



The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

Will bring out a special edition to mark the International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2024.



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ICJ opens hearings on Israeli military's incursion into Rafah

IT IS THE FOURTH TIME SOUTH AFRICA HAS ASKED THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE FOR EMERGENCY MEASURES ALLEGING THAT ISRAEL'S MILITARY ACTION IN ITS WAR WITH HAMAS IN GAZA AMOUNTS TO GENOCIDE



Presiding judge Nawaf Salam, third from right, opens the hearings at the International Court of Justice, in The Hague, Netherlands, on May 16, 2024. -Photo Credit: AP

MAY 16, 2024

THE HAGUE (TIP): The United Nations' top court on May 16 opened two days of hearings into a request from South Africa to press Israel to halt its military operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population has sought shelter, says an AP report from The Hague.

It is the fourth time South Africa has asked the International Court of Justice for emergency measures since the nation launched proceedings alleging that Israel's military action in its war with Hamas in Gaza amounts to genocide.

"The sitting is open," said ICJ President Nawaf Salam.

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INDIA ELECTION SPECIAL PAGE 12-13

Supreme Court of India curbs ED's powers of arrest



Supreme Court of India curbs ED's powers of arrest
Image for representation only

MAY 16, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): A person accused of money laundering can't be arrested by the Enforcement Directorate after the special court has taken cognizance of the probe agency's complaint (chargesheet) and has issued summons to him

under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, the Supreme Court ruled on Thursday, May 16, a TNS report said. A Bench led by Justice AS Oka, however, said: "If the ED wants custody of the accused who appears after service of summons for conducting further investigation in the same offence, it will have to seek custody of the accused by applying to the special court."

Must take court nod for custody Bench said if ED wanted custody, it could move a plea before special court, which could grant custody if satisfied custodial interrogation was required.

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Protests in PoK consequence of Pakistan's policy of systemic plundering of resources: India



"We have seen reports on protests in several areas of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing. -Photo Credit: ANI

MAY 17, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on May 17 said the protests witnessed in several parts of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) are a "natural consequence" of Islamabad's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from the region that remains under its

"forcible and illegal" occupation.

India also asserted that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh "have been, are and shall always remain integral parts of India".

Violent protests erupted in PoK over rising costs of food, fuel and essential utilities as Pakistan reels under a severe economic crisis.

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Every day counts in cases dealing with personal liberty, says Supreme Court

MAY 17, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Friday, May 17, 2024, said in matters of personal liberty, especially in cases under the money laundering law, every day counts and there is no room for delay. "Every day counts in the matters of personal liberty of citizens," Justice B.R. Gavai observed while heading a Bench also comprising Justice Sandeep Mehta.

The remark came in a plea filed by businessman Amandeep Dhall, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal. Dhall is an accused in the Delhi liquor policy case. He is accused of conspiracy and facilitating kickbacks to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Mr. Sibal said the bail plea of Dhall was adjourned over 40 times in the Delhi High Court, after which it has been listed in July.

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Justice Gavai noted that the regular bail petition of Amandeep Dhall was filed in the High Court 11 months ago. -Image for representation only



Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal addresses a press conference in New Delhi.

File Photo/ Credit: ANI

Kapil Sibal elected Supreme Court Bar Association president

MAY 17, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): Senior advocate Kapil Sibal was elected president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) on Thursday. He would be serving the SCBA for the fourth time as its president.

He was previously elected the president of the lawyers' body in 2001. He did two separate stints in the mid and the late 1990s.

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Andy Singh

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Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja

VICE PRESIDENT:

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CHIEF EDITOR:

Prof Indrajit S. Saluja

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Bidisha Roy

SPL. REPORTER UNO:

H.S. Panaser

GRAPHICS DIRECTOR:

Om Parkash Malik

DIRECTOR**ADMINISTRATION:**

Gauri Beri

CONTRIBUTING**PHOTOGRAPHERS:**Baldev Singh / BJ Videos
Gunjesh Desai / Masala Junction
Jay Mandal,
Mohammad Jaffer,
SnapsIndia
Mohammad Shahzad,
Zia Khan,
Nisha Rani
Vaaho Photographers,
Vijay Shah - Photo Journalist.**CORRESPONDENTS :****SACRAMENTO:**

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OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENTS**LONDON**

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SPL CORRESPONDENT**DELHI BUREAU CHIEF:**

Chandan Singh

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A.S. Arora,

R.P.Sharma

JAIPUR :

Dr. Yashpaul Goyal

DALLAS BUREAU CHIEF & VP

Lovllien Kaurr

972-330-3139

editor@theindianpanorama.news

The Indian PanoramaP.O. Box No. 190067, South
Richmond Hill, NY 11419,
Tel: 646-247-9458

Email:

editor@theindianpanorama.news

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GUEST COMMENT

ED in the dock : Court curbs
agency's powers under PMLA

The country is in the midst of the General Election, but it's the ED (Enforcement Directorate) which is far more in the news than the EC (Election Commission). The Supreme Court ruled on Thursday, May 16, that the ED could not arrest an accused under Section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after a special court had taken cognizance of the complaint of money laundering. The Bench stated that when an accused appeared before a judge in pursuance of a summons, the agency would have to apply to the court concerned to obtain his or her custody. According to the court, such an accused is not required

to apply for bail as he or she would not be treated as being in custody.

The ruling is another setback to the ED, which has been under intense judicial scrutiny in recent months and repeatedly accused by Opposition parties of overreach. These parties, especially AAP, have claimed that their leaders are being targeted by Central probe agencies at the behest of the ruling party. The ED's allegedly unbridled powers under the PMLA have been the subject of a heated debate since 2017, when a Division Bench struck down the Act's Section 45(1), which imposed additional conditions for grant of bail to the accused. However, this decision

had been overruled by a July 2022 judgment of another SC Bench.

Meanwhile, the SC has asserted that no exception was made in granting interim bail to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal in a money laundering case. 'We said in our order what we felt was justified,' the Bench said, adding that a critical analysis of the verdict was welcome. These observations have come two weeks after the court questioned the ED about the timing of Kejriwal's arrest - in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections. Clearly, the ED has a lot of explaining to do in one case after another.

(Tribune, India)

Malign motive: On the arrest and remand of
NewsClick founderSUPREME COURT ORDER QUASHING ARREST LAYS BARE POLICE DESIGN TO
CIRCUMVENT DUE PROCESS

The Supreme Court of India's order invalidating the arrest and remand of NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha is much more than a technical outcome based on the failure of the Delhi police to furnish the grounds for his arrest in writing. It is also an indictment of the clandestine manner in which the police sought to obtain his custody. As if invoking the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against the web portal was not malign enough - the case seems fictional in its entirety, and establishes no overt act that can even be described as unlawful, much less a terrorist act - the police seemed to have resorted to what the Court called a "blatant attempt to circumvent the due process of law". The Court did not go into the merits of the case at this stage, but said enough to warrant an adverse inference about the absence of bona fides. Mr. Purkayastha was produced before a remand judge before

dawn and his police custody obtained at 6 a.m., even though the police had the entire day to comply with the statutory requirement of producing him before a court within 24 hours. The police kept his lawyer in the dark about the early morning proceedings, and instead had a 'remand advocate' readily present during the proceedings. The idea was "to confine the accused to police custody without informing him the grounds on which he has been arrested; deprive the accused of the opportunity to avail the services of the legal practitioner of his choice so as to oppose the prayer for police custody remand, seek bail and also to mislead the court".

The judgment is also notable for extending, to the UAPA, the principle laid down in Pankaj Bansal (2023) that those arrested under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act should be given the grounds of their arrest in writing. In fact,

interpreting the relevant constitutional provisions, the Court says this may be required as a matter of course and without any exception for the arrest of any person under the UAPA or any other offences. The police recently filed a charge sheet in this case, which makes the outlandish claim that Mr. Purkayastha was funded by the Chinese government and that he and American millionaire Neville Roy Singham were involved in an alleged conspiracy to replace Indian democracy with a party-state system as in China. It speaks of their support to fomenting riots and protests in India and even funding terrorists. Given the grave, even if far-fetched, nature of the allegations against him, regular bail would have been difficult to come by. Therefore, it is salutary that the Court has treated the level of adherence to procedure - the need to furnish the grounds of arrest in this case - as sacrosanct.

(The Hindu)

Palestine's UN rights: US
must pay heed to global
support

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) convened in New York on Thursday, May 16, for an emergency special session on the Gaza crisis and, by a large majority, passed a resolution upgrading Palestine's rights as an Observer State, without offering it full membership. The overwhelming global support for Palestine was accompanied by a request to the UN Security Council (UNSC) to favorably consider its request for full statehood. With this resolution, Palestine will enjoy more

rights at the UN, though it will not get the right to vote or stand for elections to UN organs.

With effect from September 10, when the UNGA begins its next session, the Palestinian state will no longer be on the fringes. It will be seated with other member states in alphabetical order and can co-sponsor proposals and amendments. Palestinian representatives can also be elected as officers in the plenary and Main Committees of the UNGA. This move is of immense symbolic value, but it does not alleviate the prolonged suffering of the Palestinian people. Of pressing importance are a ceasefire in Gaza, a huge boost in

humanitarian aid and the safe return of Israeli hostages.

The grant of full membership to Palestine should take place along with a ceasefire. The 25 nations that abstained and the nine, led by the US, that said 'no' failed to undermine the support extended by 143 nations. The world, especially the Global South, cannot afford the blowback that is emerging from the recurring bouts of conflict in the region. Last month, the only opposition to a UNSC resolution on statehood for Palestine came from the US. With its university campuses in turmoil, America should see which way the wind is blowing domestically as well.

(Tribune, India)

India's Ambassador to Indonesia Sandeep Chakravorty and wife receive a warm welcome in New York

MAY 15, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): India's Ambassador to Indonesia Sandeep Chakravorty received a warm welcome on a private visit with his wife Dr. Taruna Chakravorty to New York from May 12 to May 16. Ambassador Chakravorty was the Consul General of India in New York from August 2017 to June 2020.

Ambassador Chakravorty and his wife Dr. Taruna Chakravorty, with their affable manners, won the admiration, respect and love of all sections of the Indian American community as well as they were popular with a cross section of mainstream American society which included academicians, artists, businessmen and politicians.

A member of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) since 1996, Ambassador Chakravorty has served in India's Missions in Spain, Colombia, Bangladesh and Peru. Prior to assuming charge as Consul General of India in New York in August, 2017, he was the Ambassador of India to Peru and Bolivia. Earlier he had been India's Deputy Chief of Mission in Bangladesh.

In India's Ministry of External Affairs, he has held several positions including Press Relations Officer, Staff Officer to Minister of State and worked on desks dealing with Central Asia, East Asia and China.

During his brief visit to New York, he was flooded with requests from organizations and individuals for according a reception to him. However, not being able to afford time for so many requests, he agreed to 2 receptions. Attorney Ravi Batra and his wife Ranju Batra, the graceful lady who is better known today as one who got the Diwali stamp issued by the USPS, and later instituted an award for diplomats



A cake cutting ceremony at the reception hosted by Ravi Batra and Ranju Batra on May 14, 2024.

L to R: Dr. Taruna Chakravorty (5th from the left), Ranju Batra, Sandeep Chakravorty, Ravi Batra, Kamal Dandona, HR Shah, Sant Chatwal, among others

"The Power of One Award", hosted a reception for Ambassador Chakravorty and Dr. Taruna Chakravorty on May 14. The attendees included only the people close to Batras.

Another reception accorded to the Chakravortys was hosted by Prem Bhandari and his wife Dr. Rekha Bhandari on May 15 which was attended by the leading lights of the top social organizations and eminent Indian Americans.

Welcoming the couple, Prem Bhandari spoke about the difficult times of political developments in India and the onslaught of COVID during which Ambassador Chakravorty



Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty shares his thoughts with the gathering at the reception hosted by Prem Bhandari and Dr. Rekha Bhandari on May 15

L to R: Dr. Rekha Bhandari, Dr. Taruna Chakravorty, Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty

Standing - L to R: Alok Kumar, Prem Bhandari, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York

had to work and praised his leadership. He also referred to Ambassador Chakravorty's readiness to help out the community and his outreach initiatives.

Ambassador Chakravorty appreciated the Indian American community leaders present for their cooperation in integrating the community, creating better understanding and cementing relationship between India and the US. He extended an invitation to the gathering to visit Indonesia which has historical linkages with India.



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TWO INDIAN AMERICAN WOMEN RESCUED BY ARMY CHOPPERS FROM HIMACHAL'S CHURDHAR VALLEY



Richa Abhay Sonawane and Sonia Ratan, were successfully rescued from the terrains of the Churdhar Valley in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district in a rescue operation executed by the Indian Army

MAY 12, 2024

SIRMAUR, HP (TIP): : Two Indian American women, identified as Richa Abhay Sonawane and Sonia Ratan, were successfully rescued from the terrains of the Churdhar Valley in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district, reports media. The rescue operation, executed by the Indian Army, concluded on Saturday, May 11 morning.

According to Sirmaur Deputy Commissioner Sumit Khimta, the stranded trekkers were airlifted from Teesri, situated along the Nohradhar-Churdhar trek route. Both individuals have been admitted to a hospital in Chandigarh, where they are reported to be in stable condition.

Joginder Singh, a resident of Nohradhar village, notified local authorities on Friday evening about the predicament of the two women. Sonia Ratan's health deteriorated during the trek, compelling them to halt their journey at Teesri, approximately 10 km away from Nohradhar.

Responding swiftly to the distress call, a multi-departmental team, comprising personnel from the police, health, and revenue departments, was dispatched to provide immediate medical assistance. Additionally, teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) were mobilized to augment the rescue efforts.

The Home Ministry and Ministry of External Affairs were promptly informed, leading to the requisition of two Army helicopters for the rescue mission.

The treacherous weather conditions prevailing in the Churdhar valley further complicated the operation.

Indian-origin woman stabbed to death at a bus stop in London

MAY 14, 2024

LONDON (TIP): A 22-year-old man charged with the murder of a 66-year-old Indian-origin woman as she waited at a bus stop in north-west London has been remanded in custody at a hearing on Tuesday, May 14.

Anita Mukhey, who worked part-time for the National Health Service (NHS) as a medical secretary, was waiting at the Burnt Oak Broadway bus stop in the Edgware area of London last week when Jalal Debella is accused of fatally stabbing her in the chest and neck.

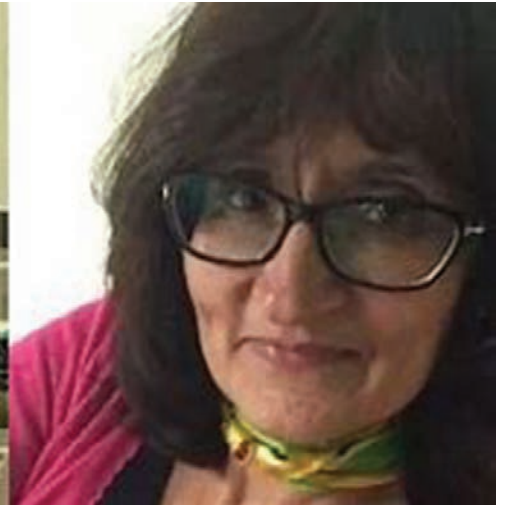
He appeared at Old Bailey Court in London and will enter his plea of guilty or not guilty at the next hearing in the case scheduled for August.

"Police were called around 11.50 am on Thursday, May 9, to reports of a stabbing in Burnt Oak Broadway," Metropolitan Police said.

"Officers, London Ambulance Service (LAS) and London's Air Ambulance (HEMS) all attended the scene, where a 66-year-old woman was treated for knife wounds. Sadly, despite the best efforts of emergency services, she died at the scene. Her family have been informed,"



Anita Mukhey, 66, was fatally stabbed at a London bus stop



the police said.

Debella was arrested on suspicion of murder in the Colindale area of north London later on May 9 and charged with Mukhey's murder and also for possession of an offensive weapon. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) told the court that a preliminary cause of death was found to be sharp force injuries to the front of the chest and neck.

"Anita Mukhey, 66 years old, was a married mother and grandmother devoted to her family, who also worked part-time in the NHS as a medical secretary. The family ask for privacy at this difficult time," Mukhey's family said in a statement issued via the police.

According to reports, members of the public screamed and shouted at the suspect to stop as the daylight attack sent shockwaves across the community.

Indian national charged in connection with Nijjar's murder appears before Canadian court

A judge set Amandeep's next court date for May 21 - when he'll appear alongside the other three men charged with conspiring to kill Nijjar

MAY 16, 2024



An undated photo of Amandeep Singh, fourth Indian national and accused, who was arrested by Canadian authorities on the charges of role in the killing of separatist Khalistan Hardeep Singh Nijjar.
Photo : PTI

SURREY, BC (TIP): An Indian national charged in connection with the killing of a Khalistani separatist appeared before a Canadian court, which ordered him to re-appear on May 21 alongside three co-accused arrested in the high-profile case that has severely strained India's relations with Canada.

Amandeep Singh, a 22-year-old suspect in the killing of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, appeared via video in a Surrey court on Wednesday, and the matter has been put forward to next week, local media reports said.

Nijjar, 45, was killed outside Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18, 2023.

Amandeep was charged on May 11 with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder, just over a week after identical charges were announced against three co-accused -- Karan Brar (22), Kamalpreet Singh (22) and 28-year-old Karanpreet Singh.

Amandeep appeared in court in Surrey virtually from Ontario, where he was already in the custody of Peel Regional Police for unrelated firearms charges.

A judge set his next court date for May 21 - when he'll appear alongside the other three men charged with conspiring to kill Nijjar.

His appearance before the court was marred by technical delays.

More than two dozen people gathered outside the courtroom before Amandeep's appearance, holding flags in support of Khalistan.

Amandeep, Karan Brar, Kamalpreet Singh and Karanpreet Singh are all Indian nationals. Police say Amandeep was splitting his time in Canada between Brampton, Abbotsford, and Surrey.

They are allegedly members of a hit squad that investigators believe was tasked by the government of India to carry out the murder of Nijjar, according to the Canadian media.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian man found guilty of molesting women during yoga classes in Singapore



Rajpal Singh was accused of touching private parts of five women during yoga classes in 2019 and 2020

Photo for representational purpose only : Thinkstock

MAY 16, 2024

SINGAPORE (TIP): A 34-year-old Indian national who used to work as an instructor at a yoga center in Singapore was found guilty on Thursday, May 16, of molesting three women during his classes.

Rajpal Singh will return to court for sentencing in July. His passport has been impounded and currently he is out on bail of SGD 25,000.

Singh was accused of touching the private parts of five women during his yoga classes in 2019 and 2020. But he was acquitted on three counts of molesting a fourth student after the judge found that the woman's testimony was not "unusually convincing", Channel News Asia reported.

The man faces a total of 10 charges. Two charges involving a fifth woman were stood down during his trial.

The punishment for outraging a person's modesty is up to two years in jail, a fine, caning, or any combination of these penalties.

Indian American billionaire Vinod Khosla loses round in Martins Beach battle



California Superior Court Judge Raymond Swope Saturday, May 11, denied Khosla's bid to throw out a lawsuit against him that says he cannot limit access to Martins Beach, a popular surfing spot near San Francisco

MAY 14, 2024

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): For 15 years, Indian American billionaire venture capitalist Vinod Khosla has been fighting a legal battle to restrict access to Martins Beach near his home in San Francisco area.

California Superior Court Judge Raymond Swope Saturday, May 11, denied Khosla's bid to throw out a lawsuit against him that says he cannot limit access to Martins Beach, a popular surfing spot near San Francisco. Swope's decision is just the latest setback in Khosla's years-long saga, Bloomberg reported.

Back in 2008, Khosla bought a home

near the beach for an impressive \$32.5 million, according to the publication. Shortly thereafter, he built a gate on the road that leads down to the cove, ensuring that the public couldn't use that access point to get to the beach. Security guards initially patrolled the beach and issued citations to those who violated the "No Trespassing" sign by jumping over the gate.

Lawyers for Khosla say the gate is legal, given that he's the property owner, but others disagree. The ensuing legal battle made it all the way to the US Supreme Court in 2018, where the justices opted to not take up Khosla's appeal, letting a lower

ruling stand.

That ruling was in favor of the Surfrider Foundation, a nonprofit in California that advocates for the protection of oceans and beaches.

And now the State Lands Commission, a California government agency, is similarly trying to bar Khosla from closing off the beach to the public. It contends that the public has "access rights" to the land given state law and historical use. Swope's ruling said the agency had given enough support for its claims, Bloomberg noted, and that it could proceed with the case it filed in 2020.

Beach access in California is a hot-button issue, and battles among homeowners and the public have been known to play out for decades. Last year, for example, the public finally gained access to Escondido Beach in Malibu after a 40-year fight. In that case, two homeowners agreed to restore an access point that had been blocked since the 1980s.

While the San Francisco issue doesn't have that sort of history behind it, it's been dragging on for more than a decade at this point. And depending on what Khosla decides to do, the public could be waiting much longer to get to Martins Beach.

Khosla told Bloomberg the battle was about property rights and a group of people trying to "coerce him" into giving up his private property.

INDIAN AMERICAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER VEENA IYER APPOINTED DISTRICT JUDGE IN MINNESOTA



Veena Iyer has been appointed as a district judge in the second judicial district, covering Ramsey County, in Minnesota by Gov. Tim Walz.

MAY 14, 2024

MINNESOTA (TIP): Veena Iyer, Indian American executive director of the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM), has been appointed as a district judge in the second judicial district, covering Ramsey County, in Minnesota by Gov. Tim Walz.

Iyer will be replacing JaPaul J. Harris and will be chambered in St. Paul in Ramsey County, according to an announcement from the governor's office.

"I am honored to appoint Veena Iyer to the Ramsey County bench," said Walz. "Her diverse practice background and understanding of the impact that our justice system has on the many communities it serves gives me the confidence that she will be a fair and balanced judge."

Iyer described her appointment as "truly bittersweet," expressing her deep attachment to ILCM and its community spirit. "I will miss ILCM, a community like no other in its tenacity, resilience, creativity, empathy, and compassion. However, I am honored that Governor Walz has entrusted me to serve the residents of Ramsey County and to ensure justice for all."

"As the child of immigrants, it has been the honor of a lifetime to serve as the executive director of the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, and I am proud of all we have done together to support immigrant and refugee families across Minnesota and North Dakota," she remarked.

Iyer was previously a shareholder at Nilan Johnson Lewis and an Equal Justice Works fellow at Legal Aid Chicago. Iyer was also a law clerk for Natalie Hudson on the Minnesota Court of Appeals, Susan Burke on the Fourth Judicial District, and Matthew Kennelly on the US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

Her community involvement includes leadership roles with the Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association and Minnesota Women Lawyers.

Iyer also serves on the Board of Regents of Augsburg University and the Community Advisory Board of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank. She received her BA from the University of Chicago and JD from Harvard Law School.

