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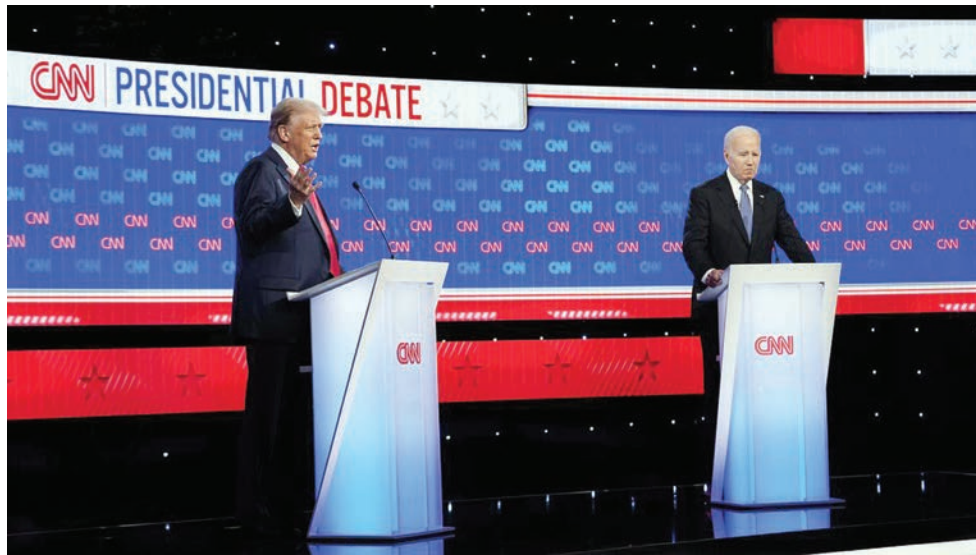
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Biden, Trump trade barbs in a lackluster US Presidential Debate

ONE FALTERED IN COMMUNICATING; THE OTHER ELUDED ANSWERS



U.S. President Joe Biden, right, and Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump, left, during a presidential debate hosted by CNN, Thursday, June 27, 2024, in Atlanta.

CNN Screenshot

JUNE 28, 2024

ATLANTA, GA (TIP):The first Presidential debate - a 90-minute affair- on June 28 in Atlanta which was hosted by CNN, had the U.S. President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump spar on policies and performances.

Their first question was on the economy. Biden who spoke mildly and in a hoarse voice dwelt on the economic gains under his watch. He claimed that he rescued the American economy from "free fall" and "chaos" when he took over the presidency from Mr. Trump in 2021.

Trump in his usual loud voice rebutted Biden and claimed that during his term, "everything was rocking good." He blamed Biden for rising prices that have frustrated Americans.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

India's President Murmu calls upon Members of Parliament to rise above party politics to find solutions to paper leaks



President Droupadi Murmu addresses Parliament on June 27.

Photo credit : PTI

JUNE 27, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday, June 27, said paper leaks would not be condoned and perpetrators of these crimes would be meted out the strictest possible punishment.

Making a mention of recent paper leak concerns in the wake of the NEET-UG controversy and the cancellations of

UGC-NET and NEET-PG exams, Murmu, in her first address to a joint sitting of Parliament after the re-election of NDA for a third time, urged politicians to rise above party politics to find solutions to the challenge of paper leaks.

"My government is committed to getting the perpetrators of paper leaks punished.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

India defeat England to barge into T20 World Cup Final



Axar Patel and Rohit Sharma celebrate the wicket of England's captain Jos Buttler during their semi-final match in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, at Providence Stadium in Guyana on Thursday, June 27

Photo credit: ANI

JUNE 27, 2024

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA (TIP):

Skipper Rohit Sharma's grace was matched by the might of Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav as India exorcised the ghosts of 2022 by handing defending

champions England a 68-run thrashing to enter the final of the T20 World Cup here on Thursday, June 27. Rohit thus became the first Indian captain to lead the country in three ICC global finals in

CONTD ON PAGE 42

SPEAKER RECOGNIZES RAHUL GANDHI AS LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN LOK SABHA



JUNE 26, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday, June 26, recognized Congress MP Rahul Gandhi as Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha. The recognition has come into effect from June 9.

A Lok Sabha secretariat notification on Wednesday, June 26, said the Speaker has recognized Rahul Gandhi, leader of Indian

CONTD ON PAGE 42



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COMMENTS

Whither American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) ?

The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) has grown from strength to strength since its inception in 1982. Through its dedication to medical education, healthcare advancement, social involvement, and cultural promotion, AAPI has become a cornerstone of support and leadership within the medical community. The organization's contributions extend far beyond clinical practice, encompassing education, research, advocacy, and humanitarian efforts that enrich the lives of its members and the communities they serve. As AAPI continues to evolve, it remains committed to its founding principles of excellence, service, and collaboration, ensuring a brighter and healthier future for generations to come.

AAPI has undoubtedly faced its share of challenges and internal strife despite its commendable achievements and contributions to the medical community. Over the years, as the organization grew in size, influence, and financial stability, it also became a battleground for internal politics and power struggles. This has resulted in a stark division within AAPI, with competing factions vying for control and influence within the organization.

The competition for leadership positions and influence has unfortunately overshadowed the core mission and objectives with which AAPI was originally founded. Instead of focusing on service to the community, professional excellence, and advocacy for healthcare issues, some members have been engaged in bitter rivalries that have led to animosity and division.

At present, AAPI finds itself at a critical juncture, with significant discord between opposing camps within the organization. This internal strife has not only tarnished the organization's reputation but also undermined its effectiveness in serving its members and the broader healthcare community. The atmosphere of conflict and mistrust detracts from the noble goals of AAPI and hampers its ability to fulfill its mission of promoting health, education, and cultural understanding.

It is imperative that influential members of AAPI intervene to mediate and reconcile the warring factions. Leaders within the organization must emphasize the importance of unity, professionalism, and mutual respect. They should remind all members of their shared commitment to serving the community through their professional skills and dedication to patient care.

There is a pressing need for a cultural shift within AAPI towards fostering a supportive and collaborative environment. Instead of viewing leadership positions as trophies to be won or sources of power, members should prioritize collective goals and cooperative efforts to advance healthcare and educational initiatives.

Addressing the internal divisions requires a concerted effort to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity within AAPI. Open dialogue, constructive engagement, and adherence to ethical standards are essential to rebuilding trust and restoring the organization's integrity.

To heal from the current discord, AAPI members must rise above personal ambitions and factional interests. They must embrace a higher sense of responsibility towards the organization's founding principles and the greater good of the communities they serve. This includes advocating for healthcare policies, supporting professional development, and actively participating in community outreach programs without the distraction of internal conflicts.

While AAPI has faced internal challenges and divisions, it possesses the resilience and potential to overcome these obstacles. By prioritizing unity, professionalism, and service to the community, AAPI can reclaim its reputation as a leading advocate for physicians of Indian origin in the United States. It is time for honorable physicians within AAPI to reflect on their shared values, mend their internal divisions, and reaffirm their commitment to excellence in healthcare and cultural enrichment. Only through collective efforts and mutual respect can AAPI continue to thrive and uphold its vital mission in the years to come.



BY
INDRAJIT SALUJA

A lack luster debate : Americans are disappointed in both Biden and Trump

The first presidential debate between President Biden and Former President Donald Trump was anticipated to be a pivotal moment in the 2024 election season, yet what unfolded left many observers disheartened and disillusioned. One couldn't believe one's eyes and ears watching and listening to the so-called debate between the two candidates. It was, to put it very simply and succinctly, a lackluster debate.

President Biden's performance was notably unsteady. Throughout the evening, he struggled to articulate his thoughts clearly, often appearing to fumble for expressions. His voice, usually a symbol of authority, faltered at times, betraying a lack of conviction and confidence. When questioned about his capabilities at his age, his response failed to reassure listeners of his fitness to lead. The moment underscored concerns about his readiness to take on the demanding role of President of the United States.

In contrast, Donald Trump exuded more self-assurance and appeared more in command of himself. He navigated through answers more fluidly, readily finding words to support his points. However, Trump's approach was not without its flaws. He frequently evaded direct answers, particularly concerning his commitment to accepting election results and condemning violence following the election outcome. Despite his confident demeanor, Trump's tendency to sidestep crucial issues left some viewers questioning the depth of his commitment to democratic principles.

Throughout the debate, Trump leaned heavily on praising his own presidency, highlighting accomplishments while criticizing Biden for perceived reversals of these gains. His strategy, though effective in rallying his base, did little to broaden his appeal beyond his core supporters. While Trump appeared more assertive on stage, his propensity to embellish achievements and dodge critical questions left many undecided voters grappling with uncertainties.

The reactions from both camps following the debate were telling. Democrats expressed disappointment in Biden's performance, hoping for a more compelling display of leadership qualities and policy vision. Conversely, Trump supporters celebrated what they perceived as a strong showing by their candidate, convinced that he had outperformed Biden decisively. The stark contrast in reactions underscored the deepening divide within American politics, where perceptions of debate performance often reinforce existing partisan beliefs rather than sway undecided voters.

Yet, beyond the partisan fervor and disappointment lies a broader sentiment among many Americans: a sense of disillusionment with the quality of presidential candidates offered. The debate highlighted not only the weaknesses of the individual candidates but also the shortcomings of a political system that seems to struggle in presenting truly inspiring and unifying leadership choices.

Many Americans expressed a yearning for alternative candidates who could offer fresh perspectives and genuine solutions to the country's challenges. The spectacle of the debate, with its lack of substantive discourse and evasion of critical issues, reinforced the perception that neither Biden nor Trump fully embodies the qualities needed to lead effectively in these tumultuous times.

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GOPIO Manhattan and Tirlok Malik, Happy Life Yoga speaker, celebrate International Day of Yoga 2024



JUNE 23, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): GOPIO Manhattan and Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik, along with The Indian Panorama and Indian American Forum, hosted an interactive and informative session on June 22 featuring eminent experts and

speakers to celebrate International Day of Yoga 2024.

The ever-ebullient Malik emphasized loving yourself and "if you love yourself, it is your responsibility to take care of your happiness and health". He conducted practical exercises as well as chair yoga, peppered with calls for laughter among

A large number of participants logged in for the session from New York, other parts of the USA, India, and around the world.

Consul General of India in New York, Amb. Binaya



Consul General of India in New York, Amb. Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, in his address as Chief Guest, underlined that yoga is a holistic body-mind-spirit system

Srikanta Pradhan, in his address as Chief Guest, underlined that yoga is a holistic body-mind-spirit system. He congratulated GOPIO and Tirlok Malik for holding the event open to all.

In his 4th year leading this event, session host Malik asked the speakers to address the question: There are challenges and hardships in life, but how do you let them go and laugh at life? Give me your personal mantra, he asked them. Indu Jaiswal, Chairperson of the Indian American Forum and a medical professional, shared her mantra: "Always have a positive outlook and believe in yourself."



Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja, Editor-Publisher of The Indian Panorama, said that "happiness is within you".

Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja, Editor-Publisher of The Indian Panorama, said that happiness is within you. He added that the five don'ts - ahimsa, Satya, etc.--of Patanjali yoga is a formula for not causing unhappiness to others.

Tara Shajan, a medical professional, suggested we should revisit our happy memories, particularly from childhood, and try to lower our happiness threshold. Neeta Bhasin, the founder of Times Square Diwali, shared that she has learned to prioritize her own happiness.

Neha Lohia, a filmmaker and spiritual enthusiast, said that we should take whatever happens to us as 'prasad' from God.

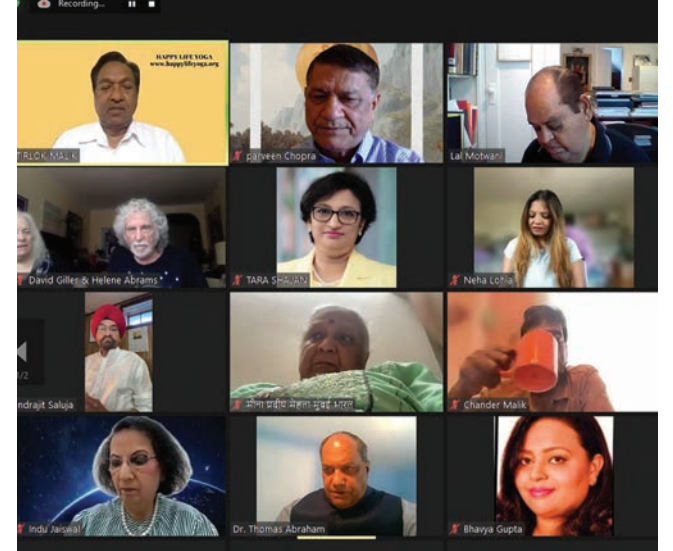
Parveen Chopra, founder of wellness and spirituality webmag ALotusInTheMud.com, mentioned the sutra, "Heyam dukham anagatam" (Avert the danger that has not yet come). Do regular exercise, yoga and meditation, he said, to avoid poor physical and mental health later in life.

Dr. Renee Mehra conducted a short meditation.

Others who spoke included Lal Motwani - GOPIO International President, Gobind Munjal - AIA National President, 'vegan ambassador' Anil Narang and Deborah Fishman.

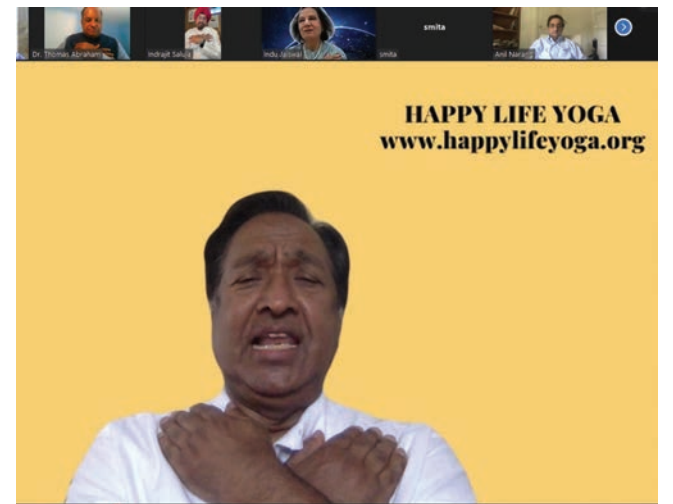
Dr. Thomas Abraham, Chairman of GOPIO (Global Organization for People of Indian Origin), talked about the objectives of the global organization. Shivender Sofat, GOPIO Manhattan President, said the message shared in this session should be shared with others.

Sid Jain of the GOPIO team attended the session and



A video grab of the participants

Bhavya Gupta gave the vote of thanks.



Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik has conducted over 100 Happy Life Yoga workshops over four years

Tirlok Malik has conducted over 100 Happy Life Yoga workshops over four years.

He created this workshop (No mats needed!) inspired by Ayurveda, yoga, and Indian philosophy as a practical way to live a happier and healthier life in today's testing times.

Women's Cricket Club of Stamford 'Sizzlers' Organizes Tournaments and Raises Funds for Local Charities

JUNE 23, 2024

STAMFORD, CT (TIP): Stamford Cricket Club Sizzlers- a local, homegrown women's cricket team comprising 20 women conducted their second annual women's cricket tournament at Stamford's Lione Park on June 22nd, 2024. SCC Sizzlers hosted 7 teams and 250 people from all over Stamford, Greenwich and Westchester.

This year the tournament was conducted in support of The Women and Children's Fund of the Fairfield County Community Foundation (FCCF). The past years have seen DVCC, The Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County and Wounded Warriors Project benefiting from their donations. This group of vibrant South Asian women, both working professionals and moms connected post COVID through their common passion for the sport. Through this venture they hope to inspire and drive more women in the community to follow their lead.

GOPIO-CT has been supporting the Stamford team.



Women Cricketers of Stamford Cricket Club Sizzlers

Many team members and their families participate in GOPIO-CT activities. SCC Sizzlers is led by Captain Bindu Philip and Vice-Captain Monika Mittal.



Sonica Katakdhond of the Stamford Women's Cricket Club Sizzlers presenting a check to Mary Grace of Fairfield County Community Foundation.

This year, HCC Drakainas, a Long Island based team and Phoenix of Westchester made it to the Finals.

Finals of the tournament will be held in the coming weeks.

