer S. Desena, Town of Hempstead Deputy Supervisor Hon. Dorothy L. Goosby, Nassau County Comptroller Elaine Phillips, respectfully invited and welcomed by Dr. Bobby Kalotee, portrayed the women empowerment and success.

OUR DISTINGUISHED AWARDEES INCLUDED:

- o Dr. Bhavani Srinivasan -> MD DCH MPH practices Pediatrics, Public Health and Acupuncture in Long Island New York, Chairwomen's Affairs for AAPI QLI for many years conducts free public health educational programs in Nassau County on numerous health issues including an annual Mental Health Symposium and Annual Breast Cancer Awareness seminar. She holds several core community leadership positions not limited to: President Grant Medical College Alumni USA Inc., Regional Director Mid-Atlantic region AAPI, Chair Publications AAPI, Vice Chair Asian American Advisory Committee Nassau County and Advisory committee Hindu Temple Flushing NY.
- o Dr. Mala Sachdeva - Professor of Medicine at Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell and academic nephrologists, an educator, and part of the full-time faculty at the Division of Kidney Diseases and Hypertension in Great Neck, New York, North well Health System.

Deputy Supervisor Dorothy Goosy and Elaine Phillips enjoying Music and Dance



Diya Lighting Ceremony with IAF Board members and Past Honorees

Currently she has been elected as President Elect in 2024 and then will serve as President (2025-2026) for



Rhea Manjrekar, Rani Verma, Pinky Rangji, Dr Mamta Shaha, Dr Bhavani Srinivasan, Dorothy Goosby, Ms. Elaine Phillips, Neela Lockel Mukherjee, Samyukhtha Arun Kumar, Dr Mala Sachdeva, Indu Jaiswal, Beena Kothari, Dr Bobby Kumar Kalotee, Roopam Maini Vimal Goyal, Deepak Bansal, Wioletta, Aashmeeta Yogiraj, Chanbir Kaur Sethi

Women In Nephrology Organization, a national organization advocating and mentoring women and men in developing exciting careers in the field of renal disease.

- o Neela Mukherjee Lockel - President and Chief Executive Officer at EAC Network. She has served as the Chief Executive Officer of the American Red Cross on Long Island since 2016, where she oversaw Red Cross activities across Nassau County and Suffolk Counties, and sat on the Regional Leadership Team of Greater New York. She facilitated the Regional Board Diversity Committee, was a member of the Advanced Public Affairs Training Team and the American Red Cross LEAD, an internal leadership development program. She has deployed to Red Cross disaster responses for Hurricanes



Lifetime Achievement Award For Late Mrs. Sharan Premi

Matthew (2016) and Florence (2018) and the California Wildfires (2017), and sat as the Interim Regional CEO for the Maine Region, to lead the team through a merger into the Northern New England Region.

- o Dr. Mamta Shaha - President of North Shore Rotary Club. She is a Board-Certified Pediatrician and an Assistant Professor of pediatrics at New York University. She is also a Board-certified Ophthalmologist from Bombay University. She is actively involved with JAINA (Federation of Jain Association in North America) and has served as JAINA Northeast Vice president for two years and served as a director of the Jain Center of America NY for 4 years. She currently chairs two committees in JAINA: As a Chairperson of the JAINA Media Committee, she produced and directed the weekly Jain TV show "Mangalam" for 10 years.
- o Samyukhtha Arun Kumar - Youth leader and inspiring next generation athlete, Golfer
- o Late Mrs. Sharan Premi - Lifetime Achievement Award

Mr. and Mrs. Premi took much pride in their incomparable ability to help the local community. They helped with anyone needing assistance. Mrs. Premi never had an issue with welcoming anyone into her home, and she would single-handedly cook meals for large groups of people at the drop of a hat. Many a times they housed people who had nowhere to go. Mrs. Premi helped new immigrants with Housing, providing shelter and guiding them in his new environment for several years. Their House was known as Mini Punjab.

Starting with the beautiful décor and warm welcome with sumptuous appetizers, the evening started with American and Indian National Anthem followed by a rocking welcome by hosts Roopam Maini and Chanbir Kaur. Sunita Sadhnani rocked audience with her melodious singing. DJ Parminder rocked the dance floor.

Several distinguished political and community leaders, IAF Board of Trustees, Members, Volunteers, supporters and audience graced the occasion applauding the distinguished accomplishments of women honorees. Several Board of Trustees and community leader in presence included Dr Urmillesh Arya, Dr Bhupendra Patel, Beena Kothari, Flora Parekh - President of Gift of Life USA, Dr. Pallavi Manvar Singh, Dr. Sunil Mehra (AAPI), Pradip Tandon (President IALI), Dr. Jagdish Gupta President (AIA), Vijay Goswamy, Anju Sharma, Dr. Purnaprasad, Dr. Prachi Dua and many other organization leaders. Aashmeeta Yogiraj emceed the event with hosts Indu Jaiswal, Roopam Maini and Chanbir Kaur and concluded with a Thank you note from Beena Kothari, Viola and Flora Parekh. Entire IAF team with several volunteers were instrumental in making the event a grand success. It was indeed a very successful evening, showcasing and honoring outstanding women achievers, who are successful in business, cultural, professional, education, and medical. Community and social services.

(Press release by Indu Jaiswal)

Acclaimed professor of South Asian Literature Dr Kamal Verma passes away

MARCH 8, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Dr Kamal D Verma, an acclaimed scholar of South Asian literature, died of natural causes this week here in the American capital. He would have turned 92 in April.

Professor Verma taught for 42 years at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ) in Pennsylvania. After retirement, he continued to serve as Professor Emeritus and an advisor to the University President, focusing on recruiting more diverse faculty and students from South Asia.

He was also one of the founding members of the South Asian Review and the South Asian Literary Association - two nationally acclaimed scholarly efforts aimed to promote Indian and other South Asian writers and ideas.

Dr Jem Spectar, President of UPJ, called Dr Verma "a brilliant scholar, an exceptional teacher and guide, a highly respected colleague, and a dear friend".

"His students speak of a great intellect: a professor who deepened their critical thinking, analytical, and writing skills, someone who deepened their understanding of our world, and someone whose classes prepared them for lifelong success," Spectar said.

Dr Verma was born in 1932 in Punjab, India. He was the eldest child in a large family, and the first member of his extended family to attend college.

He completed his BA from DAV College, Jalandhar, in 1951, followed by a

BA in teaching from Agra University in 1953 and an MA in English from Panjab University in 1958.

In India, he became the principal of a teacher's college in Punjab where he served until 1963, when he departed for the United States on a Ford Foundation Fellowship to obtain his Specialist in Education degree at the University of Northern Iowa. He then pursued further professional studies in literature, leading to his PhD from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

Dr Verma, his wife Savitri, also a teacher and head of a women's college in India, and their five children settled in Johnstown, Pennsylvania in 1971. They were the first Indian-American family to move to the area.

Dr Verma's children pursued varied careers in business, medicine and law. His son Richard would go on to serve as the US Ambassador to India for President Obama, and he currently serves as the Deputy Secretary of State, the highest-ranking Indian American in the State Department ever. Richard Verma was the first ever Indian-American to be US Ambassador to India.

Verma was in New Delhi last month where he gave a talk at the Observer Research Foundation, and noted how his father, like millions of other Indian Americans, started over from next to nothing, rebuilt in their new country, but maintained and even strengthened ties with India.

"My father tells a great immigrant story of showing up in the United States with USD 14 and a bus ticket. He left so much behind and he took a big risk. He was brave. And he never let us forget our roots. What an amazing role model we had," remarked Ambassador Verma.

"These are the stories and journeys that bind our two countries together." Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a letter sent to Ambassador Verma this past week, wrote that Professor Kamal Verma "was a true embodiment of the grit and determination demonstrated by every Indian immigrant."

He worked hard to give a better life to his family in a foreign country, and at the same time continued to remain true to his Indian roots...and will always be remembered in his homeland."

Dr Verma's writings were widely admired and acclaimed, especially his three published books. His second book, *The Indian Imagination*, focused on several of the leading writers of the Indian colonial and post-colonial periods of Indian history.

His last book, *Understanding Mulk Raj Anand*, focused on noted Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand and included a series of letters between Dr Verma and Anand over 15 years, focusing again on the ideas that inspired the colonial struggle for independence.

He released the book in the US and India in 2017 with significant critical success. He even presented the book to Prime Minister Modi in 2018.



Dr. Kamal Verma

During his career, Dr Verma would end up teaching thousands of students in India, Canada and the United States, and he published dozens of articles, in addition to the three books.

Professor Nalini Iyer of Seattle University and the editor of the *South Asian Review* said: "Dr Verma was a towering figure who had an impact on so many. He paved the way for South Asian scholars and literature in the United States and cared for his family and friends at every turn. He also trained and inspired hundreds of faculty members across the globe in the field of South Asian literature and philosophy. This is a gift for which he will be long remembered."

India-US relationship now can be as ambitious as we choose to be: Deputy Amb Ranganathan

MARCH 5, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The relationship between the world's two largest democracies, which have made significant progress in the last 20 years, now can be as ambitious as "we choose to be," a top Indian diplomat has said.

"When I look at the broader relationship, the India US strategic partnership, I think we have now reached a stage where we can say that the partnership has come into its own. We have achieved a lot over the past 70 years. But what we have achieved over the past 20 years has been at a different level altogether. And I would say that now we are at a stage where we can be as ambitious as we choose to be," said India's Deputy Ambassador to the US, Sripriya Ranganathan.

The top Indian diplomat was speaking at the Stanford India Dialogue, the Leaders of Tomorrow Conference, organized by Stanford India Policy and Economics Club (SIPEC), in partnership with the Motwani Jadeja Foundation.

"We can decide to set our goals, set our sights on targets that were unimaginable a few years ago, and we can. Not only can

we be ambitious, but we can also be confident that we can make these things work, we can bring to implementation ideas that would've seemed outlandish even 20 years ago," Ranganathan said at the conference.

Stanford Professor at its School of Medicine Dr Anurag Mairal, who has been instrumental in the conference, said this is the first India conference on the west coast of this size. The US-India partnership is going to be the most defining partnership of its kind for the next three decades, he said.

Citing the example of India-US relationship in the field of space and the area of emerging and critical technologies, Ranganathan said scientists and policy from both the countries are actively engaged because "we see these as being the frontiers of the future and what will allow us to gain the leadership role in the shape of the global economy" in the next few decades.

"We have reached the stage where we have been able to say to each other let's work together so that we are able to shape this world together, so that we are able to discover where the areas of

overlap are, where are the areas of complementarity so that together we are able to make a difference. I think if we look back after about 10 years, we will find that there are at least 10 to 15 interesting, important and profound projects that India and the US have been able to work on and concretize so that we are able to make this fantastic platform of our collaboration," Ranganathan said.

The top Indian diplomat urged the students, in particular those from India and of Indian origin, of Stanford to stay connected with India. "I would urge you to maintain your connections with India and bring some of these learnings also back to India so that we are able to also benefit from the knowledge that you're picking up over here," she said.

"The second is a bridge of collaboration. If you can join hands both on campus and beyond with your friends, with your peers in the US, professors in the US, and be able to pursue excellence in partnership with them, I think that is an area of exploration that we feel would yield us tremendous dividends going forward," she said.

"The third bridge is the bridge of



When I look at the broader relationship, the India US strategic partnership, I think we have now reached a stage where we can say that the partnership has come into its own", said Ranganathan.

culture. If you can in your conversations, in your interactions, share the cultural perspectives, share your stories, break down the stereotypes and spark off that interest in India.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

NIA takes over cases related to Maoist violence

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the probe into about half a dozen Maoist violence cases, including the January ambush on a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur and the killing of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Ratan Dubey in the state's Narayanpur in November last year, people familiar with the matter said.

The agency will also look into the role of supporters of Madvi Hidma, the commander of Battalion-I of People's Liberation Guerilla Army of Maoists, suspected to be behind a recent spate of attacks in the region.

"A larger conspiracy by Maoists to regain the lost ground by targeting security personnel, politicians, and civilians is being investigated. We have taken up eight cases linked to Maoists in the last few weeks," said an official, who did not want to be named.

On January 16, Maoists attacked the CRPF camp in Bijapur and claimed that three security personnel were killed in a gunbattle that followed. The security forces denied the claim. Ratan Dubey, the vice president of BJP's Narayanpur unit, was hacked to death with a sharp-edged weapon in Narayanpur in November 2023 while he was campaigning.

An Improvised Explosive Device blast in Chhattisgarh's Kanker during Chhattisgarh assembly elections last year is among other cases the NIA has taken up. Individuals suspected to be working for Maoists have been arrested in Chhattisgarh over the last few months.

Source: HT

IndiaAI Mission gets Cabinet nod, Rs 10,372 crore allocated

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Cabinet on March 7 approved the national IndiaAI mission with a budget outlay of Rs 10,371.92 crore in a major push for the country to become an artificial intelligence hub by developing large language models, building AI infrastructure and upskilling its workforce.

The IndiaAI Mission aims to establish the country as a leader in AI through initiatives like developing computing infrastructure involving over 10,000 GPUs (graphics processing units) in partnership with the private sector, setting up an AI datasets platform to give startups and researchers access to non-personal data and other measures to foster innovation.

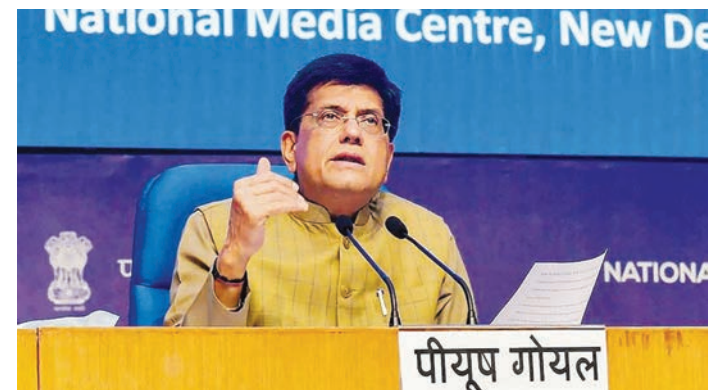
"It will act as a one-stop solution for resources critical for AI innovation," the Union ministry of electronics and information technology (Meity) said in a statement following a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The Prime Minister has democratised technology. With the AI mission, we will now make computer power available to innovators, start-ups, students, and educational institutions," Ashwini Vaishnav, the Union minister for IT said.

"AI is going to be the kinetic enabler for India's digital economy. Prime Minister Modi ji has always said that India is going to fully exploit the power of AI for the benefit of its citizens and for the expansion of its economy," said the minister of state for Meity, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who also holds the portfolio for skill development and entrepreneurship.

To build up the compute capacity in the country, this mission will also design an AI marketplace that will offer AI as a service and pre-trained models to AI innovators.

The AI mission will establish an IndiaAI Innovation Centre to develop and deploy indigenous Large



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal briefs the media on Cabinet decisions at National Media Centre in Delhi on March 7. PTI

Multimodal Models (LMMs) and domain-specific foundational models in critical sectors.

The move comes as AI technologies such as ChatGPT spark a global frenzy and countries race to keep pace by regulating their development and use.

India's AI market is projected to reach \$7.8 billion by 2025, according to one estimate cited by the IndiaAI website. The plans align with recommendations by a government working group last year, which suggested monetising non-personal data through a marketplace to drive AI development while preserving privacy, mooted a marketplace called the India Dataset Platform (IDP).

Seven components are largely what an expert group of seven working groups had recommended in their report that was released by Chandrasekhar in October 13.

The mission will also focus on increasing the number of AI courses at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral levels through IndiaAI FutureSkills. Data and AI Labs will also be set up in tier 2 and tier 3 cities to teach foundation level courses, the government announced.

CBI busts network sending Indians to Ukraine war zone

BEIJING (TIP)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday, March 7, said it has busted major human trafficking networks operating across India that targeted young people with promises of lucrative jobs abroad, including in Russia and Ukraine, but sent them off to people who then forced them to fight on the front lines of the war between those countries.

The agency conducted searches at 13 locations in Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram, Mumbai, Ambala, Chandigarh, Madurai and Chennai. It identified at least 35 instances of victims sent abroad by the alleged traffickers.

"These traffickers have been operating as an organised network and were luring Indian nationals through social media channels like YouTube etc, and also through their local contacts or agents for highly paid jobs in Russia," a CBI spokesperson said. "Thereafter, the trafficked Indian nationals were trained in combat roles and deployed at front bases in the Russia-Ukraine war zone against their wishes, thus putting their lives in grave danger."

Some victims were grievously injured in the war zone, the spokesperson said.

At least two Indian nationals are known to have been killed while serving with the Russian army. The Indian embassy in Moscow confirmed the death of Indian national Mohammed Asfan in a post on X on March 6.



A screengrab of a video where seven Indians are seen requesting the MEA to bring them back. (Photo | 'X')

The 30-year-old from Hyderabad travelled to Russia late last year and reports have said he was seriously injured along with two other Indians in hostilities in a conflict zone last month.

Earlier, 23-year-old Hemal Ashwinbhai Mangukiya, a resident of Surat in Gujarat, was killed in a Ukrainian air strike while serving as a "security helper" with the Russian Army at Donetsk, a part of Ukraine occupied by Russia. Mangukiya travelled to Russia last December.

CBI registered a case on Wednesday against private visa consultancy firms, agents and others engaged in trafficking Indians to Russia under the guise of employment, the spokesperson said. "So far around 35

instances of victims sent abroad have been established. The identity of more trafficking victims are also being established. Investigation is continuing."