Three Indian American teens die in Alpharetta car crash



Aryan Joshi and Sriya Avasarala reportedly died on the scene. Anvi Sharma, who was transported to the North Fulton Hospital in an unconscious condition died there later in the night.

MAY 15, 2024

ATLANTA, GA (TIP) : In a heartbreaking tragedy, three Indian American teens, all 18, died in a single-vehicle crash at approximately 7.55 pm Tuesday, May 14, in Alpharetta. Authorities have confirmed that the accident, which also resulted in injuries to two other 18-year-olds, occurred on a bend in the road along Westside Parkway

between Maxwell Road and Hembree Road, a residential area.

The Alpharetta Police Department, through a statement released on Wednesday, May 15, identified all five victims.

Aryan Joshi and Sriya Avasarala reportedly died on the scene. Anvi Sharma, who was transported to the North Fulton Hospital in an unconscious condition died there later in the night. The Alpharetta and Indian American communities mourned her untimely passing at her funeral held on Wednesday afternoon.

Anvi and Sriya were freshmen at the University of Georgia. Aryan was a senior at Alpharetta High School.

The two injured students have been identified as Rithwak Somepalli, a Georgia State University student, who was the car's driver, and Mohammed Liyakath, a senior at Alpharetta High School. They were also transported to North Fulton Hospital, but there is no update on their condition.

The incident prompted the closure of that section of the street until approximately 2 a.m.

Investigations into the crash are ongoing.

Indian -origin professor Ghazala Hashmi joins race for Virginia lieutenant governor

Nomination for lieutenant governor in her party's June 2025 primary.



Virginia state Sen. Ghazala F. Hashmi is seeking the Democratic Virginia state Sen. Ghazala F. Hashmi is seeking the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor in her party's June 2025 primary.

MAY 13, 2024

RICHMOND, VA (TIP): Indian-born Virginia state Sen. Ghazala F. Hashmi is seeking the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor in her party's June 2025 primary.

A former literature professor and community college administrator, Hashmi (Chesterfield) became the first Muslim in the Virginia Senate and the first Muslim woman in either chamber after flipping a redrawn suburban Richmond district in 2019.

"If we want to protect our freedoms, stand against hate and build a future that uplifts all of us, including our most vulnerable, we must always fight for what is right," said Hashmi announcing her run.

"When I first ran, I realized that any one of us can make a positive, meaningful difference. \

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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New stadium unveiled for Cricket World Cup in Nassau County



Nassau County's International Cricket Stadium was unveiled Wednesday, May 15, in Eisenhower Park
Screenshot : CBS

MAY 16, 2024

EAST MEADOW, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County's International Cricket Stadium was unveiled Wednesday in Eisenhower Park. A series of Cricket World Cup matches will be held there in June.

The 34,000-seat stadium was built in just three months.

This is the first time the United States will be hosting Cricket World Cup games.

Eight of the Men's T20 World Cup

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www.worldveganvision.org

Social media's impact on Indian politics



BY NEELANJAN
SIRCAR
&
YAMINI AIYAR



THE TRADITIONAL MEDIA'S SHIFT TO MORE PROVOCATIVE, BIASED CONTENT FOR SURVIVAL, MAY HAVE ENSURED ITS DEATH

"Influencers with views that challenge the dominant narrative have been quick to catch on, helped by the algorithms. A feature of the algorithms used in YouTube and Facebook is that content that is growing quickly in popularity will be boosted to the whole user base. Indeed, Mr. Rathee's video titled, "Is India becoming a DICTATORSHIP?", has already garnered 25 million views on YouTube. This is also certainly an undercount, as snippets of the video have been circulating all over social media platforms. Social media has also offered a space for political engagement of an increasingly reticent voter, silenced due to the prevailing environment of fear. In Mohanlalganj, we meet a local Instagram influencer from the Jatav community who reads shairi and remains publicly apolitical. But his frustration against the BJP is growing. He tells us, "I see and hear everything. If I speak, I will have trouble"."

If Congress wins this election, it will be because of Dhruv Rathee," declares a young Muslim man in Uttar Pradesh. Another group of young Jatav men in Agra list out who they follow - Mr. Rathee is top on the list as are local online "influencers." Even a young supporter of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from the Rawat community in Mohanlalganj admits that he regularly listens to Ravish on YouTube. Strikingly, almost everyone can recount the content - the details of the different shows and episodes of these influencers.

ARE INDEPENDENT JOURNALISTS ON YOUTUBE REPLACING TV JOURNALISTS?

This is the first ever social media election in India. Social media has created avenues for alternate viewpoints outside of the specter of state control and in the process successfully created a cognitive dissonance with the government narrative.

CHANGING CONTOURS

Till recently, social media has been a tool deployed by the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. In the early part of the decade, a "right wing ecosystem" emerged on social media to generate cognitive dissonance with the existing traditional media. The traditional media, in those early years did not indulge in active fear mongering. This was the role occupied by the right wing social media, which was openly politically colored and pushed the boundaries of decency with commentary on Muslims, women, and re-telling of history. As Kunal Purohit notes in his incisive book H-Pop: The Secretive World of Hindutva Pop Stars, "It provides ways to disseminate hate and stoke anger against minority groups and rivals each day, without ever becoming a tangible event, like a hate speech rally or a riot."

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ARE INDIA'S NEW ELECTION CAMPAIGNERS

But things have changed, especially as traditional media began to echo much of the content from the right wing ecosystem, saturating the type of content that was received. People are not being fooled; even core BJP supporters recognize the extent of this control. In the words of a BJP supporter we spoke to, "The media only speaks for one side (the BJP)." With a more diverse population using mobile phones and as more people searched for alternate viewpoints, an opportunity was created for critical voices. Crucially, these voices don't align themselves with any political party, allowing them to garner the credibility vacated by the traditional media. Thus many we spoke to said that it was easier to get the true picture of what is happening in India through social media. Paradoxically, the traditional media's shift to more provocative, biased content for survival, may have ensured its death.

AS DEBATES SHIFT TO SOCIAL MEDIA, FUN GOES OUT OF ELECTION SEASON IN KOLKATA

Influencers with views that challenge the dominant narrative have been quick to catch on, helped by the algorithms. A feature of the algorithms used in YouTube and Facebook is that content that is growing quickly in popularity



YouTuber Dhruv Rathee's video titled, "Is India becoming a DICTATORSHIP?", has already garnered 25 million views on YouTube.

Photo: Special Arrangement

In a democracy, diversity of opinion and active contestation of political views are critical. That these spaces are being priced open is an indicator of the sites of democratic reclaiming that are emerging in India.

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ARE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS READY FOR RECORD ELECTIONS IN 2024?

Social media has most rapidly been adopted by the educated youth population. The youth was once viewed as the core support base for Mr. Modi. However, after 10 years, the aspiration is largely gone and for many, frustration has come in its place.

The Kurmi population is pivotal in

Social media has created avenues for alternate viewpoints outside of the specter of state control and in the process successfully created a cognitive dissonance with the government narrative.

many parts of central and eastern Uttar Pradesh. Once fully behind the BJP, division among them is palpable in Barabanki. Educated youth frustrated with the lack of jobs and armed with a narrative derived from social media, have moved away from the BJP - and it shows in the results. In 2019, the BJP swept the Barabanki parliamentary constituency, but in the 2022 State election, it lost three of the five assembly constituencies that comprise the parliamentary constituency.

ELECTIONS 2024 | WITH SEVERAL JOURNALISTS AND POLITICIANS TAKING TO ONLINE PLATFORMS, WILL YOUTUBE BECOME A GAMECHANGER?

At a very basic level, this is a positive development. In a democracy, diversity of opinion and active contestation of political views are critical. That these spaces are being priced open is an indicator of the sites of democratic reclaiming that are emerging in India.

However, the long-term implications need greater interrogation. First, political narratives are now being shaped outside the formal party system. Traditionally, the party worker and the political intermediary presented voters with political narratives, connecting them with the political ideologies with which they were aligned - generating policy demands from the bottom up. But social media is making the party workers and intermediaries less relevant. This enables greater centralization within political parties, as the leader can directly shape narratives. Algorithms also ensure deeper polarization. What this will do to party structures and more significantly the public sphere remains to be seen.

Regardless, the emergence of social media as the key player in this election has everything to do with the complete abdication of the bulk of traditional media from its professional purpose of framing political issues with credibility. What does this portend for reasoned discussion and the health of Indian democracy? This is the question that the 2024 election raises.

(Yamini Aiyar is a Public Policy Scholar; Neelanjana Sircar is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research)

Stringent laws have made prolonged detention norm

WHY AREN'T DISTRICT COURTS AND HIGH COURTS DOING THEIR JOB OF PROVIDING LEGAL REDRESS IN CASES OF PERSONAL LIBERTY?



BY SRIRAM PANCHU

"We need to focus on why it is that invariably the accused has to travel all the way to the apex court to obtain release. Why aren't district courts and high courts doing their job of providing legal redress in cases of personal liberty? While the members of the former may not feel sufficiently protected, HC judges have as much constitutional protection for their independence as the judges of the Supreme Court have. What prevents them from stepping up to the plate, especially when the facts are stark enough? The system works well when each level of the judiciary plays its part, and an overdependence on the highest court is not healthy. Even there, we have seen the unusual phenomenon of withdrawal of personal liberty cases of prominent individuals after a noticeable change of the roster."

In the film world, we are used to the phenomenon of delayed releases. It seems to be so in the judicial world as well. Arvind Kejriwal has been released after 50 days in captivity, all during peak election campaigning. And now the Supreme Court has set at liberty Prabir Purkayastha after he has been inside a prison for about 225 days. While there is relief at the release, one must question why it takes so long, and what kind of laws keep men behind bars so easily.

Purkayastha is the head of NewsClick, an online journalistic platform known for its sharp reporting, independent views and for not being particularly



Lapse: Prabir Purkayastha (right) and his lawyer were not informed about the grounds for his arrest and the remand order was passed before the lawyer had received the remand application.

Photo : PTI

respectful of the powers that be. People like him are irritants to excessively strong governments, which like media outlets to be supportive by nature or bought out otherwise. How dare he focus on the farmers' agitation, Covid failures and the like! He was charged with a rather unusual offence - of accepting funds from Chinese sources to influence the political narrative in India. A bit surprising, since one doesn't remember any pro-Chinese narrative from NewsClick. While one should be wary of China, one would have thought that would extend to preventing border incursions and curbing excessive dependence on imports. But no, Purkayastha is the problem, it seems. An associate turned approver - not much to wonder about that since this is happening pretty regularly now, as witnessed in the Kejriwal case.

The flaw in the case was a gaping one. Purkayastha and his lawyer were not informed about the grounds for his arrest and the remand order was passed before the lawyer had received the remand application. Now this kind of non-conformity with the law is what lawyers and judges call "going to the root of the matter"; it vitiates the entire proceedings. Notice that this flaw happened on day one. Yet, and this is what should disturb us, it has taken the judicial system more than half a year to release him.

We need to focus on why it is that invariably the accused has to travel all the way to the apex court to obtain release. Why aren't district courts and high courts doing their job of providing legal redress in cases of personal

liberty? While the members of the former may not feel sufficiently protected, HC judges have as much constitutional protection for their independence as the judges of the Supreme Court have. What prevents them from stepping up to the plate, especially when the facts are stark enough? The system works well when each level of the judiciary plays its part, and an overdependence on the highest court is not healthy. Even there, we have seen the unusual phenomenon of withdrawal of personal liberty cases of prominent individuals after a noticeable change of the roster.

One cannot blame our judges overmuch, however. The chief problem is the monstrous nature of the laws under which these detentions are made. These are the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967, and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. Purkayastha, Sudha Bharadwaj, Gautam Navlakha, the late Father Stan Swamy and other Bhima Koregaon accused were held under the first, and Kejriwal, Hemant Soren, K Kavitha, Manish Sisodia and other politicians under the latter. These Acts and later amendments - and here both the BJP and Congress governments are to blame - make it virtually impossible to get bail, mandating that the judge first find that the accused is prima facie innocent; this is an inversion of the time-honored principle of presumption of innocence. This principle is the first rule of civilized societies, and any departure from it, unless justified by extreme risk to society, is an indication that the rule of law has become a casualty to politics.

There are other damaging provisions - the authorities can arrest without much cause; the normal criminal law restrictions on the police are absent; confessions obtained in custody are valid. Above all, there is the application of this draconian statute to ordinary offences. Even the dreaded Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), 1976, had an advisory board of high court judges to review detentions during the Emergency; it is noteworthy that the laws in question have no such provision in free India.

The sad part of the story is that the SC has upheld the validity of these laws - lock, stock and barrel - for the State and against citizens. A blot on our judicial landscape is the judgment of Justice AM Khanwilkar in the VM Choudhary case, equaling the constitutional and public damage that was done in that infamous judgment (ADM Jabalpur vs Shivkant Shukla, 1976) where it was held four to one (the great Justice HR Khanna dissented) that with the proclamation of the Emergency and suspension of fundamental rights, citizens were at the mercy of the State. The SC has admitted a review of the Choudhary judgment, but this is another priority case languishing without a hearing. Of cheer today, however, is the judgment of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan, curbing the ED's power to arrest after the special court takes cognizance of a complaint.

Purkayastha's long detention is particularly disturbing because courts worldwide are usually quick to examine cases of journalists being held in preventive custody. The judiciary and a free press are pillars of democracy, and the courts must be more vigilant in checking overbearing governments of whichever hue which threaten their members. But recent detentions have lasted long - journalist Siddique Kappan, for example. In contrast, Arnab Goswami (albeit not arrested under these laws) got double-quick release; these are not good messages to send out.

The record of the authorities in proving guilt and securing convictions under these laws is abysmal - as low as 3 per cent. This means that citizens were being held despite being innocent, and often without reasonable cause. When will our laws and courts start thinking about compensation for unjust imprisonment and deprivation of liberty? And when will we teach officers of such agencies and their political masters that they do not have immunity for mala fide and wantonly wrongful acts? Is the arm of the law sufficiently long?

(The author is a Senior Advocate. With the assistance of Vikas Muralidharan, lecturer, Sai University, and Aprameya Manthana, advocate, Madras High Court)

Don't hold in contempt those we disagree with: Congressman Tom Suozzi



BY PARVEEN CHOPRA

Being editor of ALotusInTheMud.com has not made me immune from getting caught in the whirl of the pernicious problem of political polarization. At a recent family get-together in India, the conversation veered to politics, and one person close to me remarked, "Our leader is a messiah." That was a bridge too far for me. Engaging in arguments and counter-arguments, I found the pitch of my voice rising. Thankfully, better sense prevailed, and I de-escalated.

You may have been caught in a similar situation, too. Amid the widening chasm between political parties and ideologies in India, America, and other countries, heated arguments, strained interactions, and even rifts erupt as more and more people find it hard to respect differing viewpoints. The other is always wrong, even dubbed evil. And each side insists the leader of the opposite camp will destroy democracy while our leader is godsent to fix the country.

Now Tom Suozzi is 3rd time Member of Congress from New York's 3rd district, and he is known to be working across the aisles to bring about commonsense legislation in the Congress . I spoke with him on the subject. He listed a few factors fueling polarization in America, and what we can do to alleviate the problem.

Tom Suozzi on Political Polarization in his own words

The first step is to recognize that just because we disagree with others, we don't have to hold them in contempt.

It is a very big concept of my religion. Jesus said not only to love your neighbor, but to love your enemies too, those you disagree with.

Yes, political polarization is happening in our country as everybody thinks differently. The first thing to do is to understand why this is happening.

4 FACTORS CAUSING POLARIZATION

Number one is that out of the 435 seats in Congress, 380 are 'safe' seats. They are evenly divided: 190 are safe Republican seats, and 190 are safe for Democrats. This is because the Congressional districts have been gerrymandered and because of the advantage of incumbency. You will win no matter what as long as you are in the right party. So, candidates for those safe seats don't listen to the public as much. But they do listen to the one group that can defeat them. And that's not the people who vote in the general election, but people who vote in the primaries. The few people who vote in the primaries for the Republicans are often on the extreme right, and those who vote for the Democrats are also often on the extreme left. So, politicians pandering to the small groups of people voting in the primary elections is a big problem.

Number two is social media. You get more followers, more likes and more people reposting your stuff if you say more extreme things. That encourages people to say outlandish things, encouraging more extremism.

The third cause of polarization is cable news. The most followed show on Fox News before he got moved out was Tucker Carlson Tonight. But Tucker Carlson had only 4 million viewers. Rachel Maddow on MSNBC, which is like the far left, gets 3 million viewers. But that is out of 350 million people in America. Yet, such extreme voices are controlling the political debate. And their job is not to educate people. Their job is to try and keep people watching by trying to get them enraged.

The fourth problem, and the most dangerous one, is that our strategic adversaries, Russia, Iran, North Korea and others are using our freedom and our social media to whip up the debate in our country. And they're



Political polarization is happening in our country as everybody thinks differently

supplying people with disinformation. They take an issue that people are divided on. Earlier, it was Black Lives Matter versus Blue Lives Matter -- the whole thing about the cops and the African Americans and defund the police. Now you see the same with the transgenders issue and the Evangelical Christians. Our adversaries don't pick sides; they prop up both sides to get everybody yelling and screaming at each other. The biggest thing today is Israel and Gaza. No matter that there are a lot of awful things happening in many places in the world. For example, there have been a hundred thousand people killed in Ukraine, and 20,000 children taken hostage. But you don't hear about any of that.

A lot of what is happening on our college campuses and on social media is really outside actors who want to make Americans fight with each other. Because the longer we're distracted and fighting with each other, the less likely we can actually solve the problems we face in our country and our world.

HEALING THE DIVIDE

I am constantly working to try and heal that divide. I was the first Democrat to come out and say, I would vote to keep Mike Johnson as the Speaker of the House. I don't agree with Mike Johnson on many things, but I said I'll vote to keep him as Speaker because I don't want to see the whole government come to a standstill again.

What people can do to heal the divide and save their sanity is to be careful where they get their information from. You can't trust a lot of this stuff on social media that's being directed at you. You have to work at trying to hear different voices.

If you listen to what they say on Fox News, Democrats want open borders and they want your children to become transgender and they don't care about the police. But that is not true. And if you listen to the disinformation about Republicans, they all hate people with brown skin, they don't care about poor people or the environment.

Yes, on both sides there are some people who are like what the other side is saying. But most people are not like that. They just want to say to their leaders, "Hey, can't you work together to solve the problems?"

SO, WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT WE'RE BEING MANIPULATED.

The far left is less than 8%, and the far right, too, is less than 8% of the population in America. A majority of the people are in the middle, fed up with the left-right divide. This was reported in 2018 by a public opinion study titled the Hidden Tribes of America conducted by a group named Finding Common Ground.

The best example of this is my victory in the election in February for New York's 3rd district. It was a very tight race. The Republican George Santos had won by 8 points last time. I won by eight points this time. That's a 16-point swing. Why? My opponent was saying crazy, radical things that the far right says, to attack me. And I was saying, "Hey, can we all just try and work together to solve problems?" And people responded to that message.

(Parveen Chopra is the founder and editor of ALotusInTheMud.com

For more comments on political polarization from concerned citizens in America and India, please check out the web magazine.)

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LUNCH BY *Tom Wah*

June 2

INDIA ELECTIONS 2024: 19 APRIL 2024 TO 1 JUNE 2024

Ph-4 turnout higher than earlier phases

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The overall turnout in the so-far concluded four phases of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections is 66.95%, the Election Commission of India (ECI) said in a statement on Thursday. However, while the poll body did not release disaggregated data for the fourth phase, an analysis shows that it had the highest voter turnout so far – 69.16%.

In absolute terms, of the 674 million people who could have cast their ballot in the first four phases, a total of 451 million have exercised their franchise so far, ECI said.

While ECI did not give a separate number for voter turnout in the fourth phase in its press release, HT used the data published by ECI after the first three phases to determine the percentage as well as the absolute turnout in the fourth phase of polling, under which 96 seats voted across 9 states and one Union territory on Monday.

This makes the fourth phase turnout 69.16%, the highest so far among the four phases, excluding service voters. The absolute turnout in the fourth phase was 122.5 million.

This means that the fourth phase had the highest turnout so far. The turnout in the first three phases was 66.14%, 66.71%, and 65.68%.

Because, the 69.16% turnout for the fourth phase derived from ECI's press release is the same as what the Voter Turnout application of the ECI displayed at 6pm on May 16, HT has used the PC-level percentage turnout figures from the app to



make parliamentary constituency-level comparisons.

These numbers can be used to calculate turnout for the PCs which voted in the fourth phase excluding the Srinagar PC whose boundaries have changed since the 2019 Lok Sabha election due to delimitation.

The aggregate turnout in the 95 PCs (excluding Srinagar) that voted in the fourth phase was 69.5%, the same as in 2019. In absolute terms, the turnout in

these 95 PCs was 121.8 million, 7.7% more than in 2019.

This also means that the fourth phase was the only one where turnout did not fall from what the figure was in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

In the first three phases, the turnout percentage had declined 3.9 percentage points, 3.5 percentage points, and 1.2 percentage points, respectively. In absolute terms, the turnout had declined by 0.2% in the first phase, and grew by 1.8% and 6.2%

THIS MAKES THE FOURTH PHASE TURNOUT 69.16%, THE HIGHEST SO FAR AMONG THE FOUR PHASES, EXCLUDING SERVICE VOTERS. THE ABSOLUTE TURNOUT IN THE FOURTH PHASE WAS 122.5 MILLION

in the second and third phase.

To be sure, not all PCs in which voted in the fourth phase saw an increase in voter turnout. It fell in 48 out of the 95 PCs for which this comparison can be made. 76% PCs in the first three phases had registered a decline in turnout percentage.

Only 18% of fourth phase PCs registered a decline in turnout of more than 2%. 63% PCs of the first three phases had registered a decline in turnout percentage of more than 2%. To be sure, all PC-level comparisons of turnout with that in the 2019 Lok Sabha election can only be made after excluding all Assam and Jammu and Kashmir PCs, where PC boundaries have changed since 2019 because of delimitation. Phase-level comparisons with 2019 have to exclude the Outer Manipur in addition because the PC went to polls in two separate phases. *Source: HT*

Akhilesh, Kejriwal make a joint pitch for INDIA bloc

LUCKNOW (TIP)

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav held a joint press conference in Lucknow on Thursday, May 16, and urged Uttar Pradesh to vote for the INDIA bloc candidates, alleging that the Bharatiya Janata Party will end reservation if it got more than 400 seats in the general elections.

Kejriwal also reiterated his claim that Union home minister Amit Shah will be made the next prime minister and Yogi Adityanath removed as Uttar Pradesh CM if the BJP returns to power. The BJP has repeatedly dismissed the allegations. "The people of BJP have always been against reservation. They will change the Constitution and end reservation of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward classes after coming to power," Kejriwal said.