Ms. Mary Grace of FCCF was also present for the felicitation ceremony and to accept their donation from Sizzlers.

CITY AGENCIES HOSTED 'BEAT THE HEAT' IMMIGRANT MEDIA ROUNDTABLE

JUNE 27, 2024

NEW YORK, NY (TIP): The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), NYC Emergency Management (NYCEM), and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), on June 26, hosted an immigrant media roundtable to discuss how New Yorkers can "Beat the Heat" this summer by identifying signs of extreme heat and taking appropriate measures.

Extreme heat means high heat and humidity with temperatures that are much higher than normal (10 degrees or more) lasting for several days. Extreme heat is a serious threat in New York City, and New Yorkers need to be extra careful during hot summer months.

"It is crucial we continue to host these immigrant media roundtables, especially to provide life-saving information," said

Castro, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. "From my past advocacy experience on behalf of day laborers, I know just how vulnerable immigrant populations are to extreme



weather conditions. Local immigrant press are trusted messengers, and work tirelessly to ensure their communities take necessary steps to stay safe and cool this summer."

KNOW THE SIGNS OF HEAT ILLNESS

Heat stroke occurs when the body's temperature rises quickly and can lead to death. Here are the symptoms to watch out for:

- *Hot, dry skin
- *Confusion, hallucinations, and disorientation

*Loss of consciousness or being unresponsive

- *Nausea or vomiting
- *Trouble breathing
- *Fast, strong pulse
- *Weakness
- *Dizziness
- *Heavy sweating
- *Cold, clammy skin
- *Muscle cramps
- *Lightheadedness or feeling faint
- *Headache
- *Decreased energy
- *Loss of appetite or nausea

WHAT THE CITY DOES

During heat emergencies, the City will open cooling centers throughout the five boroughs. Visit the Cooling Center Finder at finder.nyc.gov/coolingcenters/ or call 311 to find cooling center locations.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that helps low-income homeowners and renters heat and cool their homes. For more information, visit nyc.gov/hra/help/energy-assistance.

All New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's official emergency notification system, to receive free, customizable emergency alerts in 14 different languages including ASL. Download the free mobile app or receive notifications in 13 different languages by signing up at nyc.gov/notify or calling 311.

(This roundtable is part of MOIA's monthly activation to share information on available city resources and services. For additional information and resources, visit nyc.gov/beattheheat)

SBS COMMISSIONER KEVIN D. KIM CELEBRATES YEAR OF MILESTONES FOR NYC ENTREPRENEURS, WORKERS, AND NEIGHBORHOODS

MILESTONES IN OUTREACH, BUSINESSES SERVED, DOLLARS SAVED HIGHLIGHT SUCCESSSES UNDER THE ADAMS ADMINISTRATION



NYC Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Kevin D. Kim
Photo : Courtesy linkedIn

JUNE 27, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): NYC Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Kevin D. Kim, on June 27, celebrated the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) which saw historic milestones in neighborhood investment, small business formation, New Yorkers employed, and businesses served. These record achievements took place as New York City regained all of the private sector jobs lost during the COVID-19 pandemic and saw the largest number of small businesses in its history, with one in three created since 2022.

"New York City is grateful for Commissioner Kim's dynamic and effective leadership and his dedicated service to our city and the people of New

York," said NYC Mayor Eric Adams. "Commissioner Kim launched an era of unprecedented growth at SBS that facilitated more than \$265 million in funding to small businesses, connected 45,000 New Yorkers to jobs through SBS Workforce1 Career Centers, generated \$3.1 billion in contracts to M/WBEs, and supported an astounding level of community engagement. Every day, our administration strives to make our city safer, more prosperous, and more livable, and we thank Commissioner Kim for his contributions to that shared mission for the last two and a half years."

"Since Day One of this administration, Commissioner Kim has been an integral part of the team and a tireless advocate for the needs of the city's nearly 200,000 small businesses," said NYC Deputy Mayor for Housing, Workforce, and Economic Development Maria Torres-Springer. "Under his leadership, SBS has been on the front lines of our efforts to build an equitable economic recovery, strengthen our small business community, and expand economic opportunity for all New Yorkers. My sincere thanks to him for the tremendous impact that he has stewarded, including in shaping an agency that is more ready and energized

to serve New Yorkers than ever before."

"As the son of NYC immigrants, I never imagined I'd have the honor to give back to the city that has given me so much," said NYC Small Business Services (SBS) Commissioner Kevin D. Kim. "As a former small business owner, I know how vital small businesses are to families, communities, and our city. Ensuring every neighborhood's voice is heard has been my mission: we toured all 51 City Council Districts and met with New Yorkers everywhere to bring SBS resources to those most in need. We invested \$27 million into our neighborhoods, created the largest public-private loan fund for small businesses in NYC history, and saw NYC achieve new records in employment and small business openings. When I joined this agency, our city was reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic, and our future was uncertain. I want to thank Mayor Adams and Deputy Mayor Torres-Springer - it has been a privilege to serve as SBS Commissioner, and today, I can confidently say: New York City is not coming back; it is back!"

Commissioner Kim was appointed by Mayor Adams in January 2022 and is leaving the agency at the end of the fiscal year with major accomplishments

spanning first-of-its-kind programming, historic levels of engagement with New Yorkers, and a successful focus on strengthening agency operations, such as:

Engaging 25,000 New Yorkers at nearly 700 events across all five boroughs through a newly formed outreach team, with SBS Commissioner Kevin D. Kim having personally toured commercial corridors in all 51 New York City Council districts;

Saving businesses more than \$45M by cutting fines and fees, educating businesses on business compliance, and implementing a one-time liquor license fee;

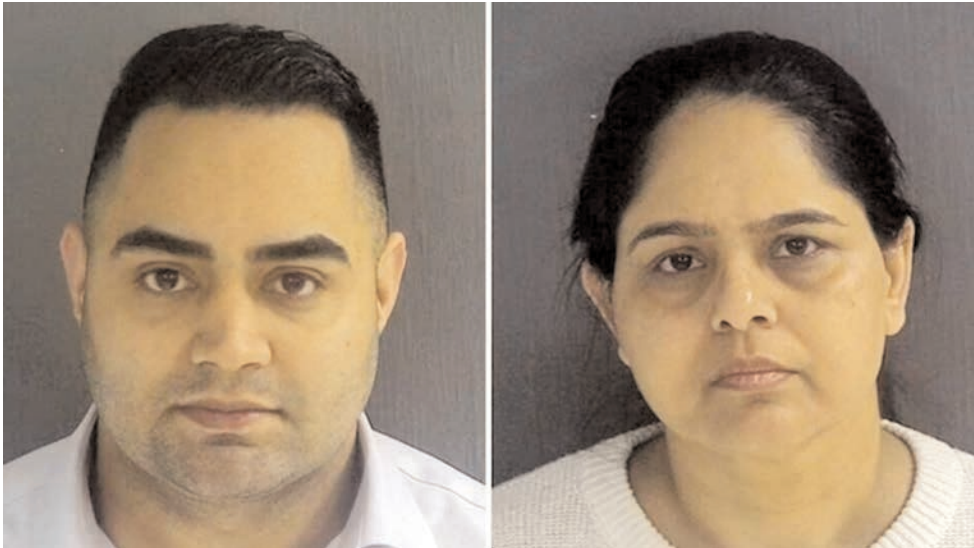
Investing an unprecedented \$27M in neighborhood revitalization including new programming to improve quality of life and activate public spaces;

Facilitating more than \$265 million in funding to businesses;

Connecting 45,000 New Yorkers to jobs through SBS Workforce1;

Facilitating \$265 million in funding to small businesses, including \$85 million in the historic NYC Small Business Opportunity fund;

Indian-American couple sentenced to prison for forcing relative to work at gas station



Harmanpreet Singh and Kulbir Kaur have been sentenced to prison terms and ordered to pay to the victim in restitution

JUNE 26, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A US court has sentenced an Indian-American couple to prison for coercing their relative to work at their gas station and convenience store for over three years by bringing him to the United States on the pretext of helping enrol him in a school.

Harmanpreet Singh, 31, was sentenced to 135 months (11.25 years) in prison and Kulbir Kaur, 43, to 87 months (7.25 years) by the court that also asked them to pay the victim, his cousin, USD 225,210.76 (Rs 1.87 crores approximately) in restitution.

The couple has since divorced.

"The defendants exploited their relationship with the victim to lure him to the United States with false promises that they would help enrol him in school," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division said.

"The defendants confiscated the

victim's immigration documents and subjected him to threats, physical force and mental abuse to coerce him to work long hours for minimal pay," she said.

"This sentence should send a strong message that such forced labor will not be tolerated in our communities," she added.

US Attorney Jessica D Aber for the Eastern District of Virginia said the defendants preyed on the victim's earnest desire to attain an education and improve his life.

Instead, they deprived him of the most basic human needs and robbed him of his freedom, the attorney said.

The evidence presented at trial demonstrated that in 2018, the defendants enticed the victim, Singh's cousin and then a minor, to travel to the US from India with false promises of helping enrol him in school, the Department of Justice said.

It said that after the victim arrived in

the US, the defendants took his immigration documents and instead forced him to provide labor and services at Singh's store for over three years, between March 2018 and May 2021.

Singh and Kaur compelled the victim to work at the store, including cleaning, cooking, stocking and handling the cash register and store records, between 12 and 17 hours a day, nearly every day, for minimal pay, according to the evidence presented during the trial.

They used various coercive means, including confiscating the victim's immigration documents and subjecting the victim to physical abuse, threats of force and other serious harm, and, at times, degrading living conditions to compel him to continue working, the evidence showed.

The couple left the victim at the store to sleep in a back office for days on multiple occasions, limited his access to food, refused to provide medical care or education, used surveillance equipment to monitor the victim both at the store and in their home, refused his requests to return to India and made him overstay his visa, according to the evidence.

The defendants also forced the victim to marry Kaur and used that marriage to threaten to take the victim's family's properties or falsely report him to the police if he left.

The evidence also showed that Singh pulled the victim's hair, slapped and kicked him when he requested his immigration documents back or tried to leave. On three different occasions, he threatened the victim with a revolver for trying to take a day off and for trying to leave.

(Source: DOJ Office of Public Affairs)

INDIAN -ORIGIN PUNJAB MAN DIES TRAGICALLY IN ITALY



Satnam Singh was injured by heavy machinery while working in a vegetable field in Lazio, near Rome, on Monday June 17

JUNE 21, 2024

ROME (TIP): A 31-year-old Indian casual worker in Italy has died tragically after he was dumped on the road without medical assistance by his employer after his arm was severed by heavy farm machinery.

Satnam Singh was injured by heavy machinery while working in a vegetable field in Lazio, near Rome, on Monday.

The Embassy of India in Rome posted on Wednesday, June 19, on X that it was aware of the very unfortunate demise of an Indian national in Latina, Italy.

"We are in contact with local authorities. Efforts are underway to contact the family and provide consular assistance," it wrote without giving more information. Singh reportedly hailed from Punjab.

According to Italian media, Singh's employer, Antonello Lovato, loaded him and his wife into a van and left them by the side of the road near their home.

"We heard his wife's screams who kept calling for help, then we saw a lad who was holding him in his arms and who carried him into the house," ANSA news agency quoted Ilario Pepe, the owner of the house, as saying.

"We thought he was helping him, but then he ran away.

"I ran after him," said Pepe, "and I saw him get into a van and I asked him what had happened and why he hadn't taken him to hospital.

"He replied 'he's not on the books as a regular employee'".

The severed arm was placed in a fruit box.

Medical help did not reach Singh until an hour and a half later. He was airlifted to a hospital in Rome but died on Wednesday.

Lovato is now under investigation for criminal negligence and manslaughter.

Lovato's father told Italian media: "My son had told [Singh] not to go near the machinery, but he didn't listen."

"It was sheer carelessness, unfortunately", said Renzo Lovato, speaking to the TG1 first channel news.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin man shot dead during robbery at convenience store in Arkansas

JUNE 23, 2024

DALLAS, TX (TIP): A 32-year-old Indian-origin man from Andhra Pradesh was among four persons killed in firing at a grocery store in Arkansas.

The victim from Andhra Pradesh was identified as Dasari Gopikrishna, a native of Bapatla district who had gone to the US only eight months ago.

He was working at the Mad Butcher grocery store at Fordyce, a small town in Arkansas, where a gunman opened fire on June 21. Gopikrishna, who was at the billing counter, sustained critical injuries. He succumbed at a hospital the next day. His family in Yajali in Karlapalem mandal of Bapatla district was shattered on receiving



Dasari Gopikrishna was among four persons killed in firing at a grocery store in Arkansas on June 21

the news. Gopikrishna is survived by a wife and a son. Four persons were killed and nine injured when the gunman opened fire inside the store and at the parking lot.

The suspected shooter, identified as Daniel Hill, was taken into custody after being shot by law enforcement officers during the incident.

Meanwhile, CCTV footage of the assailant entering the store and opening fire on the man at the counter has emerged. As the victim collapsed on the ground, the gunman jumped over the counter and escaped after lifting something from the shelf.

INDIAN ELECTRICIAN WINS AED 1 MILLION JACKPOT IN DUBAI

JUNE 25, 2024

DUBAI (TIP): A 46-year-old electrician from India has bagged an AED 1 million (approx Rs 2.25 crore) cash prize in Dubai, after years of saving and investing wisely, a local news report said on Tuesday, June 25.

Nagendrum Borugadda, from Andhra Pradesh, has been saving AED 100 with National Bonds through direct debit since 2019. Borugadda, who has been living in the UAE since 2017, is the father of an 18-year-old daughter and a 16-year-old son, a news report said.

"I came to the UAE to build a better life for my family and provide good education to my children. This win feels surreal," he was quoted by the newspaper as saying.



Nagendrum Borugadda, from Andhra Pradesh, has been saving AED 100 with National Bonds through direct debit since 2019

Photo for representation only : iStock

Indian American Community Honor Consul A.K. Vijaykrishnan at his Farewell Dinner

JUNE 20, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) chapters in New York and Manhattan joined hands with Indian American Kerala Center in Elmont, New York along with several other community organizations including Kerala Cultural Association of North America, Pioneer Club of Keralites, Kerala Samajam of Greater New York, World Malayalee Council NY Province, FOMAA Metro Region, FOKANA Metro Region, Long Island Malayalee Cultural Association and Indian American Malayalee Association of Long Island, Milan Cultural Association to give warm send off with a dinner to Consul for Community Affairs Shri A.K. Vijaykrishnan from the Indian Consulate in New York after 4 ½ years of service.

Consul Vijaykrishnan has been a ranking diplomat with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India with experience of over 36 years in a variety of interesting and challenging assignments with earlier postings in the High Commission of India in Pakistan as well as other countries and different sections of Ministry of External Affairs. Since Vijaykrishnan was retiring from the service and send-off dinner was held at the Indian American Kerala Center.

The program started with Kerala Center President Alex Esthappan in his welcome address gave high praise for Consul Vijaykrishnan during his term of office.

GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham said that although many Consuls come and go, the community organizations decided to give Consul Vijaykrishnan an appropriate send-off since he conducted his service above his call for duty by making himself available to serve the community 24/7 by sharing his cell phone to everyone.

"Whenever I called him to alert a



Indian Community Organizations honor Consul A.K. Vijaykrishnan at the Farewell and Send-Off Dinner. GOPIO Chairman presenting an honor plaque on behalf of all sponsoring organizations. Also seen in the middle are Kerala Center President Alex Esthappan, Mrs. Jalaja Vijaykrishnan, and Consul Pragma Singh.

community issue or the death of an Indian citizen in the USA, he was already on the case and that was greatly appreciated by the community," said Dr. Abraham.

Representatives of other community organizations spoke at the farewell included Beena Kothari, President, GOPIO-NY; Suresh Sharma, President, Milan Cultural Association (Hartford, CT); Johny Zachariah, President, Pioneer Club of Keralites; Manohar Thomas, President of Sargavedi; Jose Kadapuram of Kairali TV; Philip Madathil, President, Kerala Cultural Association of North America; Sibi David, President, Kerala Samajam of New York; Thomas T. Oommen, Long Island Malayalee Cultural Association; Sibi David of

Kalavedi and Biju Chacko of World Malayalee Council. Others who spoke at the event were Democratic Party leaders Dr.