Four accused consultancies or agents were named: 24x7 RAS Overseas Foundation and its director Suyash Mukut; OSD Bros Travels and Visa Services Pvt Ltd. and its director Rakesh Pandey; Adventure Visa Services Pvt Ltd and its director Manjeet Singh; and Baba Vlogs Overseas Recruitment Solutions Pvt Ltd. and its director Faisal Abdul Mutalib Khan, also known as Baba.

Cash amounting to over ₹50 lakh, incriminating documents, electronics and CCTV footage were recovered during Thursday's raids, the spokesperson said.

The agency appealed to the public not to fall for false job promises from dubious recruitment agencies and agents.

Indian authorities have stepped up efforts to bring back all Indians serving with the Russian military, though the actual number remains unclear, with some reports suggesting it could be around 100.

Last month, India's external affairs ministry confirmed that 20 Indian nationals serving with the Russian military had approached the Indian mission in Moscow seeking help with their discharge, and several were discharged after Indian authorities took up their cases in Moscow and New Delhi.



PM Modi announces LPG cylinder price cut by Rs 100 on Women's Day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a reduction of Rs 100 in cooking gas cylinder prices on Friday on the occasion of International Women's Day.

This will significantly ease the financial burden on millions of households across the country, especially benefiting "Nari Shakti" (women power), he said in a post on X.

"By making cooking gas more affordable, we also aim to support the well-being of families and ensure a healthier environment. This is in line with our commitment to empowering women and ensuring 'Ease of Living' for them," he said.

In a related decision, the government on Thursday announced the extension of Rs 300 per LPG cylinder subsidy to poor women under the Ujjwala Yojana for the next fiscal starting April 1.

The government in October last year hiked the subsidy from Rs 200 per 14.2-kg cylinders for up to 12 refills per year to Rs 300 per bottle. The Rs 300 per cylinder subsidy was for the current fiscal, which ends on March 31.

Modi visits Srinagar, first since Kashmir autonomy removed in 2019

SRINAGAR (TIP)

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made his first official visit to the main city of Indian-administrated Kashmir since New Delhi scrapped the disputed region's semi-autonomy in 2019.

Addressing a crowd in a football stadium in Srinagar, Modi on March 7 announced development projects and said previous governments had misled people over the region's special status.

Modi's government stripped the Muslim-majority territory of its special constitutional status, splitting the former state into two territories – Ladakh, and Jammu and Kashmir – directly ruled from New Delhi. Inherited protections on land and jobs given to the Indigenous residents were also removed.

The move, widely welcomed across India, angered many in the densely militarised territory. Rebels in the Himalayan region have waged a rebellion since 1989, seeking independence or a merger with Pakistan, which controls a smaller part of the Kashmir region and, like India, claims it in full.

"The success story of Jammu and Kashmir will be the centre of attraction for the world," he said, adding the region has prospered since the 2019 move. "This new Jammu-Kashmir has the courage to overcome any challenge," he said. "The



country is seeing these smiling faces of yours ... [and] feeling relieved to see you all happy."

Although Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is not a key player in Kashmir, the visit is seen as a signal to its voters that the party has fulfilled a core promise to end Kashmir's special status.

The event was also a part of Modi's campaign ahead of national election scheduled in April and May, the first since the region lost its autonomy. The last election for the region's legislative assembly was held in 2014, but the government was dismissed in 2018.

Modi did not mention plans to hold elections in the region or to restore its statehood, both demanded by Indian-administered Kashmir's pro-India political parties. His close aide and federal Home Minister Amit Shah has

repeatedly promised that the region would be regain statehood after elections.

In December, India's Supreme Court upheld the 2019 decision and asked the government to conduct state polls by September.

Modi's government claims New Delhi's direct rule of Kashmir brought about a new era of "peace and development" in the region, but critics and many residents say it heralded a drastic curtailment of civil liberties and press freedom.

For security, thousands of armed police and paramilitary forces in flak jackets were deployed, and new checkpoints were set up across Srinagar. The forces laid razor wire as they patrolled all the roads leading to the football stadium and randomly frisked residents and searched vehicles.

Navy commandos in motorboats patrolled the Jhelum river that snakes through the city. Most schools in the city are shut for the day, and the authorities have called on government employees to attend the rally.

Omar Abdullah, a former chief minister of Indian-administered Kashmir, accused the government of organising buses to bring in crowds to attend the rally, alleging that "almost none" would be attending willingly.

Cabinet panel clears new indigenous stealth fighter project in defence push

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved a highly anticipated project for the design and prototype development of an indigenous fifth-generation stealth fighter, or the advanced medium combat aircraft (AMCA), at a cost of around Rs 15,000 crore, officials aware of the matter said on March 7.

It is perhaps the most significant military project to be cleared by the government before India's general elections due in April-May.

The project will involve the design and development of five twin-engine AMCA prototypes, with the stealth fighter likely to go into production only after a decade, the officials said, asking not to be named.

The Indian Air Force's (IAF) modernisation map envisages the deployment of around 120 stealth fighters (six squadrons) 2035 onwards, with the advanced planes forming an important element of future air combat.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Aeronautical Development Agency and state-run plane maker



Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will be involved in the AMCA project, which will be developed in two phases, as previously reported by HT. The first two squadrons will consist of the Mk-1 version of AMCA powered by the American F-414 engines, while the remaining four squadrons will have the more advanced Mk-2 version equipped with an even more powerful engine to be built in India with foreign collaboration.

Source: HT

Rahul Gandhi to contest from Wayanad again

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi will again contest from Kerala's Wayanad, sources said. Rahul Gandhi's name was cleared in the first meeting of Congress party's Central Election Committee (CEC) held at party headquarters in national capital on March 7 evening, they said.

Rahul Gandhi, also a member of CEC, joined the meeting virtually from Gujarat. Rahul had won Wayanad in 2019 and by a record margin. He had, however, lost Amethi, the erstwhile Congress bastion in Uttar Pradesh, to BJP leader Smriti Irani.

The Communist Party of India (CPI), the second-largest coalition partner in Kerala's ruling Left Democratic Front, has fielded senior party leader Annie Raja from the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency.

Since candidates from Amethi were not discussed, hence it remains unclear whether or not Rahul will contest from Amethi again or Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will be fielded or not from Rae Bareilly - both seats in UP.



India in history this Week

MARCH 8 TO MARCH 14

08 MARCH

1909 International Women's Day is started to celebrate.

1948 Air India International was established.

1535 Bahadur Shah found Fateh at Chittor Fort.



1673 Chhatrapati Shivaji burst upon the fort of Panhala.

1930 Mahatma Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement.

1986 BJP leader Advani was elected party president.

1998 Indian Airlines flew with all women crew members.

1833 Journalist Vishwanath Narayan was born.

09 MARCH



1951 Famous tabla player Zakir Hussain is born.

2007 Indian doctors in Britain get legal success on discriminatory migrant rules.

1999 Indian-based, British-based industrialist Swaraj Paul was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Central Birmingham in 1999.

10 MARCH

1922 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested in 1922 on charges of treason.

1969 The CISF Act was passed in Parliament.

1985 India won the Benson and Hedges Cricket World Cup in 1985.



2010 The Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament.

1932 Born in 1932 of Udipi Ramchandra Rao, a space scientist and former president of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization).

1945 Famous Congress leader Madhavrao Scindia was born on this day in 1945.

11 MARCH

1399 Taimur Lung crossed the Indus River in 1399, after committing a rampage in North India including Delhi.

1999 Infosys Company is the first Indian company to appear on the Nasdaq (NASDAQ) International Stock Exchange list in 1999.

2007 Sunita completed the 2,012 km journey from Kolkata to Wagah in 2007 by driving in reverse gear.

12 MARCH



1913 Yashwantrao Chavan, the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra and the fifth Deputy Prime Minister of the country was born after the bifurcation of Bombay State in 1913.

1922 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested by the British for the movement against buying goods made from Europe and working with the machines of British rule.

1930 Mahatma Gandhi started the Dandi March from Sabarmati Ashram. The aim was to 'break the salt law' made by the British.

1993 There were 13 bomb blasts in Mumbai in which 257 people were killed and 800 people were injured.



1872 Sher Ali, the assassin of Lord Mayo, the then Viceroy of India, was hanged in 1872.

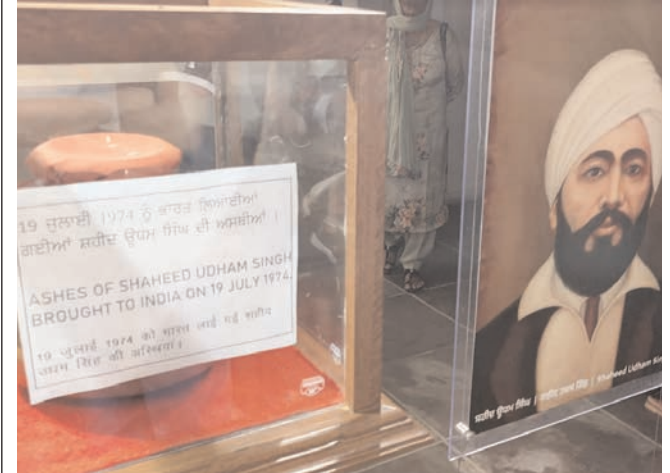
1954 The Government of India inaugurated the Sahitya Academy in 1954.

1958 In 1958, British Empire Day was named 'Commonwealth Day'.

1993 The serial bomb blasts in Mumbai in 1993

killed 300 people and injured hundreds more.

13 MARCH



1940 Indian revolutionary Udham Singh opened fire on General Dyer in London to avenge the Jallianwala Bagh from the British.

1997 Sister Nirmala was chosen as the leader in 1997 by Mother Teresa at the Indian Missionaries of Charity.

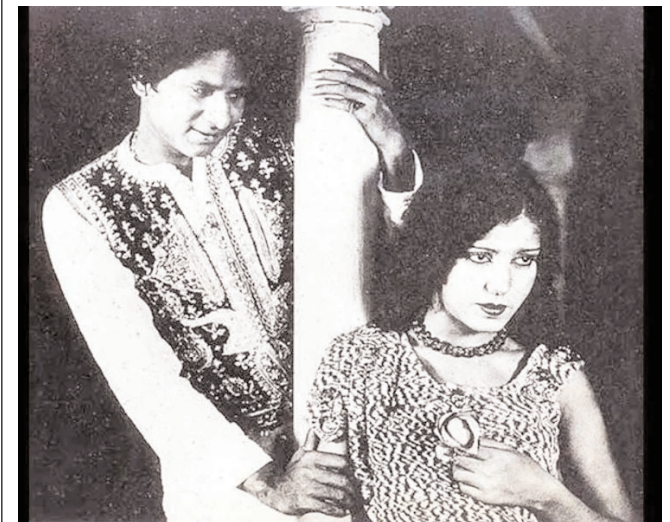
2009 The SAARC Literature Festival began in 2009 in Agra.



1971 Famous Hindi poet Atma Ranjan was born in 1971.

14 MARCH

1931 India's first speaking film 'Alam Ara' was screened.



1998 Sonia Gandhi became the first Congress president in 1998.

1983 OPEC, a group of oil producing countries, cut oil prices in 1983 for the first time in 23 years.

ASA MAI HINDU TEMPLE

invites you & your family to a

MAHASHIVRATRI

Friday March 8

HAVAN

4:30pm to 6pm

Shiv Abhishek & Pooja

1st Pooja 6:30pm

2nd Pooja 10:30pm

3rd Pooja 12:30am

4th Pooja 3am

Followed by Jalari Sthapna

Pooja thali can be purchase from Mandir

MAHASHIVRATRI VRAT

START March 1

Shiv Arti March 1 TO 7 7:30pm

Upcoming Events

Sunday March 24 - Satya Narayan Katha at 6pm

followed by Holika Dahan & Aarti

Monday March 25 Holi

Holi Celebration - Sunday March 31 12-2pm

MARCH 8, 2024 KAKAD AARTI 8:30AM

FOLLOWED BY SAI ABHISHEKHAM



OSCAR 2024 NOMINEE FROM INDIA GETS NOTICED

BY MABEL PAIS

TO KILL A TIGER

BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE
nominee for the 2024 OSCARS

REOPENS: March 8 at BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music), more Cities to follow

"How a father's love for his daughter challenged India's 'rape culture'" -

The Guardian - Saeed Kamali Dehghan

"A powerful portrait of a family's strength. A masterfully observant film, in which one family's fight for justice becomes a larger parable about a pressing human rights issue." - Pat Mullen, POV Magazine

Dir/Co-Prod/Writ: Nisha Pahuja; Co-Pros: Cornelia Principe & David Oppenheim; 2022; Documentary; Hindi with Eng/subs; 2h 5m

EXEC.PROD: Mindy Kaling, Dev Patel, Rupri Kaur alongside AC Films Inc's Andy Cohen, NFB's Anita Lee, Atul Gawande, Andrew Dragoumis, Anita Bhatia, ShivHans Pictures' Shivani Rawat, Deepa Mehta, Minor Realm's Samarth Sahni & Priya Doraswamy.



Kiran

Credit / shelterpr.com

In a small village in Jharkhand, India, 2017, a farmer becomes embroiled in conflict when he and his wife report to the police a horrific crime - after a family wedding, three village men dragged their 13-year-old daughter into the woods and raped her. According to government data, a woman is raped every 16 minutes in India, and conviction

rates are less than 30 percent. Village leaders launch a campaign not for justice, but for the father to drop charges and marry his daughter off to one of her arrested rapists-an "honorable" solution to preserve the community's dignity. Watch the trailer - youtu.be/Tgu2k1e8sUs

With intimate access to both father and

daughter through the years long ordeal (emotional, legal, financial), along with candid interviews with neighbors, the village ward, and NGO activists, Pahuja reveals a riveting story of one family's inspiring, courageous battle, and the survival instincts of a society entrenched in toxic patriarchy.

"The story is heart-wrenching but triumphant, and stays with you long after you've seen it. TO KILL A TIGER shows you not only the power of a father's love but the strength of a young woman who faced the unimaginable, and chose to fight," Mindy Kaling said in a statement.

Dev Patel called TO KILL A TIGER a "David and Goliath story to the highest extent," as well as "one of the most important in modern Indian history. In a culture where submission is commonplace, to challenge a centuries old system that has silenced the voices of victims is revolutionary. Despite threats against the family and being ostracized in their community, they remained unflinching in their resolve."

INDIAN FILMMAKER'S 1988 WORK RESTORED

BY MABEL PAIS

ONE HAND DON'T CLAP

"Kavery Dutta Kaul's vivid and engaging documentary moves and shakes with inimitable music." -

Luis Francia, The Village Voice

"Seductively rhythmic and poetic...not just a documentary about music and musicians, but an examination of cultures co-existing as if in parallel universes." - John Anderson, New York Newsday

Opens March 8 in New York City, April 8 in several theaters in Los Angeles

Dir: Kavery Dutta Kaul; USA; English; Color; 1h 32m

ONE HAND DON'T CLAP captures the vibrant story of calypso and the emergence of soca, through the eyes of two legendary artists, Lord Kitchener, the Grandmaster of the music and Calypso Rose, the first woman to break through in a traditionally male arena.

Forging onscreen the connections between American communities and where families come from, the documentary leads audiences from New York recording studios to the awesome magic of Carnival in Trinidad & Tobago. The film features artists across the 20th century whose songs reflect regional and global themes that continue to resonate. The many generations in ONE HAND DON'T CLAP trace the evolution of a musical style whose infectious rhythms and exhilarating irreverence have found



Calypso Rose

Credit / kinolorber.com

their way to ever-broadening audiences worldwide.

ONE HAND DON'T CLAP is an important and unique piece of work that does just that. Its vivid colors and imagery bring creative expression of this appealing but perhaps unfamiliar music to a global audience. Kavery's film plays a pioneering role in the recognition bestowed upon this art form in more recent times. The energy of calypso music combined with the film's character-driven, informative and entertaining story telling style reaches across borders.

Capturing the audacity and authenticity of its subjects, ONE HAND DON'T CLAP represents momentous perspectives on the music and politics of Caribbean nations and the West Indian-American community. This powerful musical force from the Caribbean combines witty English lyrics with an explosive beat that has burst out in Buster Poindexter's 'Hot, Hot, Hot' and Lionel Richie's 'All Night Long'. ONE HAND DON'T CLAP also reflects the legacy of a vast West Indian-American population, the surprising entrepreneurial growth of their music

industry in the US and the iron going ties to the traditions that flourish in the islands they come from. It lends voice to what it means to be American. Awarding the film four stars as "seductively rhythmic and poetic", John Anderson wrote in New York Newsday, "You might ask yourself halfway through the film why calypso music hasn't become a bigger part of the American musical culture. When it's over, you might ask yourself how your concept of the American musical culture could have been so narrow?"

DIRECTOR KAVERY KAUL

Director/producer Kavery Kaul makes documentaries that take audiences to places they may not know, to meet people who introduce them to a new experience, a fresh world view.

"Carnival season - that period from the New Year till Ash Wednesday - makes Trinidad one of the greatest film sets in the world. It also poses immense logistical difficulties from a production standpoint", Kavery recalls. "The challenge was to keep all that out of the film and put the focus on Kitchener, Rose, the other performers, and the story of their music."

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

SOCIALLY RELEVANT™ FILM FEST NY CELEBRATES WOMEN FILMMAKERS

BY MABEL PAIS

The 11th Edition of the SR Socially Relevant™ Film Festival, NY (ratedsrfilms.org) opens March 13 at the Maysles Documentary Center, then on March 14 at MRHS, and continues March 15-17 at Cinema Village, and finally March 18 at the National Arts Club for the Awards Ceremony.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

On the occasion of International Women's History Month, SRFF celebrates the Women Filmmakers of 2024 with a dedicated program of films, a webinar, and a screening followed by a panel discussion at NGO CSW's 68th UN Forum.