"They say the BJP is going to do something big after coming to power. The big thing they want to do is to end reservations. We know their ecosystem – RSS, BJP – has been against reservation. I want to alert that they want more than 400



seats because they want to destroy the reservation made by BR Ambedkar," he claimed.

Kejriwal said trends from across the country show that the BJP is getting less than 220 seats. The seats of BJP in Haryana, Delhi, Karnataka, UP, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand are reducing and the party is not winning a single seat in Punjab, he added.

Yadav said that the INDIA bloc will form the government on June 4, when the

election results are announced. "The atmosphere in the country indicates that in the first four phases, the BJP fell flat...And the BJP's river of tears is in spate," he said. "The BJP is the biggest liar in the universe. After its defeat, they are going to open a school of lies. It's already decided which two will be the vice chancellor and dean," he said.

This is the first joint press conference by the two leaders in UP, which sends 80 members to the Lok Sabha. The AAP is not fighting any seat in the state but is a key

member of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA). 41 Lok Sabha seats in the state will go to the polls in the fifth, sixth and seventh phases. Kejriwal said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made a rule that anyone over 75 will not be given any post in the government and the organisation, and will be retired. "When the BJP attained power in 2014, PM Modi made a rule that anyone attaining the age of 75 will not hold any position in the government or the party, the person will be retired at 75...and under that rule, the first retirees were Advaniji and Murli Manohar Joshi...Now, the next year on September 17, Modiji will be 75, and Modiji has decided that he will make Amit Shah ji his heir (waaris)". "I had raised these two issues in my Delhi press conference, and then Amit Shah attempted to clarify "no such thing is going to happen". The other leaders are denying it but Modi ji himself is not denying it...for Modiji is going to follow the rule he made for others or else people will think that Modiji had made the rule to sideline Advaniji and others," he said. *Source: HT*

Cong adopts multi-pronged media strategy in polls, 20,000 volunteers spread message

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Congress has adopted a multi-pronged social media strategy with Rahul Gandhi directly reaching out to people via the 'speak to the camera' mode on various issues and deploying of 20,000 volunteers spreading the party's messages on WhatsApp platform, party sources said on Thursday. The core theme of the outreach is direct connect with people and get a feedback about their problems, aspirations and come up with solutions in form of party's much talked about Nyay Patra manifesto, they said.

According to the sources, more than 88 lakh people have downloaded its manifesto from Congress website so far. Apart from his letter to party workers, rallies and press conferences, Gandhi is connecting directly with people through his interactive sessions such as Yuva Nyay Manch, lectures on Samajik Nyay and his outreach to farmers and women in Chhattisgarh and Karnataka.

The former Congress president's YouTube channel has 5.6 million subscribers and had about 350 million views in last one month, the sources said, adding his Instagram account has over 190 million views and 7.9 million subscribers.

He also has 25.5 million followers on Twitter, 6.3 million followers on his WhatsApp channel and 70 lakh on Facebook.

Gandhi had walked more than 4,000 km



from Kanyakumari to Kashmir in the Bharat Jodo Yatra and then undertaken the 6,000-km-long hybrid Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra from Manipur to Mumbai.

Through these two yatras, Gandhi engaged with millions of farmers, youngsters, women, labourers, traders, SCs/STs/OBCs, and made a direct outreach to them. This also helped the party to understand the pulse of the ground and shape the campaign keep that genuine feedback from ground, the sources said.

Gandhi has been using the 'speak to the camera' mode to reach out to people on

various issues.

"There are 20,000 committed volunteers who are directly in touch with more than 5 lakh people via WhatsApp. These volunteers then shared the posts/video messages/You Tube Links instantly with people through WhatsApp groups and other social media platforms," a party source said. "These volunteers are in direct touch with Rahul Gandhi's office. And they regularly provide feedback on each and every content that is being shared/released on social media platforms of his," the source said.

Source: PTI

MODI ACCUSES 4 GENERATIONS OF GANDHI FAMILY OF 'DESTROYING' CONSTITUTION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, May 16, slammed the Congress and the Gandhi family for amending the Constitution during their tenure at the Centre. In an interview, he claimed four generations of the Gandhi family tinkered with the Constitution.

Asked about the Opposition's allegation that the BJP plans to change the Constitution if it gets 400 Lok Sabha seats, PM Modi said it was Jawaharlal Nehru who brought the first amendment. He said Nehru brought the amendment to curb freedom of speech. He said Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi overturned court verdicts.

"The question that should be asked- who was the first to play with the Constitution? Pandit Nehru did. He brought the first amendment which was meant to restrict freedom of speech. His daughter (Indira Gandhi) then overturned the court verdict by bringing an amendment. Then her son (Rajiv Gandhi) came and overturned Shah Bano's verdict. He changed the Constitution," he told India Today.

'INDIA my brainchild, very much part of it', says Mamata Banerjee after 'outside support' remark

TAMLUK (TIP)

A day after announcing that he would extend outside support to the opposition front INDIA after it comes to power, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday, May 16, said she is very much part of the anti-BJP alliance at the national level and would continue to be in it.

While addressing an election rally at Tamluk, Banerjee said that the TMC is not in alliance with the CPI(M) and the Congress in West Bengal.

"At all India level, some people have misunderstood my statement yesterday. I am very much part of the INDIA alliance. The INDIA alliance was my brainchild. We are together at the national level and will continue to be together," she said.

Banerjee alleged that the West Bengal units of both CPI(M) and Congress, who are part of the INDIA alliance, have joined hands and helped the BJP in the state.

"Do not count on the CPI(M) and the Congress in Bengal. They are not with us, they are with the BJP here. I am talking about that (INDIA bloc) in Delhi," she said.



Banerjee on Wednesday said her party will extend support to the opposition INDIA bloc from outside to form the government at the Centre.

Expressing scepticism about the BJP's ambitious target of achieving 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections, she said people will reject them.

"The entire country has understood that the BJP is a party full of thieves. We (TMC) will support the INDIA bloc from outside to form a government at the Centre. We will extend our support so that in Bengal, our mothers and sisters never face a problem... and those who work in the 100 days' job scheme, also do not face problems," Banerjee had said.

BJP complains to EC over Rahul Gandhi's 'two types of soldiers' remark

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday, May 15, lodged a complaint with the Election Commission, alleging model code of conduct (MCC) violation by the Congress and disrespect to the Indian Army by Rahul Gandhi.

A BJP delegation comprising External Affairs minister S Jaishankar, Union ministers G Kishan Reddy and Arjun Meghwal, party's national media head Anil Baluni and Om Pathak met with the Election Commission.

"A few days ago, Rahul Gandhi ji said that Narendra Modi has created two types of soldiers... This is a lie, this is a direct attack on our Armed forces, they want to make it a matter of controversy, they want to reduce their morale. This is not a matter of elections, it is a matter of national security," Jaishankar told reporters

after the delegation meets with the EC. "The Army is using its full strength for the security of the country against the Chinese... So we take this very seriously and our request is to the Election Commission to take very strict action regarding this, such a thing should not happen in future and should be restricted," the minister added. Addressing a rally in Raebareli, Gandhi had said, "PM Narendra Modi has made two types of Jawans. One is the son of a poor, Dalit, minorities and the other is from a rich family. He has given a new name to the son of the poor, Agniveer, who won't be getting any facilities like pension, canteen... but, if you are a senior officer or one amongst the four, you'll get all those things. In the military, they have created 'two-India', two types of 'shaheed.'" Rahul Gandhi is contesting from Raebareli.

INDIA AND GUATEMALA SIGN MOU ON CONSERVATION OF THE TIGER (PANTHERA TIGRIS) AND THE JAGUAR (PANTHERA ONCA)



Members of delegation from both sides indulged in productive bilateral meetings

MAY 12, 2024

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): A 4-member delegation from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change led by Ms. Leena Nandan, Secretary visited Guatemala from 3-6 May 2024 to sign MoU on Conservation of the Tiger (*Panthera Tigris*) and the Jaguar (*Panthera Onca*). Other members of the delegation representing the Ministry were Dr. Gobind Sagar Bhardwaj, ADG and Member Secretary (NTCA); Shri Sujit Kumar Bajpayee, Joint Secretary; and Shri Amit Raj, Director.



MOU on Conservation of the Tiger (*Panthera Tigris*) and the Jaguar (*Panthera Onca*) was signed between India and Guatemala

The signing ceremony of the MoU took place at the National Palace of Culture in Guatemala City on May 3, 2024. During the signing ceremony, India highlighted its successful Project Tiger initiative, launched in 1973, which has significantly increased the tiger population, offering to share conservation expertise with Guatemala. This includes advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and satellite imaging, as well as capacity-building training programs. India's experience in managing large predator reintroductions, such as cheetahs from Africa, underscores its readiness to collaborate with Guatemala to address threats facing the native Jaguar population. India invited Guatemala to join the International Big Cat Alliance and proposed signing a comprehensive MoU to address broader environmental issues beyond tiger and jaguar conservation, focusing on strengthening monitoring and control measures.

The event also featured video presentations on "50 Years of Project Tiger: Reviving the Roar of the Big Cats" from Indian side and "Jaguar (*Panthera Onca*) Conservation Actions in Guatemala" from CANAP, Guatemala. In her opening remarks, Ms. Leena Nandan, Secretary, expressed gratitude for the MOU signing, emphasizing its significance in bolstering joint conservation efforts between India and Guatemala. She highlighted the joint commitment reflected in the MOU to protect iconic and endangered species like the Tiger and Jaguar, emphasizing the resolve to combat wildlife trafficking and preserve biodiversity. She commemorated the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger, lauding India's success in increasing the tiger



The event also featured video presentation of 50 Years of Project Tiger Reviving the Roar of the Big Cats

population and its contribution to climate change mitigation. Ms. Nandan underscored India's initiatives under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's leadership, including the International Solar Alliance and efforts in renewable energy, as well as environmental schemes like Namami Gange and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. She drew parallels between Mayan civilization and ancient Indian culture, both embracing sustainable living practices, and reiterated India's commitment to environmental conservation for a greener, healthier planet.

In his speech Vice Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. José Rodrigo Rodas, focused on the significant challenges facing the iconic Guatemalan species, the Jaguar. He highlighted that the Jaguar's habitat in Guatemala is continuously threatened by deforestation, forest fires, and illegal hunting. Despite these challenging conditions, a robust Jaguar population has been observed in southern Petén and the Caribbean region of Amatique. Mr. Rodas emphasized the vital importance of the Jaguar to Guatemala, not only for environmental preservation but also for its cultural and economic significance to indigenous communities. He noted that forest fires pose a significant challenge in Guatemala, which has lost about half of its forest cover.

The delegation also participated in several bilateral meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of Guatemala. These productive discussions highlighted the strengthening of India-Guatemala relations. During the meetings, India extended invitations for Guatemala to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). Celebrating India's leadership in tiger conservation, India offered its expertise to help enhance Jaguar populations in Guatemala. Additionally, India's proactive climate change initiatives, including its leadership in the International Solar Alliance (ISA), were showcased, with India inviting Guatemala to become a member. The Guatemalan side assured that they will evaluate and monitor the Jaguar population both inside and outside the protected areas, addressing major challenges in conservation such as deforestation, forest fires, and illegal hunting. There is a robust Jaguar population in southern Petén and the Caribbean region of Amatique in Guatemala.

Last year India celebrated the 50th anniversary of an intensive conservation effort known as Project Tiger, which resulted in the tiger population to nearly double to 3167, compared to only 1800 in the 1970s. Currently, India is the largest tiger range country in the world. Research has shown that India's tiger conservation policy has not only helped in preserving and increasing tiger populations, but it has also played a role in climate change mitigation by avoiding forest loss. India is home to over 70 percent of the world's endangered tiger population.

The MOU will pave the way for cooperation in related areas, strengthen the bilateral relations between India and Guatemala, and support Guatemala's efforts to conserve the Jaguar population and preserve its forest coverage and sustainable development. This landmark agreement will signify joint commitment to protecting one of the world's most iconic and endangered species. By collaborating on conservation efforts, sharing best practices, and enhancing research and monitoring initiatives, both nations aim to safeguard the future of tigers and their habitats, ensuring their survival for generations to come. This MoU underscores mutual resolution to combat wildlife trafficking, promote sustainable ecosystems, and preserve biodiversity on a global scale. Additionally, the productive meetings and engagements throughout the visit laid the groundwork for future cooperation and mutual understanding. As both nations continue to deepen their partnership, signing of this significant MoU served as a testament to the shared values and aspirations of India and Guatemala towards a more sustainable and prosperous future.



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Mahadev app's brains trust a group of 7 people, say sleuths

A group of seven men controlled the allegedly illegal operations of the Mahadev Online Book (MOB), according to an Enforcement Directorate (ED) officer close to the investigation.

Until recently it was believed that two men, Sourabh Chandrakar and Ravi Uppal were the masterminds. Now, ED has named a German national Lark Marshall and four Indians, Ratan Lal Jain, Hari Shankar Tibrewal, Girish Talreja and Shubham Soni aka Pintu Bhaiyya, in addition to Uppal and Chandrakar as the app's brains trust.

According to the ongoing investigation the group if five paid Rs 76 lakh to lower-rung operatives cited as witnesses by the investigating agencies to keep their names out of the investigation. ED officials allege that while Lark Marshall designed the betting app, the daily operations, revenue generation and transactions, and further investment of the profits generated from the illegal betting activities was controlled by the six Indians. ED is also believed to have learnt that MOB's top-tier orchestrated a campaign among MOB branch operators in India to put the entire blame on Chandrakar and Uppal if questioned by investigating agencies; a probe into the operation began in 2022.

AI flight collides with tug tractor at Pune Airport runway

A Delhi-bound Air India flight with 180 passengers collided with a tug tractor at the Pune Airport runway on Thursday (May 16), news agency ANI reported. There was no injury to the passengers though the aircraft suffered damage due to the collision. "The aircraft, carrying around 180 passengers, suffered damage to its nose and a tyre near the landing gear. Despite the collision, all passengers and crew on board are reported to be safe," an airport official told the news agency.

The passengers were made to disembark the plane following the mishap. Alternative arrangements were made for the passengers as they remained stranded at the airport.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched an inquiry to determine the cause of the collision, ANI reported. Preliminary reports suggest that the tug truck, used for manoeuvring the aircraft on the ground, struck the plane during the taxiing process. Airport operations continued without significant disruption, although the affected aircraft was taken out of service for detailed inspection and repairs for a brief period and is now ready for operations.

Over 300 people become Indian citizens under CAA

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Union Government on Wednesday granted citizenship certificates to more than 300 people who applied under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, a senior government official said.

At least 14 people were handed their certificates by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla in Delhi, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a statement.

The country of origin of the applicants was not disclosed by the government but a government source said that most applicants were Pakistani Hindus.

The 14 people who received the certificates in Delhi came from Pakistan in 2013.

The source said that as applications were being scrutinised and finalised, certificates were being sent by post to beneficiaries in other parts of the country. Most Pakistani Hindus who entered India legally are living in Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, and Delhi.

It was not known how many people from West Bengal, including Matuas and Namasudras, and those excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, had applied under the CAA. The citizenship portal requires applicants to declare the country of origin, and also submit at least one document tracing their roots to Bangladesh, Pakistan or Afghanistan.

Since the intended beneficiaries in West Bengal entered India without any documents, they are unable to apply under CAA.

The Hindu met the families who were granted citizenship in Delhi. They said it was the first time since coming to India on a tourist visa in 2013 that they had applied for citizenship.

Jhoola Ram, a resident of Majnu Ka Tila in north Delhi, said that a priest at a nearby temple had signed the eligibility



Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla hands over citizenship certificates to 14 people who applied for citizenship under CAA in Delhi.

certificate validating his religion. One of the documents required to apply under the CAA is an eligibility certificate issued by a "locally reputed community institution".

On March 11, days ahead of the announcement of the general election, the MHA notified the Citizenship Amendment Rules, 2024 that enabled the implementation of the CAA, more than four years after the legislation was passed by the Parliament in December 2019. The Citizenship Act, 1955 was amended to facilitate citizenship through registration and naturalisation under Section 6B of the CAA to undocumented migrants belonging to six non-Muslim communities — Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian — from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who had entered India on or before December 31, 2014, and reduced the period to qualify for citizenship from the existing requirement of continuous stay of 11 years to continuous stay of five years.

Source: The Hindu

Maliwal 'assault' case: Police register FIR, Delhi CM Kejriwal's aide named as accused

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Delhi Police on Thursday, May 16, registered an FIR in connection with the alleged assault on AAP MP Swati Maliwal by an aide of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, even as the BJP hit out at the AAP supremo for maintaining silence over the incident.

Bibhav Kumar, the personal assistant of Kejriwal, has been named as an accused in the case, officials said. He has also been summoned by the National Commission for Women (NCW) on Friday over the matter. The FIR was registered after Maliwal's statement was recorded by a two-member team, led by Additional Commissioner of Police P S Kushwaha. It was at the Rajya Sabha member's residence in Central Delhi for nearly four and a half hours since around 1.50 pm.

Officials said the FIR has been registered at the Civil Lines police station against Kumar under Indian Penal Code sections 354 (assault or criminal force on a woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation), 509 (word gesture or act of intent to insult) and 323 (assault).



The development comes two days after Maliwal went to the police station and alleged that a member of Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Kejriwal's personal staff "assaulted" her at the CM's official residence. According to the contents of the statement given by Maliwal to police, an official source said, she was sitting in the drawing room when Kumar came and allegedly slapped her multiple times. She ran out of the CM's residence and called police, the MP stated in her complaint, the sources said and added that she also claimed that Kejriwal was present at his residence when the incident took place. An official said police took Maliwal for medical examination to the All India Institute of Medical

Sciences here. In a post on X after the police team left her house, Maliwal said she has recorded her statement with the Delhi Police on what happened with her and urged the BJP to not indulge in politics. "Hope appropriate action is taken. Whatever happened with me was extremely bad," said the MP.

She also said, "The past days have been very difficult for me. I thank those who prayed. Those who tried to indulge in character assassination, said that I was doing it at the behest of the other party, God bless them too." According to sources, in her police complaint, Maliwal has named Kumar as the "main person" who allegedly assaulted her when she had gone to meet Kejriwal on Monday.

The BJP attacked Kejriwal after he refused to comment on the Maliwal "assault" matter during a press conference in Lucknow. He was flanked by Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav and AAP Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh.

Kejriwal avoided a question on the issue and it was fielded by Singh who said his party has already made its stand clear on the issue.

No exception made in granting interim bail to Kejriwal: SC

The Supreme Court on Thursday, May 16, steered clear of the political talk about it having made an exception for Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in granting him interim bail for campaigning in the Lok Sabha polls but said "critical analysis of the judgement is welcome".

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta refused to consider claims and counter-claims by advocates for the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Kejriwal on statements related to grant of interim bail to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener.

"We have not made any exception for anybody. We said in our order what we felt was justified," the bench said.

Appearing for the ED, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta objected to Kejriwal's speeches in poll rallies that if people voted for AAP, he would not have to go back to prison on June 2.

"It is his assumption, we cannot say anything," the bench told Mehta.

It added, "Our order is very clear about when he has to surrender. It is the order of the Supreme Court. The rule of law shall be governed by this order."

Mehta alleged that Kejriwal had violated the bail condition by his assertion.

"What is he trying to imply? It is like a slap on the institution," the Solicitor General said.

Justice Khanna said the court's order is clear that he has to surrender on June 2.

"We have not said anything in the order that he cannot speak about the case," the bench said.

Without naming Union Home Minister Amit Shah, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who was appearing for Kejriwal, referred to an interview where he said many believe the court accorded "special treatment" to the AAP leader.

The bench told Singhvi it would not go into that.

The senior lawyer denied that Kejriwal had made any statement about having to go back to jail if people did not vote for his party. Singhvi said he can swear an affidavit to that effect.

The top court was hearing Kejriwal's plea against his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in a money-laundering case stemming from the alleged excise scam.

On May 10, the apex court had granted Kejriwal interim bail till June 1, the last day of the seven-phase general election, and directed him to surrender and go back to jail on June 2.

The Delhi chief minister was arrested on March 21.

The court had, however, barred Kejriwal from visiting his office or the Delhi secretariat, and signing official files unless absolutely necessary for obtaining the lieutenant governor's approval.

The matter relates to alleged corruption and money-laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22.

Source: PTI

ED can't arrest accused after special court has taken cognisance of complaint: SC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Supreme Court Thursday, May 16, held that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) cannot arrest an accused under Section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after a special court has taken cognisance of the complaint of money laundering.

A bench of justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said when an accused appears before a court in pursuance of a summons, the agency will have to apply to the court concerned to get his custody.

"After cognisance is taken of the offence punishable under Section 4 of the PMLA based on a complaint under Section 44 (1)(b), the ED and its officers are powerless to exercise power under Section 19 to arrest a person shown as an accused in the complaint," the top court said. If the accused appears before the special court by summons issued by the court, it cannot be treated that he is in custody, it said.

"Accused who appeared before the court pursuant to the summons not required to apply for bail, and thus twin conditions of Section 45 of PMLA are not applicable," the bench said in its judgment.

The twin conditions state that when an accused in a money laundering case applies for bail, the court has to first allow the public prosecutor to be heard and only when it is satisfied that the accused is not guilty and unlikely to commit a similar offence when released, can bail be granted.

The top court noted the submission that some of the special courts under



the PMLA are following the practice of taking the accused into custody after they appear pursuant to the summons issued on the complaint.

Therefore, the accused are compelled to apply for bail or for anticipatory bail apprehending arrest upon issuance of summons, it said.

"We cannot countenance a situation where, before the filing of the complaint, the accused is not arrested; after the filing of the complaint, after he appears in compliance with the summons, he is taken into custody and forced to apply for bail. Hence, such a practice, if followed by some Special Courts, is completely illegal.

"Such a practice may offend the right to liberty guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution of India. If the ED wants custody of the accused who appears after service of summons for conducting further investigation in the same offence, the ED will have to seek custody of the accused by applying to the Special Court," the bench said.

The apex court said the special court must pass an order on the application by

recording brief reasons after hearing the accused.

"While hearing such an application, the Court may permit custody only if it is satisfied that custodial interrogation at that stage is required, even though the accused was never arrested under Section 19. However, when the ED wants to conduct a further investigation concerning the same offence, it may arrest a person not shown as an accused in the complaint," it said.

The apex court judgment was pronounced on a question of whether an accused in a money laundering case has to meet the stringent twin test for bail even in cases where the special court takes cognisance of the offence.

Issuing a slew of directions, the top court said once a complaint is filed, it will be governed by Sections 200 to 205 of the CrPC as none of the said provisions are inconsistent with any of the provisions of the PMLA.

"If the accused was not arrested by the ED till filing of the complaint, while taking cognisance on a complaint under Section 44(1)(b), as a normal rule, Court should issue a summons to the accused and not a warrant. Even in a case where the accused is on bail, summons must be issued. "After a summons is issued under Section 204 of the CrPC on taking cognisance of the offence punishable under Section 4 of the PMLA on a complaint, if the accused appears before the Special Court pursuant to the summons, he shall not be treated as if he is in custody. Therefore, it is not necessary for him to apply for bail," the bench said.