Sumita SenGupta, Kalathil Varghese and Koshy Thomas; May Philip and Mathew Kutty Easo.

Consul Vijay Krishnan was presented with an honor plaque for his sincere service to the Indian Diaspora community by these organizations together.

In his reply to remarks, Vijaykrishnan said that he enjoyed fully working for the benefit of the Indian American community. He told that he encountered a lot of family disputes including violence against spouses and suggested that the community must pursue non-violence in any disputes.

Vijaykrishnan said that he had attended many regional community festivals and suggested to community organizations to invite some members of other Indian community organizations whenever any regional festivals are held. This would help better understanding and knowledge of Indian festivals all our communities.

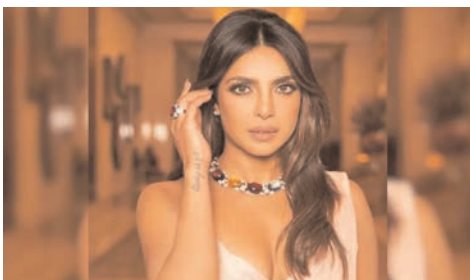
The Consul for Visa at the Indian Consulate Pragma Singh will have the additional charge of Consul for Community Affairs, who said at the meeting that she would continue the work of Consul Vijaykrishnan and looking for community support.

Kerala Center Secretary Raju Thomas gave the vote of thanks.

(Based on a Press Release)

Priyanka Chopra's former restaurant Sona to shut down; final service on June 30

Last year in August, People Magazine confirmed that Priyanka Chopra is no longer associated with SONA, which opened in 2021



Priyanka Chopra
Image Instagrammed by Priyanka Chopra

JUNE 25, 2024

NEW YORK / NEW DELHI (TIP): Priyanka Chopra's former New York restaurant SONA will serve its final brunch service on June 30. The restaurant, known for serving Indian cuisine with a contemporary touch, is

closing its door almost a year after Priyanka ended her partnership with the establishment.

The restaurant shared a statement on its official Instagram page on Wednesday. It read, "After more than 3 remarkable years, SONA will be closing. We have immense gratitude for everyone who walked through our doors. It's been our greatest honor to serve you. Thank you to our dedicated team who serve delicious food, smiles & warmth daily. Sona's final service will be brunch on Sunday, June 30. We hope to see you for a final meal or drink. Our doors and arms are open." Sharing the statement, the restaurant wrote, "We'll miss you. Come on by for one final hurrah."

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India must remain ahead of the curve

PURSUIT OF GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS MUST BE TEMPERED BY AWARENESS OF REGIONAL & IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES



BY SHYAM SARAN

"THERE IS AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE US HAS ENOUGH STAKES IN ITS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIA NOT TO LET THE ISSUE GET OUT OF HAND. HOWEVER, THE EXTRADITION OF GUPTA TO AMERICA FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE INITIATION OF JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HIM MEAN THAT THE ABILITY OF THE US ADMINISTRATION TO MANAGE THE FALLOUT WILL BE SEVERELY LIMITED. IF FURTHER DAMAGING EVIDENCE BECOMES PUBLIC DURING THE TRIAL, THERE WILL BE EVEN GREATER REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE TO INDIA AND THERE WILL BE DEMANDS IN THE US CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN MEDIA FOR PUNITIVE MEASURES AGAINST INDIA. IT WOULD BE PRUDENT FOR THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO WORK OUT A COPING STRATEGY AND REMAIN AHEAD OF THE CURVE."

The din of the Lok Sabha elections is over. A duly elected government is in place and it is gearing up to face both domestic and external challenges. Some of these challenges are not new, though they have a different scale and dimension. But some will be novel and unexpected. On balance, the domestic landscape remains relatively more stable. There may be a coalition government at the Centre, but the BJP remains its largest constituent. Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have been politically diminished by the election results, but he remains the most popular and powerful leader. Temperamentally, he is unlikely to significantly alter the



There is an assumption that the US has enough stakes in its strategic partnership with India not to let the Pannun issue get out of hand

Credit: PTI

modus operandi he has relied upon during the past decade. He is more likely to double down in implementing his political, ideological and economic agendas than in stepping back into a more consensual mode. To the extent that political stability and policy continuity will matter in a world where even the more powerful countries, including the US, are descending into a period of mounting uncertainty, political polarization and even fragmentation, India will be seen as a more stable and reliable anchor in the international system. That will be an asset it can leverage to advance its interests.

India is important to the world, but the world remains more important to India. A more modest external posture may help.

If India is able to sustain its current rate of GDP growth of around 7 per cent per annum over the next decade, as it seems likely to do, that, too, will make it an outlier among major emerging economies. The Modi government has been unusually business-friendly and this has improved the investment environment for domestic and foreign entities. It must now shift from a business-friendly to a market-friendly strategy which creates an enabling environment for all businesses to flourish. If it does, the economic transformation of India will become the great story of the next several decades. This could potentially expand the country's diplomatic space. Foreign policy should be harnessed to promoting the interests of Indian businesses rather than those of a few chosen entities.

Unlike the domestic space, the external space will be far more challenging and India's vulnerabilities will be greater. In a rapidly changing and fluid geopolitical landscape, the uncertainties unleashed by continuing

and escalating wars in Europe and West Asia and the prospects of dramatic and deeply disruptive departures in the foreign policies of major powers as a fallout of impending elections will require an extraordinary agility and skillful diplomacy on the part of India. There seems to be an assumption that India's value as a countervailing and constraining power vis-à-vis China would not only persist but also be enhanced. But as we had witnessed during the Cold War, the dominant powers often temper their confrontation with significant measures of détente and even collaboration at the cost of those allied or aligned with them. One should not rule out such strategic re-ordering of relations between the US and China which may shrink India's own strategic space and heighten its vulnerability to Chinese pressure.

It is also possible that in meeting the China challenge in the Indo-Pacific, the US may attach greater value to its alliance systems and operational arrangements with other partner countries in the region. The US has worked hard to create a truly trilateral military alliance with Japan and South Korea, helping overcome the historical antipathy between Japan and South Korea. The three countries are now sharing intelligence, conducting military drills and coordinating their postures towards China and the region and this is becoming the core of American Indo-Pacific strategy instead of the Quad (India, Japan, Australia and the US). The AUKUS, comprising Australia, the UK and the US, which is a military alliance based on a substantial nuclear submarine force, will also gain in importance as it begins to be rolled out. The revival of the US-Philippines military alliance and the US gaining access to key bases in that country are

another link in the American security chain. The Quad summit scheduled earlier this year in India has been postponed and is unlikely to be convened until after the US presidential elections. But its fate has become uncertain, and with that its value to India as a counter to China.

There are other vulnerabilities to be dealt with. The allegations regarding assassination attempts, perpetrated by Indian intelligence agents against Khalistani elements in the US and Canada who are accused of spreading terrorism in India, may adversely impact India's relations with key Western partners. The allegation is that a US citizen, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, was the target of an assassination plot hatched by an employee of India's external intelligence agency, R&AW. It relied on an Indian citizen, Nikhil Gupta, to carry this through a hired hitman. The plot was foiled by the US authorities. The Indian government has promised a full investigation. There is an assumption that the US has enough stakes in its strategic partnership with India not to let the issue get out of hand. However, the extradition of Gupta to America from the Czech Republic and the initiation of judicial proceedings against him mean that the ability of the US administration to manage the fallout will be severely limited. If further damaging evidence becomes public during the trial, there will be even greater reputational damage to India and there will be demands in the US Congress and the American media for punitive measures against India. It would be prudent for the Indian government to work out a coping strategy and remain ahead of the curve.

It is hoped that the newly elected government will re-orient its policy towards its neighborhood, including towards China. There needs to be a re-engagement with China and the search for a new equilibrium in the relationship. The opportunities for a resumption of dialogue at the summit level during the forthcoming summits of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the BRICS grouping should be grasped, even if the prospects of resolving outstanding issues are limited. The same goes for re-engagement with Pakistan, for which the conditions are much more conducive than before, given its grave economic crisis and geopolitical diminution.

The pursuit of global aspirations must be tempered by an awareness of more regional and immediate challenges. India is important to the world, but the world remains more important to India. A more modest external posture may help.

(Shyam Saran is a Former Foreign Secretary of India)

Opposition's larger demography, Leader of the Opposition's big responsibility



BY P.D.T. ACHARY

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE 18TH LOK SABHA MUST TAKE HIS CUE FROM THE VERDICT OF THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION - TO RESTORE NORMALCY IN PARLIAMENT AND HIGHLIGHT THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURES

The 2024 general election is historic in as much as it resulted in the numerically largest Opposition in the Lok Sabha. It is perhaps the largest in the history of the House. With the Opposition securing over 234 seats, one also saw the debate on the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) come alive. In the 16th and 17th Lok Sabhas, there was no LoP because under a direction of the Speaker issued in the 1950s, in order to get recognition as a party in the House, it should have a minimum of 10% members in that House (Direction 121).

This direction was issued for the recognition and categorization of parliamentary parties for the sake of providing them certain facilities in Parliament. But this direction does not deal with the recognition of the LoP. Later, Parliament enacted the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977, which for the first time, defined the term Leader of the Opposition as "the Leader in that House of the party in opposition to the Government having the greatest numerical strength and recognized as such by the Chairman of the Council of States or the Speaker of the House of the People, as the case may be".

The definition shows that in order to recognize a person as LoP, there are two conditions that need to be fulfilled. First, the party should be numerically the biggest one in opposition to the government. Second, that party should be recognized by the Speaker as a party. As mentioned earlier, the Speaker can recognize a party as such only if it has 10% of the strength of the House. In other words, only a party which has 10% of the strength of the House can put forth its claim to the post of LoP. Under the direction cited, a party which has less than 10% members shall be categorized as a group which cannot claim the post of LoP. Thus, the Congress parliamentary party which had only 52 members, in 2019, in the Lok Sabha, two less than 54 which is the threshold, could not get this post.

However, the enactment of the 10th Schedule has, in a way, rendered the categorization of parties into parties and groups by the Speaker/Chairman (Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha) irrelevant. Under this schedule, all political parties, irrespective of the number of Members that they have in the Houses, are "parties". The term 'group' is not recognized by the Schedule. So, in tune with the Schedule, necessary changes in the Leaders of Opposition Act should have been made to enable the Speaker to recognize the leader of the largest Opposition party in the House, irrespective of whether it has 10% Members or not. Anyway, the leader of



Since the Opposition in the Indian Parliament is not monolithic and is composed of multiple parties with divergent ideologies and programs, the role of the Leader of the Opposition is full of challenges'

Photo Credit: ANI

the Congress party is now the Leader of the Opposition in the 18th Lok Sabha.

IN THE WESTMINSTER SYSTEM

The post of Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha has great political significance. In the British parliamentary tradition, he is called the Prime Minister-in-waiting as he is the one who the king turns to when the incumbent government falls, to form an alternative government. He, therefore, forms a shadow cabinet of his colleagues in his party. It is an interesting feature of the Westminster system of government.

The shadow cabinet is formed under the leadership of the leader of opposition who will be called the shadow prime minister. According to this tradition, the shadow cabinet scrutinizes the policies and actions of the government and offers alternative policy. It is called the shadow cabinet because its members mirror the positions of the individual member of the real cabinet. As members of the shadow cabinet, these Opposition members familiarize themselves fully with the operations of the government. They can seek all relevant information about the entire gamut of the activities of the government. Erskine May, an international authority on parliamentary system says, "The Leader of the Opposition and some of the Leader's principal colleagues in both Houses form a group, known as 'the Shadow Cabinet', each member of which is given a particular range of activities on which it is their task to direct criticism of the Government's policy and administration and to outline alternative policies...."

Although we have adopted the Westminster system, the practice of forming a shadow cabinet does not exist in Parliament or State legislatures. The post of the Leader of the Opposition in the Indian Parliament has been a

statutory position since 1977. However, this statute does not define the functions of the Leader of the Opposition. Traditionally, he will be a very senior member of the principal Opposition in the House who commands great respect and has wider acceptability among the parties in the Opposition.

WITH CHANGE IN 2024, THE CHALLENGES

Since the Opposition in the Indian Parliament is not monolithic and is composed of multiple parties with divergent ideologies and programs, the role of the Leader of the Opposition is full of challenges. The biggest problem he faces is that he has no power. It is easy for a party in power to attract other parties and keep the alliance together through a power-sharing arrangement. Opposition to the policies and programs of the government is a major factor which keeps them together. In certain situations, the hope of bringing down the government acts as a unifying factor. In fact, the traditional role of the Opposition is to "oppose the government, to criticize it and to seek to replace it".

In the past 10 years, the Lok Sabha has seen a rather lean Opposition which could not mount any serious challenge to the government. A large majority enjoyed by the ruling party and its intimidatory postures overawed the Opposition which often felt helpless. But the 2024 general election has brought about a sea change in the political atmosphere and the demography of the House. It is perhaps for the first time that the Lok Sabha has such a huge number in the Opposition. With over 234 Members in the Opposition benches, the House is almost evenly divided. This has, no doubt, boosted the morale of the Opposition which, to a great extent, can influence the running of the House. It would be reflected in the admission of questions, the content of the answers, debate on Bills, general debates such as

the debate on the motion of thanks, urgent matters of public interest, admission of adjournment motions, and reference of Bills to the committees for detailed scrutiny, to name a few.

The Leader of the Opposition should be able to capture this new mood of the Opposition and present his views in the House in the most effective way. The LoP of the 18th Lok Sabha has the onerous task of serving the unity of the Opposition at all costs. As the prime minister in waiting, he has the responsibility to inform the nation about the failures of the government based on truth and with a great sense of responsibility. In the House he has primacy in debates and other interventions. It is the well-accepted parliamentary tradition that the Speaker permits the Leader of the Opposition to make interventions on any matter without any notice. He can demand the presence of the Prime Minister in the House when it debates serious issues. According to the British tradition, the Prime Minister directly informs the Leader of the Opposition about major policy initiatives. Thus, the channel of communication between the Prime minister and the Leader of Opposition is always kept open.

THE PAST HAS LESSONS

In India too, this healthy tradition can be followed, which will certainly strengthen democracy. Jawaharlal Nehru had created certain traditions such as being present in the House during Question Hour on most of the dates and supplementing the replies given by Ministers whenever he felt that such replies were inadequate. Nehru is said to have pleaded with the Speaker to grant more time to the leaders of the Opposition and he would invariably be present in the House to listen to them. He used to say that it is only from the Opposition members that he would come to know about the real situation in the country, and not from his own party members who would only praise him and not speak the truth. The Indian Parliament evolved in its early stages in such an environment. There is much in the past which can be learned and emulated by the new generation of parliamentarians. Repudiation of the past will take us nowhere. Intolerance towards dissent was never a part of that tradition. The people of India have given the political class a great opportunity to restore normalcy in Parliament. The main function of the Leader of the Opposition is to constantly remind the ruling Benches of the need to normalize Parliament.

(P.D.T. Achary is former Secretary General, Lok Sabha)

Preventing another NEET fiasco

THE STAKES IN NEET ARE INCREDIBLY HIGH. THEREFORE, WE NEED STRONG GOVERNANCE IN THE FORM OF FOOLPROOF AND COMPLETE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND THEIR COMPLIANCE



BY RAJEEV KUMAR

"Coaching and admission counselling centers, typically run by business tycoons, have realized that clients, the NEET aspirants, have failed to secure preferred seats despite their advice. However, despite this fiasco, the industry has found a way to enhance their brand value through media and social media coverage. The owners of this trillion-rupee industry, along with the 23 lakh NEET aspirants this year, are up in arms. Their hypothesis is that mapping scores to ranks cannot vary very widely from previous years. In this conundrum, various allegations of cheating and paper leakage, amongst others, have been raised. Despite numerous crackdowns and investigations, paper leakage in medical admission exams remains a persistent issue."

During the National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) this year, scores and ranks were inflated. As a consequence, many candidates may not get admission to their desired college as predicted based on previous years' scores.

Coaching and admission counselling centers, typically run by business tycoons, have realized that clients, the NEET aspirants, have failed to secure preferred seats despite their advice. However, despite this fiasco, the industry has found a way to enhance their brand value through media and social media coverage. The owners of this trillion-rupee industry, along with the 23 lakh NEET aspirants this year, are up in arms. Their hypothesis is that mapping scores to ranks cannot vary very widely from previous years. In this conundrum, various allegations of cheating and paper leakage, amongst others, have been raised. Despite numerous crackdowns and investigations, paper leakage in medical admission exams remains a persistent issue.