The in-person events are preceded by two webinars respectively on March 8, with all the women

(ratedsrfilms.org/2024program). The main themes are 100 Years of Armenian Cinema, Black History Month, BIPOC films, Aging and Disability, Women, LGBTQI+, and more. A special in-person program was presented on February 26, on the occasion of Black History Month at MRHS, one of the festival venues (ratedsrfilms.org/2024scheduleandvenues).

Most of the line-up films stream online starting March 19. The Festival's YouTube Channel (youtube.com/channel/UCTSz55oZhoPPlhJos82RoSw) streams 'Meet the Filmmakers' live interviews, and the trailers of the selected films can be viewed there.

AWARDS

The SRFF 2024 competition award categories are The Vanya Exerjian - Empowering Women and Girls Award,

Tickets are available at discount prices at filmfreeway.com/SRFF24/tickets.

Full price tickets are also available.

Press and Media are invited.

The SR Socially Relevant™ Film Festival, NY

Website - ratedsrfilms.org

Email - ratedsrfilms@gmail.com

SRFF was founded by Actress/ Filmmaker Nora Armani in 2013 as a response to the proliferation of violence and violent forms of storytelling in media and entertainment. Following a family tragedy that cost the lives of two of her dearest and nearest, namely her cousin Vanya, and uncle Jack Exerjian, Armani



SRFF Poster

Credit / Socially Relevant™ Film Festival, NY

filmmakers of SRFF 2024 (26 in total representing 50% of the Official Selection), and on March 11, when SRFF participates with two films made by women and about women, followed by a panel discussion, as a partner organization in NGO CSW's (the Committee on the Status of Women) 68th annual UN Forum. The two films are Lego Oma, by Karina Sturm (Germany), and Women on the Move, by Alice Lemkes (UK). Details and registration links may be found on the SRFF website - ratedsrfilms.org/2024scheduleandvenues

SOCIAL ISSUES

SR Socially Relevant™ Film Festival, NY covers a broad range of social issues. Totalling (ratedsrfilms.org) 53 films, the Official Selection, including the short films lineup, can be found on the festival's website under the 2024 Program -

Best Narrative Feature, Best Documentary Feature, Best Narrative Short, Best Documentary Short, Best Actor, Best Actress and the Vision Award by festival partner IndiePix. The Finalist Screenplay Awards are sponsored by InkTip and NetworkISA.

"Eleven years have gone by quickly. We're proud to have had the opportunity to present 700 socially relevant films from 40 countries over the past 10 years. The work of talented and dedicated filmmakers has offered us the bonus of learning about the human condition, filmmaking, and ways of engaging an audience, as the first steps towards raising awareness of social issues." Festival Founding Artistic Director Nora Armani said.

TICKETS

For a limited time only, Early Bird Tickets, Trio

founded the festival to commemorate them in a meaningful way.

SRFF believes in the power of the film medium in raising awareness of social issues and promoting positive social change. This new edition deals with topics such as Climate Change, Family and Adoption, LGBTQ Rights, Home and Health, Disability, Incarceration and Freedom, New York City, Racism, and BIPOC cultures.

The Mission of the SR Film Festival is to shine the spotlight on filmmakers who tell compelling, socially relevant, human-interest stories across a broad range of social issues without resorting to gratuitous violence and violent forms of storytelling.

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



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Janhvi Kapoor to star alongside Ram Charan in tentatively titled RC 16

On Janhvi Kapoor's 27th birthday on Wednesday, it was announced that the actress will be featuring alongside star Ram Charan in the tentatively titled pan-India film RC 16. Production company Mythri Movie Makers welcomed the actress on board on X and wished her a happy birthday.

"Welcoming the celestial beauty on board for #RC16. Happy Birthday to the mesmerising [#JanhviKapoor](#) [#RamCharanRevolts](#) Global Star [@AlwaysRamCharan](#) [@BuchiBabuSana](#) [@arrahman](#) [@RathnaveluDop](#) [@artkolla](#) [@vridhcinemas](#) [@SukumarWritings](#)." The entertainer, which is directed by Buchi Babu Sana, who made his debut with Uppena, is presented by Mythri Movie Makers and produced under the banner of Vridhhi Cinemas and Sukumar Writings. The music is given by AR Rahman. *Source: IANS*

Richa Chadha talks about women working behind the scenes in Bollywood

Actor-producer Richa Chadha says she wants to work towards empowering women in traditionally male-dominated areas of the film industry, such as spot and lighting departments.

The 37-year-old actor, known for films like Gangs of Wasseypur, Fukrey franchise, said for her debut home production, Girls Will be Girls, they trained and hired women in the lighting department.

Directed by Shuchi Talati, the film follows the journey of Mira, a 16-year-old girl whose rebellious awakening is intertwined with her mother's unfulfilled coming-of-age experiences.

"Intentionality matters, and we have to try and do something. I turned producer with Girls Will Be Girls. The director is a woman. There was a sexuality thing in the film, so she wanted an all-female team.

"In the lighting department, there are no women in India. We thought of doing a training programme for it. A company called Light and Light sent a trainer. They spent time with girls teaching (them) storytelling through lightning, using technology, etc. We hired one of them on our set," Chadha said during a panel discussion at FICCI Frames on Tuesday evening.

The actor said while there has been "progress" in the representation of women in front of and behind-the-camera, a lot of work still needs to be done.

Condemning the recent incident of a Spanish woman's gang-rape in Jharkhand's Dumka district, Chadha said such "horrible" instances create a fear of "unsafe" atmosphere for women.

"We have made some progress. Every year it is better than last year. But then, it's taking two steps forward and one step back. When something horrible happens in society, whether it's in Manipur, Jharkhand, it sets people (back in time) because then parents are like, 'It's unsafe for you to study and work'. We are not in a decision-making position in society," she said.



Chadha and Ekta Kapoor were part of a panel discussion at FICCI Frames, called Trailblazers in entertainment: Celebrating Women's Contribution in Films and Shows'.

Kapoor said it is easier to make "misogynistic" films than a movie that celebrates womanhood.

"It has become far tougher since Covid-19 because it is easier to make a slightly misogynistic film, or a more machismo kind of film than celebrating womanhood or feminism. The word feminism is a taboo in movies. It is so scary as, we as women producers, want to support stories, and we will be at it," the producer said. *Source: PTI*

Alia Bhatt to headline Spy Universe film

The speculations about actor Alia Bhatt joining the YRF Spy Universe have finally come to an end as Yash Raj Films' CEO Akshaye Widhani confirmed this exciting news. Alia is all set to team up with Sharvari Wagh in the yet-to-be-titled film. Reportedly, they will play super-agents in the action entertainer.

Sharing the new development within the YRF Spy Universe, Akshaye said, "I'll share the worst kept secret in the industry, which is, that Alia Bhatt is headlining a Spy Universe film and that the schedule starts later this year. But you know, talking about this spy universe, we are just so thrilled and excited about having this IP in the studio."

He added, "I think the YRF Spy Universe is a financial and cultural juggernaut. And as one of the most prized IPs, we take a lot of pride in it. So there's a lot of stuff that's going to come on the spy universe, we're going to see more and more films getting made under it. But of course, not going to share everything here. But we will talk about it at a more opportune time. But for now, I can just say that Alia Bhatt is headlining a spy universe film."

Meanwhile, Alia is gearing up for her upcoming film Jigra. Helmed by Vasana Bala, Jigra will be co-produced by Karan Johar and Alia herself. The film



is all set to hit the theatres on September 27. Director Vasana Bala previously helmed films like Monica O My Darling, a crime thriller film Peddlers and Mard Ko Dard Nahi Hota. Jigra was announced last year in September. The announcement video showed the film is a tale of a sister's love for her brother and how she would do anything to protect him. *Source: ANI*

AAMIR KHAN, DARSHEEL REUNITE 16 YRS AFTER TAARE ZAMEEN PAR

Actors Aamir Khan and Darsheel Safary reunited 16 long years after starring in the 2007 film Taare Zameen Par. Darsheel took to his Instagram to share an ad that sees Aamir play his grandfather.

"Join #AamirKhan as he goes on an adventure through time with Charged by Thums Up," wrote Darsheel, sharing the ad on his Instagram page. In it, Aamir can be seen playing his 'dadu', someone who finds a solution to all his life's problems. On Tuesday, March 5, Darsheel had shared a set of pictures of Aamir, writing, "It is Aamir's multiverse, and we're all just living in it. 3 days to go. #mrperfectionist #masterclass #versatileactor."





Gal Gadot announces birth of fourth child

Wonder Woman star Gal Gadot has revealed that she has given birth to her fourth child with husband Jaron Versano.

The Israeli actor, who resides in Los Angeles, made the announcement on her Instagram account on Wednesday. It was not widely known that Gadot was pregnant. It is the fourth girl for the couple, who are already parents to Alma (12) Maya (six) and Daniella (two).

"My sweet girl, welcome. The pregnancy was not easy and we made it through," Gadot wrote in the post.

The actor said they have named the newborn 'Ori', which means 'my light' in Hebrew, but didn't disclose when and where she gave birth.

"You have brought so much light into our lives, living up to your name, Ori, which means 'my light' in Hebrew.

"Our hearts are full of gratitude. Welcome to the house of girls.. daddy is pretty cool too," the 38-year-old captioned a photo of her holding the baby in her arms in the hospital.

The Idea of You: Anne Hathaway falls for a much younger guy in new rom-com

Who can resist falling love with Anne Hathaway? Surely not even young rockstars. The first trailer for Prime Video's upcoming romantic comedy *The Idea of You* is out. It stars Anne Hathaway (41) with Nicolas Galitzine (29). Anne plays an art manager who falls for Nicolas' gentle rockstar. They meet at Coachella and it is love at first sight. He follows her to her workplace, clearly smitten but she is apprehensive about their age difference. But the fire in their hearts is already lit.

The official synopsis of the movie reads: Based on the acclaimed, contemporary love story of the same name, *The Idea of You* centers on Solène (Anne Hathaway), a 40-year-old single mom who begins an unexpected romance with 24-year-old Hayes Campbell (Nicholas Galitzine), the lead singer of August Moon, the hottest boy band on the planet. When Solène must step in to chaperone her teenage daughter's trip to the Coachella Music Festival after her ex bails at the last minute, she has a chance encounter with Hayes and there is an instant, undeniable spark. As they begin a whirlwind romance, it isn't long before Hayes' superstar status poses unavoidable challenges to their relationship, and Solène soon discovers that life in the glare of his spotlight might be more than she



bargained for.

The film is directed by Michael Showalter and also stars Ella Rubin, Annie Mumolo, Reid Scott, Perry Mattfeld, Jordan Aaron Hall, Mathilda Gianopoulos, Raymond Cham Jr., Jaiden Anthony, Viktor White, Dakota Adan.

The film marks Director Michael Showalter's return to the SXSW Film Festival after six years where he debuted and presented numerous projects such as *Hello My Name is Doris* (2015) and *The Big Sick* (2017), both of which won the Audience Award at the festival. *Source: HT*

Cameron Diaz in talks to star alongside Keanu Reeves in Outcome

Cameron Diaz is in talks to star alongside Keanu Reeves and Jonah Hill in the upcoming dark comedy, titled *Outcome*. Helmed by Jonah, *Outcome* will feature Keanu as Reef, a damaged Hollywood star who must "dive into the dark depths of his past to confront his demons and make amends after he is extorted with a mysterious video clip from his past." Details of Cameron's role are still under wraps. This is not the first time Cameron will feature in the comedic space.

She has previously featured in films such as *The Mask*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *There's Something About Mary*, *Bad Teacher*, *Charlie's Angels* and *Shrek* franchises. The actress took a step back from Hollywood in 2018 to put more focus toward her endeavours as a bestselling author and entrepreneur.

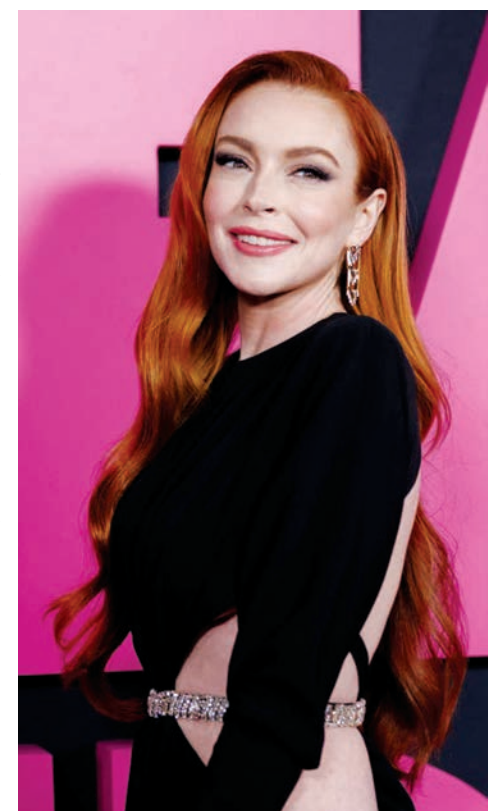
She also has *Back in Action* opposite Jamie Foxx in the Netflix action comedy by the same name, which marks her "un-retirement".



LINDSAY LOHAN 'EXCITED TO WORK WITH' JAMIE LEE CURTIS ON FREAKY FRIDAY SEQUEL

Lindsay Lohan shared she is excited to once again work with the Academy Award-winning actress Jamie Lee Curtis in the sequel of their popular 2003 film *Freaky Friday*. Lindsay said the upcoming film is "in the process," but did not say when the shooting would commence or if there even is a completed script.

The 37-year-old actress said that she was "just excited to work with Jamie again and see how much further we can take it. Because we talk almost every other day in general, so I think we're going to have a lot of fun with this." Lindsay said on *Andy Cohen Live* that a *Freaky Friday* sequel is still happening and added that she and the 65-year-old star are "both excited".



RUSSIAN SPY CHIEF SCOLDS FRENCH PRESIDENT MACRON FOR 'EXTREMELY DANGEROUS' REMARK ON UKRAINE

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian President Vladimir Putin's foreign intelligence chief has said French President Emmanuel Macron's refusal to rule out sending European troops to fight Russian soldiers in Ukraine was extremely dangerous and irresponsible.

Macron said last month that there was no consensus on sending European troops to fight in Ukraine but that nothing should be excluded, though the United States and other European members of the alliance have said there were no plans to do so.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has triggered the deepest crisis in Moscow's relations with the West since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and President Vladimir Putin has warned that the West risks provoking a nuclear war if it sends troops to fight in Ukraine.

Asked about Macron's remarks, Sergei Naryshkin, the head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), the main successor to the KGB's First Directorate foreign spying section, said they were deeply irresponsible.

"This shows the high degree of political irresponsibility of Europe's leaders today, in this case, the president of France," Naryshkin told state television in remarks on Tuesday. "These statements are extremely dangerous."

"It is sad to see this, sad to observe and sad to understand that the ability of current elites in Europe and the North Atlantic to negotiate is at a very low level," he said.

"They more and more rarely demonstrate any common sense at all." Russia and the United States have the world's largest arsenals of nuclear weapons. President Joe Biden has cautioned that a conflict between Russia and NATO could trigger World War Three.

After the Russian invasion in 2022, Western leaders said they would help Ukraine defeat Russian troops on the battlefield and drive out Russian troops. Ukraine recaptured large swathes of territory in 2022.

But Kyiv's counteroffensive in 2023 failed to pierce heavily dug in Russian lines, and Russian forces have been pushing into Ukrainian territory just as U.S. support for Ukraine is tangled in domestic political debates.

Russia controls just under one fifth of territory internationally recognised as Ukraine. (Reuters)

Will legitimately defend rights in South China Sea: Beijing

BEIJING (TIP): China's foreign minister Wang Yi on March 7 took a belligerent stance on the disputed South China Sea, warning of "justified actions" to defend its sovereignty claims and chided the US for not implementing its commitments to improve bilateral ties.

Wang, in his customary annual press conference on the sidelines of the Parliament session, took officially vetted questions from the national and international media on varied topics of global significance.

Wang 70, a veteran diplomat and member of the Politburo of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), abruptly took over as Foreign Minister last year after his junior Qin Gang was dismissed. The fate of Qin is not known yet. There was speculation about Wang being succeeded by Liu Jianchao, the Chinese diplomat currently heading the international department of the CPC, but there was no announcement about it. Wang, in his nationally televised press



meet that lasted nearly 90 minutes, spoke sternly on the South China Sea disputes as he warned that, "China will take justified actions to defend its rights in

accordance with the law, and respond to unwarranted provocations with prompt and legitimate countermeasures in the South China Sea." His comments came as the South China Sea dispute returned to haunt Beijing with the Philippines, backed by the US, began asserting its claims confronting the Chinese coast guard ships with its naval assets.

China claims most of the South China Sea. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims. "The Chinese people have lived and worked in the South China Sea for generations," Wang said about China's claims. Wang also announced a visa-free policy for Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg on a trial basis, starting March 14.

Meanwhile, a top American diplomat for East Asia and the Pacific, Daniel Kritenbrink, criticised China for using intimidation tactics against other countries in the region to press its sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea. — PTI

Sexually transmitted infections surge in Europe, latest data shows

LONDON (TIP): Sexually transmitted infections surged across Europe in 2022, with reported cases of gonorrhoea jumping by nearly a half, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said as it released its most recent data on March 7.

Syphilis cases rose by 34% from the previous year, to more than 35,000, chlamydia cases by 16% to more than 216,000. Gonorrhoea cases jumped by 48% to more than 70,000.