'Narrow': EAM S Jaishankar reacts to US' sanction warning after Chabahar Port deal

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A day after the US warned of a "potential risk of sanctions" following India's 10-year agreement to operate the Chabahar Port in Iran, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar highlighted that the project will "benefit the entire region". Jaishankar added that people should not take a "narrow view" of the initiative.

The EAM spoke at an interaction on Tuesday after the launch of the Bangla edition of his book 'Why Bharat Matters' in Kolkata. When asked about the US remarks, Jaishankar said, "I did see some of the remarks that were made, but I think it's a question of communicating, convincing, and getting people to understand that this is actually for



everyone's benefit. I don't think people should take a narrow view of it." "They (US) have not done so in the past. So, if you look at the US' own attitude towards the port in Chabahar, the US has been appreciative of the fact that Chabahar has a larger relevance...we will work at it," he added.

Earlier on May 14, the United States warned that "anyone" considering business deals with Tehran must be aware of the "potential risk of

sanctions." "I would just say...US sanctions on Iran remain in place and we will continue to enforce them," the US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson, Vedant Patel said at the press briefing, adding, "Any entity, anyone considering business deals with Iran, they need to be aware of the potential risk they are opening themselves up to, potential risk of sanctions."

The Long-Term Bilateral Contract on Chabahar Port Operation was signed between Indian Ports Global Limited (IPGL) of India and Iran's Port & Maritime Organisation (PMO) on Monday. This agreement allows for the operation of the Shahid-Behesti port as part of the Chabahar Port Development Project for the next 10 years.

India in history this Week

MAY 17 TO MAY 23

17 MAY

1769 The East India Company imposed a variety of restrictions on weavers to ruin Bengal's textile industry.

1918 Birth of India's famous industrialist and top member of Tata group, Russian Modi.

1987 Sunil Gavaskar retired from Test cricket.



2007 The fourth round of the India-Pakistan Composite Dialogue commenced in Rawalpindi.

2010 Promoting the country's oldest traditional sports, Kabaddi, the Punjab government announced the hosting of the Kabaddi World Cup next month.

2014 The death of CP Krishnan Nair, the famous hotel industrialist of India and founder of the 'Hotel Leela Group'.

1865 Celebration of World Communication Day started.

2018 BS Yeddyurappa took the oath of office of Chief Minister of Karnataka for the third time.

1980 A record of standing for 33 hours on one leg was set by VS Kumar Anand.

1995 The Restricted Area Permit (RAP) was abolished by the three northeastern states of the country.

1999 He was resigned from his post by Congress President Sonia Gandhi. But it was rejected by the Congress Committee of which the CWC also says.

18 MAY

1912 The first Indian feature length film Sri Pundalik was released.

1974 India became a nuclear power country with its first underground atomic bomb test in Pokhran, Rajasthan. The trial was named 'Smiling Buddha'.

2008 Indian-origin writer Indra Sinha was awarded the Commonwealth Award in 2008 for her book Animal People.

1914 Tenth Governor of Reserve Bank of India Jagannathan was born.

1933 HD Deve Gowda, the twelfth Prime Minister of India, was born.



1966 India's famous botanist Panchanan Maheshwari died.

1974 Pokhran Nuclear Blast Day

19 MAY

1913 Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy was born, who later became the President of the country.

1954 The National Film Board was formed by the government in the country.

1969 Andhra Pradesh came under a terrible storm which took 608 lives. Not only this, around 20000 people were rendered homeless in this storm.

1971 The first naval submarine station was built at Visakhapatnam.

1980 TN Raina died when he was General of India.

1992 Tennis player Leander Paes was awarded the Arjuna Award.



1993 The government had decided to link the power with Indian Airlines.

1904 One of the first industrialists of India, Jamsetji Nusrawanji Tata was killed.

1910 Nathuram Godse, who killed Mahatma Gandhi and added a black chapter to the pages of Indian history, was born.

20 MAY

1900 Famous poet Sumitranandan Pant of Hindi world was born on this day.

1918 Piru Singh, a valiant soldier of the Indian Army who was instrumental in the 1947 Indo-Pak war, was born.

1929 Rajkumar Shukla died. He was a freedom fighter and one of the prominent people of Champaran Satyagraha.

1932 Vipin Chandra Pal, leader of the Garam Dal in India and the father of revolutionary ideas, passed away.

1957 T. Prakasam died. He was a famous freedom fighter and the first Chief Minister of Andhra State.

1972 Famous poet of Brajbas Gaya Prasad Shukla 'Sanehi' dies

2012 Renowned anthropologist and feminist scholar Leela Dubey died.

2011 Mountaineer Premlata Agarwal of Jharkhand created a new history in mountaineering, having the distinction of being the oldest Indian woman to climb Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain peak.

2011 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh dedicated the oil refinery at Bina in Madhya Pradesh to the country at a cost of thousands of crores. It is a world class project with the efforts of Bharat Petroleum Limited, Oman Oil Company and Government of Madhya Pradesh.

21 MAY

1960 Indian actor Mohanlal Vishwanath Nair was born.

2006 Attack on Congress rally in Srinagar on 21 May. 1971: Famous director, script writer Aditya Chopra was born.

1991 Former Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi

died in a suicide attack in Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu.

1994 Sushmita Sen won the title in the 43rd Miss Universe competition held in Manila.



22 MAY

1772 Raja Rammohun Roy, one of the socio-religious reformers, was born on this day in 1772. He started the Brahma Samaj movement and raised his voice against evils like child marriage and sati system.

1987 The heartbreaking Hashimpura massacre took place on this day in 1987, in which 19 jawans of Uttar Pradesh were tried for murder.

1963 India's first glider Rohini took off.

1984 Bachendri Pal became the first Indian woman to conquer Everest, the world's highest peak.

1988 India successfully tested the indigenously developed intercontinental ballistic missile Agni.

1936 Foundation stone of India's first stadium Brabourne Stadium in Bombay

1949 West Germany formally came into existence after adopting the constitution.

2010 Air India Express Boeing 737 crashed while landing in Mangalore. In which 158 people died.

23 MAY



1919 Birthday of Maharani Gayatri Devi, Rajmata of Jaipur royal family.

1967 The country had taken a step forward in the field of education. Under which the South Gujarat University was established on this day.

1995 The TADA rule was abolished. Along with this, a proposal was made in the Lok Sabha to implement the Anti-Terrorism Activities Act.

2008 India successfully test-fired the surface-to-surface missile Prithvi-2.

2014 The Supreme Court did not consider it a crime for women and men to live together without marrying.

2016 The Indian Space Research Institute (ISRO) launched the space shuttle RLV-TD made entirely in India from Sriharikota Space Center in Andhra Pradesh in 2016.

NYIFF ONCE AGAIN OFFERS FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CINEMA

BY MABEL PAIS

SPECIAL EVENT: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SHABANA AZMI IN CINEMA

The New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF), the oldest and most prestigious comparable film event in North America, presented annually brings us its 24th edition, May 31 - June 02, 2024. These are four packed days with a celebration of new Indian cinema from different regions of the country - a mixture of films and conversations - cinema from the global Indian community.

This year's festival lineup features films that showcase the depth and range of contemporary Indian cinema, including cutting-edge dramas, documentaries, and shorts, some that premiered at Cannes Film Festival and Toronto International Film Festival. All films will screen at Village East by Angelika, 181 Second Ave., New York, NY 10003.

SPECIAL EVENT

Ms. Azmi will delve into her remarkable journey, from her groundbreaking debut in Shyam Benegal's 'Ankur,' to her trailblazing roles that have earned her five National Film Awards and international accolades. Beyond her cinematic achievements, Ms. Azmi's dedication to social activism, particularly for the rights of women and the underprivileged, is truly inspiring.

"I have been associated with the New York Indian Film Festival since its inception and I am heartened by the progress it has made over the years in leaps and bounds. I am happy that my 50th year is being celebrated at the NYIFF and I look forward to it," Ms. Azmi said.

Several other well-known Indian film personalities will be featured in a wide array of works.



Opening Night film, 'Dear Jassi'

Credit: nyiff.us

Opening Film "Dear Jassi" is directed by celebrated Indian American filmmaker Tarsem Singh, who has made films with Jennifer Lopez and Julia Roberts. Plus, he has directed videos for music legends like the bands R.E.M. and Lady Gaga.



Closing Night film, 'Mrs.'

Credit: nyiff.us

Closing Film "Mrs." stars Bollywood actress Sanya Malhotra.

Amitabh Bachchan, Vivek Gomber ("Court" and "Sir"), classical dancer and actress Leela Samson ("O Kadhal Kanmani") and Adil Hussain ("Life of Pi") star in filmmaker Pooja Kaul's debut film "The Umesh Chronicles."

Rajshri Deshpande (Netflix show "Trial by Fire" and "Angry Indian Goddesses") plays the lead in "Privacy."

Roshan Mathew ("Moothon," "Darlings" and the recent Amazon Prime show "Poacher") and Darshana Rajendran ("Kooda" and "C U Soon") star in the Sri Lankan drama "Paradise" directed by Prasanna Vithanage and presented by Mani Ratnam's Madras Talkies.

Tannishtha Chatterjee ("Brick Lane" and "Angry Indian Goddesses") plays the lead in American filmmaker Wendy Bednarz's debut film "Yellow Bus."

Last year's best director winner Avinash Arun ("Three of Us") returns with a stunning short film "Monsoon Walk."

Two times NYIFF best film winner Umesh Kulkarni ("Highway Ek Selfie Arpar," 2016) and "Vihir," 2010) brings a short film this year "U=Me." The film stars Arjun Radhakrishnan ("Pada," and the series "Rocket Boys"), Shweta Basu Prasad ("Makdee" and last year's hit show "Jubilee") and veteran actor Mohan Agashe ("Astu" and "Kaasav").

Naseeruddin Shah stars in the short film "Khidki."

Geetanjali Kulkarni ("Court" and the series "Gullak") plays the lead in the short film "Rhino Charge."

Actresses Palomi Ghosh ("Nachom-ia Kumpasar") and Anjali Patil ("Newton") star in the short "Identity."

"We aim to truly underscore the NYIFF commitment to diversity and cultural representation in film," said Aseem Chhabra, NYIFF Festival Director. "This year, we will feature films in 12 languages spoken in India: Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil. Two films also feature Sinhalese and Arabic languages. All films will have English subtitles."

"I am thrilled to present the lineup for this year's New York Indian Film Festival. Our selection of films not only epitomizes the artistic brilliance we champion but also mirrors the vibrant narratives we strive to share with our community. This year, the amalgamation of cultural richness, outstanding narratives, and stellar performances is poised to make this edition of the festival unparalleled in its appeal," said Poonam Khubani IAAC Board Member.

2024 NYIFF FILMS & EVENTS LINEUP

NYIFF presents 18 Narrative Features, 5 Feature Documentary Features, 21 Narrative Shorts, and 5 Documentary Shorts. For updates and the complete schedule, visit nyiff.us.

FIRE

Date and Time: Sun, Jun 02, 11 AM to 2:30 PM

Location: Theatre 2, Village East by Angelika, New York, NY

Director: Deepa Mehta

Length: 104 mins.

Year of The Film: 1996.

The screening of Fire will be followed by a conversation with Shabana Azmi and filmmaker Mira Nair.



'Fire': (left) Nandita Das, Shabana Azmi

Credit: nyiff.us

SHABANA AZMI

Over five decades, Shabana Azmi has showcased exceptional talent and versatility

contd from page 19

across the silver screen, starring in over 140 Hindi films and 12 International Productions such as Deepa Mehta's 'The Midnight Children' and 'Fire,' Mira Nair's 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist,' Gurinder Chadha's 'It's a Wonderful Afterlife' and Ismail Merchant's 'In Custody.' From her gripping portrayal in 'Ankur' to her recent roles in 'Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani' and 'Ghoomer,' her collaborations transcend borders, with projects including Shekhar's Kapur's 'What's Love Got to Do with It?' and Steven Spielberg's prestigious mini-series 'Halo.' Azmi's repertoire is a testament to her unparalleled skill and diverse roles. As Shabana Azmi continues to illuminate screens and stages alike with her presence, her legacy as a trailblazer in Indian cinema remains unparalleled.

Shabana Azmi believes art should be used as an instrument for social change and is also a committed social activist. She is both a Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan Awardee. She heads the NGO Mijwan Welfare Society (MWS) founded by her father that works for the upliftment of rural India with a focus on the girl child and women. She was awarded the Gandhi International Peace Prize at the House of Lords by Vanessa Redgrave and honored at the Bicentennial celebrations of International Human Rights in Paris, alongside Mother Theresa, by President Mitterrand of France. Additionally, Ms. Azmi received the Crystal Award at the World Economic Forum, with Mohammed Ali and Michael Douglas. Her recent nomination as Global Leadership Ambassador for Women in Public Service Project, initiated by Hillary Clinton, further underscores her global impact and commitment to fostering positive change. She has been chosen by Time Magazine as one of 25 Asian heroes and is the

only woman among four Indians who has made a difference. She stands as a beacon of inspiration, epitomizing excellence in both art and activism.

TICKETS

For purchase of a single ticket, multiple tickets or passes, visit nyiff.us/ticket.

THE NEW YORK INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL (NYIFF)

NYIFF is the oldest, most prestigious film festival screening premieres of feature, documentary and short films made from, of, and about the Indian subcontinent in the independent, arthouse, alternate and diaspora genres. Three days of screenings, post-screening discussions, industry panels, award ceremonies, special events, after parties, red carpet galas, media attention and packed audiences build an awareness of Indian cinema, entertain and educate North Americans about the real India, and add to the amazing cultural diversity of New York City. For more information, visit nyiff.us.

FOLLOW NYIFF ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook and Instagram: [@nyindianfilmfestival](https://www.facebook.com/nyindianfilmfestival)
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OFFICIAL HASHTAGS:

#NYIFF2024 #IndianCinema #GlobalIndianCommunity #FilmFestival
The Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC):
Learn more at iaac.us.

HiFF RETURNS TO NYC SHOWCASING CINEMATIC GEMS

BY MABEL PAIS



Xernona Clayton with President Barack Obama.

Saturday Spotlight presentation: 'Xernona Clayton: A Life in Black and White.'

Credit: HarlemFilmFestival.org

The 2024 Harlem International Film Festival (Hi) presents the films and events for its 19th edition - returning as a fully in-person event taking place May 16-26 with special support from the Mayor's Office of Media & Entertainment.

This year's film lineup once again celebrates and showcases relatively undiscovered international cinematic gems and local New York filmmaking talent with a special focus on Harlem artists. Hi's lineup features 61 films, including 24 features (10 narrative, 14 documentaries), 20 shorts (11 narrative, 9

documentaries, 1 television webisode), 2 experimental, 4 music videos, and 3 VR projects, 4 television webisodes, and 4 youth films.

Due to their successful teaming last year, Harlem International Film Festival and Columbia University Zuckerman Institute's free-to-the-public presentations will not just return but encompass all in-person screenings for the first four days of the film festival. Located at The Forum (601 West 125th Street), Hi's famous Opening Night red carpet, screenings and panels will all be located at that central hub with the second weekend at Maysles Documentary Center (343 Malcolm X Boulevard).

Harlem International Film Festival's Program Director, Nasri Zacharia, said, "This is our fourth year working with the Zuckerman Institute at Columbia University and the second with the Forum, and we are thrilled to be able to provide so many programs free to the public. This festival is unique in our dual focus on world cinema alongside our homegrown talent here in the HUB -- Harlem, Upper Manhattan, and the Bronx. This year's lineup scores on both of those fronts yet again."

For updates, registration, and more information on the Harlem International Film Festival go to HarlemFilmFestival.org.

2024 HARLEM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FILM & EVENT LINEUP

OPENING NIGHT

You Are Always Right Here - World Premiere
Dir: Nana Ghana; USA; 1h 22m

PRECEDED BY

Kankantri (The Silk Cotton Tree)
Dir: Gabri Christa; Suriname, 27m

SATURDAY SPOTLIGHT PRESENTATION

Xernona Clayton: A Life in Black and White - New York Premiere
Dir: Nancy Saslow; USA; 1h 58m

ADDITIONAL FEATURE FILMS

There are 9 Narrative Features, 13 Documentary Features, 10 Narrative Shorts, 9 Documentary Shorts, 2 Experimental Films, 4 Music Videos, 3 Virtual Reality Films, 4 Webisodes, and 4 Youth Films.

TICKETS

To purchase tickets, visit harlemfilmfestival.org/purchase-tickets.

THE HARLEM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (HiFF)

Celebrating the art of cinema in the home of the Harlem Renaissance, The Harlem International Film Festival (Hi) inspires and entertains by honoring dynamic films by anyone about anything under the sun. Conceived from the belief that we all have unique experiences and perspectives to share, the Festival actively seeks and exhibits fresh work. Hi is committed to exemplifying the eminence that Harlem represents and is dedicated to bringing attention to the finest filmmakers from Harlem and across the globe.

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

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BEETHOVEN'S THIRD SYMPHONY BREAKS RULES FORGING A NEW FUTURE FOR THE SYMPHONIC FORM

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Symphony presents Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, May 16-19, 2024 at locations in New Jersey.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")

A hallmark of great music is its ability to say something powerful to us no matter how many times we have heard it. For a few listeners, this will be a first acquaintance with Beethoven's magnificent "Eroica" Symphony, which is certain to make a powerful impression. For most of us, a performance of this masterwork is a visit with an old and dear friend. Now more than two centuries old, the "Eroica" sounds fresh and immediate throughout its forty-seven minute duration.

(Photos M 1 and M 2 here)



Jeremy Denk
Credit : njsymphony.org



Anna Clyne
Credit : njsymphony.org

PROGRAM

Beethoven Symphony No. 3, "Eroica"
Plus, Jeremy Denk plays Anna Clyne's ATLAS Piano Concerto!

Markus Stenz conductor
Jeremy Denk piano
New Jersey Symphony
Berlioz Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9

Anna Clyne ATLAS for Solo Piano and Orchestra
(East Coast Premiere; New Jersey Symphony Co-Commission)

Thu, May 16, 7:30 pm, Mayo Performing Arts

Center in Morristown

Fri, May 17, 8:00 pm, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton

Sat, May 18, 8:00 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

Sun, May 19, 3:00 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

Intermission
Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")
Allegro con brio

Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Finale: Allegro molto

Concise motives are building blocks for the heroic first movement. Principal oboe is the soloist in the somber 'Marcia funebre.' Beethoven limits himself to one theme in the scherzo, but puts it through its paces. Listen for the horns' section solo in the "hunting call" trio. Beethoven used the famous finale theme for two other variation sets. Heroism, surprise, drama, solemnity, humor: the "Eroica" has them all.

BEETHOVEN'S EROICA IS INSPIRED BY BERNSTEIN'S MASTERFUL MUSIC MAKING

BY MABEL PAIS



Family Concert
Credit : njsymphony.org

Discover what makes a live orchestra concert so special. The New Jersey Symphony takes a deep dive into Beethoven's "Eroica"- his breakout Third Symphony that broke all the rules and forged a new future for the symphonic form. Inspired by Leonard Bernstein's masterful way of putting young audiences at the center of music-making, this interactive concert will feature inside tips, listening cues and fun facts that make for the perfect Saturday afternoon family outing!

PROGRAM

Sat, May 18
2.00 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark
Markus Stenz conductor
Diego Garcia host
New Jersey Symphony
Estimated Concert Duration: 1 hour and 10 minutes

For this family friendly concert, the festivities start an hour before with an instrument petting zoo and a special performance in the lobby by the Youth Orchestra String Ensemble.

This will be a Relaxed Performance, designed to accommodate the differing needs of New Jersey Symphony patrons. You and your families are encouraged to bring your own sensory manipulatives, noise reduction headphones and other necessary tools (like a comfort stuffed animal, lovee or stuffy) that will allow you to react and enjoy the music in a way that is most natural for you!

More information on the resources available in place pre-concert and during the performance is available @ njsymphony.org/visit/accessibility-1/what-is-a-relaxed-performance

PLEASE NOTE: If you are someone who enjoys silence in a concert hall, this performance might not be for you.

REVEL IN THE EPIC SCORES OF JOHN WILLIAMS WITH NJ SYMPHONY

BY MABEL PAIS

Celebrate epic film scores with the New Jersey Symphony, from unforgettable themes composed by John Williams, to the golden age of cinema, to famous classical music moments in movies. Enjoy familiar favorites from Harry Potter and Star Wars alongside monumental musical moments from Apocalypse Now and Cast Away, and so much more. You won't want to miss this love letter to film music!

PROGRAM

SPECIAL CONCERT - SYMPHONY CELEBRATION

Thu, May 30 1:30 pm
New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

CONCERT PRELUDE

Thursday, May 30, at 12:40 pm
Experience a special pre-concert performance by New Jersey Symphony musicians as they perform alongside local amateur musicians in an Amateur Chamber Music Event.

Fri, May 31 8:00 pm
New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

SPECIAL CONCERT-OPENING PERFORMANCE

Friday, May 31, at 8 pm
The May 31 concert opens with a special performance of John Williams' Theme from Jurassic Park by the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra's Academy Orchestra, conducted by Jessica Rivero Altarriba.

Sat, June 1 8:00 pm
Count Basie Center for the Arts in Red Bank
Sun, June 2 3:00 pm

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news



Jessica Rivero Altarriba Credit : njsymphony.org



Xian Zhang Credit : njsymphony.org



Milestone moment: Manoj Bajpayee on his 100th film

Manoj Bajpayee, who is gearing up for the release of his 100th film *Bhaiyya ji*, shared that after a long gap, people of North India will see representation of their culture, the relationship they are very familiar with, and the culture that belongs to them, on screen. The Padma Shri awardee, who hails from Bihar said, "These are the characters that people have seen many times. Characters belonging to the North India region. This culture has been showcased for many years, but there has been a two-decade gap so we concentrated a lot on urban stories." "And that is why we are all very excited that after a long gap, the people of North India will get their representation on the screen. When you make a film with all your heart, it shows on the screen too," he added. On *Bhaiyya ji* being his 100th film, Manoj shared, "It was director Apoorv Singh Karki who came to me while we were shooting in Lucknow, and he told me that it will be my 100th film. I was surprised. When you look back, you see that it was never an easy journey. But God has been very kind. He has shown me some failures, but has also given me a lot of positivity and strength to carry on. I didn't decide that *Bhaiyya ji* was going to be my 100th film."

Aishwarya, daughter Aaradhya get a grand welcome at French Riviera

Cannes 2024 is getting bigger and many Bollywood celebrities are expected to make an appearance at the international film festival. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan along with her daughter, Aaradhya were papped at the Mumbai airport while heading to the festival. Recently, a series of pictures and reels of her arrival at the French Riviera have gone viral.