Candidates wait to enter a NEET examination center in Mangaluru on May 5, 2024

Photo Credit: The Hindu

Since its inception, NEET has emerged as the largest exam in the 'One Exam, One Nation' model because of the number of candidates taking the exam, the number of languages the exam is conducted in, and the diversity of various other factors. The quality of education and the college fees payable are critical factors that vary widely. A seat in a top government college with good quality education could cost a few lakhs, whereas a seat in a private college could cost a few crores. Moreover, parents are willing to go beyond their means to secure higher ranks for their children in these competitive exams, as the family's reputation is considered to hinge on this.

Thus, the stakes in NEET are incredibly high, making it vulnerable to irregularities, accidental or intentional. Therefore, we need strong governance in the form of foolproof and complete Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and their compliance. There cannot be any weak link in the chain of operations from setting question papers to conducting the exam to admissions.

However, there are many weak links, as seen from the distribution of the wrong question paper at some centers, for example. Reportedly, some centers distributed the back-up question paper instead of the primary paper. How were both sets - the primary and the secondary/back-up question papers - accessed almost simultaneously? Were they accessed from banks' strongrooms or another reserve? How was the back-up question paper set taken from the banks' strongrooms without any emergency circumstances or protocols? There are

several unanswered questions about the authorization and attitude of the officials concerned. This seemingly inconsequential event is actually of enormous consequence and could give us an idea of how the exam was conducted this year.

This one error led to a cascade of errors. A wrong question paper was distributed, subsequently taken back along with the Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) sheet, thus creating panic among the candidates. The correct question paper was then distributed, and no additional time was given for the time lost. Then, exceptionally huge grace marks were awarded for the time lost, which was later scrapped due to a public outcry.

Each of the above demonstrates the need for critical SOPs for complete governance of the exam, which includes several stakeholders such as those who set the question paper, translators, reviewers, the printing press, officials at examination centers, banks' strongrooms, and invigilators. Any loose links in this chain have the potential for malpractices. Only proper investigation may reveal any substantial wrongdoing.

Despite all the above pitfalls, it is commendable that the National Testing Agency (NTA) voluntarily disclosed most of the information, as per Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. Since the declaration of NEET 2024, the NTA has disclosed the most relevant information through its press releases. In addition, the NTA has followed SOPs for disclosure of answer keys, collecting feedback about wrong questions and answer keys, disclosure of the individual

OMR sheet, and self-evaluation of one's score, which seem to have worked with no issues at all.

It is on record that these SOPs were developed and directed through a decade-long (2006-2015) protracted legal battle by the author of this article in the Supreme Court and High Courts to ensure transparency and develop well-defined rational SoPs for admissions to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). In one such judgment, the Supreme Court observed in 2011, "In fact the action taken by the appellants in challenging the procedure for JEE 2006, their attempts to bring in transparency in the procedure by various RTI applications, and the debate generated by the several views of experts during the course of the writ proceedings, have helped in making the merit ranking process more transparent and accurate."

However, this alone is not enough for NEET. The NTA should devise SOPs to get stabilized cut-offs, as done by the IITs, avoid inflated scores and ranks, and achieve a long-tail distribution. It should work to replace ad-hocism with well-defined, sound, and secure SOPs. It should follow a professional war-room culture to facilitate quick and sound decision-making during the entire process. As the Supreme Court said in 2011, "The selection process requires to be upgraded and fine-tuned year after year with periodic changes..., so that the selection process and examination remain relevant and meaningful."

(Rajeev Kumar is a former Computer Science professor at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Kanpur, BITS Pilani, and JNU)

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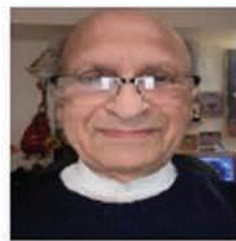


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Increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech for minorities in India concerning: Antony Blinken



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has expressed concern at the increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech for minorities in India -File photo

JUNE 27, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): There has been a "concerning increase" in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, and demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities in India, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said.

In his remarks at the release of the annual State Department report on international religious freedom, Blinken said on Wednesday, June 26, that at the same time, people around the world are

also working hard to protect religious freedom.

The report stated that senior US officials continued to raise concerns about religious freedom issues with their Indian counterparts in 2023.

"In India, we see a concerning increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities. At the same time, people around the world are also working hard to protect religious freedom," the secretary of state said.

Ten of 28 states have laws restricting religious conversions for all faiths. Some of these states also impose penalties specifically against forced religious conversions for the purpose of marriage, the 2023 Report on International Religious Freedom stated for India.

During the year, some members of religious minority groups challenged the government's ability and willingness to protect them from violence, investigate crimes against members of religious minority groups, and protect their freedom of religion or belief, it stated.

India has previously rejected the US

state department's annual human rights report on the country, saying they continue to be based on "misinformation and flawed understanding".

"Motivated and biased commentary by some US officials only serves to undermine further the credibility of these reports," the Ministry of External Affairs said last year.

"We value our partnership with the US and will continue to have frank exchanges on issues of concern to us," it said.

In this year's report, the US state department said that Christians and Muslims were arrested under laws banning forced religious conversions, which religious groups said in some cases were used to harass and imprison members of religious minority groups on false and fabricated charges or for lawful religious practices.

Observing that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated calls to enact a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) at the national level as called for in the Constitution instead of a system of separate personal laws for religious communities, the state department said Muslim, Sikh, Christian and tribal

leaders and some state government officials opposed the initiative on the grounds it was part of a project to turn the country into a "Hindu rashtra (a Hindu nation)".

Some UCC proponents, including opposition politicians, said a UCC would promote greater equality, including for women, by preventing polygamy or inequitable inheritance within personal religious laws.

Welcoming the report, the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) said it echoes findings presented in the annual report released by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom that calls on the State Department to designate India as a "Country of Particular Concern (CPC)" for ongoing and severe violations of religious freedoms for minorities.

"Once again, it is clear from the State Department's own reporting that India more than qualifies as a CPC," IAMC executive director Rasheed Ahmed said and added that "now it is time for Secretary Blinken to act on these facts, as well as the facts that have been presented by USCIRF for years, and designate India as a CPC".

Looking forward to the results of India's inquiry into Pannun case: US



"They (Indian officials) have announced that they are conducting an inquiry, and we will look forward to the results of that inquiry," State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference on Wednesday, June 26 -Photo : Courtesy X

JUNE 27, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The US has said it is looking forward to the results of the Indian inquiry into the allegations that an Indian official was involved in an alleged plot to assassinate Sikh separatist leader Gurbatwant Singh Pannun on American soil.

In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta of working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Pannun in New York. Pannun, wanted in India on terror charges, holds dual citizenship of the US and Canada.

Gupta, who was arrested in the Czech Republic in June last year, was extradited to the US on June 14.

"They (Indian officials) have announced that they are conducting an inquiry, and we will look forward to the

results of that inquiry," State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference on Wednesday.

He was responding to a question on members of the Foreign Senate Foreign Relations Committee writing a letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken calling for a strong diplomatic response on the Indian government's involvement in an alleged assassination attempt on a US citizen on US soil.

Following the allegations, India appointed a high-level inquiry committee to look into the inputs provided by the US on the plot.

Miller said, "We will respond to those members privately as we always do. I won't speak to that here. But as pertains to the other issue, when this issue first arose, we made clear that we had raised it with the government of India and told them that we expected there to be a full investigation."

During a virtual media briefing on Wednesday on his and US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan's visit to India last week, US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said, the US has consistently pressed India for updates on the Indian investigation into the alleged foiled plot to kill Sikh separatist Pannun and made it clear that it seeks accountability in the case.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, maximum from US: World Bank report

JUNE 26, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, which is almost twice of USD 66 billion received by Mexico during the same period, the World Bank said in a report released on Wednesday, June 26.

China (USD 50 billion), the Philippines (USD 39 billion), and Pakistan (USD 27 billion) figure in top five countries list of remittances recipients as released by the World Bank, according to which remittances in 2023 after a period of strong growth during 2021-2022, officially recorded remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) moderated in 2023, reaching an estimated USD 656 billion.

Growing at 7.5 per cent, remittance flows to India touched USD 120 billion in 2023, reflecting the benefits of a deceleration in inflation and strong labor markets in the United States, the largest destination for India's skilled migrants, and other OECD destinations, as well as positive demand for skilled and less-skilled workers in the GCC countries (which, together, are the second largest destination for Indian migrants)," the World Bank said.

While the same external demand conditions could have favored remittance flows to Pakistan, weak internal conditions due to a balance of



payments crisis and economic difficulties triggered remittances to plummet 12 per cent to USD 27 billion in 2023 compared with more than USD 30 billion in 2022, it said.

According to the World Bank, remittance flows to India from the United Arab Emirates, which account for 18 per cent and are the second largest source of India's remittances after the United States, benefited from the February 2023 agreement.

The latter established a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions and cooperation for interlinking payment and messaging systems between India and the United Arab Emirates.

The use of dirhams and rupees in cross-border transactions is instrumental in channeling more remittances through formal channels. In addition to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar account for 11 per cent of India's total remittances, it said.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

Embassy of India in Guatemala Organizes Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2024 in Central America



India's Ambassador to Guatemala Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra welcomed participants to International Day of Yoga 2024, emphasizing India's role in promoting health through Yoga.

JUNE 22, 2024

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): India has tirelessly promoted the benefits of yoga worldwide, culminating in the United Nations General Assembly declaring June 21st as the International Day of Yoga in 2014, a resolution proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This annual celebration has since become a global phenomenon, uniting millions of people across cultures in practicing yoga. To promote the benefits of yoga among the general public in Central America and to celebrate the 10th International Day of Yoga, the Embassy of India in Guatemala organized several yoga events across the three countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. In Guatemala, the Embassy organized one of the largest gatherings of yoga practitioners in Central America, Latin America, and possibly the Americas, at Mariscal Zavala, Guatemala City, with an attendance of approximately 5,000 people to celebrate the International Day of Yoga on June 22, 2024. This year, IDY 2024 was celebrated with the theme "Yoga for Self and Society," emphasizing the dual benefits of yoga: promoting personal well-being and its positive impact on society as a whole.

India's contribution to the global yoga movement is both profound and transformative, deeply rooted in the country's rich cultural and spiritual heritage. Yoga, which originated in ancient India over 5,000 years ago, is more than just physical exercise; it is a holistic practice that unites the mind, body, and spirit. The earliest references to yoga can be found in the Rig Veda, one of the oldest sacred texts, and its philosophies were systematically compiled by the sage Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras around 400 CE. India's yoga gurus, such as Swami Vivekananda, B.K.S. Iyengar, and Sadhguru, have traveled the world, spreading the teachings of yoga and establishing it as a universal practice for health and well-being. Today, yoga is embraced globally, with yoga studios, wellness centers, and community classes in almost every country. India's enduring legacy in yoga continues to inspire a journey toward inner peace, physical vitality, and spiritual awakening, demonstrating the timeless relevance and transformative power of this ancient practice.

Yoga has gained remarkable popularity in Central America over the past few years due to concerted efforts by various organizations and the growing global awareness of its benefits. The Embassy of India in Guatemala has played a pivotal role in this movement by organizing daily yoga classes at its premises, making the practice accessible to the local population. These

initiatives have helped people in Central America embrace yoga as a daily practice, appreciating its holistic approach to health and well-being. The regular classes have fostered a deeper understanding and acceptance of yoga, leading to a vibrant community of practitioners who integrate yoga into their everyday lives, thereby enhancing their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.



IDY 2024 celebration in Guatemala City on June 22 was LATAM's largest Yoga event with around 5000 participants.

These concerted efforts by the Embassy and local yoga studios have encouraged the Embassy to organize a grand event in collaboration with several Indian and local companies such as HCL Tech, Caplin Point, Krishpar Healthcare S.A., [24]X7.ai, Lukahm, Yash Pakka, TCS, Pradilsha, Hetero, TCS,TVS, Cygnus, Sierra, Hidra Vida, and Grupo Uma located in the region. Their contributions in arranging logistics and manpower were substantial in ensuring the event's success. The magnitude of this event, held at Mariscal Zavala in Guatemala City, was immense, with approximately 5,000 yoga enthusiasts participating in the celebration of the International Day of Yoga on June 22, 2024. The event left a significant impression on the general public, showcasing the widespread appeal and benefits of yoga. The local government, particularly the Ministry of Defence, local municipalities, and Mariscal Zavala management, provided invaluable support, further highlighting the collaborative effort that made this event a resounding success. This large-scale celebration not only emphasized the importance of yoga but also strengthened the cultural and diplomatic ties between India and Central America.



Our sponsors played a pivotal role in the success of IDY 2024

While extending his gratitude to the local partners for their support in organizing the grand event, Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra highlighted the tireless efforts by the Government of India to promote yoga on a global scale. He underscored the significance of yoga as a universal practice that transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, bringing people together in the pursuit of health and

harmony. Dr. Mohapatra also expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the local community for wholeheartedly embracing yoga and incorporating it into their daily lives. He noted with pride that the increasing number of students attending yoga sessions at the Embassy is a clear testament to the growing enthusiasm for yoga in the region. Furthermore, he commended the collaborative spirit that made this event possible, highlighting the crucial role of local partners, businesses, and government bodies in fostering a supportive environment for yoga.

During the event, Mr. Erick Borrondo, the Olympic medalist for Guatemala, shared his insightful remarks on the benefits of yoga for athletes. He emphasized how yoga has been instrumental in enhancing his performance, flexibility, and mental focus. He encouraged all, especially athletes, to adopt yoga, noting that its practice promotes not only physical strength and endurance but also mental resilience and clarity, essential for excelling in competitive sports. Representatives from the sponsors expressed their enthusiasm and support for the grand celebration of International Day of Yoga. They highlighted the importance of promoting wellness and a healthy lifestyle, emphasizing how yoga aligns perfectly with these goals.



Students from diverse schools of Guatemala enthusiastically joined the IDY 2024, embracing Yoga's benefits and fostering a healthy lifestyle

A parallel celebration of the International Day of Yoga took place in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on June 21, 2024, co-organized by the Embassy of India in collaboration with Yoga Garden and local sponsor Caplin Point. Despite challenging weather conditions across the region, approximately 800-1000 yoga enthusiasts gathered to participate in the event, demonstrating their dedication to the practice and its benefits. Meanwhile, in El Salvador, adverse weather conditions unfortunately prevented the planned yoga event from taking place. The embassy intends to reschedule the event once conditions improve, ensuring that the celebration of yoga's universal appeal continues across Central America.

The International Day of Yoga event was an outstanding success, marked by the enthusiastic participation of over 6,000 individuals in the two Central American countries. Participants enjoyed a vibrant atmosphere filled with yoga sessions, and insightful speeches. The distribution of commemorative t-shirts, sponsored giveaways, and refreshments further enhanced the experience, fostering a sense of community and wellness. The Embassy of India expresses its gratitude to everyone involved, reaffirming its commitment to organizing similar events in the future to promote yoga and strengthen cultural ties between India and Central America.

CBI arrests two accused from Patna in NEET-UG paper leak case

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which has taken up the probe into alleged irregularities in the NEET-UG, made its first arrests on Thursday, June 27, by nabbing two persons from Patna.

According to CBI officials, the arrested persons – Manish Prakash and Ashutosh Kumar – allegedly housed NEET aspirants at a school in Patna a day before the exam on May 4 and provided them with leaked question paper. The examinees were then made to memorise the answers before they appeared for the exam on May 5.

Prakash's wife Archana told the Indian Express, "The CBI called me around 1:30 pm to say that my husband has been arrested. He is a social worker who would often help people with making stay arrangements for students. I had heard someone asking him on the phone to make arrangements for four to five students. We had no idea about the enormity of trouble he has now landed in."

On the other hand, the central probe agency had tried to track the prime accused Sanjiv Mukhiya on Wednesday, but to no avail. Mukhiya is absconding from his village in Nalanda. The probe agency suspects that he may have fled to Nepal.

The CBI is said to have received more information on another accused, Sikandar Yadavendu, who has already been arrested by the Bihar Police. Yadavendu had allegedly introduced the four examinees to 'setters' Nitish Kumar and Amit Anand, the IE report said.