"The numbers paint a stark picture, one that needs our immediate attention and action," said ECDC director Andrea Ammon in a press conference on the data.

Untreated STIs can lead to a range of health problems including chronic pain, infertility and, for syphilis, neurological and cardiovascular complications.

Cases of lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) and congenital syphilis, when the infection is transmitted from mother to foetus, also increased sharply, ECDC said, although from lower levels.

Rates of STIs have been rising for years in many countries, including in Europe, although this was stalled by



Covid as most governments imposed social isolation measures, people stayed home and reporting rates fell.

A number of reasons were behind the sustained rise, ECDC said, including better surveillance and a rise in home-testing as well as an increase in riskier sexual behaviour.

A leap in infections among young heterosexual people in the latest data, and particularly young women, could be due to a change in sexual behaviour post-pandemic, the EU agency said.

It said there was no evidence yet that the rise in gonorrhoea infections was due to antimicrobial resistance, but said it would continue to monitor this. Ammon said the numbers were likely the "tip of the iceberg" as many infections go undetected.

European countries need to focus on testing, treating and prevention efforts, she said, and individuals need to take steps to protect themselves, particularly by using condoms, for example. (Reuters)

3 killed in Houthi missile attack on Barbados-flagged bulk carrier True Confidence in Gulf of Aden

DUBAI (UAE) (TIP): A missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels on a commercial ship in the Gulf of Aden on March 6 killed three of its crew members and forced survivors to abandon the vessel, the US military said. It was the first fatal strike in a campaign of assaults by the Iranian-backed group over Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The attack on the Barbados-flagged, Liberian-owned bulk carrier True Confidence further escalates the conflict on a crucial maritime route linking Asia and the Middle East to Europe that has disrupted global shipping. The Houthis have launched attacks since November, and the US began an airstrike campaign in January that so far hasn't halted their attacks.

Meanwhile, Iran announced Wednesday that it would confiscate a \$50 million cargo of Kuwaiti crude oil for American energy firm Chevron Corp. aboard a tanker it seized nearly a year earlier. It is the latest twist in a yearslong shadow war playing out in the Middle East's waterways even before the Houthi attacks began.

The US military's Central Command said an anti-ship ballistic missile launched from a Houthi-controlled area in Yemen struck the True Confidence, causing significant damage to the ship. In addition to the three deaths, at least four crew members were wounded, with three in critical condition.

Two aerial photos released by the US military showed the the ship's bridge and cargo on board ablaze.

"These reckless attacks by the Houthis have disrupted global trade and taken



the lives of international seafarers simply doing their jobs, which are some of the hardest jobs in the world, and the ones relied on by the global public for sustainment of supply chains," Central Command said.

The attack came after the ship had been hailed over radio by men claiming to be the Yemeni military, officials said. The Houthis have been hailing ships over the radio in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden since beginning their attacks, with analysts suspecting the rebels want to seize the vessels.

After the missile hit, the crew abandoned the ship and deployed lifeboats. A US warship and the Indian navy were on the scene, trying to assist in rescue efforts.

The ship's managers and owners said the ship's crew of 20 included one Indian, 15 Filipinos and four Vietnamese. Three armed guards, two from Sri Lanka and one from Nepal, also were on board. The ship had been carrying steel from China

to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The United Nations called on the Houthis "to cease all attacks against international shipping in the Red Sea," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said, expressing serious concern about the continuing attacks, including the latest incident where the status of the crew is unknown.

Dujarric said the attacks are causing risks "to property, to life, to ecology in the area."

At the State Department in Washington, spokesman Matthew Miller condemned the attack. "We continue to watch these reckless attacks with no regard for the well-being of innocent civilians who are transiting through the Red Sea. And now they have, unfortunately and tragically, killed innocent civilians," he told reporters.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre separately warned: "The US obviously is going to continue to take action."

Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, a Houthi military spokesman, claimed the attack in a prerecorded message, saying its missile fire set the vessel ablaze. He said the rebels' attacks would only stop when the "siege on the Palestinian people in the Gaza is lifted."

The rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea and surrounding waters over the Israel-Hamas war, but up to Wednesday hadn't killed any crew members. The vessels have included at least one with cargo bound for Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor, and an aid ship later bound for Houthi-controlled territory.

Despite more than a month and a half of US-led airstrikes, Houthi rebels have remained capable of launching significant attacks. They include the attack last month on a cargo ship carrying fertilizer, the Rubymar, which sank on Saturday after drifting for several days, and the downing of an American drone worth tens of millions of dollars.

It was unclear why the Houthis targeted the True Confidence. However, it had previously been owned by Oaktree Capital Management, a Los Angeles-based fund that finances vessels on installments. Oaktree declined to comment.

Meanwhile, a separate Houthi assault Tuesday apparently targeted the USS Carney, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer that has been involved in the American campaign against the rebels. The Carney shot down bomb-carrying drones and one anti-ship ballistic missile, Central Command said. Saree acknowledged that attack as well. (AP)

Six people stabbed to death by 19-year-old student from Sri Lanka at Ottawa home

TORONTO (TIP): A 19-year-old student from Sri Lanka is accused of stabbing and killing six people he lived with, including a 2 1/2-month-old baby girl and three other kids from a Sri Lankan family, Ottawa police said Thursday.

Ottawa police chief Eric Stubbs said an "edged weapon" or "knife-like object" was used by the suspect, who was identified as Febrio De-Zoysa. He has been charged with six counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted murder. Mass killings are rare in Canada.

Stubbs said the deceased are Sri Lankan nationals who recently came to Canada. He said they include a 35-year-old mother, a 7-year-old son, a 4-year-old daughter, a 2-year-old daughter and the 2 1/2-month-old baby girl as well as a 40-year-old acquaintance of the family.

The police chief said when the first officers arrived at the home the family's father was outside and screaming for

someone to call 911. Police received two emergency calls at 10.52 pm Wednesday.

The father is in hospital with serious, but non-life-threatening, injuries.

"This was a senseless act of violence perpetrated on purely innocent people," Stubbs said.

Sri Lanka's high commission said that it is in touch with relatives in the country's capital, Colombo.

De-Zoysa made a brief appearance in court Thursday and mumbled his assent as the justice of the peace ordered him not to speak to the father who survived the attack or to four other witnesses who provided statements to the police.

His case was adjourned until March 13 to give him time to find a lawyer.

Police were called to the home in the Barrhaven area just before 11 pm Wednesday night. The suspect was arrested quickly after that, and police said there was no continuing threat to public safety.

Don Perera, a neighbor, said he met the

family that lived in the home last fall at a Halloween party at the nearby Catholic elementary school. He said the father was from Sri Lanka.

Shanti Ramesh, who lives across the street, was alerted to a commotion late Wednesday. From her balcony, she saw a man sitting on the driveway of the home and yelling before two police officers arrived and carried him away.

On Thursday morning, five marked police cars were parked on the street and in driveways near the home, which is a middle unit of a row of brick townhouses.

Several people in white jumpsuits were going in and out of the home throughout the early morning, while parents and kids walked and biked by on their way to a nearby elementary school.

"Our first reactions are all ones of shock and horror at this terrible violence," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said.

Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe called



the news distressing for all the city's residents.

"It's hard to believe," he said. "It's devastating and heartbreaking."

Police have identified the victims as Darshani Banbaranayake Gama Walwwe Darshani Dilanthika Ekanyake, the 35-year-old mother; Inuka Wickramasinghe, a 7-year-old boy; Ashwini Wickramasinghe, a 4-year-old daughter; Rinyana Wickramasinghe, a 2-year-old daughter and Kelly Wickramasinghe, a 2 1/2-month-old baby girl. (AP)

ZULFIKAR BHUTTO DIDN'T RECEIVE FAIR TRIAL: PAK SC

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Former Pakistan prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, executed by the military regime of Gen Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq in 1979, did not receive a fair trial and due process, the Supreme Court opined unanimously on March 6 in a much-anticipated review of the high-profile case.

Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa announced the opinion of a nine-member larger bench of the apex court. It is based on a special case sent in 2011 by then president Asif Ali Zardari to the Supreme Court to revisit his father-in-law Bhutto's conviction for abetment in a murder case and his eventual hanging on April 4, 1979.

On March 18, 1978, the Lahore HC sentenced Bhutto to death for ordering the assassination of Ahmed Reza Kasuri, a founding member of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

Announcing the unanimous opinion, Isa said, "The proceedings of the trial do not meet the requirements of the fundamental right to a fair trial." But the SC also ruled that the verdict could not be changed as the Constitution and law did not allow so. (PTI)

PTI TO PROTEST ACROSS PAK ON MARCH 10

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Jailed former PM Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party on March 5 announced that it will launch nationwide protests on March 10 against the "stealing" of the mandate, a month after a general election marred by allegations of vote rigging. (PTI)

THREE-DAY IGM CONCLUDES IN SRI LANKA

COLOMBO (TIP): The three-day fifth edition of the International Gita Mahotsav (IGM) on a foreign land concluded at Colombo in Sri Lanka on March 3. The event was jointly organised by the Kurukshetra Development Board and the government of Sri Lanka.

As part of the celebrations, a copy of Srimad Bhagavad Gita was presented by the delegation from Haryana in parliament of Sri Lanka on Monday. During the festival, a crafts bazar, book fair, shobha yatra, seminars, school-level competition, exhibition, cultural and musical shows and a 'Maha Aarti' were organised.

Honorary secretary of the KDB Upender Singhal said, "The festival concluded in Sri Lanka. It was a matter of pride for us that the government of Sri Lanka was involved in the celebrations and the festival was celebrated on a grand scale. (TNS)

Nepal PM 'Prachanda' forges new alliance with ex-premier Oli's party after splitting with Nepali Congress

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' on March 5 decided to form a new alliance with former premier KP Sharma Oli's party after terminating its nearly 15-month partnership with the Nepali Congress due to differences between the top leadership.

The alliance between the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) led by Prachanda and the Sher Bahadur Deubal-led Nepali Congress has been terminated as the growing differences between the two top leaders reached a climax, a CPN-Maoist Centre party leader said.

"As (the) Nepali Congress did not cooperate with the Prime Minister, we are forced to look for (a) new alliance," Ganesh Shah, Secretary of the CPN-Maoist, told PTI.

Prachanda became the prime minister for the third term with the support of the Nepali Congress on December 25, 2022.

After breaking the alliance with the Nepali Congress --the largest party in the House of Representatives-- Prachanda joined hands with the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), led by Oli, who was regarded as Prachanda's top critic.

Last year, the CPN-UML withdrew its support to the Prachanda-led government following a rift over backing the main opposition party's candidate for the presidential poll.



The new cabinet will be formed on Monday afternoon, and the size of the cabinet will be smaller, said Surendra Pandey, Vice-chairman of the CPN-UML.

The rift between the Maoist Centre and Nepali Congress grew after differences grew between Nepali Congress leader and Finance Minister Mahat and Prachanda over the issue of budget allocation to certain projects.

The rift grew as Nepali Congress President Deuba wanted the party's senior leader and newly elected lawmaker Krishna Sitaula to be made the Chairman of the National Assembly against Prachanda's plan to appoint his party's fellow to the key post.

On Monday, the CPN-UML Chairman Oli met Prachanda at the Prime

Minister's quarters at Baluwatar and discussed matters relating to forming a new alliance, Shah said.

"The two leaders discussed the formation of a new government, a future course of action and possible leftist alliance among others, according to sources close to Baluwatar," Shah said.

Soon after the meeting, leaders of three political parties, including Prime Minister Prachanda, CPN-UML chairman Oli and Rastriya Swatantra Party's (RSP) Ravi Lamichhane met at Baluwatar and discussed the modality of the new alliance and the formation of the new government.

Nepali Congress emerged as the largest party in the House of Representatives during the November 2022 general election, securing 89 seats out of a total of 275.

The CPN-UML secured 78 seats, followed by the Maoist Centre, which got 32 seats.

The RSP, Rastriya Prajatantra Party, Janata Samajwadi Party and CPN-Unified Socialist won 20, 14, 12 and 10 seats respectively. It is necessary for a party to win the support of at least 138 members of the House of Representatives to form the government.

CPN-UML, the second largest party in Parliament, will be a major alliance for the Prachanda-led new government. (PTI)

Bangladesh Nobel laureate granted bail in graft case

DHAKA (TIP): A court in Bangladesh on March 3 granted bail to Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus in a USD 2.3 million embezzlement case. Yunus, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for pioneering the use of microcredit to help impoverished people, was sentenced to six months in prison in January on a separate charge of violating labour laws. He was granted bail in that case too and has appealed.

Prosecutor Mir Ahmmad Ali Salam said the embezzlement case involves a workers welfare fund of Grameen Telecom, which owns 34.2 per cent of the country's largest mobile phone company, Grameenphone, a subsidiary of Norway's telecom giant Telenor.

"The charges involve the embezzlement of over 250 million takas and money laundering. The accused gave the money to trade union leaders instead of the workers. This way they deprived the ordinary workers of their rightful earnings," Salam said. — AP

46 killed as fire breaks out in Bangladesh building

DHAKA (TIP): A massive fire in Bangladesh that raged through a six-storey building home to restaurants where many families with children were dining has killed at least 46 persons and injured dozens, the health minister said on March 8.

Fire authorities said a gas leak could have caused Thursday's blaze in the capital, which spread quickly after breaking out in a biryani restaurant, and was only reined in following two hours of effort by 13 units of firefighters.

Hospitals are treating 22 persons with burn wounds, Health Minister Samanta Lal Sen said. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed shock and sorrow at the incident. Firefighters used cranes to rescue people from the charred building, said fire officials, who were still working to clear debris and douse any remaining embers.

Relatives gathered at the hospital early on Friday to receive the bodies of the dead. — Reuters

PM Modi congratulates Shehbaz Sharif on taking oath as Pakistan prime minister

ISLAMABAD / NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 5 congratulated Shehbaz Sharif on taking oath as the prime minister of Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif on Monday took the oath as Prime Minister of Pakistan, assuming the cash-strapped country's reins for a second time, nearly a month after an inconclusive election marred by allegations of vote rigging.

In the February 8 elections, Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party came second. Independent candidates backed by jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) won the most seats but failed to get a majority in Parliament.

On Sunday, Shehbaz, 72, comfortably won the election for premiership in the newly-elected Parliament. Shehbaz, the consensus candidate of the PML-N and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), received 201 votes in the 336-member Parliament. His challenger Omar Ayub Khan of Khan's PTI secured only 92 votes. President Arif Alvi administered the oath to Shehbaz, the 24th elected prime minister in a ceremony held at the Aiwan-i-Sadr, the presidential palace.

Shehbaz earlier served as prime minister of a coalition government from April 2022 to August 2023 before Parliament was dissolved to hold general elections last month. (TNS)

Maha Shivaratri ('The Great Night of Shiva') is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in honor of the deity Shiva, between February and March. According to the Hindu calendar, the festival is observed on the fourteenth day of the dark (waning) half of the lunar month of Phalgun or Magha. The festival commemorates the wedding of Shiva and Parvati, and the occasion that Shiva performs his divine dance, called the Tandava.

It is a notable festival in Hinduism, marking a remembrance of "overcoming darkness and ignorance" in life and the world. It is observed by remembering Shiva and chanting prayers, fasting, and meditating on ethics and virtues such as honesty, non-injury to others, charity, forgiveness, and the discovery of Shiva. Ardent devotees stay awake throughout this night. Others visit one of the Shiva temples or go on a pilgrimage to the Jyotirlingams. The festival is believed to have originated in 5th century BCE.

On this day Shiva devotees observe fast and offer fruits, flowers and bel leaves on Shiva Linga. Shivaratri is also spelled as Shivratri, Shivarathri and Sivaratri. Maha Shivaratri is a popular Hindu festival. It is celebrated every year in reverence of the Lord Shiva. Maha Shivaratri festival is also widely known as 'Shivaratri'. It means the 'Great Night of Shiva'. This auspicious day is believed to be the day of convergence of divine powers of Lord Shiva and Goddess Shakti. It is believed that on this day the planetary position in universe evokes the spiritual energies very easily. Religious penances are carried out to gain boons through the practice of medication and yoga. People worships lord Shiva whole day and chants "Om Namah Shiva". Some devotees also perform Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra to seek divine blessings of Lord Shiva.

Shivaratri Rituals

Devotees of Lord Shiva observe the Shivaratri Festival by following the prescribed rituals with sincerity and devotion. All through the day, devotees abstain from eating food and break their fast only the next morning, after the nightlong worship. Ritual baths of Shivalinga in the numerous Shiva temples by Shiva worshipper, mainly women, is another significant feature of Shivratri customs and traditions. Devotees strongly believe that ritual worship of Lord Shiva on the auspicious day of Shivaratri absolves them of past sins and they are blessed with Moksha.

As a tradition devotees wake up early in the morning of the Mahashivratri day and take a ritual sunrise bath, preferably in the holy waters of river Ganga. They also offer prayers to the Sun God, Vishnu and Shiva as a part of a purification rite observed on all-important Hindu festivals. After wearing fresh new clothes devotees visit the nearest Shiva Temple to give the customary bath to the Shivalinga.

On a Shivratri day, Shiva temples are thronged by devotees, mainly women, who come to perform the traditional Shivalinga pooja and seek blessings from the god. At times there is so much rush in the temples that devotees have to wait for their turn to observe pooja. At their turn for worship, devotees circumambulate the Shivalinga, three or seven times, and then pour water over it. Some also pour milk. Sounds of bell and shouts of 'Shankarji ki Jai' or (Hail Shiva) reverberate in the temple premises.