A video of Aishwarya accompanied by Aaradhya getting a grand welcome at Cannes 2024 has surfaced online. In the viral reel Aishwarya had her arm in a sling, with a white cast that was visible around the wrist. She wore a knee-length blue coat teamed with a black outfit and shoes. While Aaradhya paired her light-blue hoodie with black pants and pink shoes. The host is seen presenting the mother-daughter duo with a beautiful bouquet in the viral clip. After being introduced to the former Miss World's daughter, he gives her a warm hug. The actor thanks him for his hospitality as he bows down to her in respect. Aishwarya also waved at her fans on her arrival.

For the unversed, Aishwarya is making her 21st appearance at Cannes International Film Festival. Her presence at the 77th Cannes Film Festival is the most awaited moment as the actor has dazzled red carpet every time with her unique fashion statements. She made her debut in a Neeta Lulla saree, with heavy gold



jewellery, at Cannes Film Festival 2002. The same year she featured in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's epic *Devdas*, co-starring Shah Rukh Khan and Madhuri Dixit.

Apart from Aishwarya and Aaradhya, Kiara Advani and Sobhita Dhulipala have already left for Cannes. While Urvashi Rautela has already

arrived at the international film festival, Shark Tank India judge Namita Thapar has also made her Cannes 2024 debut. Rajpl Yadav has made his first appearance for his upcoming film *Kaam Chalu Hai*. The actor is attending Cannes for the first time as his movie based on a real story will be screened at the festival.

Release of Kangana's 'Emergency' postponed in wake of LS polls

The release of the Kangana Ranaut-starrer "Emergency" has been postponed amid the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, the makers have announced.

Ranaut, the lead actor, writer, director, and producer on "Emergency", has been fielded by BJP for the Mandi constituency in Himachal Pradesh in the polls. The state will vote in the last phase on June 1.

Manikarnika Films Production, the studio behind the upcoming political drama, shared the update on its official X page on Wednesday evening.

"Our hearts are filled with love pouring in for our queen Kangana Ranaut. As she prioritises her duty to the nation and her commitment to serve the country, the release date of our much awaited film 'Emergency' has been postponed," the banner said in the post.

A new release date of "Emergency" will be announced soon, it added.

The film has been delayed multiple times; it was



previously scheduled to be released on November 24, 2023.

"Emergency" is billed as the story of a watershed moment in the political history of India. Ranaut plays the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the film.

Ranbir-starrer Ramayana's working title revealed

The shooting for Ranbir Kapoor and Sai Pallavi-starrer *Ramayana* has been going on in Mumbai for some time now. As per a News18 report, the working title of the film is also out. Moreover, the filming for *Ramayana* may take place beyond the schedule the film's team had finalised. Hence, Ranbir will reportedly start shooting for Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Love And War* by August or September this year. News18 quoted a source as saying, "Ranbir will



continue shooting for *Ramayana* and begin the prep for *Love And War* in the second half of August or early September simultaneously. While Alia will get busy with filming YRF's upcoming spy thriller with Sharvari Wagh, Ranbir will dive into script reading sessions and discussions with Bhansali before beginning its shoot. Bhansali, in fact, will begin *Love And War* with him as the latter may reach the conclusion of the shoot of the first part of the *Ramayana* trilogy by November. The shoot of *Love And War* will begin in Mumbai but a set for the same is yet to be constructed." The working title of *Ramayana* is reportedly *God Power*.



Will Smith to star in 'Sugar Bandits'

Actor Will Smith is all set to join the cast of *Sugar Bandits* as the lead. The film is helmed by Stefano Sollima, best known for *Without Remorse* (2021) and *Sicario: Day of the Soldado* (2018). The film is described to be an action-thriller. Will Smith is set to portray an ex-special forces soldier leading a covert team bent on eradicating the drug trade in Boston.

The makers are yet to announce the rest of the cast and their respective roles. *Sugar Bandits* will be produced by Will Smith and Jon Mone through Westbrook Studios, with Ryan Shimazaki overseeing the production. Stuart Ford will produce for AGC Studios, which is funding the project entirely. 3 Arts Entertainment will be produced by Richard Abate. Sollima's partners Gina Gardini is the executive producer and Ludovico Purgatori will be co-producing.

Sollima is known for *ZeroZeroZero* and the hit series *Gomorra*. He recently co-wrote, produced and directed *Il Mostro*, the upcoming Italian Netflix four-part series based on the novel *The Monster of Florence* written by American writer Douglas Preston and Italian journalist Mario Spezi.

Game of Thrones star Sophie Turner revealed that she was not sure about stepping into motherhood in her early 20s and even considered terminating her first pregnancy.

Turner spoke about how she considered not keeping the child and discussed the situation with her estranged husband, Joe Jonas.

In Bali, Turner found out she was pregnant and said that sat on the news for a week.

"Maybe because I was so young, I sat on it for a week," the actress told *British Vogue*, reports *pagesix.com*.

Turner said she threw the pregnancy test at Joe Jonas, asking, "What do you think we should do? Do you think we should have it?"

The actress shared that she didn't know if she wanted to be a mother at the time and even spoke to therapists about her feelings. "When you're in your early 20s, life is so frivolous," she said.

Turner said that she "didn't know" if she "wanted to be a mother," but after discussing it with Joe, "something changed" in her. "I just knew I had to have her," she said.

Joe and Turner welcomed their daughter, Willa, in 2020. Two years later,

Jennifer Lopez-Ben Affleck embroiled in divorce rumors

Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck's relationship seems to have hit another bump on the road. Despite the "Queen of Dance's" supposed three-part \$20 million love letter to Affleck, expressed through the multi-hyphenate musical sci-fi film *This Is Me... Now: A Love Story*, her single *This Is Me... Now* and Amazon Prime documentary *The Greatest Love Story Never Told*, the Hollywood couple has reportedly hit a rough patch in under two years of their marriage.

In *Touch Weekly's* latest report, with the couple's troubled marriage as its subject line, suggests that Affleck has already "moved out" of their shared residence.

The unnamed source who spilled the alleged secret to the website said, "The writing is on the wall—it's over... They're headed for a divorce—and for once, [Ben's] not to blame!"

On May 6, JLo helmed the pivotal position as one of the Met Gala co-chairs. However, Affleck stayed absent from the scene, missing out on the opportunity to cheer on his wife during her starry red carpet moment. Though media reports initially connected his absence at the Gala to his official commitments to filming *The Accountant 2*, in *Touch Weekly's* new claims suggest otherwise. The website's source told them that Affleck had, in fact, "decided to call it quits" with the 54-year-old pop diva.

Ever since they rekindled their romance, both Hollywood stars have



approached their time in the spotlight differently. While JLo has avidly been the subject of several stories on camera, the Air actor has reduced his public presence to a minimum.

He's even admitted wanting to stay away from making headlines for his relationship, but also being stuck in limbo in Jenny From the Block's documentary: "Getting back together, I said, 'Listen, one of the things I don't want is a relationship on social media.' Then I sort of realized it's not a fair thing to ask. It's sort of, like, you're going to marry a boat captain, and you go, 'Well, I don't want the water.' We're trying to learn to compromise."

Despite their former love-filled visage, fans were quick to speculate about the growing distance between the two.

According to *The Mirror*, they were last spotted together in the final week of March, when they were headed out for a NYC lunch. The British national daily tabloid also noted that the *Marry Me* actress was pictured on May 15, arriving at a Los Angeles studio with her crew, minus Ben.

After allegedly moving out of their house, the insider added that Ben is "focussing on his work and his kids now." With their relationship supposedly headed towards its downfall, the source also stated that the couple "will likely have to sell the dream house they spent two years searching for." Although the said person claims that Ben and Jennifer will "never stop loving each other," the suspected crossfire emerges out of their different outlooks.

Sophie Turner reveals she contemplated terminating first pregnancy with Joe Jonas



they had another daughter, Delphine.

The actress added: "Because my ex and I travel so much, I wanted Willa to have a sibling. I wanted them to have each other. They're so much fun, total girlie girls,

and absolute rays of sunshine in my life."

In a new interview, Sophie has opened up about her relationship with Joe and what being a part of the Jonas family

was like. Sophie, Priyanka Chopra and Danielle Jonas are married to the three Jonas Brothers – Joe, Nick and Kevin, and were often seen accompanying their husbands on tour. Sophie said that being treated "like the wives" was something she did not appreciate but clarified that Joe never made her feel that way.

Talking to *British Vogue*, Sophie said, "There was a lot of attention on the three brothers, and the wives. Well, we were always called the wives, and I hated that." Sophie said that the three women were somehow perceived as "groupies." "It was kind of this plus-one feeling. And that's nothing to do with him – in no way did he make me feel that – it was just that the perception of us was as the groupies in the band," she said.

Sophie, Priyanka and Danielle were a part of the music video of "Sucker," which marked a reunion of the Jonas Brothers band. Following the release of the *Happiness Begins* album, the three women were often tagged as J-Sisters as they frequently toured with the band.

NEW ZEALAND INVESTIGATING TOP INDIAN SPICE BRANDS OVER CONTAMINATION

NEW ZEALAND (TIP): New Zealand's food safety regulator on May 15 said it is investigating possible contamination in spice products of top Indian brands MDH and Everest after they faced scrutiny in other countries.

The United States and Australia have been looking into contamination after Hong Kong last month suspended sales of three spice blends of MDH and one of Everest, saying they contained high levels of a cancer-causing pesticide, ethylene oxide. Singapore ordered a recall of the Everest spice mix.

In a statement to Reuters, the regulator, New Zealand Food Safety, said it is aware of the overseas recalls.

"Ethylene oxide is a chemical known to cause cancer in humans, and its use for food sterilisation has been phased out in New Zealand and other countries. As MDH and Everest spices are also available in New Zealand, we are looking into this issue," said Jenny Bishop, the regulator's acting deputy director general.

MDH and Everest did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment. They have said their products are safe for consumption.

Regulators in India have inspected MDH and Everest plants and sent samples for testing after the global scrutiny, though the results have not yet been made public.

For decades, MDH and Everest have been household names in India. Their products are also exported to the United States, Europe, South East Asia, Middle East and Australia.

MDH has since 2021 also seen an average 14.5% of its US shipments rejected over the presence of bacteria salmonella, a Reuters analysis of US Food and Drug Administration data has found. (PTI)

Slovakia's populist prime minister shot in assassination attempt, shocking Europe before election



BANSKA BYSTRICA (SLOVAKIA) (TIP): Slovakia's populist Prime Minister Robert Fico was shot multiple times and gravely wounded on May 15, but his deputy prime minister said he believed Fico would survive.

The prime minister had been greeting supporters at an event when the attempted assassination took place, shocking the small country and reverberating across Europe weeks before an election.

"I guess in the end he will survive," Tomas Taraba told the BBC, adding: "He's not in a life-threatening situation at this moment."

Doctors fought for Fico's life several hours after the pro-Russian leader (59), was hit in the abdomen, Defence Minister Robert Kalina told reporters at the hospital where Fico was being treated.

Five shots were fired outside a cultural centre in the town of Handlova, nearly 140 km northeast of the capital,

government officials said. Fico was shot while attending a meeting of his government in the town of 16,000 that was once a centre of coal mining.

A suspect was in custody, and an initial investigation found "a clear political motivation" behind the assassination attempt, Interior Minister Matus Sutaj Estok said as he briefed reporters alongside the defence minister.

Fico has long been a divisive figure in Slovakia and beyond, but his return to power last year on a pro-Russian, anti-American message led to even greater worries among fellow European Union members that he would lead his country further from the Western mainstream.

Kicking off his fourth term as prime minister, his government halted arms deliveries to Ukraine, and critics worry that he will lead Slovakia — a nation of 5.4 million that belongs to NATO — to abandon its pro-Western course and follow in the footsteps of Hungary under populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

PM MODI CONDEMNS ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON SLOVAKIAN LEADER AS COWARDLY

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed shock on Thursday at the assassination attempt on his Slovakian counterpart Robert Fico, and condemned it as a cowardly and dastardly act.

In a post on 'X', Modi said, "Deeply shocked at the news of the shooting at Slovakia's Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Robert Fico. I strongly condemn this cowardly and dastardly act and wish PM Fico a speedy recovery. India stands in solidarity with the people of the Slovak Republic." PTI

Thousands have repeatedly rallied in the capital and across Slovakia to protest Fico's policies.

A message posted to Fico's Facebook account said he was taken to a hospital in Banská Bystrica, 29 km from Handlova, because it would take too long to get to the capital, Bratislava.

The attack comes as political campaigning heats up three weeks ahead of Europe-wide elections to choose lawmakers for the European Parliament. Concern is mounting that populists and nationalists similar to Fico could make gains in the 27-member bloc.

But politics as usual were put aside as the nation faced the shock of the attempt on Fico's life. (PTI)

UK government releases prisoners early to ease overcrowding in jails

LONDON (TIP): The British government triggered emergency measures to release some criminals from prisons early and to delay the start of certain court hearings to prevent overcrowding in jails.

The prison population in England and Wales has doubled in the last 30 years as a result of longer criminal sentences and a tougher approach to violent and drug-related crime.

A spokesperson for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the early release would only apply to prisoners at the end of their sentences and they would be under strict supervision, including electronic tags.

Prisoners convicted of terrorism, sexual or serious violent crimes would be excluded and prison governors would have the power to block some individuals being released, the spokesperson said.



The government is releasing the prisoners early to relieve "short-term pressure on the prison estate," the spokesperson said. "It is a temporary scheme."

The Ministry of Justice said in a separate statement on Wednesday that it had initiated a measure whereby detained defendants who were denied bail could be returned to police custody

instead of going to prison if there was no space available there.

"We have initiated a previously used measure to securely transfer prisoners between courts and custody and ensure there is always a custody cell available should they be remanded," the ministry said.

It was last used in March for about a week.

The opposition Labour Leader Keir Starmer accused Sunak in parliament of issuing "get out of jail free cards" to criminals and asked if people convicted of domestic abuse were being released early.

Last summer, the prison population of England and Wales stood at a record high of 88,225, up 8% from a year earlier, leaving a usable capacity of 557 places, official figures show.

Three in every five prisons were overcrowded, meaning they held more inmates than could be provided with a decent standard of accommodation.

Sam Townend, chair of Bar Council, which represents lawyers, said "we cannot continue like this" and "the government must now show that it takes criminal justice seriously" by investing in prisons, courts, and the entire system. (Reuters)

Chinese President Jinping, Russian counterpart Putin hint at political settlement to end Ukraine war

BEIJING (TIP): Chinese President Xi Jinping on May 16 hinted at a political settlement to end the Ukraine war, saying he expects peace and stability will return to the European continent, shortly after his talks with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin as the two leaders vowed to counter any attempt by the US to hinder their strategic ties.

Putin received a grand welcome upon his arrival here earlier in the day on his first foreign visit after winning the fifth term in office in March for wide ranging talks with Xi to reset the burgeoning China-Russia strategic ties for future.

“China hopes that peace and stability will return to the European continent at an early date, and stands ready to play a constructive role to this end,” Xi said at a joint press conference with Putin after their talks.

A joint statement issued after Putin-Xi talks said that both sides believe that for “a sustainable settlement of the Ukrainian crisis, it is necessary to eliminate its root causes.”

In a veiled criticism of the US, which is pressuring Beijing to end its strategic ties with Russia, the joint statement said relations between China and Russia do not target any third countries, therefore they will counter any attempts to hinder such cooperation.

“The two sides note that the relationship between Russia and China has progressed to a more advanced interstate cooperation compared to the military-political unions of the Cold War era as it is not bloc or confrontational in nature, nor does it target any third countries,” Russia's new agency Tass quoted the document as saying.

According to the statement, Russia



and China reaffirmed their resolve to defend their legitimate rights and interests and block any attempts to impede a normal development of bilateral ties, and any interference in the internal affairs of the two nations or to impose restrictions on their economic, technological and foreign policy potential.

Putin's visit to China, the second since last October, follows Xi's just concluded European Union tour to France, Serbia and Hungary where the Chinese leader came under pressure from EU leaders not to sell arms to Russia. The US too is mounting pressure on China not to sell arms to Russia.

While Xi, 70, regards his ties with Putin, 71, as counter to the US' increasing hostility towards China, which Beijing says is aimed at countering its rise, there is unease here

over the Russian leader's continuation of the Ukraine war.

Though Beijing has not publically supported Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the “no-limits” China-Russia strategic partnership has come under intense scrutiny from the US and its allies, who have imposed sanctions on Moscow and repeatedly called Beijing to use its leverage to bring the war to an end.

Xi, who has met Putin more than 40 times, welcomed his “old friend”, saying the relations between the two countries have withstood an international “storm and changes” and set a model for mutual respect and cooperation.

The two leaders held wide-ranging talks on a host of issues, the significant among them is the way out to end the Ukraine war. Xi said the two sides believe that a political settlement is the right way forward for the Ukraine crisis. (Reuters)

Israeli tanks push into Rafah as battle rages in Gaza's north

CAIRO (TIP): Israeli tanks forged deeper into eastern Rafah on May 14, reaching some residential districts of the southern border city where more than a million people had been sheltering, raising fears of yet further civilian casualties.

Israel's international allies and aid groups have repeatedly warned against a ground incursion into refugee-packed Rafah, where Israel says four Hamas battalions are holed up.

Israel has vowed to press on into Rafah even without its allies' support, saying the operation is necessary to root out remaining Hamas fighters.

“The tanks advanced this morning west of Salahuddin Road into the

BLAME GAME OVER CROSSING CLOSURE

Israel said on Tuesday that it was up to Egypt to reopen the Rafah Crossing and allow humanitarian relief into the Gaza Strip, prompting Cairo to denounce what it described as an attempt to shift the blame for the aid blockage

The Rafah Crossing is on the border between Egypt and southern Gaza, and a vital route for aid going into the coastal territory

“The key to preventing a humanitarian crisis in Gaza is now in the hands of Egypt...I have spoken to British and German counterparts to persuade Egypt to reopen the crossing,” Israel's Foreign Affairs Minister Katz said

Brzail and Jneina neighbourhoods. They are in the streets inside the built-up area and there are clashes,” one resident said.

Palestinian residents of western Rafah later said they could see smoke billowing above the eastern neighbourhoods and hear the sound of explosions following an Israeli bombardment of a cluster of houses.

Hamas's armed wing said it had destroyed an Israeli troop carrier with an Al-Yassin 105 missile in the eastern Al-Salam district, killing some crew members and wounding others. According to Gaza health officials 82 Palestinians were killed in the past 24 hours, the highest death toll in a single day in many weeks. — Reuters

RUSSIA EXPELS UK DEFENCE ATTACHE IN RETALIATORY MOVE

MOSCOW (TIP): Russia said on May 16 it was expelling the British defence attache and promised further, unspecified retaliation after Britain threw out his Russian counterpart last week.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said it had summoned a British embassy representative to inform them of the move. On May 8, Britain announced it was ordering out the Russian defence attache, describing him as an undeclared military intelligence officer.

The Russian statement said Moscow viewed that as “a politically motivated action with a clearly expressed Russophobic character, which deals irreparable damage to bilateral relations”. — Reuters

4 DEAD IN NEW CALEDONIA RIOTS OVER POLL REFORMS

SYDNEY/PARIS (TIP): France will declare a state of emergency on the Pacific island of New Caledonia after three young indigenous Kanak and a police official were killed in riots over electoral reforms.

The state of emergency will give authorities additional powers to ban gatherings and forbid people from moving around the French-ruled island.

Police reinforcements have been sent to the island after rioters torched vehicles and businesses and looted stores. Schools have been shut and there is already a curfew in the capital. “Since the start of the week, New Caledonia has been hit by violence of a rare intensity,” said Prime Minister Gabriel Attal.

“No violence will be tolerated,” he said, adding that the state of emergency “will allow us to roll out massive means to restore order”.

Rioting broke out over a new Bill, adopted by lawmakers in Paris on Tuesday, that will allow French residents who have lived in New Caledonia for 10 years to vote in provincial elections. — Reuters

ISRAEL NEEDS CLEAR, CONCRETE PLAN FOR GAZA'S FUTURE, SAYS BLINKEN

KYIV (TIP): Israel needs a clear and concrete plan for the future of Gaza where it faces the potential for a power vacuum that could become filled by chaos, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on May 14. “We do not support and will not support an Israeli occupation. We also of course, do not support Hamas governance in Gaza.... We've seen where that's led all too many times for the people of Gaza and for Israel. Reuters

HIGH COURT IN NEPAL ACQUITS CRICKETER LAMICHHANE OF RAPE CHARGES, AVAILABLE FOR T20 WORLD CUP SELECTION

KATHMANDU (TIP): Sandeep Lamichhane, the globally recognised cricketer from Nepal, has been acquitted of rape charges by Patan High Court in Nepal and is now available to play all forms of domestic and international matches, country's cricket board said in a press release on May 15.

The 23-year-old faced eight years of imprisonment and half a million rupees fine handed over by a district court after being found guilty of rape in 2022.

Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) president Chatur Bahadur Chand said in a press release that "Honourable High Court of Patan has found Lamichhane innocent and his suspension from domestic and international cricket is lifted."

Leg-spinner Lamichhane has so far played 51 ODIs and 52 T20Is for Nepal with 112 and 98 wickets to his credit.

He has also played in IPL for Delhi Capitals, in Big Bash League for Hobart Hurricanes and for Surrey Jaguars in 'The Hundred'. He last played for Nepal in November in a T20I match against Oman at Kirtipur.

Lamichhane's acquittal means that he will be available to play for Nepal in the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas. (PTI)

Pakistan ex-PM Imran Khan seen in court via video link, appears in good shape

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan appeared before the Supreme Court by video link from prison on May 16 to plead his petition against changes in Pakistan's anti-graft laws.

His video appearance was expected to be streamed live on the court's website and YouTube, making it the first publicly seen visuals of the jailed leader since his arrest in August last year. But the pictures could not be seen on the website as proceedings began.

It was not immediately clear why the feed was not available on the website or YouTube. The top court has lately been allowing live streaming of important cases.

Posts about the appearance, however, crossed 200,000 within hours on social media platform X.

Up to 15,000 of Khan's supporters waited on the YouTube channel of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party for the court visuals to be aired. That number fell below 5,000 when it became apparent the live stream was not happening.

Khan, a 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician, has been appearing in other courts since being jailed on corruption charges, but cameras have not been permitted to cover those proceedings which are usually conducted on the jail premises.

While Khan has been fighting dozens of cases registered against him, Thursday's appearance was in connection with a case he has filed against amendments to Pakistan's anti-graft legislation.

During three hours of proceedings,



Khan's microphone was muted before Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa adjourned the hearing.

A date for the next hearing would be given later after consultation with his fellow judges, he said.

Regarding Khan's video link appearance, he said "the same arrangement will continue," according to a Reuters reporter inside the courtroom.

His party leader Ali Muhammad Khan demanded that his appearance should be livestreamed at the next hearing.