The CBI has registered six FIRs in the



Men arrested in the NEET-UG paper leak case being taken to custody in Patna. Photo: PTI

NEET paper leak case. The first CBI FIR was registered on June 23, a day after the Union education ministry announced it would hand over the probe into the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the exam to the Central agency.

Following the announcement of a CBI probe, the Bihar and Gujarat governments issued notifications to transfer their local NEET-UG "paper leak" cases to the central agency.

This year's NEET-UG exam was conducted on May 5 at 4,750 centres in 571 cities, including 14 abroad. Over 23 lakh candidates appeared for the test.

Following the declaration of results on June 4, there have been protests across the country over alleged irregularities in the conduct of the

exam.

'Source of NEET leak likely courier, transport firm staff'

The NEET-UG question paper for the May 5 entrance test may have been leaked on May 3 while being transported from the Ranchi airport to an office of courier company Blue Dart, and then to the Hazaribagh branch of the State Bank of India (SBI) with the help of employees of either the transport company or the courier agency, officials aware of the matter said.

Bihar Police's Economic Offences Unit (EOU), which arrested 18 people and recorded the statements of SBI and Blue Dart employees, handed its case files to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which took over the case.

Police officers, who asked not to be named, said that those arrested – including members of a gang in Nalanda – have, in the past bribed employees of courier companies, drivers involved in transportation and photographed question papers en route to different exam centres.

Bihar Police have also shared with CBI details of their investigation that show how the 2024 NEET-UG question paper was driven first by a transport company driver for over a 100km route and then by an e-rickshaw to the bank for a distance of less than 2km.

"Police have shared statements of the Blue Dart company employees and bank officials with CBI which will question them soon," one officer said.

The 2024 NEET-UG, conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) for admissions to MBBS, BDS and other related undergraduate courses across India, has been beset with a series of allegations ranging from question paper leaks, inflated marking and arbitrary allowance of grace marks – issues that have become a nationwide flashpoint for political parties, leading to thousands of students protesting for weeks. This year's examination was conducted on May 5 at 4,750 centres in 571 cities, including 14 abroad with 2.3 million candidates appearing for it.

After a month of investigations in states like Bihar and Gujarat, the first FIR by CBI in the paper leak case was registered on Sunday, a day after the Union education ministry announced it would hand over the probe into the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the exam to the central agency.

'Undemocratic, but not unconstitutional': Congress' Shashi Tharoor on Emergency

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Amid the ongoing Emergency row in Lok Sabha, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Thursday, June 27, stated that the Emergency, imposed on June 25, 1975 by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was 'undemocratic but not unconstitutional.'

"I am a critic of the Emergency, but the very fact is that it may have been undemocratic but it was not unconstitutional. A provision of the Constitution permitted the imposition of an internal emergency. That provision has since been removed," Tharoor told NDTV in an interview.

On Thursday's address to a joint sitting

of Parliament by President Droupadi Murmu, in which she spoke about Emergency, among other things, the senior Congressman mentioned that for the President to call Emergency an 'attack on the Constitution,' was 'actually inaccurate in legal terms.'

"I am not supporting the move, and I am not saying that this is something to be proud of. I think arresting opposition politicians, censoring the press, and a number of steps taken during that period were undemocratic, but, sadly, not unconstitutional," he remarked.

Tharoor, who recently won his fourth consecutive Lok Sabha election from Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram constituency, accused the Narendra Modi

government of raking up the Emergency issue as a 'diversionary' tactic.

"The BJP-led NDA government is moving the goalposts. They can talk about 1975 or 2047, and not about the present. The focus must be on burning issues such as unemployment, the NEET paper leaks, and the situation in Manipur," he asserted.

The Emergency was lifted on March 21, 1977. In the subsequent general elections, Indira Gandhi was voted out of power, and the Janata Party government took office. However, the alliance of disparate parties collapsed in 1979, and Gandhi was re-elected as Prime Minister in 1980, and held the chair until her assassination in 1984.



Roof collapses at Terminal 1 of Delhi airport, 1 dead; all departures suspended

One person was killed and six other sustained injuries after the roof at Delhi airport's Terminal 1 collapsed around 5am on Friday, June 28, following torrential rainfall that lashed the national capital. Taxis stationed at the city side of the terminal were buried and four vehicles were damaged in the incident. Airport authorities have temporarily suspended all departures from T1.

Personnel from the Delhi police, fire services, CISF and the National Disaster Response Force are present at the site to carry out rescue operations.

"I am personally monitoring the roof collapse incident at T1 Delhi Airport. First responders are working at the site. Also advised the airlines to assist all affected passengers at T1. The injured have been evacuated to hospital. Rescue operations are still ongoing," Union minister of civil aviation Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu posted on X. The deceased has been identified as 45-year-old Ramesh Kumar, while the injured have been identified as Santosh Kumar Yadav, Shubham Shah, Dashrath Ahirwar, Arvind Goswami, Sahil Sudan and Yogesh Dhawan, according to Delhi Police.

"Due to heavy rain since early this morning, a portion of the canopy at the old Departure forecourt of Delhi Airport's Terminal 1 collapsed around 5 am. Emergency personnel are working to provide all necessary assistance and medical aid to those affected," a Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) spokesperson said.

CID files chargesheet against ex- Karnataka CM Yediyurappa in POCSO case

BENGALURU (TIP)

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Karnataka police on Thursday filed a chargesheet against former Karnataka chief minister and senior BJP leader B S Yediyurappa for the alleged sexual assault of a minor who visited his home with her mother to seek help in a case of sexual assault on the minor that reportedly occurred in 2015.

The CID filed the chargesheet in a fast track court designated for cases filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, on Thursday, June 27, evening.

The 81-year-old former CM has been charged for sexual assault under Section 8 of the POCSO Act, for sexual harassment under Section 354 (A) of the Indian Penal Code, for destroying evidence under IPC Section 204 and for offering gifts to cover up an offence under Section 214.

Three associates of the former CM — Arun Y M, Rudresh M, and Y Mariswamy — are also accused in the case under Sections 204 and 214 of the IPC for destroying evidence of a video recording by the victim's mother of her confrontation of Yediyurappa after the alleged incident.

The chargesheet was filed by the CID a day ahead of a high court hearing of a petition filed by Yediyurappa for quashing of the FIR registered against him on March 14 for the alleged incident of sexual assault of a teenager on February 2, 2024.

The Karnataka High Court on June 14 directed the CID not to arrest Yediyurappa on the basis of an arrest warrant issued by the POCSO court on June 13 by pointing out that the former CM was no "Tom, Dick or Harry" and that he had agreed to appear before the CID on June 17 to participate in investigations as sought by the CID.



Jharkhand HC grants bail to former CM Hemant Soren in money-laundering case

The Jharkhand High Court on Friday, June 27, granted bail to former chief minister Hemant Soren in a money-laundering case linked to land scam.

The high court had on June 13 reserved its decision on Soren's bail plea.

"Bail has been granted to Soren. The court has held that prima facie he is not guilty of the offence and there is no likelihood of the petitioner committing an offence when on bail," Soren's senior counsel Arunabh Chowdhury told PTI.

Soren, the executive president of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on January 31 in connection with its investigation into the money-laundering case.

The 48-year-old politician is currently lodged in Birsa Munda jail.

During the hearing, ED's counsel SV Raju argued that if Soren is released on bail, he would commit a similar offence.



10 Indian fishermen charged with death of Sri Lanka navy sailor

COLOMBO (TIP)

Ten Indian fishermen who were arrested earlier this week for illegal fishing will be charged with the death of a Navy sailor who succumbed to the injuries sustained during an operation to seize their trawler, Sri Lankan authorities have said.

"They face charges for illegal fishing in Sri Lankan waters, death of a naval person during the operation and for causing damage to naval property," the Sri Lankan Navy said in statement issued on Wednesday.

The navy said the 10 fisherman were arrested on June 25 (local time) during a special operation conducted off Kankesanthurai Port in Jaffna district, northern Sri Lanka, for illegally fishing in the country's waters.

A senior sailor from the navy Special Boat Squadron sustained critical injuries due to "the aggressive manoeuvres of the Indian trawler, resisting its seizure" during the operation, later succumbing to his injuries after being admitted to a hospital in Jaffna.

According a post mortem report, the sailor's death was an accident, arising



Ten Indian fishermen, arrested for allegedly engaged in illegal fishing in the Sri Lankan waters on Monday, will be charged with the death of a Navy sailor, who was killed in an operation to seize their trawler, authorities have said.

from damage to his spinal cord, the navy said. Indian officials did not officially comment on the development. After the operation, the fishermen were brought to the Kankesanthurai Harbour and handed over to the Mailadi Fisheries Inspector for legal proceedings. The local police had filed a 'B' report with the Mallakam Court in Jaffna, seeking their prosecution. A hearing in the matter is scheduled for July 22.

Illegal fishing is a contentious issue in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with fisherman from both sides arrested frequently for trespassing into the other country's waters.

Sri Lanka Navy said it has arrested more than 200 Indian fishermen and seized 27 trawlers for illegal fishing so far this year. In 2023, it arrested 240 Indian fishermen along with 35 trawlers for allegedly "poaching" in Sri

Lankan waters.

External affairs minister S Jaishankar informed Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin on Thursday, June 27, that the Indian high commission in Colombo and the consulate in Jaffna have been taking up the issue of early release of Indian fishermen currently detained in Sri Lanka.

In a letter to Stalin, Jaishankar said that as of June 26, a total of 34 Indian fishermen were in judicial remand in Sri Lanka and six were serving sentences in jails there.

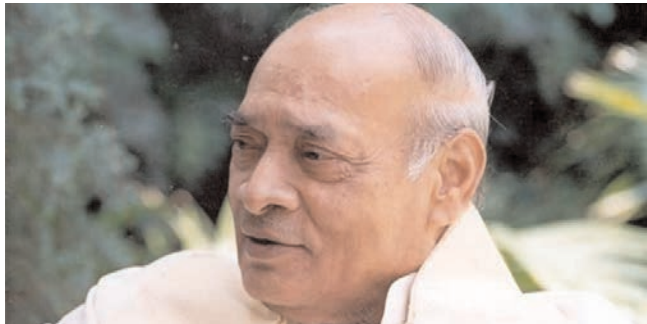
Jaishankar was responding to three letters sent by Stalin this month to raise the issue of fishermen from Tamil Nadu detained in Sri Lanka. He said that the "genesis of this issue goes back to 1974, following an understanding between the then Union government and the state government".

Since 2014, the National Development Alliance (NDA) government has sought to address the livelihood interests and humanitarian aspects of the fishing community. "These efforts continue in their multiple dimensions, including through engaging the government of Sri Lanka," he said. *Source: HT*

India in history this Week

JUNE 28 TO JULY 04

28 JUNE



1921 Former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, who had knowledge of 17 languages, was born.

1975 In the backdrop of anti-government protests during the Emergency in India, the Center implemented the most rigorous press censorship since Independence.

1986 Agreement with Mizo National Front, Lal Denga becomes Chief Minister of Mizoram.

1986 The Central Government also enacted a law to provide maternity leave to unmarried girls.

1996 India opened its mission in Palestinian-controlled Gaza City.

29 JUNE

1757 Mir Jafar succeeded the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha.

1888 The first (known) recording of classical music was made.

2005 Composite 10-year agreement between India and the United States.

1893 Indian scientist and statistician Prashant Chandra Mahalanobis was born.

30 JUNE

1914 Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, was arrested for the first time in 1914 while agitating for the rights of Indians in South Africa.

1947 The members of the Boundary Commission for the partition of Bengal and Punjab were announced in 1947 after the partition of India.

2008 Ravikant, Uma Shankar Chaudhary and Vimal Chandra Pandey were jointly conferred with the Navlakhan Award of Jnanpith in 2008.

2008 Indian journalist Anisuddin Aziz was awarded the New Business of the Year Award of International Association of Book Keepers (IAB) in 2008.

1903 Indian politician and member of Lok Sabha Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava was born.

1911 Indian litterateur Nagarjuna was born.

1934 India's famous scientist C.N. R. Rao was born.

1917 India's famous veteran politician, industrialist, educationist and thinker Dada Bhai Naoroji died.



1953 Jana Sangh founder Shyamaprasad Mukherjee died while imprisoned in Kashmir.

01 JULY

1852 A stamp named 'Sindh Dak' was issued by the Chief Commissioner of Sindh, Sir Bertlefore, for use

only in the state of Sindh and on the Mumbai Karachi route.

1862 Inauguration of Calcutta High Court.

1879 Postcard debut in India.

1955 The Imperial Bank of India was nationalized and named the State Bank of India.

1964 Establishment of Industrial Development Bank of India

1975 The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced a 20-point program.

1991 The Warsaw Pact was dissolved.

2006 Chess player Parimarjan Negi became the youngest second grandmaster.

2017 Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced as a significant reform of the economy in India.

1938 The famous flute player Pandit Hariprasad



Chaurasia was born on this day.

1882 The second Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Rai was born on this day. His birthday is celebrated as Doctor's Day in the country.

02 JULY

1934 Asit Bhattacharya, one of the great revolutionaries of India, died.



1940 The British government arrested Subhas Chandra Bose on 2 July 1940 AD for inciting rebellion.

1948 Famous Janakavi Alok Dhanwa was born.

2004 The Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan held mutual talks in Jakarta.

2004 Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus station was



declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

1916 Geological Survey of India was established.

03 JULY



1972 Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi and Pakistan's JU Bhutto had a disarmament agreement on Kashmir.

2018 A part of the Gokhale Road overbridge fell near Andheri station in Mumbai.

1661 Portugal gifted Bombay to the British King Charles II.



1996 Rajkumar, actor of Hindi films passed away.

1760 The Maratha army occupied Delhi.

1979 Construction of the famous Vidyasagar bridge in Kolkata, called the second Howrah Bridge, began.

2005 Mahesh Bhupathi and Mary Pierce won the Wimbledon mixed pair title.

04 JULY

1789 The East India Company entered into a treaty with the Peshwa and the Nizam against Tipu Sultan.

1881 Start of toy train between Siliguri and Darjeeling.

1902 Swami Vivekananda passed away.



1963 Death of freedom fighter Pingali Venkayya who designed the Tricolor.

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Lok Sabha gets leader of Oppn after 10 yrs as Rahul Gandhi steps in

CONGRESS LEADER FOLLOWS IN FOOTSTEPS OF HIS LATE FATHER RAJIV GANDHI, WHO HELD THE POSITION FROM 1989 TO 1990, AND MOTHER SONIA, WHO HELD IT FROM 1999 TO 2004

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was officially recognised as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the 18th Lok Sabha on Wednesday, June 26, a day after his party communicated its decision to appoint him as the LoP to protem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab.

The LoP holds an important position in a parliamentary democracy. As LoP, Gandhi will now be part of the high-level committee that selects the Chief Election Commissioners, CBI director, Lokpal, Chief Vigilance Commissioner and National Human Rights Commission chairperson.

As LoP, Gandhi will be a “shadow Prime Minister.” According to the ‘Practice and Procedure of Parliament’, a manual published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, as a shadow Prime Minister, the LoP has to be prepared to “take up the responsibility of forming a government if his party secures a majority at an election or if the government resigns or is defeated.”

“He has, therefore, to measure carefully his words and actions, and on a matter of national interest to act with as much responsibility as is expected of the Prime Minister,” the manual says.

Gandhi’s appointment as LoP is expected to give fresh impetus to the opposition INDIA bloc, which has ramped up 234 seats as against the NDA’s 293.

The position was lying vacant for the last 10 years as the principal opposition party did not have the requisite numbers. In the two previous Lok Sabha elections in 2014 and 2019, Mallikarjun Kharge and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury were the leaders of the Congress in the House in the absence of LoP.

In fact, Rahul Gandhi will be the third in the Gandhi family to take on the role of LoP. Before him, both his parents had held the post. Rajiv Gandhi was the LoP from 1989 to 1990, and Sonia Gandhi held the post from 1999 to 2004.

Will have a cabinet rank

As LoP, Gandhi will have a cabinet rank. The position — both in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha — has statutory recognition. The LoP is given salary and certain other facilities and amenities as mandated by The Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

For instance, as LoP, Gandhi will be entitled to a seat in the Lok Sabha in the front row left to the Chair next to the seat of Deputy Speaker and a room in Parliament House with Secretarial and other facilities.