Ritual Bath of Shivalinga

Shivratri Rituals Following the rituals prescribed in the Shiva Purana, every three hours, Shivalingam is given a special bath with milk, yoghurt, honey, sandalwood paste and rose water. Puja, meditation and chanting of 'Om Namah Shivaya' accompany the ritual bath. Following the bath, vermilion paste is applied on the linga. Traditionally, leaves of a forest tree Aegle marmelos (bilwa, maredu, wood apple) are used for Shiva puja. Thereafter, Bilwa leaves, which have to be a stalk with three leaves, is kept on top of the Shivalinga. Ber or jujube fruit is a special offering to the god on this day. Beetle leaves are also offered by some. Some also offer bilwa leaves in the belief that the Goddess

Mahashivratri: Lord Shiva's great night



Lakshmi resides in them. Others believe it is offered for its cooling effects on the hot-tempered deity. Many devotees also decorate the linga with flowers and garlands and offer incense sticks and fruit.

Worship of Lord Shiva continues all through the night on Shivaratri Festival. Devotees stay awake all night and spend the night in Shiva temples in worship of Lord Shiva. Singing of hymns and verses in praise and devotion of Lord Shiva besides the intense chanting of Om Namah Shivay, the mantra that is said free people from all their sins, continue through the night on Shivaratri.

Special worship of Shiva by priests continues through the nightlong prayer vigil. During this ritual worship, Lord Shiva is offered special food made from the fruits of the season, root vegetables and coconuts. Those observing the Shivaratri Fast break their fast the next morning by consuming the prasada offered to Shiva.

Shivaratri Fast

Shivaratri Fast is considered to be the most important fast for the devotees of Lord Shiva. Shiva Purana goes on to say that if a devotee observes Shivaratri Vrata with sincerity, pure devotion and love he is blessed with the divine grace of Lord Shiva. Every year devotees observe Maha Shivaratri fast with devotion and sincerity. Though many go on a diet of fruits and milk, some do not consume even a drop of water all through the day and night of Shivaratri Festival.

According to Hindu mythology, observance of

"Everyone thinks how to become a better son or daughter, mother or father, brother or sister, husband or wife, and man or woman. But no one puts actual thoughts on that they are all HUMAN and how to become a better HUMAN. What can we do to learn how to be a better human? "

-- Arish K Sahani

mahashivratri Vrat with discipline helps a devotee to control the two great natural forces that afflict a man, rajas guna (the quality of passionate activity) and tamas guna (the quality of inertia). When a devotee spends an entire day in the Feet of Lord and worships with sincerity, his motion is controlled and evils like lust, anger and jealousy, born of Rajas are ignored and subdued. Besides, when a devotee observes vigil throughout the night (jaagran) he manages to conquer the evils of Tamas Guna too. It has also been mentioned that when a devotee observes a round of worship every three hours, the Shivaratri Vrata becomes perfect.

Devotees of Lord Shiva believe consider Shivratri fast to be extremely auspicious and rate it equal or more than performing an Ashwamedha Yagna. Some believe that a devotee who observes a Shivaratri Fast with sincerity and utters the name of Lord Shiva with perfect devotion is absolved from all sins. Such a devotee reaches the abode of Lord Shiva and lives there happily. He is also liberated from the cycle of birth and death.

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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."

Working long hours ups depression risk in women

Women who work more than 55 hours a week are at a higher risk of depression, according to study which found that the same is not true for men.

The study of over 20,000 adults found that after taking age, income, health and job characteristics into account, women who worked extra-long hours had 7.3 per cent more depressive symptoms than women working a standard 35-40 week.

Weekend working was linked to a higher risk of depression among both sexes, according to the researchers from Queen Mary University of London and University College London in the UK.

Women who worked for all or most weekends had 4.6 per cent more depressive symptoms on average compared to women working only weekdays.

Men who worked all or most weekends had 3.4 per cent more depressive symptoms than men working only weekdays.

"This is an observational study, so although we cannot establish the exact causes, we do know many women face the additional burden of doing a larger share of domestic labour than men, leading to extensive total work hours, added time pressures and overwhelming responsibilities," said Gill Weston, a PhD candidate at UCL.

"Additionally women who work most weekends tend to be concentrated in low-paid service sector jobs, which have been linked to higher levels of depression," said Weston.

The research showed that men tended to work longer hours in paid work than women, and having



children affected men's and women's work patterns in different ways: while mothers tended to work fewer hours than women without children, fathers tended to work more hours than men without children.

Two thirds of men worked weekends, compared with half of women. Those who worked all or most weekends were more likely to be in low skilled work and to be less satisfied with their job and their earnings than those who only worked Monday to Friday or some weekends.

Researchers analysed data from 40,000 households across the UK since 2009. Information about working hours, weekend working, working conditions and psychological distress was collected from 11,215 working men and 12,188 working women between 2010

and 2012.

Depressive symptoms such as feeling worthless or incapable were measured using a self-completed general health questionnaire.

"Women in general are more likely to be depressed than men, and this was no different in the study," Weston said.

"Independent of their working patterns, we also found that workers with the most depressive symptoms were older, on lower incomes, smokers, in physically demanding jobs, and who were dissatisfied at work," she said.

"We hope our findings will encourage employers and policy-makers to think about how to reduce the burdens and increase support for women who work long or irregular hours—without restricting their ability to work when they wish to," she added.



How your daily routine damages your hair

We all have bad hair habits, most likely because we didn't know any better, but after reading some of the common bad habits many are guilty of below, you won't have an excuse to continue doing these any more.

Using Old Combs & Brushes

Don't let your hair pile up in your hair brush, this can be a breeding ground for germs and bacteria. Make sure to clean the hair out every week, and deep clean your hair brush once a month.

Tip: Clean your hair brush or comb with baking soda and water, this will remove oil and product that builds up over time.

Applying Too Many Chemicals

Artificial chemicals are bad for your body, and your hair is no exception. If you're coloring, getting keratin treatments, or relaxing your hair more often than you should, you are probably doing more damage than good. Make sure to keep any chemical processes or treatments down to a minimum, and your hair will begin to look and feel better and stronger.

Tip: If you have to get chemical treatments, establish a routine that involves preemptive care, like applying a hair mask a couple days before your treatment. You can also use a hair cover up on your roots so you don't have to get your hair colored as often!

Going Too Long Without A Haircut

If you want healthy hair, make sure you're getting regular trims to avoid split ends. Split ends can move up the hair shaft until you not only have split ends but a completely damaged hair shaft, which eventually leads to weakened locks and even hair thinning.

Tip: The right trim is ½ inch each month, or every other month if you are trying to grow your hair longer.

FOOD CORNER

Malai Kofta

Ingredients

4 Large Potatoes, boiled, 250 Gram Paneer (cottage cheese), 50 Gram Maida, 1 Tbsp Coriander leaves (chopped), 3 Onion, 1 Tbsp Ginger-garlic paste, 2 Tomatoes, 200 Ml Malai or cream, 2 Tbsp Raisins and cashew nuts, 50 Gram Cashew nuts paste, 1/2 tsp Haldi, 1/2 tsp Red chilli powder, 1/2 tsp Kitchen king masala, 1 Tbsp Kasuri methi (dry fenugreek), To taste Salt, 1 Tbsp Sugar

Method

- Refrigerate the boiled potatoes for 4 to 6 hours as this makes it easy to cook koftas.
- Mash the boiled potatoes and paneer along with maida. The mix should not be too hard or too soft. Add salt, chopped coriander leaves and mix well.
- Cut the raisins and cashew nuts into very

small pieces and add 1/2 teaspoon of sugar to the mix.

- Heat up the oil for deep frying.
- Roll out the balls from the dough you prepared and stuff the dry fruit mix in the center. Fry the koftas and if they break in hot oil then dust them with dry maida before putting them in.
- Fry some onion, ginger-garlic paste and tomato paste.
- Mix the cashew nut paste with 2 tablespoon of warm milk and pour it into the paste.
- Except for kasuri methi, add all the dry masala into the paste and saute till the oil separates itself.
- Add half a cup of water and simmer the gravy till it's done.
- Add cream/malai along with a tablespoon of sugar and kasuri methi.
- Simmer the gravy till the oil starts separating and once it's done, put the fried koftas into the gravy.
- Serve hot with chapatis.



How gut health helps in improving bone density among women

On this International Women's Day, we celebrate the strength and resilience of women worldwide yet, amidst the hustle and bustle of their daily lives, women often overlook a crucial aspect of their health: the gut. Recent research has unveiled a fascinating connection between gut health and bone density, especially among women. With women at a greater risk of developing osteoporosis than men, understanding how a healthy gut can be a game-changer for women's bone health is important.

In an interview with Zarafshan Shiraz of HT Lifestyle, Dr Debojyoti Dhar, Co-Founder and Director at Leucine Rich Bio, shared, "The gut is home to trillions of microorganisms, collectively known as the gut microbiota. This complex ecosystem plays a pivotal role in various physiological functions, including immune regulation, nutrient absorption, and even bone health. Recent studies have shed light on the intricate relationship between gut health and bone density, particularly in women. Several studies have shown that gut microbiota play an important role on bone metabolism (the intricate balance between bone formation and bone dissolution)."

Talking about Gut Dysbiosis and the role of Short-Chain Fatty Acids, she said, "Disbalance in the microbiota profile in the gut is called dysbiosis. Research has shown that dysbiosis in the gut can lead to loss of bone density. One of the key mechanisms through which the gut microbiota influences bone health is the production of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs). SCFAs are byproducts of the fermentation of dietary fiber by gut bacteria. These compounds have been shown to enhance calcium absorption, reduce inflammation, and promote bone formation. Research indicates that higher levels of SCFAs are associated with increased bone mineral density (BMD) in postmenopausal women. This underscores the importance of maintaining a healthy gut microbiota to support optimal bone health."

Revealing why bone density is important, Dr Debojyoti Dhar said, "BMD is a measure of the amount of minerals, such as calcium and phosphorus, present in bone tissue. Higher BMD indicates greater bone strength and density, reducing the risk of fractures and osteoporosis. Maintaining a healthy BMD is crucial for overall bone health and mobility, especially as women age and face hormonal changes that can affect bone density."



Did you know menopause affects bone health? Dr Debojyoti Dhar informed, "Menopause is a critical period in a woman's life when hormonal changes can significantly affect bone health. Estrogen, a hormone that declines during menopause, plays a crucial role in maintaining bone density. As estrogen levels decrease, women become more susceptible to bone loss and osteoporosis. However, emerging evidence suggests that the gut microbiota may modulate estrogen metabolism, potentially influencing bone health during menopause."

Talking about gut microbiome profiling, she said, "Given the profound impact of gut health on bone density, knowing one's gut microbiota offers scope for the management of bone-related issues. One way to gain insights into the composition and diversity of the gut microbiota is through gut microbiome profiling tests like BugSpeaks. These tests analyse the genetic material of gut microbes, providing valuable information about the overall health of the gut microbiota. By identifying any imbalances or deficiencies in the gut microbiota, women can take proactive steps to improve their gut health and, in turn, support their bone density. This may include dietary modifications, probiotic supplementation, and lifestyle changes that promote a healthy gut environment."

On this Women's Day, let's recognise the significant impact of gut health on women's bone density and overall well-being. By taking charge of gut health, understanding their gut microbiome through profiling and adopting gut-friendly habits, women can maintain strong bones throughout their lives. *Source: HT*



Sleeping for just 3 to 5 hours daily may increase Type 2 diabetes risk: Study

People who sleep for only three to five hours daily may be at a higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, according to a study.

The research, published in journal JAMA Network Open, also shows that chronic sleep deprivation cannot be compensated by healthy eating alone.

"I generally recommend prioritising sleep, although I understand it is not always possible, especially as a parent of four teenagers," said Christian Benedict, associate professor at Uppsala University and lead researcher behind the study.

The team examined the link between Type 2 diabetes and sleep deprivation. Type 2 diabetes affects the body's ability to process sugar (glucose), hindering insulin absorption and resulting in high blood sugar levels. "I generally recommend prioritising sleep, although I understand it is not always possible, especially as a parent of four teenagers," said Christian Benedict, associate professor at Uppsala University and lead researcher behind the study.

The team examined the link between Type 2 diabetes and sleep deprivation. Type 2 diabetes affects the body's ability to process sugar (glucose), hindering insulin absorption and resulting in high blood sugar levels.

The researchers used data from one of the largest population databases in the world, the UK Biobank, in which nearly half a million participants from the UK have been genetically mapped and responded to questions on health and lifestyle.

They followed the participants for over 10 years and found that a sleep duration of between three and five hours was linked to a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In contrast, healthy eating habits led to a lower risk of developing the disease, but even people who ate healthily but slept less than six hours a day were still at higher risk of Type 2 diabetes.

"Our results are the first to question whether a healthy diet can compensate for lack of sleep in terms of the risk of Type 2 diabetes. They should not cause concern, but instead be seen as a reminder that sleep plays an important role in health," Benedict added. *Source: PTI*

Eating too much protein could harm your heart

Eating too much protein could cause heart problems, according to researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

In a study, published in Nature Metabolism, involving people, mice, and cells, consuming over 22% of daily calories from protein was linked to immune cell activation, contributing to the formation of plaque in the arteries, a condition called atherosclerosis.

The amino acid leucine, found in animal products like beef and eggs, played a significant role in this molecular process.

Senior author Babak Razani

warned against increasing protein intake blindly, saying it might harm arteries. He said that this study could encourage discussions about tweaking diets for better health.

"Our hope is that this research starts a conversation about ways of modifying diets in a precise manner that can influence body function at a molecular level and dampen disease risks," he said in a statement.

The study also questioned the popular belief that more protein is always better. Based on a 10-year survey of average American diets, a lot of daily calories come from protein, mostly from meat.

This aligns with the idea that protein is crucial for health, but studies, including this one, suggest too much might not be good for long-term health.

Razani and metabolism expert Bettina Mittendorfer collaborated for a deeper understanding. The study spanned different models, from cells to mice to humans. Initial experiments with healthy people guided the timeline for immune cell activation.

Simulations in mice and human cells showed that eating more than 22% of daily calories from protein can harm macrophages, cells that help clear debris, leading to plaque buildup in arteries.

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Earth to witness fourth mass coral reef bleaching event

The world stands on the brink of witnessing its fourth mass coral bleaching event, a phenomenon that threatens to hit a vast expanse of tropical reefs, including significant portions of Australia's iconic Great Barrier Reef.

This dire prediction from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has marine biologists on high alert following a series of record-breaking ocean temperatures driven by climate change and the El Niño climate pattern.

Derek Manzello, the coordinator of NOAA's Coral Reef Watch, expressed grave concerns about the impending crisis. "It's looking like the entirety of the Southern Hemisphere is probably going to bleach this year," he stated, emphasising the unprecedented scale of the potential disaster. "We are literally sitting on the cusp of the worst bleaching event in the history of the planet."

Coral bleaching, a stress response triggered by elevated sea temperatures, leads to corals expelling the symbiotic algae that give them their vibrant colors. This loss not only leaves the corals pale and weakened but also jeopardizes the rich biodiversity they support.

US army experimenting with generative AI chatbots in war games: Report

The United States Army Research Laboratory is experimenting to see whether OpenAI's generative AI solutions can help battle planning, but within a military video game.

The New Scientist on Wednesday reported how US Army researchers are using OpenAI's GPT-4 Turbo and GPT-4 Vision models to provide information about simulated battlefield terrain and details on friendly and enemy forces, as well as military lessons on attacking and defending. They also used two other AI models based on older technology. After that, they gave the AI assistants a mission to destroy all enemy forces and seize an objective point.

The AI assistants immediately outputted many courses of action, at which point, a user playing the role of a commander asked the model to refine that output. While OpenAI's GPT models worked better than the other two models, they also caused more casualties while carrying out mission objectives.

The use of generative AI is just one small part of the US Army's push to take full advantage of artificial intelligence in their strategy. Project Maven, the US Department of Defense's flagship AI effort, has located rocket launchers in Yemen and surface vessels in the Red Sea and helped narrow targets for strikes in Iraq and Syria, reported Bloomberg in February.

But this potential use of AI on



battlefields also raise many ethical concerns. The prospect of leaving decisions that could potentially kill people to machines is more reminiscent of the Terminator series of movies than that of a bright future espoused by AI evangelists. But that has not stopped the military. The Pentagon asked US lawmakers for billions of dollars to develop its artificial intelligence and networking capabilities, reported DefenseScoop in March. It has also established a Chief Digital and AI Officer positions to help use and spread the technology across the department.

ChatGPT-maker OpenAI confronting a mountain of legal challenges

After a year of basking in global fame,

the San Francisco company OpenAI is now confronting a multitude of challenges that could threaten its position at the vanguard of artificial intelligence research.

Some of its conflicts stem from decisions made well before the debut of ChatGPT, particularly its unusual shift from an idealistic nonprofit to a big business backed by billions of dollars in investments.

It's too early to tell if OpenAI and its attorneys will beat back a barrage of lawsuits from Elon Musk, The New York Times and bestselling novelists such as John Grisham, not to mention escalating scrutiny from government regulators, or if any of it will stick.

As the modern-age lunar race picks up pace, Russia and China are setting their sights on the moon with plans to establish a nuclear power plant.

The power plant is expected to be established on the lunar surface between 2033 and 2035.

Yuri Borisov, the head of Russia's space agency Roscosmos, revealed this ambitious project in a statement, highlighting a significant collaboration between the two nations in advancing lunar exploration.

Borisov, who has a background as a former deputy defense minister, emphasised the collaborative efforts between Russia and China in a joint lunar program. He pointed out Russia's valuable contribution with its expertise in "nuclear space energy," marking a pivotal step towards sustainable lunar habitation.