FRESHLY SHAVEN, DYED HAIR

Khan's party circulated a screen grab, which instantly went viral, that showed him wearing a sky-blue polo shirt, with sleeves rolled up and both buttons open, freshly shaven and with dyed hair.

"Picture is out. So will be him, soon," said a post on X.

Though the origin of the screen grab could not be verified independently, it appeared to match what was shown on the screen inside the court, according to

the Reuters reporter present.

Court staff were seen checking how such an image could have been captured when phones or cameras were not allowed in the courtroom, the Reuters reporter said, but the court did not take any formal notice or issue any orders for an investigation.

Khan remained seated throughout the hearing but looked uncomfortable and kept changing positions when he was not asked any questions by the court even after couple of hours, according to the Reuters reporter.

The Supreme Court had this week ordered the government to ensure that Khan be produced via video link, granting his request to be allowed to represent himself instead of through a lawyer.

Khan, who was removed from power in 2022, was granted bail in a land corruption case on Wednesday, but will remain in prison having been convicted in four cases, of which sentences in two have been suspended.

The former prime minister, who remains widely popular in Pakistan, alleges that the cases are part of an effort by his political rivals and the country's powerful military to sideline him and keep him from returning to power. Both deny this.

Khan-backed candidates won the most seats in a national election earlier this year despite him being in jail, but they did not have the numbers to form a government. An alliance of his rivals led by previous Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif eventually formed a government. Reuters

Lawrence Wong sworn in as Singapore's fourth PM



SINGAPORE (TIP): Economist Lawrence Wong was on May 15 sworn in as Singapore's fourth prime minister in a planned political transition for the island state.

Wong, 51, succeeded Lee Hsien Loong, 72, who relinquished his position after two decades; both belong to the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) that has been driving Singapore's economic progress for more than five decades.

Wong, who was the deputy prime minister, will be leading the fourth generation PAP politicians' government as the Prime Minister and Finance

Minister. President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, 67, administered the oath to Wong, described by the local media as a low-key leadership transition.

Wong cited continuity, stability and the need to avoid disruptions as reasons for not making major changes at the minister (cabinet) level.

"With all other ministers holding on to their portfolios across the leadership transition from Lee Hsien Loong's government to Wong's, it also testifies to the consistency in Wong's decision-making," a news report said. (PTI)

Nepal President's adviser quits after flaying inclusion of Indian areas in map

KATHMANDU (TIP): Chiranjivi Nepal, the economic adviser to Nepal's President Ram Chandra Paudel, has resigned after his controversial remarks on the government's decision to issue new 100-rupee notes with a map that includes three Indian territories, a move already rejected by India.

The President approved Chiranjivi Nepal's resignation on Sunday, according to a press release issued by the Office of the President. "I made the remarks as an economist and a former governor of the central bank but some news media have twisted it in an attempt to unnecessarily drag the respectful institution of the President into controversy, which made me feel sad," Chiranjivi Nepal said on Monday.

The new map includes territories such as Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura. India maintains Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura belong to it.

"I, therefore, tendered my resignation

taking the moral obligation of the attempt made by some online news portals which have tried to drag the President into controversy based on my statement," he said. "My intention in the statement was just to make people aware as a conscious citizen that such acts could create practical problems to the country and the people at a time when discussions are underway at diplomatic levels (on the map)," he clarified.

A Cabinet meeting last week decided to replace the old map with the new one while printing new notes of Rs 100.

CPN-UML chairman and former PM KP Sharma Oli had publicly criticised Chiranjivi Nepal for his remarks. Earlier, a group of civil society leaders had demanded the removal of Chiranjivi Nepal over his remarks against the government's decision to print new Rs 100 notes with the map of Nepal as per the amended Constitution. — PTI

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Ways a woman can make a man fall in love with her

Look good

Men are visual beings, work on the first thing a man sees when he looks at you. Highlight what is unique to you, dress appropriately for your body.

Smell good

Looking good will pull him towards you, smelling good will excite him.

Smile sincerely in front of him

When a woman smiles and shows warmth in front of a man, it encourages him to dig a little deeper.

Make his work progressively easy

Work with him, he cannot make any inch closer to you without your help.

Show him you respect yourself

When a man sees the woman respecting herself, he sees in her a woman worth the effort. He wants someone grown, who can hold her own; a woman with values and principles.

Throw him hints

Even though it's the man's role to pursue the woman, she should signal him that she wants to be hunted. Use suggestive words to him, throw a hint about what you like, indirectly tell him your preferences, he will get the point.

Be real with him

You expect him to impress you by him being real and so you make him fall for you by being real, don't pretend to be the woman you are not.

Be available but not desperate

When he asks you out, make time.



Pick up his phone calls, let him be able to reach you but don't become possessive too early in his pursuit of you. A woman who appears to be desperate and in a rush confuses the man or even worse makes him hold back to stop or find a new pace.

Reward him

When he does something good for you, acknowledge it. Say thank you, let him know he is on the right track.

Ask him questions

Men love it when the woman also shows interest in him. Don't make it always about you.

Surprise him

Suddenly plant a kiss on his cheek, buy him a nice gift, do something that shows you also got game. Men love a woman who can match their charm.

Trust him

The more a man feels the woman trusts him, the more he gets to trust her. Woman, you hold the secret to

trust, he also has fears. Just like you are taking a risk in engaging him, he is taking a risk in pursuing you.

Give him the best hugs

Tight and intimate hugs plant the right ideas in a man. He begins to want the woman more, to wonder what treasures lie ahead as he gets closer to her heart.

Be there for him

When he sees he can depend on you it stops being about a race to your heart but a connection with your heart. He melts for you even more when he feels that you care.

Work with his pace

Some men are slow at committing, others fast. Show him that you understand his pace.

Single him out

Cut off his competition for him, men may not express it but they get insecure when they are trying so hard to get to a lady but she doesn't look like she is paying attention.



Pick the right scent

It is important to fight the unpleasant odour due to heat, but it is imperative that you choose the right fragrance suiting your skin and personality. Don't forget to sample the fragrance outside the store, unaffected by the effect of the store and the air conditioning inside, say experts.

- Lot of us overlook the percentage of pure perfume that is included in the concoction. As the summer months are upon us, it is important to choose a scent that has a higher concentration of pure perfume in order to ensure the scent can brave the heat and humidity as well as prove to be long lasting and effective.
- If you prefer lighter tones, you can pick up a flowery scent. You can also pick from the numerous oceanic and mint or 'citrusy' scents. It is perfect for a refreshing and uplifting feel and also helps you pull through humid conditions. If you prefer a darker tone with more earthy notes, you can opt for woody bases like sandalwood.
- When choosing a fragrance it is important to sample it outside the store, unaffected by the effect of the store and the air conditioning inside. Walk outside the store, finish some chores and sample it again to be sure of the actual scent.
- It is important to check the contents of the perfume, to make sure that the juices and essences are stabilised and not harmful to the skin. The summer heat makes us more susceptible to rashes and other unpleasant conditions due to our increased sensitivity during the time.
- Make sure you have compared and sampled different kinds of fragrances and perfumes in order to choose the best one for you.

FOOD CORNER

Chicken with sweet potatoes & cauliflower

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon Madras-style curry powder
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced-
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, (about 1 1/2 pounds), trimmed
- 1 sweet potato, (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 3 cups cauliflower florets, (1 small head) or broccoli florets, 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, Freshly ground pepper, to taste, 1/4 cup chopped unsalted dry-roasted peanuts, or cashews, 1/4 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves

Method

- Combine yogurt, curry powder, coriander, ginger, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt and cayenne in a shallow glass dish; mix to blend. Reserve 1/4 cup of this mixture; cover and refrigerate. Add chicken to the remaining yogurt mixture and turn to coat. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight.
- Preheat oven to 230°C. Lightly coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
- Remove the chicken from the marinade and place on the prepared baking sheet. Toss sweet potato with the reserved yogurt mixture in a medium bowl and place on the baking sheet.
- Toss cauliflower with oil in a medium bowl and add to the baking sheet. Season vegetables with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Roast chicken and vegetables, uncovered, for 15 minutes.
- Carefully turn the chicken over and stir the



vegetables. Roast until the vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes more.

- Arrange chicken and vegetables on a platter or individual plates and garnish with peanuts (or cashews) and cilantro.

Deficiency of nutrients can make you look older

Have signs of aging started appearing on your face before your age? Are you looking older than your age despite using expensive skin care products? Let us tell you that behind this there may be deficiency of some essential nutrients in the body. Yes, to stay healthy, it is necessary to have the right level of essential vitamins, minerals, nutrients and hormones in the body. Deficiency of some essential nutrients in the body can have a negative impact on your health. To look younger than age, it is very important to have certain nutrients in the right quantity in the body. Deficiency of these nutrients can make you look older. Come, let us tell you what are these nutrients.

- Deficiency of Omega-3 in the body causes skin inflammation. Due to this, skin starts getting damaged.
- If you are deficient in zinc in your body, it can affect oil production and reduce the glow of the skin.
- Vitamin E acts like a shield to protect the skin from oxidative stress and free radicals. Due to its deficiency, signs of aging appear quickly.
- Vitamin C is essential to boost collagen production. It also reduces fine lines and other signs of aging.
- Vitamin A deficiency can cause wrinkles on the face. Due to this, skin health also starts deteriorating.
- UV damage and oxidative stress can cause facial aging. When selenium levels in the body are low, the skin is unable to fight UV damage and oxidative stress.
- Due to deficiency of Vitamin D, the growth of cells is affected and the skin cannot be repaired.
- When the level of Vitamin K decreases, blood circulation does not occur properly and the skin starts losing its elasticity.
- For healthy skin and cell growth, biotin levels must be right.
- Silica is very important for collagen production in the skin and to keep the tissues healthy.

Asparagus tea is beneficial for women

- Asparagus is very beneficial for women and the cure for many diseases of women is hidden in it.



- Shatavari herb works to balance hormones.
- This also reduces the symptoms of menopause .
- It can be included in the diet even in fertile age.
- It is effective in improving the fertility of women.
- This also provides relief from problems related to digestion.
- This tea relaxes the mind and body and removes weakness.

Moringa tea

- Moringa is a superfood. Women of all ages should include it in their diet. But, especially, it must be consumed at the age of 40-45.
- It can be consumed in many ways. Its tea is also very beneficial.
- Iron, calcium and many other essential minerals are found in it.
- This tea improves metabolism. Besides, it also reduces stress, anxiety and mood swings.
- It also reduces the signs of aging.
- This tea is also very beneficial in reducing joint pain after the age of 45 .



Exercise can rejuvenate brain, delay cognitive decline: Study

Physical activity has a significant effect on brain health, and it can not only rejuvenate your brain but also prevent or delay cognitive decline that comes with ageing, according to a new study on Wednesday.

A team from the University of Queensland in Australia focussed on the expression of genes in individual cells in the brains of mice.

The results, published in the journal *Aging Cell*, showed that exercise has a significant impact on gene expression in microglia—the immune cells of the central nervous system that support brain function.

Importantly, the team found that exercise reverts the gene expression patterns of aged microglia to those seen in young mice. The results, published in the journal *Aging Cell*, showed that exercise has a significant impact on gene expression in microglia—the immune cells of the central nervous system that support brain function. Importantly, the team found that exercise reverts the gene expression patterns of aged microglia to those seen in young mice.

Vukovic noted that the study stresses the importance of “tailored exercise programmes”.

“Our findings should help different industries to design interventions for elderly individuals who are looking to maintain or improve both their physical and mental capabilities,” she said.

Further, the study showed that running on a wheel “prevented and/or reduced the presence of T cells in the hippocampus” in mice during ageing.

T-cells are immune cells known to increase with age. They found that microglia cells are required for the stimulatory effects of exercise to help form new neurons in the brain’s hippocampus—a region involved in memory, learning, and emotion. The study can help design interventions for older adults to maintain or improve both physical and mental health.

Source: IANS

Fruit which looks like ice keeps body hydrated, improves digestion too

There is a flood of fruits in the market during the summer season. One gets more beneficial results than the other. One such fruit is Tadgola. It fruits in clusters on tall palm trees. It is also known as Ice Apple. Actually, its structure is like this, it looks like a ball of ice and is slightly delicate to touch. There are many benefits of consuming it.

People often get dehydrated during the summer season. To overcome water deficiency, you can consume Tadgola. Tadgola has a cooling effect. There is also abundance of water in it. In such a situation, if you consume it, you are saved from dehydration and you also get essential nutrients.

It helps in maintaining electrolytes in the body. This gives you instant energy.

Apart from this, Tadgola is very beneficial for your stomach. Often in summer, one complains of digestive problems and heat in the stomach. At the same time, fiber is found in large quantities in it and it also has water content. The presence of fiber and water can



improve intestinal health. This can relieve the problems of constipation, acidity and heat in the stomach. The thing to note is that avoid eating overripe tadgola, it can cause stomach ache.

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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



DR. SATISH ANAND
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAPI National
E-Mail: sanandmd@gmail.com

GITANJLI ANAND
Former President, India Association of Long Island (IALI)
E-mail: gitanjlianand@gmail.com

Google brings theft detection feature with Android 15

Google has finally introduced the new OS update for mobile users - Android 15. The new iteration of Android comes with a suite of new features focused on enhancing user interface and privacy. One such feature aimed at improving user privacy is a set of advanced theft protection features aimed at strengthening the security of Android devices and safeguarding users' data in the face of theft attempts.

The new Theft Detection features have been developed in response to the increasing reliance of users on smartphones for various tasks like online banking, storing sensitive information, and capturing cherished memories. According to Google, the new suite of features will protect users before, during, or after the case of theft. The availability feature will roll out through Google Play services updates later this year to users using Android phones running on Android 10+, with some features available only with Android 15.

Google is unveiling enhanced device and data protection measures to thwart theft attempts before they occur. These upgrades include an improved factory reset protection feature that makes it challenging for thieves to reset stolen devices and resell them. With this feature, if a device gets stolen, it will become unsellable without the owner's credentials, significantly reducing incentives for theft.

Webb telescope spots most distant and oldest black hole collision ever

The James Webb Telescope has discovered the most distant merger of two gigantic black holes dating to the time of 740 million years after the universe-forming Big Bang. To give perspective, the Big Bang is an event that occurred 13.8 billion years ago.

As per a European Space Agency report, the supermassive black holes have masses of millions to billions times that of the Sun in most massive galaxies in the local universe, including in the Milky Way galaxy. The system is known as ZS7.

One of the two black holes has a mass that is 50 million times the mass of the Sun, as per the findings. The mass of the other black hole is likely similar, although it is much harder to measure because this second black hole is buried in dense gas.

Astronomers continue to question how the supermassive black holes got so big.

Lead author Hannah Ubler of the University of Cambridge, wrote in the findings published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, that the mergers could point to why black holes grow so rapidly, even at "cosmic dawn".

"We found evidence for very dense gas with fast motions in the vicinity of the black hole, as well as hot and highly ionised gas illuminated by the energetic radiation typically produced by black holes in their accretion episodes," Ubler said.

Launched in 2021 as the eventual successor to NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, Webb is the biggest and most powerful observatory ever sent into space.

NASA astronauts turn Arizona desert into practice ground for Artemis III moonwalk

NASA astronauts began a week-long field test in the lunar-like landscape of San Francisco Volcanic Field near Flagstaff, Arizona to practice moonwalks during the Artemis campaign.

Wearing mock spacesuits, NASA astronauts Kate Rubins and Andre Douglas conducted a variety of technology demonstrations, hardware checkouts and Artemis science-related operations in the desert.

Throughout the week-long tests, two integrated teams – comprising astronauts, engineers, field experts, flight controllers and scientists – will practice end-to-end lunar operations. "Field tests play a critical role in helping us test all of the systems, hardware, and technology we'll need to conduct successful lunar operations during Artemis missions," said Barbara Janoiko, director for the field test at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

During four simulated moonwalks and six advanced technology runs, NASA will evaluate gaps and challenges associated with lunar South Pole operations, including data collection and communications between the flight control team and science team in Houston for rapid decision-making protocols.

Teams will demonstrate technology that may be used for future Artemis missions, such as display and navigation data stream capabilities in the form of a heads-up display using augmented reality or lighting beacons that could help guide crew back to the lander.



Pichai on OpenAI launching ChatGPT 4o one day prior to Google I/O 2024

OpenAI launched ChatGPT 4o, a new AI model that will power ChatGPT chatbot, just a day before Google developer's conference. ChatGPT 4o will be available for free, the Sam Altman-led AI start-up said. But was the day for the reveal chosen specifically to taunt Google?

Google CEO Sundar Pichai said that "one event happened over a day, does not matter over time." He explained, "my perspective, this inflexion point we are on with AI, the opportunity that I see, you want to zoom out, the fact that one event happened over a day, does not matter over time."

He added, "As a company, we have been investing in it over a long time. We are developing state of art models and working to deploy them to billions of people in a way where we can make a difference in their lives. And to me, that's the North Star, that's our mission. We stay focused on that."

Sundar Pichai was also asked about the possibility of OpenAI violating Google's terms and conditions. He said, "Look, I think it's a question for them to answer. I don't have anything to add. We do have clear terms of service. And so,



you know, I think normally in these things we engage with companies and make sure they understand our terms of service. And we'll sort it out."

This comes after it was reported that OpenAI may be violating terms and conditions to train its AI models.

X to make live content more engaging, reach more users, says Musk

Tesla CEO Elon Musk on Thursday said the X platform will soon launch more features to make live content more engaging and reach a wider audience.

When X senior security engineer Nathan McGrady asked what is the worst thing about live content on the platform, a user replied: "Discoverability".

"It's not being pushed by the algorithm. There's no dedicated live content tab," said the X user. He further said that people viewing the live content are completely dependent on the performance of a tweet. "That's not an incredibly reliable way to discover," he posted. The tech billionaire replied: "High priority fix". Another Musk follower suggested that he would love to see being able to go live with a group of users, like "host a panel discussion or debate, like StreamYard and other tools".

Super chats will also arrive for live content soon, said the company.

Some X users also raised questions about the edit button that has been taken off the live videos after the live stream is over.

"That was a super valuable tool that makes the 'replay' look less appealing," said a user.

Last week, the Tesla and SpaceX CEO said users can post movies, TV series or podcasts on the platform and earn money.

IEA cuts oil demand growth forecast by 1.4L barrels/day

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has scaled down its forecast for the growth in oil demand during 2024 as it expects the consumption of fuels to come down amid the economic slowdown in the advanced OECD countries.

The Paris-based agency has reduced its oil demand forecast for the year by 140,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 1.1 million bpd. The IEA in its monthly oil report said its lower growth outlook for 2024 was on account of the slowdown in industrial activity and a mild winter leading to a reduction in fuel consumption.

It also mentioned the fall in share of diesel cars which was leading to lower fuel sales. "Combined with weak diesel deliveries in the US at the start of the year, this was enough to tip OECD oil demand in the first quarter back into contraction," the IEA said. However, the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) expects the world oil demand to increase by 2.25 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2024. The projection would enable the oil cartel to go in for higher prices.

The International Energy Agency has cited slowdown in industrial activity, a mild winter leading and a fall in share of diesel cars as reasons for reduction in fuel consumption.

India's economy to expand 7% this yr, getting more investments than China: UN expert

UNITED NATIONS (TIP)

India registered "very robust" economic growth performance and has become an alternative investment destination for many Western companies as "less and less" foreign investment is going into China, an expert at the UN said as the global body revised upwards the Indian GDP growth for 2024.

"India is also benefiting from more investments coming into India from other Western sources as less and less foreign investment is going into China. India has become an alternative investment source or destination for many Western companies. I think that is also benefiting India," Chief of the Global Economic Monitoring Branch, Economic Analysis and Policy Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Hamid Rashid, told reporters here on Thursday, May 16.

He was briefing on the mid-year update of the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 that has revised upwards India's growth projections for 2024, with the country's economy now forecast to expand by close to 7 per cent this year.

The World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2024, released on Thursday, said, "India's economy is forecast to expand by 6.9 per cent in 2024 and 6.6 per cent in 2025, mainly driven by strong public investment and resilient private consumption. Although subdued external demand will continue to weigh on merchandise export growth, pharmaceuticals and chemical exports are expected to expand strongly."

The 6.9 per cent economic growth projections for India in the mid-year update is an upward revision from the 6.2 per cent GDP forecast made by the UN in January this year.

On the Indian economic outlook, Rashid said, "I think the drivers are very simple. Indian inflation has come down significantly. And that means that the fiscal position is not as constrained as in other countries and there is both support on the monetary side and the fiscal side in terms of stimulating growth."



Exports up 1% to \$35 billion in April

India's merchandise exports rose by 1 per cent to USD 34.99 billion in April even as the trade deficit widened to a four-month high of USD 19.1 billion during the month, according to government data.

Healthy growth in sectors such as electronics, chemicals, petroleum products and pharmaceuticals has helped in registering positive growth in exports despite global economic uncertainties.

Imports also increased by 10.25 per cent to USD 54.09 billion in the month under review from USD 49.06 billion in April 2023 due to a significant jump in gold imports.

The imports of precious

metals more than doubled to USD 3.11 billion in April this year. Crude oil imports rose by 20.22 per cent to USD 16.5 billion.

Trade deficit, or the gap between imports and exports, in April 2023 stood at USD 14.44 billion. The previous high in the deficit was recorded in December 2023 at USD 19.8 billion.

In March 2024, the outbound shipments dipped to USD 41.68 billion from USD 41.96 billion a year ago.

Briefing media on the data, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said the figures show that the new fiscal year started on a good note and hoped that it would continue.

Honda raises electrification investment to \$65 bln through FY2030

MUMBAI (TIP)

Japan's Honda Motor pledged to double its electrification and software investment to about \$65 billion over the 10 years running through the 2030 business year, it said on Thursday, May 16. Honda CEO Toshihiro Mibe told a press conference the automaker planned to spend a total of 10 trillion yen on electrification and software over the period, doubling the amount it had pledged in April 2022.

The company, a relative latecomer to electric vehicles, first had to ensure it could reliably procure batteries and achieve cost cuts and performance improvements before focusing on software-defined vehicles, Mibe said.

"As for strengthening software development, we realised the amount we had settled on two years ago was simply

not enough, so we significantly increased that portion," Mibe said, after a presentation that focused mostly on hardware improvements.

Models of a battery-powered vehicle series Honda will start rolling out from 2026 will have a cruising range of 300 miles or more, Mibe said, pledging to equip the cars with an ultra-thin battery pack and a newly-developed compact e-axle. The automaker said it aimed to cut battery procurement costs in North America by more than 20% by 2030 and reduce production expenses by about 35%, partly by boosting parts integration.

Japan's second-biggest automaker after Toyota Motor originally unveiled the battery-powered "Honda 0 Series" in January as it braces for a long-term push to catch up with global rivals in the transition to EVs.