According to a Lok Sabha Secretariat



booklet, the LoP enjoys certain privileges on ceremonial occasions, like escorting the Speaker-elect to the rostrum; and a seat in the front row at the time of Address by the President to both the Houses of Parliament among others.

How is LoP chosen

The LoP is chosen from among the largest recognised opposition parties in the Lok Sabha.

According to rules established by G.V.Mavalankar, the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha, a political party must command a minimum of 10 percent of the Lok Sabha’s total strength — at least 55 Members of Parliament out of 543 — to qualify as a parliamentary party. The leader of the largest opposition party meeting this criterion assumes the position of LoP.

Upon receiving a request from the largest opposition party to recognise its designated leader as the LoP, the Speaker reviews the request through the secretariat and grants recognition accordingly.

It was on 1 November 1977 that the offices of the LoPs in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha were created by an Act of the Parliament. Before this, except for a brief spell of one year (December 1969-December 1970), there had been no official ‘Opposition’ in the sense the term is used in the parliamentary system of government.

The position remained vacant during intervals from 1970 to 1977, from 1980 to 1989, and most recently from 2014 to 2024.

“Consequent on the split in the Congress Party in November 1969, the association of members dissociating themselves with the ruling party was given recognition as Opposition party as it satisfied the tests for recognition. The parliamentary party was called Congress Party (opposition) and its leader was accepted as the Leader of the Opposition,” the manual says, adding that since Independence, it was the first time that the Lok Sabha had a recognised Opposition Party and a Leader of the Opposition.

Ram Subhag Singh from Buxar constituency assumed this role in 1969 after the split within the Congress party. His tenure lasted until the dissolution of the Lok Sabha in December 1970.

As the LoP Rahul Gandhi will get a salary and will have several facilities and amenities at his disposal under the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

According to a government booklet available in the Parliament library, “The Leader of the Opposition occupies a seat in the front row left to the Chair. He/she also enjoys certain privileges on ceremonial occasions like escorting the Speaker-elect to the rostrum and a seat in the front row at the time of the Address by the President to both the Houses of Parliament.”

Rahul Gandhi’s Journey To His First Constitutional Post — A Snapshot

Rahul Gandhi is a five-time Lok Sabha MP, having represented the constituencies of Amethi, Wayanad, and now, Raebareli.

Rahul Gandhi first became an MP in 2004 when he won the Amethi constituency. He has lost only one election so far — the one held in Amethi in 2019. But since he fought for the Wayanad seat in Kerala the same year, he retained his Parliament membership.

Rahul Gandhi was briefly disqualified as an MP in 2023 after he was convicted in a defamation case. However, his conviction was stayed and his membership was reinstated.

Rahul Gandhi held the position of the Congress President between 2017 and 2019. He currently serves as the chairperson of the Youth Congress.

Rahul is the third member of the Gandhi family to hold the Leader of Opposition’s post in Lok Sabha. His father Rajiv Gandhi, who later became the Prime Minister of India, was the first member of the Gandhi family to be elected to the post in 1989-90. His mother Sonia Gandhi held the Constitutional post from 1999 to 2004.

What Would Be Rahul Gandhi’s Powers As Leader Of Opposition

Rahul Gandhi will have greater powers as India sees its first Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha in 10 years. It will be difficult for the government to make a decision without the LoP’s support.

Rahul Gandhi, as the Leader of Opposition, will enjoy the status, salary, and allowances of a Cabinet minister. He will get a salary of Rs 3.3 lakh. He will also get security at the level of a Cabinet minister. This may include a Z+ security cover.

He will get a government bungalow similar to that of a Cabinet minister.

Rahul Gandhi will now be on the three-member panel that selects the chief election commissioner and two election commissioners. His powers will be limited on the three-member PM Narendra Modi-led panel as the third member, a central Cabinet member, is picked by the PM. However, with the BJP no longer enjoying absolute majority in Lok Sabha, the two members cannot “impose” its decisions on Rahul Gandhi.

Rahul Gandhi will have greater powers as a member of the committee that picks the chiefs of the central agencies like the CBI, ED, and CVC. The three-member committee will be led by PM Modi and will have the Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court judge appointed by the latter on board.

This will be a big boost for the Opposition as it has been accusing the government of using central investigative agencies to target its leaders and intimidate them into joining the BJP.

Will protect our Constitution, hold NDA govt accountable for their actions: Rahul Gandhi

Lok Sabha's Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday said that together Congress will raise the voice of every Indian in Parliament, protect our Constitution, and hold the NDA government accountable for their actions.

"I thank Congress President @khargeji, and all the Congress leaders and Babbar Sher karyakartas from across the country for their overwhelming support and warm wishes. Together, we will raise the voice of every Indian in Parliament, protect our Constitution, and hold the NDA government accountable for their actions," the Congress leader said in a post on X.

Notably, Lok Sabha did not have a Leader of the Opposition in the last 10 years because no political party, other than the ruling party, was able to secure the minimum Lok Sabha seats required to nominate a Leader of the Opposition.

In his first address to Lok Sabha as the leader of opposition, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said that results of the recent Lok Sabha elections have shown that the people of India expect opposition to defend the Constitution of India.

Rahul, who was speaking after the re-election of Om Birla as the Lok Sabha Speaker, congratulated the Kota MP on his successful election on the behalf of INDIA bloc and the entire opposition.

He said that the opposition now has a greater voice in Lok Sabha and expressed confidence that the Speaker will allow them to raise their concerns in the lower house.

"This House represents the voice of India's people and you are the final arbiter of that voice. Of course, the government has political power, but the opposition also represents the voice of India's people. And this time, the opposition represents significantly more voice of the people than it did last time.

"The opposition would like to assist you in doing your work. We would like the House to function often and well. It is very important the cooperation happens on the basis of trust. It is important that the voice of opposition is allowed to be represented in the House," he said.

Rahul further said that the idea of "silencing" the voice of the opposition is "undemocratic".

"The question is not how efficiently the House is run. The question is how much of India's voice is being allowed to be heard in the House. So the idea that you can run the House efficiently by silencing the voice of the opposition is non-democratic," he said.

Rahul added that the election has



With the Constitution in hand and 'Bharat Jodo' chants in the background, Rahul Gandhi took oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha.



Rahul Gandhi urged newly-elected Speaker Om Birla to be impartial, says, 'Oppn would assist you'.

shown that people want the opposition to defend the "samvidhan" of the country.

"This election has shown that the people of India expect the opposition to defend the Constitution of this country.

We are confident that by allowing the opposition to speak, you will do your duty by defending the Constitution of India," he said.

Rahul Gandhi won from both

Raebareli and Wayanad Lok Sabha constituencies in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls. While Rahul Gandhi won with a margin of 364422 votes from Wayanad defeating Communist Party of India's Annie Raja, in Raebareli, he won with a margin of 390030 votes from Raebareli defeating Bharatiya Janata Party's Dinesh Pratap Singh.

However, after Rahul Gandhi announced that he would resign as an MP from Wayanad and keep the Raebareli constituency, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge announced Priyanka Gandhi's candidature from Wayanad last week.

If Priyanka Gandhi wins from Wayanad, three members of the Nehru-Gandhi family will be in Parliament - Sonia Gandhi in Rajya Sabha and Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi in the Lok Sabha.

The leader of the largest opposition party having not less than one-tenth seats of the total strength of the Lok Sabha is recognised as the leader of the Opposition.

He will be a member of crucial committees such as Public Accounts (Chairman), Public Undertakings, Estimates and several Joint Parliamentary Committees.

He is entitled to be a member of various selection committees responsible for appointing heads of statutory bodies like the Central Vigilance Commission, the Central Information Commission, the CBI, the NHRC, and the Lokpal.

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate and MP from Kota, Om Birla was elected as the Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha after the motion for the same was moved by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and seconded by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The motion was adopted by the house through a voice vote.

The house echoed with 'Ayes' and 'Noes' and the pro-tem speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab declared Om Birla as the Speaker of the lower house.

The opposition which had filed K Suresh as the Speaker candidate of the INDIA bloc did not press for a division vote. Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi also extended wishes to Birla and accompanied him to the chair along with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and PM Modi.

The NDA, which commands 293 MPs in the 543-member Lok Sabha, was able to demonstrate its clear majority to ensure that Om Birla returns to the chair he held in the 17th Lok Sabha. The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha began on June 24 and will conclude on July 3.

Om Birla elected Lok Sabha speaker for second term



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets Om Birla after the latter was elected as the Speaker of the House during the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha, in New Delhi, Wednesday, June 26, 2024. Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijju are also seen.

| Photo Credit: PTI

Om Birla was elected Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha on Wednesday, June 26, defeating Kodikunnil Suresh of the Congress in a voice vote, as the Opposition did not press for a division of votes.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded Birla for the skill he showed in maintaining the decorum of the House during his previous term. Newly appointed Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi, however, stressed the importance of “impartiality” from the Speaker’s chair, noting that “the idea that you can run the House efficiently by silencing the voice of the Opposition is a non-democratic idea”.

In keeping with parliamentary tradition, Gandhi walked across the aisle to congratulate Birla, shook hands with Mr. Modi and escorted the Speaker to his Chair along with the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju.

But the bonhomie was short-lived as Birla read out a resolution to recall the imposition and excesses of the Emergency in 1975, triggering a huge uproar by the Opposition in the House. The resolution stated that the Congress had crushed the spirit of the Constitution and dictatorship had been imposed in 1975.

“The Emergency is a black spot in history. The aim of these amendments made by the Congress government was to bring all the powers to one person, to control the judiciary, and to destroy the basic principles of the Constitution. By doing this, the rights of citizens were suppressed and the principles of democracy attacked,” Birla said, reading out the resolution. “The then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi also talked about committed bureaucracy and committed judiciary, which is an example of her anti-democratic attitude,” he added.

Amid sloganeering by Opposition members, the House was adjourned for the day after observing a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the Emergency.

The end of the day’s Lok Sabha’s proceedings was in stark contrast to the mood of the House at the beginning of the day. Though the Opposition INDIA bloc nominated Mr. Suresh to contest the election for the Speaker’s post, it did not ask for any division of votes, prompting pro tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab to announce that Birla was elected by a voice vote.

This also led to the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Congress taking opposing views; TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee claimed that Mahtab did not allow a count of votes, while the Congress’ Jairam Ramesh asserted that the party did not seek a division for the sake of “creating an atmosphere of consensus”.

The Lower House’s proceedings began with Mr. Modi moving a motion to elect Birla as the Speaker, a position that the three-term MP from Kota had held in the 17th Lok Sabha as well. All partners of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) also moved identical proposals in favour of Birla to convey a message of unity.

Similarly, the proposal for Suresh was moved by the Shiv Sena (UBT)’s Arvind Sawant, and was supported by Congress leaders and their allies.

Once Birla assumed his Chair, the Prime Minister praised him for ensuring that the Lok Sabha functioned even during the COVID-19 period and for maintaining the dignity and decorum of the House, at times by taking difficult decisions. “When people analyse the significance of the 17th Lok Sabha under

your leadership in the future, the role of the House in giving a new direction will prominently feature,” Modi said.

Highlighting “landmark legislation” such as the Constitutional amendment to provide for women’s reservation in the parliamentary and State polls, the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, and the three new criminal laws, the Prime Minister noted that the 17th Lok Sabha had achieved 97% productivity, the highest rate in 25 years.

Being the Speaker of the Lok Sabha in a vast country like India is a challenging task. During the sessions, the Speaker must manage both the ruling and opposition parties, ensuring impartiality despite being affiliated with a particular party. The Speaker balances the activities of both sides to maintain smooth functioning, as the discussions in the House are meant for the people’s benefit. The Indian Parliament represents the aspirations of 1.4 billion citizens, making its conduct crucial for strengthening democracy.

Responsibilities During Amrit Kaal

Prime Minister Modi mentioned that Om Birla is assuming his responsibilities for the second term during Amrit Kaal. His five years of experience and that of the members will guide the House during this critical period. In his constituency, Birla has worked on maternal and child care, healthcare, and promoting sports. The last Lok Sabha was considered a golden period in parliamentary history, with significant and transformative decisions like the Women’s Empowerment Act, Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization, and various bills related to social security and data protection.

Om Birla’s profile

Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha, Om Birla also who served as the Speaker of 17th the Lok Sabha, is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), representing the Kota-Bundi constituency in Rajasthan.

Born on November 23, 1962, in Kota, Birla holds a Master’s degree in Commerce from Government Commerce College, Kota, and Rajasthan University.

Birla’s political career began with the student wing of the BJP, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), and he later served as the state president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) in Rajasthan. His parliamentary journey started with his election to the 11th Rajasthan Legislative Assembly, where he served three consecutive terms.

Birla was elected to the 16th Lok Sabha in 2014 and re-elected in 2019. As Speaker, Om Birla is known for his efforts to maintain decorum in the House. He has initiated several measures to enhance the productivity of parliamentary proceedings and to ensure transparency and accountability. Birla emphasizes the importance of dialogue and cooperation among members, fostering a spirit of bipartisanship.

Om Birla’s Record

Om Birla has made a record by being re-elected as the Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha. His first term lasted from June 19, 2019, to June 24, 2024, and he is now starting his second term. Before him, five others have served as Speaker for two consecutive terms. These include M.A. Ayyangar, Gurdial Singh Dhillon, Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, Balram Jakhar, and G.M.C. Balayogi.

Privileges for the Speaker

The Speaker presides over Lok Sabha sessions and manages its operations. For this role, they receive a good salary and other benefits. According to the 1954 Parliamentary Act, which was amended in 2010, the Speaker receives a monthly salary of 1 lakh rupees. They also get a constituency allowance of 70,000 rupees and an additional 2,000 rupees for each meeting attended. After their term, they receive a monthly allowance of 20,000 rupees, plus a pension and an extra 1,500 rupees as an additional allowance. The Speaker and their family enjoy travel allowances similar to other ministers, along with free residence, travel, and boarding facilities. They also receive free electricity, phone, peon, staff services, and medical care.

Modi's 1st foreign bilateral visit during 3rd term likely to be to Russia

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is skipping the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit in Kazakhstan, is likely to travel to Moscow next month for his first foreign bilateral visit in his third term in office.

The visit has been tentatively scheduled for the second week of July, around July 8.

If this pans out, it will be a major break from past convention during his last two terms, when the neighbourhood had been the focus of his first foreign trips after elections.

During his 10-year tenure earlier, Prime Minister Modi chalked up 76 foreign trips, visiting 66 countries -- surpassing his predecessor Manmohan Singh's tally of 73 international visits.

In 2014, Modi chose Bhutan for his first bilateral foreign foray, followed by the Maldives and Sri Lanka in 2019.

The Indian government has not yet confirmed the visit but the Russian government was quick to do so.

"I can confirm that the Indian premier's visit is in the pipeline ... We are making active preparations for it. This visit will take place," Yuri Ushakov, Russian President Vladimir Putin's foreign policy aide, told media personnel in Moscow as reported by the Tass news agency.

The visit appears to have been confirmed very recently, as the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has not yet dispatched an advance team to Moscow to handle security and protocol arrangements.

Modi has visited Russia five times in the past decade, but he has not made a bilateral trip to Moscow since 2019.

Even considering the COVID-19 pandemic, this is a lengthy gap, particularly since India and Russia agreed to hold annual summits after their relationship was upgraded to a strategic partnership in 2000.

His first trip to Moscow was in June 2015 for the BRICS summit and his last one was for the annual summit at Vladivostok in September 2019.

The Indian PM will join the list of world leaders who have visited Russia during the ongoing Ukraine war, which includes leaders from China, Hungary, Turkey, Myanmar, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, as well as various other African and Central Asian countries.

India has not publicly criticised Russia for invading Ukraine in February 2022, but has broadly called for a peaceful resolution and the protection of civilians in disputes.

Modi did not attend the global peace summit on the Ukraine war in Switzerland and was represented by a senior MEA official.



On the sidelines of the G7 summit, PM Modi met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, Pope Francis, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and British Prime Minister Sunak.

India distanced itself from the joint statement issued after the summit, insisting that both parties to the conflict – Russia and Ukraine – must be at the table.

Russia was not invited to the summit.