The initiative aims to overcome the limitations of solar panels, which Borisov noted would not be enough for the electricity demands of future lunar settlements. Instead, nuclear power emerges as a viable solution to fuel these extraterrestrial habitats.

The complexity of delivering and installing a power unit on the lunar surface was acknowledged by Borisov, who stressed the importance of automating the process to avoid human presence during the initial stages.

This approach points to the challenges and risks associated with deploying nuclear technology in space.

Further expanding on Russia's vision for space innovation, Borisov discussed the development of a

Russia wants to put a nuclear plant on the moon; China plans to help it

nuclear-powered cargo spaceship, dubbed a "space tugboat." This vessel, described as a "huge, cyclopean structure," would leverage a nuclear reactor and high-power turbines to transport large cargoes between orbits, collect space debris, and fulfill other critical functions.

Despite the resolution of most technical questions surrounding the project, cooling the nuclear reactor remains a significant hurdle yet to be overcome.

Russia's lunar ambitions have been marred by setbacks, including the failure of its first moon mission in 47 years last year when the Luna-25 spacecraft crashed after spinning out of control.

However, Moscow remains undeterred, with plans for further lunar missions and explorations of a joint Russian-China crewed mission and even a lunar base. This comes as China announces its goal to send the first Chinese astronaut to the moon before 2030, signaling a competitive yet collaborative race to lunar colonisation.

Amidst international concerns over the militarization of space, Russian President Vladimir Putin has dismissed US warnings about Russia's intentions to deploy nuclear weapons in space.



Moody's ups growth forecast to 8% for FY24; India to remain fastest growing G20 nation

Moody's Ratings on Thursday, March 7, raised India's GDP growth forecast for FY24 to around 8 per cent from 6.6 per cent on the back of strong domestic consumption and capital expenditure.

The estimate comes a day after RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the economic growth in the current financial year could be close to 8 per cent in view of the third quarter GDP data released by the government.

The latest estimate of Moody's is about 140 basis points higher than the earlier projection of 6.6 per cent made in November 2023.

The National Statistical Office has projected 8.4 per cent growth in December quarter of the current financial year. It has also revised GDP estimates for the first and second quarters to 8.2 per cent and 8.1 per cent from 7.8 per cent and 7.6 per cent, respectively. "We expect India to be the fastest-growing economy among major G20 countries, with its real GDP growth to accelerate to around 8 per cent in the fiscal year ending March 2024 (fiscal 2023-24) from 7 per cent in fiscal 2022-23," Moody's said in a report.

Government capital expenditure and strong domestic consumption will underpin India's economic growth. Moreover, India is poised to benefit from increased global trade and investment opportunities arising from companies' strategies to diversify away from China, it said. *Source: PTI*

Fed is 'not far' from confidence needed to cut rates, says Powell

WASHINGTON (TIP)

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell suggested the central bank is getting close to the confidence it needs to start lowering interest rates.

"We're waiting to become more confident that inflation is moving sustainably at 2%," Powell said Thursday while answering questions from the Senate Banking Committee. "When we do get that confidence — and we're not far from it — it'll be appropriate to begin to dial back the level of restriction."

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Powell's remarks add some additional color about officials' thinking around the timing of the first rate cut, bolstering the idea that such a move could come in the next few months.

Two-year Treasury yields fell following Powell's comment, while traders boosted bets on a June rate cut.

Powell repeated his testimony from Wednesday that it would likely be appropriate to cut interest rates "at some point this year," but made clear officials are not ready yet. Policymakers need more evidence that inflation is heading sustainably to the central bank's 2% goal before acting, he said.

After raising the benchmark federal funds rate more than five percentage points starting in March 2022, the Fed has held interest rates at a two-decade



high since July. Against a backdrop of strong job growth and January jump in prices, officials have repeatedly emphasized they're in no rush to lower borrowing costs from the current range of 5.25% to 5.5%.

In December, the committee penciled in three interest rate cuts for this year, but Fed officials will update their forecasts at the March 19-20 meeting.

The Fed chief was on Capitol Hill for the second of two days of his semiannual monetary policy testimony.

Powell's European counterpart Christine Lagarde offered more specific

guidance Thursday, indicating the European Central Bank may be in a position to lower rates in June. Fresh forecasts show inflation hitting the ECB's 2% goal in 2025, but Lagarde said she and her colleagues aren't "sufficiently confident" to start cutting yet.

"We clearly need more evidence, more detail," the ECB president told reporters in Frankfurt, after policymakers left the deposit rate unchanged at 4% for a fourth straight meeting. "We will know a little more in April, but we will know a lot more in June." *Source: Bloomberg*

Sensex, Nifty eke out gains to settle at fresh lifetime highs

MUMBAI (TIP)

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty closed at fresh record highs on March 7 following gains in metal and FMCG shares amid firm global trends and foreign fund inflows.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex eked out gains of 33.40 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 74,119.39. During the day, it jumped 159.18 points or 0.21 per cent to reach an all-time high of 74,245.17.

The Nifty rose by 19.50 points or 0.09 per cent to reach a new closing peak of 22,493.55. During the day, it climbed 51.6 points or 0.22 per cent to a record high of 22,525.65. Among the Sensex firms, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, ITC and Nestle were the major gainers.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank and Power Grid were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul settled in the green while Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong



Kong ended lower.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. The US markets ended in positive territory on Wednesday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 2,766.75 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.65 per cent to USD 82.42 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark jumped 408.86 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at a new record high of 74,085.99 on Wednesday. The Nifty climbed 117.75 points or 0.53 per cent to settle at a fresh closing peak of 22,474.05.

US stock market: Shares rally to records ahead of jobs report

Global stock indexes rallied to record highs on Thursday, while government bond yields fell after the European Central Bank held interest rates steady and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell reiterated that easing was likely in 2024 if inflation behaved.

The yield on benchmark 10-year US Treasury notes hit a near one-month low then steadied as investors adjusted positions before Friday's release of the February U.S. payrolls report.

That is a highly anticipated monthly U.S. economic release because of its centrality to the Fed's high employment and low inflation mandates.

While the ECB left its policy rate at a record high, it took a first, small step towards lowering it, saying inflation was easing faster than it anticipated only a few months ago.

"We are making good progress towards our inflation target and we are more confident as a result - but we are not sufficiently confident," ECB President



Christine Lagarde told a press conference. That sent the pan-European STOXX 600 to a record high. It closed up 0.99%, while Europe's broad FTSEurofirst 300 index rose 20.37 points, or 1.03%. In the U.S., Powell on Wednesday testified before the House Financial Services Committee, saying rate reductions would "likely be appropriate" this year "if the economy evolves broadly as expected" and once officials gained more confidence in inflation's steady decline. He repeated those comments before the Senate Banking Committee on March 7.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MAR 11 TO MAR 17, 2024

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

of the time women will be spent in religious works. Youth time is better. At the end of the week, there may be more expenditure on amenities. During this, make the final decision in money-related matters only after understanding your circumstances. Lend money to someone carefully, otherwise, the money may get stuck. Also, drive slowly.

In the middle of the week, due to not getting cooperative behavior from siblings, there can be some mental pain. In any case, do not get lost, by the end of the week the solution to the problems will be found. Avoid any kind of show-off in love affairs or you may have to be embarrassed.



ARIES

Ganesha says that at the beginning of this week, the people of Aries will spend most of their time participating in auspicious works and having fun. During this, a short and pleasant journey is also possible. People associated with the business will get the expected profit. More money can be spent than expected on things related to home repair or luxuries. In the middle of the week, there can be differences between brothers or fathers regarding something. Be careful during this, the opposing side may try to take advantage of the opportunity. There will be confusion among the youth and students regarding their work. Avoid any kind of haste in a love affair; otherwise, the things made can get spoiled.



TAURUS

Ganesha says that the people of Taurus will have to manage their time this week. Spend according to your pocket, otherwise, you may face a financial crunch. Be sure to take the opinion of your well-wishers before investing money in a business or any scheme. In the middle of the week, with the help of close friends or a relative, there will be chances of profit in a particular work. Full cooperation will be received from the parents. Don't stray from your goal. Caution is expected in a love affair. Someone may try to create a rift in your relationship. It would be better to clear misunderstandings through mutual conversation. Take special care of your spouse's health at the end of the week.



GEMINI

Ganesha says that this week will prove to be the end of long-standing troubles for Gemini. Misunderstandings or disputes with love partners will end. Love affairs will get strengthened. There will be a plan to buy and sell new property. New opportunities will be available in terms of career and business. Those doing business with foreign countries will get special benefits. Working with planning in financial matters is sure to bring benefits. At the end of the week, there may be a dispute with family members regarding the ancestral property. Resolve family issues with a calm mind. Especially do not ignore the feelings of your spouse.



CANCER

Ganesha says that Cancer sign people will be able to expand their long pending plans at the beginning of the week. Full cooperation of subordinates will be received in the workplace. Relatives will accept your love and a love affair can turn into a marriage. Full cooperation will be received from the parents regarding the special work. There will be an increase in social honor and prestige. Most



LEO

Ganesha says that the people of the Leo zodiac should come out of the world of dreams and face reality this week. Do not tell anyone else until the work is done. At the beginning of the week, some good news can be received from the children's side. The efforts of the students engaged in preparing for the examination competition will be successful. Do not forget to consult a well-wisher before investing money in business. There is a possibility of going on a long journey in the middle of the week. Will get a chance to spend more time with their love partner. Love affairs will get strengthened.



VIRGO

Ganesha said that this week will be medium fruitful for the people of Virgo. At the beginning of the week, the mind will be affected by an unknown fear. There will be a need to work harder in the workplace. In this regard, long or short-distance travel may also have to be done. Stay away from people who create misunderstandings in the family and reach a decision with discretion. In the middle of the week, there may be an excessive expenditure on the purchase of any special work or item. During this, there will be relatively less support from family members. Do not ignore the feelings of the love partner under any circumstances. Life partners will get full support in times of crisis. At the end of the week, some good news can be received from the children's side.



LIBRA

Ganesha said that at the beginning of the week, control both your anger and speech. There can be a dispute in the family, especially with a brother or sister. Any senior advice will prove beneficial to settle property-related disputes. Overall, the week that started with struggle will end with accomplishment. During this, adopt positive thinking and do not let the inferiority complex enter your mind. If there is a possibility of going two steps forward by taking one step back, then do not hesitate to take it back. Will feel a lot of relief with the help of a female friend. At the end of the week, the mind will be upset due to unnecessary expenditure. Take any decision in career business carefully. Respect each other's feelings in love relationships. There will be some decrease in the pleasures of married life.



SCORPIO

Ganesha says that for people of the Scorpio zodiac, this week is going to fulfill their wishes. Positive results will be seen in the workplace. Salaried people will get the full support of their seniors. This time is auspicious for working women. There will be profit in occupations as expected. There will be a possibility of buying land, buildings, vehicles, etc. Students will get good news.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says that this week if you want, you can get the desired results by working hard. There will be a meeting with an influential person in the middle of the week. Do not ignore health-related problems at the end of the week, otherwise, you may end up in the hospital. You will get the full support of your life partner in an emergency of life. Will get a chance to spend better time with their love partner. Time is favorable for students and youth. Success will be achieved by working hard.



CAPRICORN

Ganesha says that at the beginning of the week, things will be as per your wish but, in the middle, you may have to compromise with the circumstances. Employed people need to maintain better coordination with their colleagues. Take a big decision in financial matters only after careful consideration. At the end of the week, the mind will be worried about the health of an elderly person in the house. Material happiness will be spent on things related to resources. There will be mutual happiness and cooperation in a love relationship. You will get the full support of your life partner while facing the challenges of life.



AQUARIUS

Ganesha says that Aquarius people may have to face some difficulties at the beginning of the week. Although sometimes some challenges teach better lessons, like this, this time will prove to be very important for your future. In this time of crisis, you will get to know the true identity of your loved ones. Due to this, it will be very easy for you to make important decisions in the future. There will be a need to take care of the feelings of others while solving family issues. To achieve a specific goal, students and youth have to manage their time. Do not create any kind of misunderstanding in love relations, otherwise, a third person can take advantage of it. At the end of the week, there will be a chance to spend a better time with the family. A short and pleasant journey is possible.



PISCES

Ganesha says that you will get a chance to be involved in some religious work. During this period, you will get the full support of luck. This time will also be favorable for occupation people. But in the middle of the week, control your emotions and avoid telling your secret things to someone else, otherwise, he may take undue advantage of it. Be honest with your spouse, otherwise, you may have to be humiliated in society. Will get a chance to spend more time with their love partner. The help of a friend will work as a lifeline in strengthening the love relationship. Most of the time women will spend time performing religious works. This week will be normal in terms of soundness.

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MARCH 11 TO MARCH 17
BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA**

MARCH 11

Ganesha says you would have abundant energy right now, and if you used it well, you would achieve outstanding accomplishments. Later in the year, a long trip looks likely, probably to attend some momentous event. It is not advisable to rely on friends and family because they won't be accommodating. Financially speaking, it appears to be an excellent time to buy equities and real estate, but all purchases should be made with the long term in mind.

MARCH 12

Ganesha says to be aware of your impulsive and hasty tendencies. To improve your productivity, take the initiative to alter the workplace environment to suit your needs. You'll target meetings with delegates who are well-known around the world. You'll be able to start saving for the future now. You'll appreciate having your partner around. You have a deep faith in God, and you may soon visit numerous holy sites. Your attention will be drawn to interior design and construction.

MARCH 13

Ganesha says starting new businesses

is encouraged throughout the upcoming time. Previously sluggish projects would pick up steam. If there are any disagreements, they will be resolved, which will make you feel relieved. Due to your competitive nature, you would always try to outperform others and be well-liked by your fellow students. Friends will be supportive but obnoxious. The possibility of developing romantic relationships with coworkers exists, but they would be very fleeting.

MARCH 14

Ganesha says you enjoy reading to expand your knowledge, but you need to learn to control your urge to act when you are bashful, arrogant, or moody. Children would provide great joy and success in their chosen careers. Travelling far or going on a pilgrimage will be high on your agenda. Property sales, rent accrual, dividends, and interest payments all result in financial profits for the seller. Long-term investments and speculative ventures are also advantageous at this time.

MARCH 15

Ganesha says many people's financial situations will improve today, and some

will inherit family property. Your confidence will increase as the business prospers and you make money. Both academically and athletically, students will do incredibly well. Those with high blood pressure or piles should exercise caution with their health. The legal issues weighing on your mind will be resolved to your satisfaction. For some, promotions and pay raises are likely.

MARCH 16

Ganesha says today you should work on controlling your occasionally careless and stubborn behavior. Entrepreneurs would diversify their businesses and pursue new, lucrative opportunities. If you deal in real estate, you will do incredibly well, but you might anticipate some partner rivalry. Later today, you'll be delighted to hear some exciting news from your kids. Make the most of your new romance, which may be new to you. For both spiritual and physical benefits, meditation and yoga should be practiced.

MARCH 17

Ganesha says people will regard you with respect and deference. You possess the fortitude to handle any



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

circumstance. You will become a well-known person because of your originality and planned work, attracting everyone's attention. Your snarky and cynical nature can keep you from social gatherings. Potent nature may cause you to lose credibility. You will soon take the marital oath. Be patient, since resolving your legal challenges will take some more time.

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|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ||



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Ranthambore: A sanctuary for the majestic Bengal Tiger

The Ranthambore Tiger Reserve is among the world's most prominent tiger reserves, serving as a sanctuary for the majestic Bengal Tiger species. The Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, situated in Sawai Madhopur in the northern Indian state of Rajasthan, is one of the largest tiger habitats in the country.

The Ranthambore National Park, along with the Ranthambore Fort and the surrounding hills and valleys, altogether make Ranthambore a traveller's delight. The place is a boon for wildlife photographers and is perfect for excursions and sightseeing. Safari Rides add to the adventure along with hot Rajasthani picks for shopaholics. With an area of 392 kilometres square, Ranthambore National Park is a natural habitat for a variety of exotic species. It is an absolute delight for birdwatchers and an ideal place to watch animals in their natural habitat.

The Ranthambore Fort, built in the 10th century, stands tall over the entire National Park. Built by the Chauhan Dynasty, the Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Located inside the fort is the majestic temple of Lord Ganesha, the Trinetra Ganesha Temple. Ganesha devotees flock the temple throughout the year. The other two temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva and Ramlalaji respectively. Two Jain temples, devoted to Lord Sumatinath and Lord Sambhavnath are other attractions of the Fort. The Padam lake and the Surwal lake are two among many that are a haven for bird watching. The ideal time to visit these lakes is early morning. Located adjacent to the Padam lake is the Jogi Mahal, a red sandstone marvel. Kachida Valley, famous for locating panthers and bears, along with Raj Bagh Ruins and the surrounding deciduous forests altogether score brownie points for Ranthambore.

Ranthambore Tiger Reserve

Spread in an area of 392 sq. Km, the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve is one of the largest and famed tiger reserves in the country, famous for the magnificent Bengal Tiger found there. The Ranthambore Tiger Reserve derives its name from the Ranthambore Fort located in the region. Situated in the Sawai Madhopur district of Rajasthan, it forms a part of Project Tiger reserves, by the Government of India, set up in 1955. Ancient religious ruins found within the forest, surrounded by the rich biodiversity and aesthetically crumbling cenotaphs make Ranthambore Tiger Reserve a favourite spot for photographers, wildlife enthusiasts and travellers.