Fed's Powell downplays potential for a rate hike despite higher price

WASHINGTON (TIP)

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said on Tuesday, May 14, that the central bank is unlikely to raise its key interest rate in response to signs of stubborn inflation and underscored his view that price increases would soon start to cool again. Yet Powell, during a panel discussion in Amsterdam, said his confidence that inflation will ease "is not as high as it was" because price increases have been persistently hot in the first three months of this year. Powell stressed that the Fed's preferred approach was to keep its benchmark rate at its current two-decade peak rather than increase it.

"I don't think that it's likely, based on the data that we have, that the next move that we make would be a rate hike," Powell said. "I think it's more likely that we'll be at a place where we hold the policy rate where it is."

Financial markets and economists have been hoping for signs that one or two Fed rate cuts might be coming this year, given

that inflation is down sharply from its high in 2022. But with price pressures still elevated, Powell and other Fed officials have signaled that no rate cut is likely anytime soon. Powell spoke hours after a report on U.S. producer prices showed that wholesale inflation picked up in April. On Wednesday, the government will issue the latest monthly report on consumer inflation, which is expected to show that price growth cooled a bit last month. In his remarks, Powell downplayed the wholesale price report, which also showed that some costs cooled last month, including for airfares, hospital visits and car insurance. "I wouldn't call it hot," he said of the wholesale inflation data. "I would call it sort of mixed."

Economists are divided over whether the high inflation figures this year reflect a re-acceleration in price growth or are largely echoes of pandemic distortions. Auto insurance, for example, has soared 22% from a year ago, but that surge may reflect factors specific to the auto industry.

Source: AP

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Sikh History This Week

MAY 17 TO MAY 23

17th May



1762 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia defeats Jain Khan.

1783 Baba Dyal Ji, the Nirankari leader, was born. NIRANKARI: a particular branch of GurSikh faith, established by Bhai Dayal Singh Ji. A Saehajdhari Sikh resident of Peshwar, GurSahai Ji, had a son named RamSahai Ji who married Ladhaki, daughter of Vasakha Singh (treasurer for the tenth Guru). Bhai Dayal Singh was born from this marriage on 15 Vaisakh sunmat 1840 (1783).

1973 US Government recognized Sikh Dharma as a religion.

The United States Government recognized Sikh Dharma as a religion, granting them the privileges and protection enjoyed by other churches in America.

18th May



1711 Battle of Batala between Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and followers of Saekhul Hind.

19th May

1919: The British regime acknowledged right of the Sikhs to wear their religious sword and removed all restrictions on Kirpan Sahib. A long agitation against restrictions on Kirpan Sahib was successfully concluded. This agitation saw hundreds of Sikhs in Jails. However, upon its conclusion all restrictions on Kirpan Sahib (specifically in armed forces) were removed all over British India and Burma. Kirpan Sahib is the second Kakaar, out of a total of five Kakaars, mandated for GurSikh's attire. Others include Kaes (unshorn hair), Kanga (comb), Kasha (underwear), and Kadha (bangle).

1940 A meeting of all Sikh parties was held in Amritsar, to explore the issue of Sikh sovereignty and a

sub-committee was set-up to explore the matter.

20th May



1606 The Mughal royal decree to apprehend Guru Arjan Dev Ji was announced.

1704 Anandpur Sahib was attacked unprovoked by the combined forces of neighbouring Hindus Rajas.

1912 Kahan Singh began compiling Mahan-Kosh, a Sikh Encyclopedia. KAHAN SINGH: is among the noted learned Sikh scholars. He was born on Bhado Wadi 10th sunmat 1918 (1861) in village Sabaj Banaera, Patiala, to father Bhai Narayan Singh and mother Mata Har Kaur Ji. As a child Kahan Singh was very active and thereby extremely close to his parents. He learned Gurmukhi from Bhai Bhup Singh. He was initiated to read Sri Guru Granth Sahib at the age of five by his father. At seven years of age, he was fluent in reciting Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Subsequently, Kahan Singh was sent to Delhi for Sanskrit education. He studies initially from Bawa Kalyan Das then Pandit Sri Dhar, Bansi Dhar, Bhai Vir Singh, Bhai Ram Singh, and Bawa Parmanand. He studied poetry from Bhai Bhagwan Singh Dughu. Subsequently, he learned music from Mahant of Gurusar Maharaj, Gaja Singh. At 20 yrs. he started learning Pharsi and english. By the age of 22, Bhai Kahan Singh had accomplished the basic necessary for understanding and analyzing Sikh literature.

1922 Harnam Singh Mehdipur is assaulted by Chakarvartis of Kishan Singh Gargaj group.

1923 Ralla and Dittu of Kaulgarh were murdered.

1930 Akali Jatha left Peshawar to help the Pathans.

Akali Jatha, led by Master Tara Singh, left for Peshawar to help the Pathan followers of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who had been fired upon in Kissa Khwani Bazar. Tara Singh was arrested in Lahore and incarcerated in Gujrat jail. The Akali volunteers were not permitted to proceed beyond Dina in Jhelum, where they were lathi charged till every one of them became unconscious.

21st May

1920 The Akali, a Punjabi daily newspaper, started publication.

1921 The militant Akalis held a meeting and deputed Bela Singh and Ganda Singh to murder J.W. Bowring in Lahore. J.W. Bowring was Police Captain during the Nankana Sahib massacre. Akalis were convinced that he had conspired and aided Mahant Narayan Dass in carrying of the Nanakana Sahib massacre. Since then, he had been moved to Lahore. Unfortunately the plan foiled by a government agent, Sadhu Singh, who has posed as a staunch Akali

supported and worked with Akali newspaper. Both were arrested at the Lahore railway station on May 23, 1921 and tried under Babbar Akali Conspiracy Trial No. 1.

1923 Second declaration of the Babbar Akalis owning the Kaulgarh murders was issued in Babbar Akali Doaba newspaper.

1924 Viryam Singh Babbar hanged until death.

1924 5th Shahidi Jatha of 500 valiant Akali Satyagrahies courted arrest on reaching Jaito.

22nd May



1710 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur) killed Wajir Khan in Chapud-Chidhi and destroyed Sirhind. Then he established his capital at Mukhlas. Until 1720 everything was conducted from this capital.

1960 Punjabi Suba Convention was held at Amritsar. It was attended by Dr. Kitchlew, K.G. Jodh, Zaheer Qurashi and leaders of Socialist and Swatantra Parties.

23rd May

1606 Jahangir received false reports on Guru Arjan's blessing Khusrau.

1848 Maharani Jind Kaur exiled and sent to Banaras prison.



1914 Guru Nanak Jahaz (Koma gata Maru) reached Vancouver port, Canada. However, it was forced to return to India. KOMA GATA MARU: Punjabis traveling to foreign land in search of better jobs were being discriminated against at the beginning of 20th century. The Canadian government had issued prohibition against their entry and the British ships had refused to accept any Punjabi travelers. The Canadian law stated, for the purpose of preventing immigration from India and other countries, that only those passengers could land in Canada who travelled on a through ticket without any break in journey from their land of birth. However, no company provided such a service between the Indian and Canadian ports. As a result, many Punjabis were stranded for months in Hong Kong, unable to get tickets for their final destination, Canada.



**BEJAN DARUWALLA AND
CHIRAG DARUWALLA**

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MAY 20 TO MAY 26, 2024

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



ARIES

Ganesha says this week, that people doing business will be successful in taking the business forward. There are also chances of going on a business-related trip. Will get promotion in job. Married people need to focus on their married life. There may be discord due to someone else's words. Your love life will be good, but do not let confusion arise. This week will be better for investing in the stock market. If you want to build your own house, you can do so. Your pending work will now be completed. Will get support from family. This week you may be entrusted with more family responsibilities. You will go to shopping malls and picnics with your family members, where everyone will look very happy. There can be talk of marriage of bachelors.



TAURUS

Ganesha says this week will be good for Taurus people. People living a love life will wander away from their beloved, which will not be good for them. In the field of education, you will spend your time not only in studies but also in social activities. Time is good for higher education. Working people will seem happy in their jobs. People doing business will get new contracts, from which they will earn profits and strengthen their financial position. Time is not a special thing in investing. Whatever investment you make, it will be better if you do it only after taking someone's advice. Take special care of your health. Your family responsibilities may increase. You will get the company of your mother.



GEMINI

Ganesha says this week, people with the Gemini zodiac sign will experience some ups and downs in their lives. There may be discord in love relationships due to some other person. Will get support from family. Some puja, havan will be organized at home, in which everyone will be coming and going, in such a situation you will have to maintain the sweetness of your speech. Time is good for higher education. You have to pursue your studies with all your heart. This week you will have to do money-related transactions very thoughtfully. You will also have to spend a lot on children. The financial situation will be good. You will get to do new work, which will increase your income. Maintain sweetness of speech while talking to seniors on the job. People doing business will go on a business-related trip, which will create a new identity.



CANCER

Ganesha says this week, people with the Cancer zodiac sign will experience happiness and peace in their domestic life. Will get support from family. Today you will spend time with family and learn to save money so that you do not have to face any problems in the future. Your love life will be better. A good relationship will come for single people. You will achieve success in the field of education. Time is good for higher education. Businessmen will get new contracts, from which they will earn profits and strengthen their financial position. People doing jobs will get praise from their superiors. Health will improve. Your financial condition will improve. All the family members will together plan a trip to some religious place. You will spend a lot of money on home decoration. A lot of money will also be spent on children's education.



LEO

Ganesha says this week is going to be mixed for people with Leo's zodiac sign. Students will pay less attention to their studies, due to which they will not get the expected results. Time is good for higher education. The hard work of the youth who are preparing for the competition will be successful. Maintain coordination in married life. Spend some time with your partner, and resolve any old grievances. Your love life will be better. Don't let ego come into your life. People doing jobs will get praise from their superiors. People doing business will take help from their friends and colleagues to take the business forward. You will get new contacts. The economic situation will remain strong. Expenses will be higher. Today you may also have to spend on your health. You will do some shopping for your family's needs.



VIRGO

Ganesha says this week, people with the Virgo zodiac sign will seem very happy about their love relationships. This week you will meet an old friend. In married life, your relationship with your spouse will be better than before. Health will improve. Take care of your eating habits. It would be better if you made some changes in your daily routine. People doing business will get new contacts from which they will earn profits and strengthen their financial position. You will get your pending money back so that you can complete your pending work. People who are employed will get opportunities for promotion in the job. You will spend a lot on repairing the house. This week you can invest in the stock market for a long time. If you have made any investment earlier, you will get full benefit from that also.



LIBRA

Ganesha says the pending work of Libra zodiac people will be completed this week. You will achieve success in the field of education. You can get your spouse to start some new work. Father will spend money on your business. The economic situation will be strong. With the help of a special

person, your pending money will also be recovered. Contact will be made with new people. You will be successful in taking your business forward. Will get support from family. Your love life will be better, but interference from another person can bring discord in your life, be careful. You will see job progress. Time is good for higher education. Can invest in the stock market for the long term. More money will be spent on a new vehicle.



SCORPIO

Ganesha says this week is going to be very good for the natives. Unmarried people will get the life partner of their choice. In love life, an old partner will return, which will bring an outpouring of love in life. There will be ups and downs in health due to changing weather. The economic situation will remain strong. Can make any investment for the long term. In business, you will get new contacts from abroad. It would be better for employed people to stick to their old jobs. A new job offer will also come. This week you will also spend a good amount of money on yourself. You can also buy land. Everyone in the family will be seen working together. Will spend some time in religious programs for mental peace. A new guest will arrive in the house, which will create an atmosphere of happiness in the family.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says people with the Sagittarius zodiac sign will be very happy to hear some good news this week. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family also. Will meet an old friend. Old memories will be refreshed. Marriage proposals of unmarried people will be approved. Auspicious programs will be organized. You will achieve success in the field of education. Your health will be better than before. Your financial condition will be good. You will also get a new job offer in your job. Unemployed people will also get good employment. Your love life will be better. Businesspeople will adopt new methods in business. Time is not good for investing in the stock market. This week you will be able to manage your savings well because you will spend less money here and there unnecessarily.



CAPRICORN

Ganesha says Capricorn sign people will plan to visit some religious places with their family members this week. Where everyone will look very happy. You will also spend some time alone with your spouse. People living a love life will feel sad if their beloved leaves them at the right time. This week you will make many changes to improve your health. People who are working will get a new job offer. Your financial condition will be good. You will also spend some money on yourself. There are chances of suddenly going on a trip, which you will enjoy to the fullest. If you have given money to someone, there is a possibility of getting it back. Unnecessary expenses at home will also be reduced and mental stress will be relieved.

contd on page 35

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MAY 20 TO MAY 26 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

MAY 20

Ganesha says that you may have to take out time for yoga, meditation, and especially music or any of your hobbies. Try to vent your anger in the best possible way by acting or communicating better. Today can be beneficial for you. The interest of students of this zodiac sign may increase in this zodiac sign. Some new responsibilities may come upon you, which you will be able to complete successfully.

MAY 21

Ganesha says that today is a very good day for you because despite being busy with work, you can feel very calm and happy today. Everything in your life today will help you achieve everything you want. If you try to move forward slowly, take care of your health.

MAY 22

Ganesha says the day is looking wonderful. You may feel energetic throughout the day and the flow of positivity may allow you to do some

serious work. Your creative ideas can inspire people around you. Have a nice day today. Today you may get to learn something new in the office. Today you can plan to visit some beautiful places with your partner.

MAY 23

Ganesha says the day is bringing wonderful travel opportunities for you. Today you may meet an old friend who can make you happy; You may get emotional while talking to your friends. You can soon plan to visit some beautiful places with your partner. You may spend some money on holidays, trips, or hobbies as this can help improve your mental health. Your work life can be great. It is advised to take precautions, eat healthy food, and change your lifestyle.

MAY 24

Ganesha says that today you can feel good by getting the support of family and spouse at every step of life. You may plan to buy a new house. You may plan a reunion of all your friends which will

take you down memory lane. This could be a good day to be successful in your endeavors. You can make every possible effort to move ahead in life. Your strong commitment to getting things done perfectly can work to your advantage.

MAY 25

Ganesha says it is a good day. Positive energy can keep you active throughout the day and make you feel good in the first part of the day. This is a good day if you want to resolve your love or marital issues. Positive developments in your lifestyle can prove beneficial for you. You may find yourself more confident on the professional front after achieving career or educational goals. You may get some good marriage proposals.

MAY 26

Ganesha says you will have a great day. Some wonderful career opportunities may knock at your door, and it may take you some time to make the best decision of your life on the professional front. It's a wonderful day, so you should try to make the most of it.



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

You can expect a good day as all your business or job issues may get resolved today with the help of a mediator or third party. Your parents may appreciate your presence and shower you with love.

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations.
He can be reached at
www.bejandaruwalla.com
info@bejandaruwalla.com
+91 81412 34275

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AQUARIUS



Ganesha says this week is going to be full of energy for the people of the Aquarius zodiac sign. You will complete your pending tasks in less time than before. Will get benefits from government schemes. The financial situation will be better. People doing jobs will hear praise from their superiors. You will be successful in taking your business forward. Single people will get the life partner of their choice as per their wish.

Married people will be seen forgetting their old differences and moving ahead in life. Students will have some success in the field of education. People who are competing will work harder and achieve success. This week will be better for investing in land and the stock market. You can even buy some for yourself. If you want to take a loan, you will get it easily.



PISCES

Ganesha says this week will be full of happiness for love relationships. If you had any estrangement with your lover, you would end it and move on. Marriage proposals of unmarried people will be approved. Auspicious programs will be organized. Will plan a trip to some religious place with family members.

Married people will live happily and peacefully in their domestic life. You will have unnecessary expenses this week. There will be an increase in income. If you want to take a loan to buy property, then you will get it easily. Time is good to

invest in the stock market. Time is good for people looking for a job change. People doing business will get new contacts, which will help your business move forward. You will be successful in spreading your reputation all around. Your health will improve more than before.

Author Bio

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. **He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com**

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Mohini Ekadashi is regarded as one of the most important fasting days for Hindus. The day of Mohini Ekadashi is celebrated to worship Lord Vishnu and his incarnated form of Mohini. Devotees observe a Mohini Ekadashi fast to get relieved from their past sins and live a life filled with luxuries.

As per the Hindu calendar, Mohini Ekadashi is celebrated in the month of Vaisakh during the Shukla Paksha on the 11th day (Ekadashi tithi). According to the Gregorian calendar, the day falls in the month of April or May.

Significance

According to Hindu mythology, it is believed that the importance and significance of Mohini Ekadashi have been first explained by Lord Krishna to King Yudhishtira and by Saint Vasishtha to Lord Rama.

If a person observes a Mohini Ekadashi Vrat with utmost dedication and devotion then he receives many 'punya' or 'good karmas' as its fruitful result.

The Punya received are equivalent to the one attained by donating a thousand cows, visiting pilgrimages, and performing yajnas.

It is also believed that devotees get free from the cycle of birth and rebirth and attain salvation by observing the fast of Mohini Ekadashi.

To know the detailed importance of Mohini Ekadashi, devotees can read the Surya Purana.

Mohini Ekadashi Vrat Katha

As per the Hindu scriptures, Mohini was the incarnated form of Lord Vishnu. At the time of Samudra Manthan, when nectar was churned out, there was a dispute that took place between demons and deities about who will consume the Amrit. Deities sought help from Lord Vishnu and thus appeared in the form of a beautiful woman named Mohini to distract the attention of the devils from the pot of nectar. Thus, all the deities consumed nectar with the help of Lord Vishnu. That is why the day is celebrated as Mohini Ekadashi. It is the same fast which was observed by King Yudhishtira and Lord Rama.

Legend

As per the legend, once there was a place named Bhadravati which was situated near the river Saraswati. King Dhrutimaan who was a firm devotee of Lord Vishnu used to rule the place. He was blessed with five sons, out of which the fifth one whose name was Dhrishtabuddhi was actually a sinner being involved in too many bad deeds and immoral activities.

Seeing all this, King Dhrutimaan abandoned Dhrishtabuddhi. To survive, he got involved in acts of robbery. As a result, he was thrown out of the kingdom. Dhrishtabuddhi started living in a forest. Once when he was wandering in the forest, he arrived at Sage Kaundinya's hermitage.

It was the time of Vaisakh month and sage Kaundinya was taking a bath. Some droplets just splashed out and sprinkled on Dhrishtabuddhi. Because of this, he attained self-realization and good sense and thus regretted all his immoral deeds. He pleaded the saint to guide him to the path of salvation from his past sins and bad karma.

To this, the sage asked him to observe an Ekadashi fast which falls in the Vaisakh month during Shukla Paksha to get relieved from the sins. On the day of Ekadashi, Dhrishtabuddhi observed the Ekadashi Vrat with complete devotion. Ultimately all his sins were washed out and reached to Vishnu Lok.

Since that time, it is believed that devotees can attain salvation by observing a fast of Mohini Ekadashi.

Rituals

- The devotees observe a silent vow or a strict Mohini Ekadashi fast on this particular day.
- The observers are required to wake up early in the morning and get dressed up in clean attire after taking a shower.
- All the rituals of Mohini Ekadashi Fast initiate on the eve of Dashami (tenth day).

Mohini Ekadashi



Important information

Mohini Ekadashi Vrat

Sunday, 19 May 2024

Mohini Ekadashi Begins : 18 May 2023 at 11:22 AM

Mohini Ekadashi Ends : 19 May 2023 at 01:50 PM

- On this particular day, observers are required to consume a single satvik meal and that too before the period of sunset.
- The Vrat continues till the time when Ekadashi tithi ends.
- During the observance of Mohini Ekadashi Vrat, the observers are restricted to perform any kind of sinful or evil deed and are also restricted to speak lies.
- The fast concludes on the eve of Dwadashi which is the twelfth day. All the observers are required to make some donations and offer food to the Brahmins before concluding their fast.
- The observers are not allowed to sleep during the night. They must spend their entire time reciting Mantras in order to please Lord Vishnu.
- Reciting of 'Vishnu Sahasranama' is considered as highly auspicious.
- On this particular day, devotees worship Lord

“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

- Vishnu with great zeal and immense devotion.
- Once all the rituals are finished, devotees perform aarti.
- Performing charity on the eve of Mohini Ekadashi is regarded as highly rewarding. The observer should donate food, clothes, and money to the Brahmins.
- Devotees also organize a 'Brahman Bhoj' as a part of the donation as it is believed the individuals who perform charity and donations on the eve of this festival never go to hell after their death.

Apart from Mohini Ekadashi, there are 23 Ekadashi Vrat in a year that fall on Krishna and Shukla Paksha of Hindu Calendar. All these Ekadashi tithi are very significant in Hindu traditions and are popular with various Ekadashi names.

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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.”

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

ICJ opens hearings on Israeli military's incursion into Rafah

According to the latest request, the previous preliminary orders by The Hague-based court were not sufficient to address "a brutal military attack on the sole remaining refuge for the people of Gaza."

Israel has portrayed Rafah as the last stronghold of the militant group, brushing off warnings from the United States and other allies that any major operation there would be catastrophic for civilians.

South Africa has asked the court to order Israel to withdraw from Rafah; to take measures to ensure unimpeded access for U.N. officials, humanitarian organizations and journalists to the Gaza Strip; and to report back within one week on how it is meeting these demands.

During hearings earlier this year, Israel strongly denied committing genocide in Gaza and said it does all it can to spare civilians and is only targeting Hamas militants. It says Hamas' tactic of embedding in civilian areas makes it difficult to avoid civilian casualties.

In January, judges ordered Israel to do all it can to prevent death, destruction and any acts of genocide in Gaza, but the panel stopped short of ordering an end to the military offensive that has laid waste to the Palestinian enclave.

In a second order in March, the court said Israel must take measures to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including opening more land crossings to allow food, water, fuel and other supplies to enter.

Most of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people have been displaced since fighting began.

The war began with a Hamas attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7 in which Palestinian militants killed around 1,200 people and took about 250 hostages. Gaza's Health Ministry says over 35,000 Palestinians have been killed in the war, without distinguishing between civilians and combatants in its count.

South Africa initiated proceedings in December 2023 and sees the legal campaign as rooted in issues central to its identity. Its governing party, the African National Congress, has long compared Israel's policies in Gaza and the occupied West Bank to its own history under the apartheid regime of white minority rule, which restricted most Blacks to "homelands." Apartheid ended in 1994.

On Sunday, Egypt announced it plans to join the case. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Israeli military actions "constitute a flagrant violation of international law, humanitarian law, and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 regarding the protection of civilians during wartime."

Several countries have also indicated they plan to intervene, but so far only Libya, Nicaragua and Colombia have filed formal requests to do so. (Source: AP)

Supreme Court of India curbs ED's powers of arrest

If ED wanted to conduct further probe for same offence, it could arrest person not shown as accused in complaint, provided requirements of Section 19 were met

In case, an accused appeared before special court in response to summons after filing of ED complaint, he needn't satisfy stringent twin test for bail

Twin conditions for bail require court to first hear out public prosecutor; if satisfied accused isn't guilty & won't commit offence, court can grant bail

Amid criticism of its order granting 21-day interim bail to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal in a money laundering case linked to the excise scam, the Supreme Court on Thursday, May 16, said it didn't make any exception for him. "We welcome critical analysis of the verdict... We specifically said we are not making an exception for anybody," it said, refusing to go into charges and counter-charges made with regard to bail

order.