The Ukraine war led to a significant increase in India-Russia trade, which had previously been sluggish. Over the past two years, trade between the two countries nearly tripled to \$65.7 billion. This surge is primarily due to India purchasing large quantities of Russian crude oil, which was sanctioned by the West following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

According to government data, India's crude imports from Russia were \$2 billion in 2022 and rose to \$46.49 billion in 2024.

Consequently, India's trade deficit with Russia soared to \$57 billion in 2023-24.

The results of the general elections that were declared on June 4 meant that Modi returned to power for a third term, but with a diminished mandate. While the ruling alliance won a majority in the Lok Sabha, Modi's party lost over 60 seats.

Within a week after his

DURING HIS 10-YEAR TENURE EARLIER, PRIME MINISTER MODI CHALKED UP 76 FOREIGN TRIPS, VISITING 66 COUNTRIES --SURPASSING HIS PREDECESSOR MANMOHAN SINGH'S TALLY OF 73 INTERNATIONAL VISITS.

inauguration, Modi travelled to Italy for the G7 summit to participate in an outreach session with major nations from the Global South.

However, the Indian government recently notified the host of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Kazakhstan, set for July 3-4 in Astana, that Modi's planned visit was no longer feasible.

India has not officially announced the cancellation, as Modi's trip to Astana was never publicly disclosed. However, the MEA's readout of the Indian PM's phone call with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on Tuesday conspicuously omits any reference to a physical meeting for the summit in the near future, despite Modi wishing for its "success".

The last-minute cancellation was

especially significant as Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping plan to participate in the summit.

Although India has mitigated its absence by arranging a bilateral visit to Moscow, it is evident that there is no urgent rush for a Modi-Xi encounter.

Earlier this month, Modi attended the G7 Summit for the fifth consecutive time at the invitation of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

Before attending the G7 Outreach session, PM met several world leaders, including French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to discuss bilateral relations.

LINCOLN CENTER'S 'SUMMER FOR THE CITY' WELCOMES YOU TO INDIA WEEK

BY MABEL PAIS

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA), for the third annual Summer for the City (lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city), welcomes New Yorkers to hundreds of free events over three months.

A highly anticipated staple of New York City summers, this year's festival features new commissions and a wide variety of programming bringing together thousands of artists from across the world in celebration of the multitude of cultural histories and stories that live within the city.

From June 12 to August 10 Lincoln Center's campus transforms into a welcoming oasis where neighbors and New Yorkers from across the city can gather, relax, participate in performances, enjoy expanded food offerings at the Lincoln Center Night Market, and even play outdoor games. The outdoor spaces are designed by Visual Director Clint Ramos and inspired by flora and fauna of the American prairie, with greenery and plants by Donyale Werle Design, lighting designs by Andrew Grant, and projection designs by Zachary Borovay.

"Life, Liberty, and Happiness" is this year's guiding curatorial theme, highlighting how active participation in the arts helps strengthen civic bonds and grow strong community. Throughout the summer, audiences are invited to be creators themselves—whether as songwriters, poets, dancers, or storytellers.

"The ethos that drives all we do for New York is to live up to our founding mission that the arts are for everyone. It is in service of this democratic ideal that we offer a summer with artistry from so many perspectives and lived experiences—all for free or Choose-What-You-Pay," said Shanta Thake, Ehrenkrantz Chief Artistic Officer of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Thake continued, "Our guiding theme this summer helps reinforce so much of what we all share, but sometimes lose in our busy daily lives. The arts are core to our collective well-being and to helping us realize our hopes and dreams for future generations. We look forward to coming together this summer with artists from across the globe and with neighbors from across New York City."

"There's no place like New York City in the summer, where people across the five boroughs gather in our public spaces to enjoy the events, programming, and the magic of our city," said Speaker Adrienne Adams.

The majority of the more than 200 events during 'Summer for the City' are free, with select indoor performances having a Choose-What-You-Pay ticketing model, starting at \$5.

Most free performances offer a free Fast Track (lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/v/fast%20track) line to gain priority access to the event ahead of the general admission line, and these free Fast Track registrations are available every Monday at noon for that week's performances. Check event webpages on SummerForTheCity.org (lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/v/fast%20track) for performance-specific information on Fast Track availability or ticket on-sale dates.

This July, Lincoln Center will build off the success of last year's Korean Arts Week with a week-long celebration of Indian cultural traditions during INDIA WEEK. This year's festival will immerse audiences in a range of festivities that highlight the depth of India's cultural landscape from July 10-14, showcasing the country's music, dance, art, cuisine, and much more!

INDIA WEEK - JULY 10-14

Celebrate the beauty and vibrancy of Indian culture

with a week-long extravaganza of events showcasing the country's music, dance, art, cuisine, and more! The series immerses audiences in a range of festivities that highlight the depth of India's cultural landscape. The week will offer silent discos curated by DJ Rekha, a performance by Ragamala Dance Company at Damrosch Park, a high-energy social dance party celebrating garba, comedy nights, a literary event presented by PEN America, and programming for families. There's something for everyone to enjoy.

HERE'S A LISTING OF EVENTS*:

COMEDY UNDERGROUND

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/comedy-underground-628)

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 8:00 pm

The Underground at Jaffe Drive
Jaffe Dr, New York, NY 10023

NYLaughs teams up with Lincoln Center for a free underground-literally-stand-up comedy showcase every Wednesday evening from June 19 to August 7.

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

AVIMUKTA: WHERE THE SEEKER MEETS THE SACRED

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/avimukta-where-the-seeker-meets-the-sacred)

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 8:00 pm

Damrosch Park
Amsterdam Ave &, W 62nd St, New York, NY 10023

Celebrating the beauty and vibrancy of Indian culture with an extravaganza of events that highlight the depth of India's cultural landscape, India Week kicks off with the acclaimed Ragamala Dance Company's 'Avimukta: Where the Seeker Meets the Sacred.' Run time: 1 hour

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

RAJUJU - (LINCOLNCENTER.ORG/SERIES/SUMMER-FOR-THE-CITY/RAJUJU-514)

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 9:00 pm

The Dance Floor
Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

India Week continues with silent discos curated by DJ Rekha! Dance to the rhythms and sounds spun by renowned DJ and New York-based artist Rajuju Brown.

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

GARBA360 FEATURING UJJVAL VYAS MUSICALS

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/garba360-785)



Garba Credit: lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city

Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm

The Dance Floor
Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

Celebrate the beauty and vibrancy of Indian culture and folk dance traditions with Garba360 as part of India Week, featuring Ujjval Vyas Musicals, dance instruction by Heena Patel, and produced by MELA Arts Connect.

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

Sonny Singh - (lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/sonny-singh-850)

Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 7:30 pm

David Rubenstein Atrium
1887 Broadway, New York, NY 10023

Celebrate the beauty and vibrancy of Punjabi and Sikh culture with Sonny Singh! Simultaneously spiritual and rebellious, Sonny Singh's music is a reminder that hope, love, and devotion are crucial to our struggles and our collective survival.

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

SAMSARA - (LINCOLNCENTER.ORG/SERIES/SUMMER-FOR-THE-CITY/SAMSARA-485)

Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 7:30 pm & Friday, July 12, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Rose Theater
Broadway &, W 60th St, New York, NY 10019

India Week continues as Aakash Odedra Company presents the U.S. premiere of Samsara (inspired by the classic Chinese novel Journey to the West), a dance piece that traces the steps we take, both forward and backward, in search of our higher selves.

This event is choose-what-you-pay, with tickets available at (lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/samsara-485)

RRR - (LINCOLNCENTER.ORG/SERIES/SUMMER-FOR-THE-CITY/RRR)



RRR Credit: lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city

Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 8:30 pm

Damrosch Park
Amsterdam Ave &, W 62nd St, New York, NY 10023

S.S. Rajamouli, 2022, India, 187m

English and Telugu with English subtitles

In the summer of 2022, Telugu-language cinema was thrust into the American pop-cultural limelight thanks to the unprecedented box office success of RRR, S.S. Rajamouli's 1920-set action blockbuster, which charts an imaginary friendship between real-life anti-colonial revolutionaries Komaram Bheem (N.T. Rama Rao, Jr.), a leader of India's marginalized Gond tribe, and A. Rama Raju (Ram Charan), an officer of the Indian Imperial Police with mysterious personal objectives. Composer M.M. Keeravani became the first Indian artist to win the Academy Award for Best Original Song, 'Naatu, Naatu'.

This event is FREE and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

OFFERING RAIN

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/offering-rain-650)

Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 10:00 pm

The Dance Floor
Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

India Week continues with silent discos curated by DJ Rekha! Free your mind and feel the beat with global

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music spun by DJ Offering Rain. Offering Rain (b. Melika Davé, 1996) is a NYC born and based multi-hyphenate artist and DJ of Gujarati & Ecuadorian heritage.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

PEN PRESENTS: A CELEBRATION OF LITERATURE FROM THE INDIAN DIASPORA

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/pen-presents-a-celebration-of-literature-from-the-indian-diaspora-580)



PEN Credit: lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 6:00 pm

The Garden at Damrosch Park
Amsterdam Ave &, W 62nd St, New York, NY 10023

In partnership with Lincoln Center, PEN America brings together a group of distinguished NYC-based writers and creators of Indian descent for a discussion on what inspires their artistic practice, how their heritage has influenced their work, and the traditions that have had the greatest impact on their creative process. Learn more at pen.org.

Run time: approximately 1 hour 15 minutes, followed by book signing.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

PARAPARA AND SAZ FEATURING SUMITRA DAS GOSWAMI

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/parampara-and-saz-ft-sumitra-das-goswami)

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Damrosch Park
Amsterdam Ave &, W 62nd St, New York, NY 10023

In this enthralling double bill, Rajasthani folk group SAZ featuring Sumitra Das Goswami kicks off the evening with RANG-E-THAR, a journey through the myriad flavors of traditional music from the deserts of western Rajasthan in a unique narrative performance.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

ASHU RAI

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/ashu-rai-216)

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 9:00 pm

The Dance Floor
Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

India Week continues with silent discos curated by DJ Rekha! Follow your bliss, feel the beat and beat the heat with music spun by DJ Ashu Rai! The co-founder and resident DJ of Sholay Events' long-running South Asian LGBTQIA+ dance party "Desilicious," Ashu has performed at many of the premiere venues in NYC, including Limelight, Pacha, Club Shelter, Pyramid, the Highline Ballroom, and B.B. King's.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

MINILA SHAH - (LINCOLNCENTER.ORG/SERIES/SUMMER-FOR-THE-CITY/MINILA-SHAH-578)

Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 10:00 am & 11:30 am
Griffin Sidewalk Studio, David Geffen Hall
(lincolncenter.org/venue/david-geffen-hall/info/kenneth-c-griffin-sidewalk-studio)
10 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023
Join dancer and yogi Minila Shah (Ajna Dance



Minila Credit: lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city

Company) and musicians Jay Gandhi (bansuri flute) and Ehren Hanson (tabla) for mindfulness practices, breathwork, and gentle stretches.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

KIRAN AHLUWALIA -

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/kiran-ahluwalia-608)

Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 12:00 pm

LeFrak Lobby, David Geffen Hall
(lincolncenter.org/venue/david-geffen-hall/info/welcome-center)
10 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

Two-time JUNO winner (Canada's GRAMMY) Kiran Ahluwalia's open-hearted vocals have established her as one of global music's most compelling cross-pollinators, bringing together the traditions of Indian music, West African blues, and jazz.

Run time: approximately 1 hour

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

COMEDY NIGHT WITH: AASIF MANDVI, HARI KONDABOLU, NIMESH PATEL, APARNA NANCHERLA, AND KIRAN DEOL

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/comedy-night)



Comedy Night Credit: lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city

Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Damrosch Park
Amsterdam Ave &, W 62nd St, New York, NY 10023
Get ready for a night of humor intertwined with cultural exploration all brought to you by a powerhouse lineup of comedians whose Indian heritage infuses into their comedic brilliance.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

DJ REKHA - (LINCOLNCENTER.ORG/SERIES/SUMMER-FOR-THE-CITY/DJ-REKHA-263)

Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 9:00 pm

THE DANCE FLOOR

Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023
The iconic DJ Rekha transmits their groovy sounds to your ear at Lincoln Center's Silent Disco this summer under the stars! DJ Rekha (born Rekha Malhotra) is a producer, curator, educator, and founder of "Basement Bhangra," one of NYC's longest-running club nights.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

SAZ SUNRISE CONCERT

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/saz-sunrise-concert)

Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 5:00 am

HEARST PLAZA

30 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023
Welcome the day with music by Rajasthani folk group SAZ during India Week! Sunrise is an auspicious time in Indian culture-a symbol of divinity, energy and positivity-and the masterful artists of this celebrated group are sure to start your morning in an unforgettable way.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

RHEOLOGY: IN CONCERT

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/rheology-in-concert-561)

Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 5:00 pm

HEARST PLAZA

30 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023
Obie Award-winning writer/director Shayok Misha Chowdhury's recent play, Public Obscenities, was singled out as one of the best theater works of 2023 by The New Yorker. His newest work is a performance memoir created with his mother, the physicist Bulbul Chakraborty.

Run time: approximately 1 hour 15 minutes
This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

PRIYA DARSHINI

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/priya-darshini)

Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 6:00 pm
The Underground at Jaffe Drive
Jaffe Dr, New York, NY 10023

GRAMMY-nominated singer Priya Darshini joins forces with her all-star band at Jazz Underground at Jaffe Drive, blending Indian classical, electronica, ambient, and jazz into an intimate and captivating experience.

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

ROSHNI SAMLAL (AKA DJ RAAT KI RANI)

(lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city/roshni-samlal-aka-dj-raat-ki-rani-884)

Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 6:00 pm
The Dance Floor
Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

India Week continues with silent discos curated by DJ Rekha! Wine your body to music spun by Roshni Samlal (aka DJ Raat Ki Rani), influenced by her Indo-Caribbean diaspora heritage, experiences as a working-class, brown immigrant during the '90s, focusing on Asian Underground music, global club, soca, and chutney. Join India Week for a feast for your ears!

This event is **FREE** and General Admission, first-come, first-served.

For updates and more information, visit lincolncenter.org/series/summer-for-the-city
All events are subject to change.

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

TRIBECA 2024 FILMS WITH ASIAN/INDIAN CONNECTION

BY MABEL PAIS

DIANE VON FURSTENBERG: WOMAN IN CHARGE



Diane von Furstenberg

Credit: disney.com

TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL 2024 - Opening Night

Co-Directors/Co-Producers: Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Trish Dalton

Co-Producers: Fabiola Beracasa Beckman, Tracy Aftergood, Sean Stuart, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Trish Dalton

USA; 2024; Documentary; Biography; 1h 37m



Diane with her creations

Credit: disney.com

ACADEMY AWARD WINNER, twice over, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Trish Dalton take an unprecedented look at the non-stop life of a cultural luminary. At a time when gender equality and women's issues are at the forefront, Diane von Furstenberg's (DVF) life exemplifies empowerment, resilience, entrepreneurship, and style. She is an inspiration to women with her unapologetic demeanor. Diane never saw herself as a victim of sexism; rather, she embraced her femininity in a strong and profound way, forging a path for her daughter and the next generation of women to follow. Few women embody the gravitas, grace, and gusto of the incomparable Diane von Furstenberg.

A citizen of the world and the child of a Holocaust survivor, her story, and its impact have uplifted people around the globe. In 1974, DVF transformed not only her destiny but also that of countless women with the introduction of the iconic "wrap dress," a unique garment that instantly bestowed fashion and confidence upon its wearers, irrespective of their shape, background, or status.

As she approaches the eve of her retrospective exhibition, marking a 50-year distinguished career, Diane von Furstenberg contemplates her pioneering path in a male-dominated realm to erect a multi-million-dollar fashion empire - as an early visionary, and influencer, she challenged the status quo with the bold inquiry, "Why can't a woman do what a man does?"

With resolute determination, she faced various challenges - she was a single woman balancing a career, raising two children, and bravely confronting cancer. These hurdles didn't stop her; instead, she embraced them and they fueled her mission to inspire women everywhere to pursue their lives with equal passion and purpose and design their own lives. DVF was born to be a woman in charge. And, she was born to inspire other women to take charge of their lives.