Among other things, the tiger reserve is known for the medieval hunting trips carried out by the royals of Jaipur when hunting a tiger was the symbol of valour. One can take a safari ride through the jungle and experience watching a tiger in its natural habitat from a few metres away. Dry deciduous forests and marshy



grassland forms a distinctive feature of this place with the Aravalli Range and Vindhya Plateau surrounding it to set it apart from the strikingly different desert in the very same state. The Ranthambore Tiger Reserve is also home to a wide variety of flora and fauna. The Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary and Kaldevi Sanctuary that surrounds this tiger reserve became part of the tiger reserve project in the 1990s.

Jeep Safari

Jeep Safari is the best way to explore the various zones of the Ranthambore National Park. Wildlife photographers and bird watchers often opt for these safaris to capture thrilling moments in the National Park. Jeep safaris need to be booked well in advance to ensure availability.

Ranthambore Fort

Ranthambore Fort is a magnificent fort erected by a ruler belonging to the Chauhan Royal family located in Ranthambore in Rajasthan. The regal fort is said to have existed since the 12th century and is a perfect tourist attraction for those wanting to explore Royal Rajasthan. The splendid fort of Ranthambore stands strong amidst dense forests that form the Ranthambore National Park. The view of the fort from the national park and the view of the dense forest from the top of the fort are both worth seeing. As one explores the magnificent structure, they are bound to experience the magnificent vibe that the fort radiates in the warm sunlight of Rajasthan.

Ranthambore Fort has been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and is an important Hill Fort of Rajasthan. The dense forest that forms the Ranthambore National Park was once the hunting ground of the royalty that lived here. The fort is surrounded by a massive wall and has strong stone pathways and staircases that lead to the top portion of the structure.



As you trek upwards; do notice the traditional Rajasthani architecture with massive gates, pillars, domes, palace and temples. The reserve is home to some birds and animals. Tourists will usually find a lot of monkeys in and around the fort; however, if you are lucky, you may also be presented with the beautiful peacocks living in the National Park.

Surwal Lake

A beautiful natural water body, Surwal Lake is a treat to the tired eyes. It is located inside the Ranthambore National Park and the mesmeric surroundings make the attraction worth a visit. The region is also famous for bird watching and one can observe a number of migratory birds during the winter season.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

I believe in America': Fired-up Biden...

He worked to paint himself as a brighter, more forward-thinking choice than Trump, whom he only referred to as "my predecessor." Biden talked about his history in politics and tackled the issue of his age head on, but the end of his speech was about his hope for the future.

By comparison, Alabama Sen. Katie Britt's Republican response to the speech was bleak and painted a dark picture of the country, especially at the southern border.

It echoed Trump's "American carnage" inaugural address, though Britt avoided mentioning the former president by name.

That's a good preview of how the presidential race is likely to unfold: Republicans will paint Biden as a failure who has presided over a U.S. in decline, while Biden will work to focus attention on the progress he feels his administration has made and can continue to make.

1 in every 10 women in the world lives...

Climate change is accelerating persistent poverty gaps. As competition for scarce resources intensifies, livelihoods are threatened, societies become more polarized, and women bear an increasingly heavy burden:

1 in every 10 women in the world lives in extreme poverty.

The number of women and girls living in conflict-affected areas doubled since 2017, now, more than 614 million women and girls live in conflict-affected areas. In conflict areas, women are 7.7 times more likely to live in extreme poverty.

Climate change is set to leave 236 million more women and girls hungry by 2030, twice as many as men (131 million).

At prime working age, only 61 per cent of women are in the labor force versus 90 per cent of men.

We cannot continue to miss out on the gender-equality dividend. More than 100 million women and girls could be lifted out of poverty if governments prioritized education and family planning, fair and equal wages, and expanded social benefits.

Almost 300 million jobs could be created by 2035 through investments in care services, such as provision of daycare and elderly care. And closing gender employment gaps could boost gross domestic product per capita by 20 per cent across all regions.

The current reality is far from this. Programs dedicated to gender equality represent only 4 per cent of official development assistance. An additional USD 360 billion in developing countries is needed per year to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. This is less than one fifth of the USD 2.2 trillion spent globally on military expenditure in 2022, for example.

The areas needing investment are clear and understood. First and foremost, there must be an investment in peace. Beyond this, the investments needed include laws and policies that advance the rights of women and girls; transformation of social norms that pose barriers to gender equality; guaranteeing women's access to land, property, health care, education, and decent work; and financing women's groups networks at all levels.

UN Women is also calling on Member States at the Commission on the Status of Women, starting in New York on 11 March 2024, to back up their commitments on gender equality with resources. The world's leaders have this opportunity to develop concrete and progressive agreed conclusions that reflect the crucial need for financing gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's organizations. They must seize it for the sake of equality, our planet, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Electoral bonds disclosure: Contempt...

"The timeline of three weeks fixed by the court in its judgment dated February 15 would not be sufficient for the entire exercise to be completed," the SBI said in an application filed in the top court. In a landmark verdict, a five-judge Constitution Bench led by Chief Justice of

India DY Chandrachud had on February 15 declared unconstitutional the electoral bonds scheme that allowed individuals and companies to make unlimited anonymous donations to political parties. Acting on a PIL filed by ADR, the top court had ordered the SBI to stop issuing electoral bonds immediately and submit all details by March 6 to the Election Commission which shall make all donations public by March 13.

Indian-American incumbents Ami...

Meanwhile, Ro Khanna, seeking his fifth term, won decisively over Republican Anita Chen in the 17th Congressional District, according to American Bazaar.

In contrast, Indian-American engineer Rishi Kumar, a Democrat, lost his bid to run for Congress.

With 50% of the vote counted, former San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo was ahead with 22% of the vote, while Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian had nearly 18%. Both Liccardo and Simitian are Democrats. Kumar ended up in seventh place out of 11 candidates with 6.3% of the vote.

This came amid Indian-American Republican challenger to former president Donald Trump, Nikki Haley, dropping out of the presidential race.

Indian-American Republican Vin Kruttiventi advanced to the general election in Northern California's 14th Congressional District, home to one of the largest populations of Indian-Americans in the nation, securing second place with 17.8% of the vote to incumbent Eric Swalwell with 64.5%, seeking his sixth term in the House of Representatives.

According to reports from the Federal Election Commission, Kruttiventi, the founder and CEO of A5 Services, has invested \$500,000 of his personal funds into his campaign.

However, clinical psychologist Harmesh Kumar's longshot bid for the vacant US Senate seat left by the late Senator Dianne Feinstein ended in disappointment.

Additionally, Ash Kalra, a Democrat, emerged as the top candidate in the 25th Assembly District and will face fellow Democrat Lan Ngo in the general election.

However, challenger Tara Sreekrishnan, a 30-year-old Indian-origin leader who has garnered significant endorsements for her bid, faced defeat in her race for California's 26th district state Assembly seat.

In other races, Democrat Darshana Patel will compete against Republican Kristie Bruce-Lane for California's 76th district state Assembly seat, which covers a portion of San Diego.

The most prominent of all the Indian-American candidates was Nikki Haley, the former governor of South Carolina. She conceded to Donald Trump after losing every state but one - Vermont - in Super Tuesday's primary contests.

In January, Indian-American billionaire entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy suspended his bid after Trump won the Iowa caucus. He later pledged support for Trump's presidential bid.

Indian-American Nikki Haley...

After Super Tuesday's election results, Trump, 77, had established a commanding lead in the delegate count over his only Republican opponent, 52-year-old Haley, who denied him a full sweep by winning Vermont. "The time has now come to suspend my campaign," she said on Wednesday in South Carolina.

"I said I wanted Americans to have their voices heard. I have done that. I have no regrets," she added. "Although I will no longer be a candidate, I will not stop using my voice for the things I believe in."

As Haley suspended her campaign Wednesday morning, Trump posted on social media that the former South Carolina governor got "trounced" on Super Tuesday and invited her supporters to join his political movement.

"Nikki Haley got trounced last night, in record-setting fashion, despite the fact that Democrats, for reasons unknown, are allowed to vote in Vermont, and various other Republican Primaries. Much of her money came from Radical Left Democrats, as did many of her voters, almost 50%, according to the polls,"

Trump posted.

Haley congratulated her rival and former boss Trump during her announcement ending her presidential campaign but stopped short of endorsing him.

"In all likelihood, Donald Trump will be the Republican nominee when our party convention meets in July. I congratulate him and wish him well. I wish anyone well who would be America's president. Our country is too precious to let our differences divide us," said Haley, a former US ambassador to the UN under the Trump administration.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

CONTD FROM PAGE 9

Trump's Unchallenged Rise: Analyzing His Dominance in the Republican Field

The desire for a steady income, access to quality healthcare, opportunities for good education, and the assurance of social security forms the crux of their worries. In this context, the Trump narrative gains traction.

STEADY INCOME: The promise of economic stability and job growth was a cornerstone of Trump's previous campaign. Many Americans view Trump as a leader with a business background who can navigate economic challenges effectively.

HEALTHCARE: Trump's emphasis on dismantling the Affordable Care Act was a controversial point during his presidency. However, for some Americans, the focus on reducing healthcare costs and increasing choice resonates with their concerns.

EDUCATION: Trump's advocacy for school choice and local control over education policies appeals to those who believe in a more decentralized approach to improving the education system.

SOCIAL SECURITY: Trump's approach to economic policies and tax cuts has been viewed by some as a means to stimulate economic growth, potentially benefiting social security programs.

INDEPENDENTS: THE DECIDING FACTOR:

While party loyalty remains a powerful force in American politics, the growing number of independent voters presents a unique challenge and opportunity in the 2024 election. Independent voters, not bound by party allegiance, are more likely to prioritize tangible results over political rhetoric. They play a pivotal role in deciding the outcome of an election, especially when party dissatisfaction is evident.

TRUMP'S APPEAL TO INDEPENDENTS:

Despite legal challenges and controversies surrounding Trump, his appeal to independent voters lies in his reputation as a disruptor. Independents, dissatisfied with the status quo, may be willing to take a chance on a leader who promises a departure from traditional politics. Trump's track record of challenging established norms and his perceived focus on the everyday concerns of Americans could resonate strongly with this demographic.

The evolving narrative of the 2024 presidential election reflects a shift in focus from grand geopolitical ambitions to the practical concerns of everyday Americans. While party loyalty remains a driving force, the dissatisfaction with President Biden's performance has created a space for Donald Trump to reenter the political arena with a strong appeal to independent voters. The concerns of common Americans regarding employment, healthcare, education, and social security have become the focal points, and Trump's positioning as a candidate who can address these issues has gained traction. As the nation anticipates the unfolding drama of the 2024 election, the dynamics of party politics, independent voter sentiments, and the ability of candidates to connect with the concerns of the average citizen will be decisive factors in shaping the future of the United States.

(The author can be reached at salujaindra@gmail.com)

Sikh History This Week

MARCH 8 TO MARCH 14

8th March

1644 Patshahi Seventh, Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji, ascended to Guruship. Guru Hargobind had five sons, three of whom had died during his life time. Of the two who had survived him, Suraj Mal, born in 1617, was a worldly man, with only a moderate interest in religion, and Tegh Bahadur, born in 1621, was a recluse. So by the command of Guru Hargobind, the young Har Rai, grandson of the Guru, who was fourteen years old, was anointed as the seventh Guru of the Sikhs. The ceremony was performed by Baba Bhana, son of Baba Budha. Just before his death, Guru Hargobind put five paisas and a coconut before Har Rai, bowed to him and Baba Bhana put on his forehead the saffron mark and declared him to be the seventh Guru of the Sikhs.

1758 Sikhs attacked Lahore. Taemur escaped to Kabul. Adina Begh became the new Governor and initiated atrocities against Sikhs.



1853 Maharaja Dalip Singh converted to Christianity. Christian missionaries had spread their network to Lahore, Amritsar and other parts of the Punjab after its annexation. They saw hopeful signs of conversion of the Sikhs and made them a special target.

9th March

1783 Sikh forces, under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Baghel Singh attacked Delhi and ransacked Houz Khaas after breaking the Mori Gate. Sabzi Mandi, Malkaganj and Pahari Dhiraj areas were plundered. Sikhs set up their headquarters at Majnu Tilla, out-skirts of Delhi. During this attack the Sikh forces captured Delhi. Sardar Baghel Singh returned to Punjab only after getting some major concessions for the Sikhs, raising Kesri Flag on Red Fort and constructing seven historical Gurudwaras connected with Sikh Gurus, including Sis Ganj and Rakab Ganj as memorials to the martyrdom of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur.

10th March



1644 Bhai Mani Singh Ji, a great martyr and Granthi of Harminder Sahib was born.

1746 Subaegh Singh and Mehtaab Singh Ji were martyred.

1746 All the Sikhs of Lahore were beheaded at Nakas.

After the 1745, Sarbat Khalsa resolution, Sikhs attacked Lahore one evening and decamped with a large booty. Yahya Khan who had taken over as Governor asked Diwan Lakhpar Rai to displace the Sikhs from the nearby swamp hounds. One of the units led by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia on the way to the hills clashed with his younger brother Jaspal Rai and chopped off his head. Lakhpar Rai now in rage vowed to erase the Sikhs from the pages of history. He got a proclamation for general massacre of the Sikhs. All Sikhs of Lahore were beheaded at Nakhas on amavas, despite a petition by general body of Hindus that the executions should not take place at least on amavas. The Sikh scriptures that fell into his hands were desecrated and destroyed.



1846 British took Koh-i-noor from Lahore.

1923 Buta Singh, Lambardar of Nangal Shammann is murdered.

1946 Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak Committee (SGPC) passed resolution for the formation of a Sikh State.

1996 GurSikh women participated in the cleansing of Sri Harimandir Sahib's floor in the Amrit Vela.

11th March

1783 Sikhs entered Red Fort in Delhi and hoisted their Kesri flag, under the leadership of Baghael Singh, after successfully attacking and capturing Delhi. Further Jathaedar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was seated on throne of Diwane-Aam. Peace arrived at with Sikhs through Begam Samru after certain major concessions were made to Sikhs. Baghel Singh controlled Delhi for 8 months during which period he constructed seven historic Gurudwaras in Delhi connected with Sikh Gurus.



1985 Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, President Shiromani Akali Dal and Morcha Dictator of Dharam Udh morcha (initiated on Aug. 4, 1982) was released from Udaypur Jail. He was arrested from within the

Darbar Sahib complex on June 6, 1984, during the Operation Bluestar.

12th March

1921 Gurudwara Ram Das Sahib was forcibly taken over and brought under the control of SGPC. -Ref. "Babbar Akali Movement, A historical Survey," by

Dr. Gurcharan Singh, Aman Publications, 1993.

1947 87 GurSikh women of Boha Khalsa gave their lives through drowning by jumping into wells to save their honour rather than be subjected to humiliations by the Muslims.

1972 Elections to Punjab assembly were held. Akalis won only 24 of 104 seats. This marked the end of Fateh Singh's leadership.

1983 Sikhs decided on a protest strategy in response to Harsimran Singh's unfair termination from the Punjab University, Chandigarh.

13th March

1849 The Sikh army fought the British forces at Gurjrat. The British had vastly superior artillery. Sikhs fought valiantly but were routed. Raja Sher Singh and the remaining army surrendered thus ending Sikh opposition to British.

1921 To his dismay and amazement, Mahatama Gandhi learnt that the Sikhs did not consider themselves to be Hindus, which he had perceived them to be. Precisely, for his Gujarati audience, he wrote in the Navjivan, "Till today, I had thought of them as a sect of Hinduism. But their leaders think that theirs is a distinct religion." Gandhi went back to add, "Their sacred book is the word of their gurus and, apart from that book, they accept no other scriptures as holy."

-Source "The Sikhs in History," by Sangat Singh, 1995

1928 Central Sikh Association presented the Sikh case before the Simon Commission.

1940 Sardar Udham Singh of Sunam killed Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who was Lieutenant General of Punjab at the time of the Jallianwala incident in Amritsar. He was killed in London.

14th March



1822 Akali Phula Singh, a brave Sikh General of Maharaja Ranjit Singh died while fighting near Naushera. He headed one Sikh outfit "Misl Shaheedan" and played an active role in empire building efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

1922 Kishan Singh Gargaj delivers a fiery and anti-British speech at Anandpur Sahib, on the occasion of Holla Mohalla.

1923 First attempt is made to kill Labh Singh Dhadha, responsible for the arrest of Kishan Singh.

1924 2nd Jatha of 500 Akalis, led by Sardar Inder Singh of Village Mirza of Sialkot, was arrested at Jaito.



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History This Week

MARCH 8 - MARCH 14

MARCH 8



March 8, 1863 - During the American Civil War, Confederate Colonel John Mosby, leader of Mosby's Rangers, captured Union General E.H. Stoughton at his headquarters in Fairfax County Courthouse, Virginia.

MARCH 9



March 9, 1864 - Ulysses S. Grant was commissioned as a Lieutenant General and became commander of the Union armies.



Birthday - Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci (1451-1512) was born in Florence, Italy. He explored South America and the Amazon River, believing he had discovered a new continent. In 1507, a German mapmaker first referred to the lands discovered in the New World as America.

Birthday - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (1934-1968) was born in Gzhatsk, Russia. On April 12, 1961, he became the first human in space, orbiting in a capsule 187 miles above the Earth's surface in a flight lasting 108 minutes. His space flight caused a worldwide sensation and marked the beginning of



the space race as the U.S. worked to catch up to the Russians and launch an American into space. President John F. Kennedy later asserted the U.S. would land a man on the moon before the end of the 1960's.

MARCH 10

March 10, 1862 - The first issue of U.S. government paper money occurred as \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills began circulation.

March 10, 1880 - The Salvation Army was founded in the United States. The social service organization was first founded in England by William Booth and operates today in 90 countries.