The Bench, which also included Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, said: "After hearing the accused, the special court must pass an order on the application by recording brief reasons. While hearing such an application, the court may permit custody only if it is satisfied custodial interrogation at that stage is required, even though the accused was never arrested under Section 19."

However, the top court said: "When the ED wants to conduct further investigation concerning the same offence, it may arrest a person not shown as an accused in the complaint already filed under Section 44(1)(b), provided the requirements of Section 19 are fulfilled." It said: "If the accused was not arrested by the ED till the filing of complaint, while taking cognizance of a complaint under Section 44(1)(b), as a normal rule, the court should issue a summons to the accused and not a warrant. Even in a case where the accused is on bail, a summons must be issued." The verdict came on a petition filed by Tarsem Lal challenging a Punjab and Haryana High Court order in a PMLA case against him. The HC had on December 19, 2023, dismissed his anticipatory bail plea, saying he didn't satisfy one of the conditions under Section 45 of the PMLA.

Section 45 requires the prosecutor to be given an opportunity to oppose the bail plea and says the court can grant bail to an accused only if it's satisfied there are reasonable grounds for believing the accused is not guilty of such offence and that he is not likely to commit any offence while on bail.

While setting aside the HC verdict, the top court cancelled the non-bailable warrants issued against Lal and asked him to furnish bonds before the special court and take part in the trial proceedings, unless specifically exempted.

The Bench made it clear in cases where the accused has appeared before the special court in response to summons issued to him after filing of the ED complaint, he need not satisfy the stringent twin test for grant of bail under Section 45 that made it difficult for accused persons to get bail in money laundering cases.

Noting that a bail bond furnished in terms of Section 88 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) was only an undertaking, the top court said an order accepting the bond didn't amount to grant of bail and, therefore, the twin conditions of Section 45 of the PMLA were not applicable in such cases.

"If the accused appears before the special court by summons, it can't be treated that he is in custody... He is not required to apply for bail, and thus twin conditions of Section 45 of the PMLA are not applicable," it said.

Protests in PoK consequence of Pakistan's policy of systemic plundering of resources: India

"We have seen reports on protests in several areas of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

He was responding to a question on the protests in PoK.

"We believe that it is a natural consequence of Pakistan's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from these territories which remain under its forcible and illegal occupation," Mr. Jaiswal said.

"Such exploitative policies deny the local people rights over their own resources and the benefits thereof," he said.

"We reiterate that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and shall always remain integral parts of India," he added.

Two days ago, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar asserted that Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was, is and will always be part of India.

"I have no doubt in my own mind that someone living in PoK is comparing their situation with someone actually living in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that how is it that people today are actually progressing there," he said.



Earlier this month, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh said India will never give up its claim of PoK but it won't have to capture it with force because its people, on their own, would want to be part of India after seeing the development in Kashmir.

"I think India will not have to do anything. The way the ground situation has changed in Jammu and Kashmir, the way the region is witnessing economic progress and the way peace has returned there, I think demands will emerge from people of PoK that they should merge with India," he said.

"We will not have to use force to take PoK as people would say that we must be merged with India. Such demands are now coming," he said.

The defense minister asserted that "PoK was, is, and will remain ours". (with inputs from PTI and ANI)

Every day counts in cases dealing with personal liberty, says Supreme Court

He urged the Bench to request the High Court to decide the bail plea so that Dhall could appeal, if necessary, the decision before the Supreme Court during the summer vacations.

Justice Gavai noted that the regular bail petition of Dhall was filed in the High Court 11 months ago.

The continuous adjournments, the judge said, deprived citizens of their hope for liberty. The apex court asked the High Court to decide the bail plea expeditiously.

Kapil Sibal elected Supreme Court Bar Association president

Mr. Sibal would take over from the incumbent, senior advocate Adish C. Aggarwala.

Senior advocate Pradeep Rai was the runner-up. Advocate Vikrant Yadav was elected SCBA secretary.

Mr. Sibal secured 1,066 votes and defeated Mr. Rai who polled 689 votes. Others who contested for the post include Priya Hingorani, Tripurari Ray, Neeraj Srivastava.

Rajya Sabha member Jairam Ramesh posted on 'X' that "this is a big win for liberal, secular, democratic, and progressive forces".

A country like India, renowned for its rich and diverse wildlife, has myriad destinations that will fill your adventurous soul with a new kind of excitement and energy. So this summer, all the animal lovers must plan their trips to these remarkable and thrilling wildlife destinations in India. Here is a list of the most prominent national parks in India, where you can seek refuge this summer and quench your thirst for adventure.

Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand

A perfect retreat from the heat of plains, the Jim Corbett National Park is quite a rage among adventure seekers. With its breathtaking landscape and natural uniqueness, this place has captured the imagination of various nature and animal lovers. Also one of the oldest in the country, this park was earlier known as Hailey National Park, but was renamed after the famous James Edward Corbett. He was a well-known hunter-turned-conservationist of his time. The park is home to a myriad of wildlife species and enthusiasts mainly come here to spot tigers and tuskar elephants. The entire park is divided into six ecotourism zones, namely Bijrani, Dhikala, Jhirna, Sonanadi, Durgadevi and Dhela. Staying options are various but make sure to book beforehand.

Nearest railhead: Ramnagar Railway Station

Prominent attractions/things to do: Jungle safari, elephant ride, Corbett Museum and birdwatching

Kaziranga National Park, Assam

Assam, as we are all aware of, is noted for its breezy weather and diverse wildlife. Spread across the Golaghat and Nagaon districts of Assam, the Kaziranga National Park is home to exotic one-horned rhinoceros along with elephants, tigers, swamp deer and wild buffaloes, which combine to become the 'Big Five'. This world heritage site attracts nature enthusiasts, wildlife photographers and animal lovers from all across the globe in hordes, each year. There are several lodging options available inside the park, where travellers can stay and experience the life amidst wilderness.

Nearest railhead: Guwahati Junction railway station

Prominent attractions/things to do: Jungle safari, elephant ride, birdwatching and explore the tea gardens

Periyar National Park, Kerala

Periyar National Park or the Periyar Tiger Reserve is perfect for those wishing to escape to greenery and tranquillity. The park bewilders everyone with its mystic charm, abundant natural bounty and rich biodiversity. Picturesque to the core and filled with mystery, you won't have a single dull moment while exploring this park. Just be ready with your camera and tripods as you can easily spot elephants, leopards, sambar and, of course, tigers here. Keep your eyes and ears open or else you might experience 'blink and miss' moment!



Here, you can also opt for Periyar Lake boat safari, which is another fun moment. Staying options in Periyar are many so you need not worry, but it's advisable to have your accommodations booked in advance.

Nearest railhead: Ernakulam Junction railway station (Kochi)

Prominent attractions/things to do: Jungle safari, bird watching and boat safari

Hemis National Park, Jammu Kashmir

One of the famous high-altitude national parks in India, the Hemis National Park in Ladakh district is recognised for its unique bio diversity. The park is home to a number of endangered species such as Eurasian brown bear, leopards, Asiatic ibex,

Tibetan wolf and red fox. The entire region is simply astounding and reminds you of some romantic Hollywood movies.

A treat for the sore eyes, this place will have your heart after you have been here. Though reaching here is another story. The nearest railheads are at Kalka and Jammu; from there, one will have to hire a cab or taxi to reach somewhere close to the park. Also, staying here might be a little problematic as there are no hotels in proximity or inside the park; but there are a few villages around where travellers can take shelter and stay in the basic facilities available. Sounds like real adventure, right?

Nearest railhead: Kalka and Jammu Tawi railway stations

Prominent attractions/things to do: Jungle safari, trekking, camping,

visiting Hemis Monastery, The Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh

Awarded UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 2014, The Great Himalayan National Park is noted for its conservation of rich bio diversity. Located in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, this national park is a must visit for every nature and wildlife aficionado as the destination is a natural habitat to myriad flora and around 375 species of animals. Is that not just amazing? Surrounded with snow-clad mountains and verdant forest, this national park will have you enthralled throughout your expedition. Besides, exotic birds, one can also spot snow leopards, musk deer, Asiatic brown bears, blue sheep, red fox, black bear, goral and Himalayan tahr. Also keep your eyes open for the Western tragopan, the state bird of Himachal Pradesh, little fork-tail and blue whistling thrush. Staying here won't be an issue as there are a few modest accommodation options (government) available inside. Book before though!

Nearest railhead: There's no railway station nearby so one will have to take a bus till Kullu-Manali and Kullu is well-linked with major Indian cities via road

Prominent attractions/things to do: Trekking, walking along the jungle, boating in Tirthan River, camping, jungle safari

Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks, Uttarakhand

Away from humid sun and pollution, the Nanda Devi National Park in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand is a boon for weekenders from Delhi, Chandigarh, Haryana and other neighbouring regions. Founded in the year 1982, this national park is built around the majestic Nanda Devi peak. The park was given the status of UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988 and later, in the year 2005, got renamed as Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks. Animals that can be easily spotted here include Himalayan musk deer, Himalayan tahr, langurs, snow leopard, Himalayan black bear; and if you get lucky, you can also get up, close and personal with a brown bear (remember the famous movie 'The Revenant'). The destination binds you with its exotic collection of wilderness and captivating views of the surroundings. Staying inside can be a little tricky as there aren't much options inside. Nevertheless, there are various hotels available in Joshimath and Badrinath (close to the park), catering to all kind of budget.

Nearest railhead: Rishikesh railway station

Prominent attractions/things to do: Hiking till Nanda Devi Peak, walking in the valley, jungle safari

History This Week MAY 17 - 23

MAY 17

May 17, 1792 - Two dozen merchants and brokers established the New York Stock Exchange. In good weather they operated under a buttonwood tree on Wall Street. In bad weather they moved inside to a coffeehouse to conduct business.



May 17, 1875 - The first Kentucky Derby horse race took place at Churchill Downs in Louisville.

May 17, 1954 - In *Brown v. Board of Education*, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that segregation of public schools "solely on the basis of race" denies black children "equal educational opportunity" even though "physical facilities and other 'tangible' factors may have been equal. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Thurgood Marshall had argued the case before the Court. He went to become the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court.

MAY 18



May 18, 1980 - Mount St. Helens volcano erupted in southwestern Washington State spewing steam and ash over 11 miles into the sky. This was the first major eruption since 1857.

May 18, 1998 - In one of the biggest antitrust lawsuits of the 20th century, American software giant Microsoft Corporation was sued by the U.S. Federal government and 20 state governments charging the company with using unfair tactics to crush competition and restrict choices for consumers. The lawsuits alleged Microsoft used illegal practices to deny personal computer owners the benefits of a free and competitive market and also alleged Microsoft extended its monopoly on operating systems to "develop a chokehold" on the Internet browser software market.

Birthdays - Hollywood director Frank Capra (1897-1991) was born in Palermo, Sicily. His quintessential American films were affectionate portrayals of the common man and examined the

strengths and foibles of American democracy. Best known for *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), *It Happened One Night* (1934) and *You Can't Take It with You* (1938).

Birthdays - Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) was born (as Karol Wojtyła) in Wadowice, Poland. In 1978, he became 264th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, the first non-Italian elected in 456 years and the first Polish Pope.

MAY 19

May 19, 1943 - During World War II in Europe, Royal Air Force bombers successfully attacked dams in the German Ruhr Valley using innovative ball-shaped bouncing bombs that skipped along the water and exploded against the dams. The dams had provided drinking water for 4 million persons and supplied 75% of the electrical power for industry in the area.



Birthdays - Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969) was born in the central Vietnamese village of Kim Lien (as Nguyen That Thanh). In 1930, he organized the Indo-Chinese Communist party and later adopted the name Ho Chi Minh, meaning "he who enlightens." In 1945, he proclaimed the independence of Vietnam and served as president of North Vietnam from 1945 to 1969. He led the longest and most costly war during the 20th Century against the French and later the Americans. On April 29, 1975, six years after his death, the last Americans left South Vietnam. The next day the city of Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

Birthdays - Black nationalist and civil rights activist Malcolm X (1925-1965) was born in Omaha, Nebraska (as Malcolm Little). While in prison he adopted the Islamic religion and after his release in 1952, changed his name to Malcolm X and worked for the Nation of Islam. He later made a pilgrimage to Mecca and became an orthodox Muslim. He was assassinated while addressing a meeting in the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem on February 21, 1965.

Birthdays - African American playwright Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) was born in Chicago, Illinois. She is best known for *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) a play dealing with prejudice and black pride. The play was the first stage production written by a black woman to appear on Broadway. She died of cancer

at the age of 34. A book of her writings entitled *To Be Young, Gifted, and Black* was published posthumously.

MAY 20



May 20, 1862 - President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act opening millions of acres of government owned land in the West to "homesteaders" who could acquire up to 160 acres by living on the land and cultivating it for five years, paying just \$1.25 per acre.

May 20, 1927 - Charles Lindbergh, a 25-year-old aviator, took off at 7:52 a.m. from Roosevelt Field, Long Island, in the *Spirit of St. Louis* attempting to win a \$25,000 prize for the first solo nonstop flight between New York City and Paris. Thirty-three hours later, after a 3,600 mile journey, he landed at Le Bourget, Paris, earning the nickname "Lucky Lindy" and becoming an instant worldwide hero.

May 20, 1932 - Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. She departed Newfoundland, Canada, at 7 p.m. and landed near Londonderry, Ireland, completing a 2,026-mile flight in about 13 hours. Five years later, along with her navigator Fred Noonan, she disappeared while trying to fly her twin-engine plane around the equator.

Birthdays - Founder of modern Zionism Theodore Herzl (1860-1904) was born in Budapest, Hungary. He advocated the establishment of a new land for the Jews rather than assimilation into various, historically anti-Semitic, countries and cultures.

MAY 21



May 21, 1881 - The American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton. The organization today provides volunteer disaster relief in the U.S. and abroad. Community services include collecting and distributing donated blood, and teaching health and safety classes.

May 21, 1991 - Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in the midst of a re-election campaign, killed by a bomb hidden in a bouquet of flowers. He had served as prime minister from 1984 to 1989, succeeding his mother, Indira Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1984.

Birthdays - Russian physicist and human rights activist Andrei Sakharov (1921-1989) was born in Moscow. Although he helped construct the first atomic and hydrogen bombs for Soviet Russia, he later denounced the Soviet

government and was exiled from 1980 to 1986. He was instrumental in formulating the political reform concept called perestroika and in encouraging glasnost (openness) in restrictive communist countries.

MAY 22

May 22, 1972 - President Richard Nixon became the first American president to visit Moscow. Four days later, Nixon and Soviet Russia's leader Leonid Brezhnev signed a pact pledging to freeze nuclear arsenals at current levels.

May 22, 1947 - Congress approved the Truman Doctrine, assuring U.S. support for Greece and Turkey to prevent the spread of Communism.

Birthdays - German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was born in Leipzig, Germany. He made revolutionary changes in the structure of opera and is best known for *The Ring of the Nibelung*, a series of operas based on old German myths which include: *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walkure*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*.

Birthdays - Sherlock Holmes creator Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was born at Edinburgh, Scotland. He was also deeply interested in and lectured on spiritualism.

Birthdays - Laurence Olivier (1907-1989) was born in Dorking, England. Considered one of the most influential actors of the 20th Century, he was honored with nine Academy Award nominations, three Oscars, five Emmy awards, and a host of other awards. His repertoire included most of the major Shakespearean roles, and films such as *The Entertainer*, *Rebecca*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Boys from Brazil*, *Marathon Man* and *Wuthering Heights*. He was knighted in 1947 and made a peer of the throne in 1970.

MAY 23

Birthdays - Journalist Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) was born in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts. She became the first American woman to serve as a foreign correspondent, reporting for the *New York Tribune*. Her book *Women in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1845, is considered the first feminist statement by an American writer, and brought her international acclaim. Sailing from Italy to the U.S. in 1850, she died, along with her husband and infant son, in a shipwreck off Fire Island, New York.



Birthdays - The first American female attorney Arabella Mansfield (1846-1911) was born near Burlington, Iowa (as Belle Aurelia Babb). She was certified in 1869 as an attorney and admitted to the Iowa bar, but never practiced law. Instead she chose a career as a college educator and administrator. She was also instrumental in the founding of the Iowa Suffrage Society in 1870.

Satwik-Chirag, Meiraba in last-8

Continuing their splendid run, young Indian shuttler Meiraba Luwang Maisnam and the star men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty advanced to the quarterfinals of Thailand Open Super 500.



A day after his upset win over compatriot HS Prannoy, the 21-year-old Meiraba, who trains at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, eliminated Denmark's Mads Christophersen 21-14 22-20 in a second round clash men's singles clash that lasted 50 minutes. Meiraba, who had won the Iran Fajr International and India International in 2022, will face a litmus test when he takes on world champion and local hero Kunlavut Vitidsarn next.

World No. 3 Satwik and Chirag defeated Xie Sao Nan and Zeng Wei Han, ranked 69th, 21-16 21-11 in their second round match. The Asian Games gold medallists will next face Malaysia's Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap.

The Olympics-bound women's pair of Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa beat Chinese Taipei's Hung En-Tzu and Lin Yu-Pei 21-19 21-17 to also reach the quarterfinals. Ashmita Chaliha's gruelling fight ended in a narrow loss as she went down 15-21 21-12 12-21 to top-seeded Chinese Han Yue in the women's singles.

IPL 17 SRH qualify for playoffs after rain washes out match

HYDERABAD (TIP)

Sunrisers Hyderabad on May 16 qualified for the IPL playoffs after rain washed out their match against Gujarat Titans without a ball being bowled. SRH thus became the third team to make the cut after Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals. The Sunrisers will face Punjab Kings in their last league assignment on May 19. GT, last year's runners-up and 2022 champions, were knocked out of the playoffs race after their previous match was also abandoned due to rain. The toss didn't happen at the scheduled time of 7pm due to rain and wet outfield. The rain intensified before settling into a steady shower as the pitch and outfield stayed covered.

Kings stifle Royals to get 5-wicket win

Guwahati: Skipper Sam Curran played the lead act, taking two wickets and hitting a well-paced fifty, as Punjab Kings consigned



Rajasthan Royals to a five-wicket defeat in their IPL match.

The target was a mere 145, but Kings made heavy weather of it on a sluggish track but Curran (63 not out off 41 balls) had a calm head and the skills to lift them to their fifth win of the season. PBKS made 145/5 in 18.5 overs.

The Englishman received good support from Jitesh Sharma (22 off 20 balls) as the pair added 63 runs in a fluent fifth-wicket partnership.

For Royals, it was their fourth defeat on the trot but they remained second on the table with

16 points.

Earlier, despite a well-tuned 48 from local hero Riyan Parag, RR struggled against an array of accurate bowlers.

R Ashwin (28 off 19) and Parag (48 off 34) tried to accelerate during their 50-run stand for the fourth wicket but it could only bring in temporary momentum for RR.

"To be very honest, we have to sit back and accept that we are going through some failures," RR captain Sanju Samson said. "You have to find out what's not working well as a team." *Source: PTI*

Captain Leader Legend: Chhetri hangs up boots

Sunil Chhetri, India's most decorated footballer, has announced his retirement from international football. Chhetri, 39, made the announcement through a video on social media platform X, mentioning that India's upcoming FIFA World Cup Qualifier game against Kuwait in Kolkata on June 6 will be his last.

"The recollection of the last 19 years is a combination of duty, pressure and immense joy. I never thought that these are the many games I would play for the country, good or bad but now I did but these last one and half two months I did. And this (the feeling) was very strange. I was probably going towards the decision that this game (against Kuwait) is going to be my last," Chhetri said.

Sunil Chhetri, a name synonymous with Indian football, boasts a glittering career spanning over two decades. This gifted forward has not only dominated domestic leagues but also carved his name on the international stage. Call it coincidences or a twist of fate, Chhetri will play his final game in the city where he made his India debut 19 years ago. India's game against Kuwait is a must-win to stay in contention for a World Cup Qualifiers Round 3 berth. Currently ranked second in Group A with four points from four games, India travel to face Qatar in their final group stage match. Only the top two teams progress.

"There is one day that I never forget and remember it quite often is the first time I played for my country man, it was unbelievable. But the day before, morning of the day, Sukhi sir, my first national team coach, in the morning he came to me and he's like, you're going to start? I can't tell you how I was feeling man. I took my jersey, I sprayed some perfume on it, I have no idea why. So that day, everything that happened, once he told me,



from breakfast to lunch and to the game and to my first goal in my debut, to conceding late 80th minute, that day is probably that I will never forget and is one of the best days of my national team journey," Chhetri added.

"And the moment I told myself first, that yes, this is the game that is going to be my last, is when I started recollecting everything. It was so strange, I started thinking about this game, that game, this coach, that coach, that team, that member, that ground, that away match, this good game, that bad game, all my individual performances, everything came, all the flashes came. So I decided that this is it."

Chhetri's journey began in 2002 with Mohun Bagan. His talent soon propelled him abroad, with stints at the USA's Kansas City Wizards (2010) and Portugal's Sporting CP reserves (2012). Back in India, he donned

the jerseys of prestigious clubs like East Bengal, Dempo, Mumbai City FC, and currently, Bengaluru FC. It's with Bengaluru that Chhetri truly flourished, lifting trophies like the I-League (2014, 2016), ISL (2019), and Super Cup (2018). He even led them to the AFC Cup final in 2016.

While club success is impressive, Sunil Chhetri's true magic lies in his international exploits. He has been instrumental in India's victories in the Nehru Cup (2007, 2009, 2012) and the SAFF Championship (2011, 2015, 2021). Most significantly, his contribution to India's 2008 AFC Challenge Cup win secured their first AFC Asian Cup appearance in 27 years.

But it's his goalscoring prowess that sets Chhetri apart. Since his debut goal in 2002, he has amassed a staggering tally. With 94 goals in 150 international appearances, he sits comfortably as the third-highest active international goal-scorer, behind only Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal and Argentina's Lionel Messi. This achievement places him fourth on the all-time list.

Chhetri's international debut came in 2005, followed by his first goal against Pakistan. A defining moment arrived in the 2011 SAFF Championship, where he surpassed Indian legend I.M. Vijayan's record of six goals in a single edition by scoring a phenomenal seven, propelling India to victory and becoming the national team's highest scorer.

Across club and country, Chhetri's goal tally stands at a remarkable 252 in 515 appearances, averaging almost a goal every two games. This consistency and talent haven't gone unnoticed. In 2022, FIFA honoured him with a documentary titled "Captain Fantastic," celebrating his journey and achievements.



An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combatting avoidable blindness in children.

"On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautifully facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion. Best wishes, Peter"

Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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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.