Birthday - Politician and playwright Claire Boothe Luce (1903-1987) was born in New York City. She served in the House of Representatives from 1943 to 1947 and then became the first woman appointed as U.S. ambassador to a major country (Italy).

MARCH 11

March 11, 1918 - The 'Spanish' influenza first reached America as 107 soldiers become sick at Fort Riley, Kansas. One quarter of the U.S. population eventually became ill from the deadly virus, resulting in 500,000 deaths. The death toll worldwide approached 22 million by the end of 1920.

March 11, 1941 - During World War II, the Lend-Lease program began allowing Britain to receive American weapons, machines, raw materials, training and repair services. Ships, planes, guns and shells, along with food, clothing and metals went to the embattled British while American warships began patrolling the North Atlantic and U.S. troops were stationed in Greenland and Iceland. "We must be the great arsenal of democracy," President Roosevelt declared concerning the fight against Hitler's Germany. The initial appropriation was \$7 Billion, but by 1946 the figure reached \$50 Billion in aid from the U.S. to its Allies.

Birthday - British prime minister and statesman Harold Wilson (1916-1995) was born in Huddersfield, Yorkshire. As a young boy he once posed for a photo in front of 10 Downing Street, the residence he occupied 40 years later as head of the Labour government.

MARCH 12

March 12, 1609 - The island of Bermuda was colonized by the British after a ship on its way to Virginia was wrecked on the reefs.

March 12, 1888 - The Great Blizzard of '88 struck the northeastern U.S. The storm lasted 36 hours with snowfall totaling over 40 inches in New York City where over 400 persons died from the surprise storm.

March 12, 1938 - Nazis invaded Austria, then absorbed the country into Hitler's Reich.

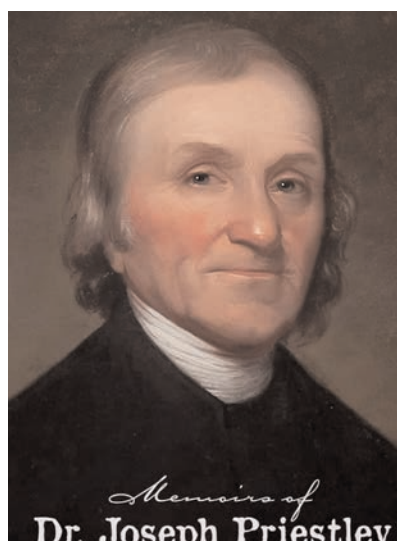
March 12, 1994 - The Church of England ordained 32 women as its first female priests. In protest, 700 male clergy members and thousands of church members left the church and joined the Roman Catholic Church which does not allow women priests.

March 12, 1999 - Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic became full-fledged members of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) less than ten years after exchanging communist rule for democracy and ending their Cold War military alliances with Soviet Russia.



Birthday - The founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938) was born in Salonika, Greece. Following World War I, he led the Turkish revolution and became Turkey's first president.

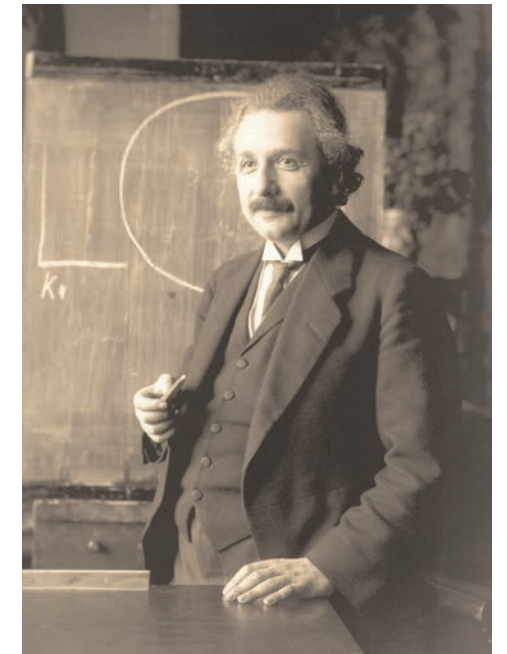
MARCH 13



Birthday - Scientist and clergyman Joseph Priestly (1733-1804) was born in Yorkshire, England. He discovered oxygen and advanced the religious theory of Unitarianism.<

March 13, 1943 - A plot to kill Hitler by German army officers failed as a bomb planted aboard his plane failed to explode due to a faulty detonator.

MARCH 14



Birthday - Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was born in Ulm, Germany. His theory of relativity led to new ways of thinking about time, space, matter and energy. He received a Nobel Prize in 1921 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1933 where he was an outspoken critic of Nazi Germany. Believing the Nazis might develop an atomic bomb, he warned President Roosevelt and urged the development of the U.S. Atomic bomb.



Birthday - The first female dentist, Lucy Hobbs (1833-1910) was born in New York state. She received her degree in 1866 from the Ohio College of Dental Surgery and was a women's rights advocate.

Mridangam Maestro T. S. Nandakumar: A Cultural Ambassador of India

BY AJAY GHOSH

MARCH 7, 2024

BRIDGEWATER, NJ (TIP): Well known around the world for his mastery of the Mridangam, a percussion instrument that is a primary rhythmic accompaniment in Carnatic music ensemble, and with expertise in various other percussion instruments, including konnakol (vocal percussion), thavil, ghatam, kanjira, and morsing, T. S. Nandakumar is a world renowned south Indian music artist, showcasing his versatility in Carnatic music, has devoted his entire life to the cause of popularizing Indian classical music around the world.

T. Shankaranarayanan Nandakumar, popularly known as "TSN" has played a pivotal role in spreading the knowledge about Indian drums, particularly the mridangam in the United States through his stage performances at prestigious orchestras, participation in global music events, educational initiatives and contributions, collaborations, global impact, and philanthropic endeavors. He has demonstrated a commitment to social responsibility through charity work, including organizing a 24-hour non-stop Akanda Seva Bhajan in aid of India's tsunami victims.

Nandakumar's belief that "Music is like a horizon which is never ending and has no boundaries" has enabled him to take music wherever he went. TSN's participation in international festivals and workshops has contributed to the global awareness of Indian percussion, showcasing the richness of Indian drumming traditions and providing a platform for cross-cultural exchange. By actively participating in musical collaborations and performances in the United States, TSN not only showcases the beauty of the mridangam but also educates audiences about the intricacies and significance of this traditional Indian percussion instrument.

As a percussionist, TSN has accompanied luminaries in Carnatic music, including Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, M. D. Ramanathan, Bhimsen Joshi, T. N. Krishnan, M. Balamuralikrishna and others. His role as an accompanist has greatly enhanced the events with the performances of these eminent artists.

Through his musical engagements, TSN engages in a form of cultural diplomacy, fostering an appreciation for Indian music and drumming traditions. This indirect form of education occurs as audiences experience the artistry and cultural depth of the mridangam during performances.

"Through music you can reach god," says Nandakumar and wants to spread this path to the Almighty. Not satisfied with his own mastery of classical Indian music, TSN took upon himself the mission to spread Carnatic music around the world. He established TSN's Percussive Arts Centre. Inc (TSNPAC),



T. Shankaranarayanan Nandakumar, popularly known as "TSN" has played a pivotal role in spreading the knowledge about Indian drums, particularly the mridangam in the United States



T. Shankaranarayanan Nandakumar is being honored

where students are trained in diverse instruments. Since its inception in 1998 in Mumbai, India, TSNPAC has evolved into a hub for students to refine their skills and collaborate within the realm of Carnatic arts. Upon migrating to New Jersey, USA, TSN seamlessly incorporated TSNPAC, offering courses in higher learning for Carnatic percussion enthusiasts in the United States. Today, TSNPAC stands as a beacon for aspiring artists seeking to master the intricacies of Carnatic percussion.

It's well known around the world that through TSNPAC, TSN has played a very important role in teaching and training students in diverse percussion instruments, including the mridangam. In addition, Internationally famous musical institutions have tapped into TSN's expertise, hosting his performances and though his highly acclaimed special, lectures in percussive arts.

Performing at the Thyagaraja Festival is a prestigious and culturally

significant experience for Carnatic musicians. The Thyagaraja Aradhana is an annual music festival held to commemorate the legendary Carnatic composer Saint Thyagaraja. TSNPAC conducts Thyagaraja Festival to commemorate the legendary Carnatic composer Saint Thyagaraja. Thyagaraja Aradhana Festival in Cleveland, Ohio, which is the largest Indian classical music festival outside of India.

"I feel very good about my accomplishment in spreading my knowledge about music to everyone. I have students all over the world, students of Indian origin and from other nationalities, some of them have become full time musicians and are accompanying renowned artists," Nandakumar says with pride. TSNPAC, in addition to providing training to music enthusiasts, has successfully organized numerous annual events by notable artists in Carnatic music, including luminaries such as K J Yesudas, N. Rajam, N. Ramani, A. Kanyakumari, and L. Subramaniam.

Mridangam Arangetrams are held annually at TSNPAC, where graduating students perform along with accomplished artists, without prior rehearsal, which is a unique approach that serves as a culminating experience for their graduation from the Center.

The festival is characterized by an atmosphere of devotion, celebrating the profound impact Thyagaraja had on the Carnatic music tradition. Musicians engaged in marathon music sessions, presenting a repertoire of kritis (compositions) composed by Thyagaraja. The festival features continuous music performances, creating an immersive experience for both performers and the audience.

TSNPAC's significant milestones include a decennial celebration marked by a grand performance featuring over 100 students. The center conducts Mridangam Arangetram annually, where students, without prior rehearsal, accompany main artists like A. Kanyakumari, culminating in a graduation ceremony. Notably, TSNPAC's influence extends globally, with 108 professional student performances, including drumming, at the Cleveland Thyagaraja festival.

Many of his students have achieved high accolades as professionals and have become graded artists by All India Radio. They follow in his footsteps by training their own students in the style of TSN and continuing to promote Carnatic percussive arts.

In addition to training students of South Asian students, several artists from the West, who are now well known for their expertise in Carnatic Music include: Paula Jeanine, Todd Isler, Johann Berby, Guillaume Barraud, Will Calhoun, Bill Buchen, Lenora Zenzlai Helm, and Bernhard Schimpelsberger.

TSN's discography, featuring solo performances and collaborations with various artists, serves as a valuable resource for those interested in Indian percussion. His recorded works contribute to the preservation and dissemination of this musical knowledge. His album, "Jewels of Rhythm" by his ensemble has earned him high accolades.

Nandakumar composed and released Jewels of Rhythm Vol 1, Jewels of Rhythm Vol 2 and Jewels of Rhythm Vol 3 which were performed by his students. Vibrative Rhythms by TSN is a fusion of Carnatic, Hindustani, and Western music as a one-man ensemble of mridangam, konnakol, thavil, ghatam, kanjira and the morsing played by himself.

Author of several books, with the objective of educating students to the themes of Indian Percussive Arts, TSN is currently working on writing books that covers advanced topics.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)



Liverpool's Darwin Nunez celebrates scoring their third goal. (REUTERS)

Liverpool rout Sparta 5-1 and Roma tops Brighton in Europa League

Darwin Nunez scored twice to help Liverpool rout Sparta 5-1 and take a big step closer to the Europa League quarterfinals on March 7.

Nunez's right-footed shot from 25 meters (yards) flew past goalkeeper Peter Vindahl to double Liverpool's early lead after Alexis Mac Allister's penalty in Prague in the first leg of the round of 16.

The Uruguay international's first strike of the evening was the 1,000th Liverpool goal scored under manager Jürgen Klopp, whose team will host the second leg next week at Anfield.

"We're happy about the result and the performance," Klopp told Czech public television. "Our goals were fantastic."

In first-half stoppage time, Nunez let a pass from Mac Allister bounce in the right corner of the area before firing inside the far post for his second.

Nunez scored in the ninth minute of stoppage time Saturday to earn Liverpool a 1-0 win at Nottingham Forest in the Premier League.

In Prague, Liverpool needed just a few minutes to go ahead.

Mac Allister sent Vindahl the wrong way in the sixth minute to convert a penalty awarded after the Argentine was downed in the area by Asger Sørensen.

Conor Bradley reduced the lead to 3-1 with an own goal a minute after he came on as substitute at the start of the second half. Luis Díaz restored the three-goal advantage seven minutes later.

Kuldeep wreaks havoc as England fold for 218

DHARAMSALA (TIP)

Kuldeep Yadav seems to have a special connection with the HPCA stadium here. It was at the same venue that Kuldeep made his Test debut seven years ago — incidentally, it was also in the month of March. Kuldeep had picked up four wickets against Australia in the first innings.

In only the second Test hosted by the stadium, Kuldeep again lit up the opening day with a five-wicket haul to put India on top against England in the fifth and final Test of the series.

On the eve of the Test, England skipper Ben Stokes had termed the pitch as a "belter". However, the visitors seemed to have completely misjudged the conditions as the English batters were picked apart by India's spin trio — Kuldeep (5/72), Ravichandran Ashwin (4/51) and Ravindra Jadeja (1/17). England folded up for 218 in less than 60 overs.

It looked like a completely different pitch when India batted as the hosts replied strongly to cut down most of the deficit. Attacking fifties by openers Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal led the hosts to 135/1 in 35 overs.

Despite England holding a strong position at 175/3, India's bowlers made a stunning comeback and all credit goes to Kuldeep, who used the flight and drift to get his fourth five-wicket haul. The mild wind blowing at the ground helped new-ball bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj. But England's openers survived the initial period of fierce swing bowling.

However, the breakthrough came in the 18th over when Kuldeep took



Kuldeep Yadav shows the ball after completing his five-wicket haul on Day 1 at the HPCA stadium in Dharamsala on Thursday. PTI

charge. After being hit for two fours, Kuldeep's flight was rewarded as Ben Duckett's mistimed hit was caught by a diving Shubman Gill.

He could have got rid of Zak Crawley (79 off 108) off his second ball of the day but India opted against taking a review for a catch. Kuldeep, though, got his man eventually with a brilliant delivery that crashed into Crawley's leg-stump.

Kuldeep got Ollie Pope (11), Jonny Bairstow (29), who is playing his 100th Test, and Stokes (0) with googlies. From the other end, Jadeja trapped Joe Root (26) and England were suddenly struggling at 175/6.

Ashwin could not be denied in his

100th Test as the veteran off-spinner cleaned up the tail, dismissing Tom Hartley (6) and Mark Wood (0) in the same over, before wrapping up the England innings with wickets of Ben Foakes (24) and James Anderson (0).

While the ball did wonders for India, the English bowlers failed to find much support. The conditions changed as the sun began to set. Openers Sharma and Jaiswal were off to a flying start. The skipper posted an unbeaten 52, while Jaiswal scored 57 before getting stumped by Foakes off Shoaib Bashir. The left-hander crossed the 1000-run mark in only his ninth Test. *Source: TNS*

Jaiswal's 700: Sunil Gavaskar finally has some company

DHARAMSALA (TIP)

A wristy flick against Shoaib Bashir's flighted off-break raced to the midwicket boundary and took Yashasvi Jaiswal to 46 runs. The moment passed by quietly but a significant milestone was achieved nonetheless with that lovely shot against the turn — Jaiswal's run-tally for this series reached 701.

Before March 7, Sunil Gavaskar, incidentally in the commentary box at HPCA Stadium, was the only Indian to have amassed 700-plus runs in a Test series — he did it twice against West Indies (1971 and 1978-79). On day one of this fifth and final Test, Jaiswal also became the fastest Indian to 1000 Test runs (in terms of matches, having played 9 Tests), eclipsing a record belonging to Gavaskar and Cheteshwar Pujara (11 Tests each). In terms of innings, only Vinod Kambli (14 innings) has got to 1000 faster than Jaiswal's 16.

A look at the list of 25 batters who have reached the 700-run mark in a series shows that luck doesn't play a role here. From Don Bradman's table-topping 974 runs to Viv Richards's 829 — the names speak of quality, class and the rare ability to make a series their own. Each



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates his half-century on Day 1 of the 5th Test match against England, at Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium, in Dharamsala on March 7. (ANI)

member of this elite group has had a great impact on the sport as a whole and India will hope Jaiswal manages to keep the tradition going.

The ease with which Jaiswal, 22, peppered the boundary on Thursday was in sync with the oomph he

has exhibited all through the home series. Yes, a rush of young blood eventually resulted in Jaiswal's stumping off Bashir after making a breezy 58-ball 57, but these are minor concerns about a left-handed batter who there's a lot to like about.

Again in his innings on Thursday, what came through was the clarity about his template. Not until the eighth over did Jaiswal hit a boundary, moving along steadily to six runs off 25 balls even as Rohit Sharma got the scoreboard moving with a few sumptuous strokes. But once Bashir was brought on, Jaiswal was able to flick the switch ever so quickly and hit the rookie off-spinner for three sixes in an over.

Jaiswal's six-hitting prowess is worth harping on. In nine Tests, he has already smashed 29 sixes, showing a fearless propensity to take the aerial route. It's a skill he has honed by playing in the IPL, where he has ownership of the record for the fastest fifty (13 balls) in addition to a turbo-charged 124 off 62 balls. As Rajasthan Royals' high-performance director Zubin Bharucha said recently, Jaiswal has spent many hours working on his power-hitting game. *Source: HT*



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In 2018 Prasanth, Sushanth and Nisanth were diagnosed and treated for Prematurity Retinopathy. An illness in premature babies which can cause blindness.

Luckily through GEMROP an initiative funded by EFA to screen premature babies throughout hospitals in India, the triplets were able to receive an expensive surgery free of charge. The boys are now the age of 4 with perfect vision.