"We aspire for this film to not only celebrate Diane's remarkable life but also to ignite a sense of empowerment in women of all ages, at a time when women's rights and freedoms are being challenged. It's a call to embrace their innate power and live life on their own terms, as Diane von Furstenberg has so inspiringly demonstrated and championed." Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy & Trish Dalton.

U.S. Release Date (Tribeca Film Festival): June 5, 2024

Premier Date on HULU: June 25, 2024

KILL



'Kill' poster

Credit: Roadside Attractions

Director/Writer: Nikhil Nagesh Bhat

Producers: Hiroo Yash Johar, Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, Guneet Monga Kapoor, Achin Jain

Cast: Lakshya, Tanya Maniktala, Raghav Juyal

Rated:R; Action, Thriller; Length: 1h 55m; Hashtag: #Kill



Lakshya in 'Kill'

Credit: Roadside Attractions

At its heart, 'KILL' is a tale of separation and an unquenchable longing for reunion. Amrit (Lakshya) and Tulika's (Tanya Maniktala) desire to be together is met with an ever-mounting tide of adversity. Ultimately, 'KILL' is a journey into the human spirit, the power of love, and the extraordinary lengths one will go to protect their cherished ones.

Star-crossed lovers Tulika and Amrit find their clandestine relationship jeopardized after Tulika's family whisks her aboard the Rajdhani Express bound for both New Delhi and an arranged marriage. But commandos Amrit and his friend are far from willing to let fate dictate their story.

They embark on a "rescue" mission that turns into a gory adventure. Just when the stakes couldn't get any higher, the train hurtles into chaos as a gang of 40 blade-wielding bandits storms in. Amrit and his friend employ their combat skills to protect the passengers. The train's confines transform into a claustrophobic battleground, where martial arts meet mayhem.

As the body count rises, Fani (Raghav Juyal), the black sheep of the gang, accentuates the tension, and the train's compartments become a canvas for a furious dance of survival. Amrit isn't just a commando; he's a force of nature, driven by love and armed with dauntless determination. He fights against the odds, carving a path through a hail of knives to shield everyone. With every strike and every confrontation, their resilience is put to the test.

Drawing inspiration from the real-life "dacoits" who once wreaked havoc on Indian trains, 'KILL' takes this high-concept premise that blurs the lines between duty and emotion. In a world where every twist of the track could mean life or death, 'KILL' paints a portrait of how far a man can go in love to rewrite his destiny.

"Ultimately, KILL is a journey into the human spirit, the power of love, and the extraordinary lengths one will go to protect their cherished ones." - Director Nikhil Nagesh Bhat.

U.S. Release Date: July 4, 2024.

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



CO POWERED BY



PRRIA HAIDER & PRIYANKA JOTWANI
PRESENT



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DESIGN - ODEON GRAPHICS



Varun Dhawan's Baby John to release on Christmas

The makers of Varun Dhawan's upcoming film *Baby John* have revealed a new international release date of December 25th, 2024, this Christmas, adding to the seasonal excitement.

The action entertainer by Atlee, Jio Studios, A for Apple Studios, and Cine1 Studios is also expected to collide with the film *Sitaare Zameen Par*, starring Aamir Khan.

The film's release date has been pushed back due to its emphasis on visual effects and action sequences.

The team needs more time to perfect every detail so that 'Baby John' fulfils the high expectations of the audience. The Christmas release makes it an ideal time for an out-and-out mass entertainer.

Baby John marks the Hindi film debut of Keerthy Suresh and also features Wamiqa Gabbi, who is making her silver screen debut. Bollywood veterans Jackie Shroff and Rajpal Yadav will play significant roles in this action entertainer. The film is a musical, with a score composed by S Thaman.

Newlyweds Sonakshi Sinha, Zaheer Iqbal are all smiles as they step out for dinner

Newlyweds Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal are the talk of the town. On June 23, the two lovebirds got married in the presence of family and friends. They also held a reception that evening, which was attended by several Bollywood stars. Now, the two have made their first public appearance after marriage, as they stepped out for a dinner date with close friends and relatives.

For the latest outing on Wednesday, June 26, evening, both Sonakshi and Zaheer chose a restaurant in Mumbai. Sonakshi looked radiant in a red silk dress, which she paired with heels and shimmery white clutch bag. Meanwhile, Zaheer opted for a white shirt with black leaf motifs printed on it. Both Sonakshi and Zaheer posed for a few moments outside the restaurant and flashed a big smile. They were then seen entering the restaurant, as they went on to hug a close relative. Zaheer was seen touching the feet of an elder relative.

Sonakshi and Zaheer opted for a civil marriage at her home on Sunday. They were joined by her dad Shatrughan Sinha, mother Poonam Sinha and his parents. Shatrughan later took to X (formerly Twitter) to thank people for their congratulatory messages, calling it the 'wedding of the century'. The couple wore ivory outfits for the wedding, with Sonakshi later switching into a gold and red saree, and Zaheer opting for a white kurta with red underlay.

Sonakshi and Zaheer later threw a party for their friends and family at a restaurant in Mumbai. The do was attended by Salman Khan, her first co-star, Rekha, Kajol, Raveena Tandon and others. *Source: HT*



Kangana Ranaut's directorial 'Emergency' to release in September

Kangana Ranaut's upcoming film 'Emergency' is all set to release in theatres on September 6. The actor announced the same with a new poster. Last month, in May, the acclaimed actor announced the postponement of the film due to her Lok Sabha election campaign.

After her victory, she is gearing up for the release of her highly anticipated period political drama, set for 6th September 2024. The actor announced the major update on Instagram and wrote, "The Beginning of the 50th Year of Independent India's Darkest Chapter, Announcing #KanganaRanaut's #Emergency In Cinemas on 6th September 2024. The Explosive Saga of The Most Controversial Episode of The History of Indian Democracy (sic)."

Backed by Zee Studios and Manikarnika Films, 'Emergency' is a mega-budget depiction of one of the most controversial episodes in the history of Indian democracy. At the heart of the story is one of the most sensational leaders of all time, India's first woman Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi.

Talking about the film in a press release,



Kangana said, "I am deeply inspired by William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the essence of *Emergency* is the destruction wrought when ambition goes unchecked by moral constraints, it is undoubtedly the most sensational chapter of Indian democracy and I am eagerly awaiting its worldwide release on 6th September 2024."

'Emergency' also features Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhary, Milind Soman, Shreyas Talpade, Vishak Nair, and the late Satish Kaushik in pivotal roles.

Junaid Khan confirms new movie after Maharaj success

Actor Junaid Khan, who recently garnered critical acclaim for his role in the Netflix film *Maharaj*, has teased fans with news of his latest cinematic venture. The actor, who is the son of Bollywood star Aamir Khan, revealed that he has commenced shooting for an untitled film in Delhi.



In an exclusive conversation with ANI, Junaid Khan shared insights about his new project, hinting that it is backed by a prominent production house. Earlier, certain reports of him shooting with Khushi Kapoor in Delhi were doing rounds on the internet which suggested the duo would shoot in the national capital for a few weeks.

This announcement comes on the heels of the release of *Maharaj*, a historical drama that has received widespread positive feedback since its premiere.



Nicole Kidman celebrates 18th wedding anniversary with Keith Urban

Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban celebrated their enduring love on their 18th wedding anniversary. Kidman, 57, captured the essence of their bond with a heartfelt gesture on Tuesday, June 25. She shared a captivating photo, where she appeared relaxed in a vibrant, patterned dress, barefoot on a stone wall overlooking the expansive sea. By her side, Urban, 57, serenaded her with an acoustic guitar, clad in a striking pink shirt and black pants, mirroring the casual, intimate setting.

Kidman simply captioned the picture by writing, "Forever;" and adding the hashtag "happyanniversary."

The image speaks volumes of their shared journey, highlighting Kidman's serene presence and Urban's musical accompaniment, blending personal warmth with the picturesque backdrop. Their anniversary tribute encapsulates not just a milestone in years but a testament to their enduring commitment and shared passions. It's a snapshot of their love story that resonates beyond words, capturing a moment of tranquility and mutual admiration amidst the beauty of nature—an ode to their "forever" love that continues to inspire.

Many of their celebrity friends left sweet comments celebrating their milestone. Naomi Watts wrote, "This looks like true love heavenly." Rita Wilson commented, "Love you both. Happy Anniversary, lovers."

Kidman and Urban's love story began at the G'Day USA gala in 2005, culminating in a romantic wedding the next year at St. Patrick's Estate in Manly, Australia. Their journey into parenthood began with the birth of daughter Sunday Rose in July 2008, followed by daughter Faith Margaret in December 2010. Early in their marriage, the couple confronted significant challenges when Urban grappled with addiction.

Paris Hilton testifies to US Congress about childhood abuse

Paris Hilton, the American socialite and media figure, has told a congressional panel looking into strengthening child welfare protections that she was "force-fed medications and sexually abused by staff" while she was institutionalized as a teenager.

Hilton, an outspoken advocate for better protections for children in youth facilities, told the House committee on ways and means on Wednesday that she had been "violently restrained and dragged down hallways, stripped naked and thrown into solitary confinement".

The 43-year-old has previously described how she was subjected to "a parent-approved kidnapping" at four different youth facilities as her parents searched for solutions to her rebellious behavior and "fell for the misleading marketing of the troubled teen industry".

She has characterized the "tough love" teen course-correction business as a \$50bn industry that includes therapeutic boarding schools, military-style boot camps, juvenile justice facilities and behavior-modification programs.

On Wednesday, June 25, the reality TV star said she found her institutional experience "isolating and traumatic" and that she had been prevented from alerting her parents to what was happening because phone calls were monitored.

"It's really difficult to tell anyone in the outside world. A lot of these kids are not believed because these places tell the parents they're being lied to and manipulated because they want to go home," Hilton told the panel.

Hilton has also called on lawmakers to pass the Stop Institutional Child Abuse act, designed to strengthen oversight of residential youth programs; supports the re-authorization of Title IV-B of the Social Security Act; and is an advocate for a "Bill of Rights" for children in youth facilities.

The Provo Canyon school, one of the institutions Hilton attended, previously responded to Hilton's accusations saying it was under different management and "therefore cannot comment on the operations or student experience prior to that time".

"What we can say is that the school provides a structured environment, teaching life skills, providing behavioral health therapy, and continuing education for youth who come to us with pre-existing and complex emotional, behavioral and psychiatric needs," the school said.



Scarlett Johansson wanted to join 'Jurassic World' franchise for 10 years



Actress Scarlett Johansson has confirmed that she will be starring in the next 'Jurassic World' movie, directed by filmmaker Gareth Edwards, who has previously helmed films such as 'Rogue One' and 'Godzilla'.

An 'enormous' 'Jurassic Park' fan, Johansson shared that she has always wanted to be part of the franchise, even if it meant "dying in five minutes".

Speaking to ComicBook.com, Johansson said, "I've been trying to get into this franchise in any possible way for over 10 years. I'm like, 'I'll die in the first five minutes! I can get eaten by whatever! I'll do the craft service! I'll do anything for it. The fact that it's happened in this way at this time is just actually unbelievable."

"I am an enormous 'Jurassic Park' fan," Johansson said, reports Variety.

"It is one of the first movies I remember seeing in theatres. I remember it so vividly. It was life-changing and mind-blowing. I cannot express how excited I am."

The script for the upcoming film is by David Koepp. The screenwriter is returning to the franchise after writing for Steven Spielberg's 'Jurassic Park' in 1993 and 'The Lost World: Jurassic Park' in 1997.

Johansson said that "the script is so incredible" for the fourth 'Jurassic World' movie, which will be an entirely new story that's separate from the first 'Jurassic World' trilogy, featuring Chris Pratt.

Source: IANS

WIKILEAKS FOUNDER JULIAN ASSANGE RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA A FREE MAN AFTER US LEGAL BATTLE ENDS

CANBERRA (TIP): WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange returned to his homeland Australia aboard a charter jet and raised a celebratory clenched fist as his supporters cheered on June 26, hours after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing U.S. military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that concludes a drawn-out legal saga.

Assange told Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in a phone call from the capital Canberra's airport tarmac that Australian government intervention in the U.S. prosecution had saved his life, Assange lawyer Jennifer Robinson said.

Assange embraced his wife Stella Assange and father John Shipton who were waiting on the tarmac, but avoided media at a news conference less than two hours after he landed.

"Julian wanted me to sincerely thank everyone. He wanted to be here. But you have to understand what he's been through. He needs time. He needs to recuperate and this is a process." Stella Assange told reporters.

Assange was accused of receiving and publishing hundreds of thousands of war logs and diplomatic cables that included details of U.S. military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. His activities drew an outpouring of support from press freedom advocates, who heralded his role in bringing to light military conduct that might otherwise have been concealed from view and warned of a chilling effect on journalists. Among the files published by WikiLeaks was a video of a 2007 Apache helicopter attack by American forces in Baghdad that killed 11 people, including two Reuters journalists.

The case came to a surprise end in a most unusual setting with Assange, 52, entering his plea in a U.S. district court in Saipan, the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands. The American commonwealth in the Pacific is relatively close to Assange's native Australia and accommodated his desire to avoid entering the continental United States.

Albanese said Assange told him during their phone call he was looking forward to playing with his sons, conceived while the father was in self-exile in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London for seven years.

"He described it as a surreal and happy moment, his landing here in our national capital, Canberra," Albanese told reporters in Parliament House. "I had a very warm discussion with him this evening. He was very generous in his praise of the Australian government's efforts." (AP)

China's Communist Party expels former defence minister for corruption

BEIJING (TIP): Former Chinese defense minister Li Shangfu was expelled from the ruling Communist Party and is being investigated for corruption and bribery, the official Xinhua news agency reported on June 27.

The Defense Ministry said Li had abused his authority to enrich himself by taking bribes and granting favors in violation of military and party discipline. Li was removed from office in October 2023 after disappearing from public view for almost two months.

Such charges have been leveled against numerous military leaders under the rule of President Xi Jinping, who also heads the armed forces as chairman of the Central Military Commission and has made a crackdown on corruption a hallmark of his rule since taking power more than a decade ago.

Former Chinese defense minister Li was expelled from the ruling Communist Party and is being investigated for corruption and bribery.

Insiders have claimed that he is undertaking a widespread purge of officers suspected of conspiring with foreign forces or simply being insufficiently loyal to Xi. High-ranking military officers occupy an elevated



position in Chinese politics and can enjoy extensive privileges.

In its statement, the ministry gave no details of the allegations against Li, other than saying that his alleged crimes were "exceptionally pernicious" and that they posed "an enormous danger."

Li spent most of his career as a specialist in the missile and procurement branches, and was under travel and financial sanctions from the U.S. at the time he dropped from view last September. That roughly coincided with

the sudden disappearance of then-foreign minister Qin Gang and several leading officers in the rocket corps amid unproven allegations of misconduct. Li was replaced in December by Admiral Dong Jun.

China has the world's largest standing military, its biggest navy, and a rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal, but it has not been tested in warfare in half a century. The military reports to the Communist Party, with the defense minister playing a secondary role. (AP)

Gaza's summer of despair: Sewage, garbage, and rising health risks amid ongoing conflict

DEIR AL-BALAH (TIP): Children in sandals trudge through water contaminated with sewage and scale growing mounds of garbage in Gaza's crowded tent camps for displaced families. People relieve themselves in burlap-covered pits, with nowhere nearby to wash their hands.

In the stifling summer heat, Palestinians say the odor and filth surrounding them is just another inescapable reality of war — like pangs of hunger or sounds of bombing.

The territory's ability to dispose of garbage, treat sewage and deliver clean water has been virtually decimated by eight brutal months of war between Israel and Palestine. This has made grim living conditions worse and raised health risks for hundreds of thousands of people deprived of adequate shelter, food and medicine, aid groups say.

Palestinians gather to fill water jugs near one of the strip's few functioning desalination plants in Deir al-Balah, Gaza Strip.

Hepatitis A cases are on the rise, and doctors fear that as warmer weather arrives, an outbreak of cholera is increasingly likely without dramatic changes to living conditions. The U.N., aid groups and local officials are scrambling to build latrines, repair water lines and bring desalination plants back online.



COGAT, the Israeli military body coordinating humanitarian aid efforts, said it's engaging in efforts to improve the "hygiene situation." But relief can't come soon enough.

"Flies are in our food," said Adel Dalloul, a 21-year-old whose family settled in a beach tent camp near the central Gaza city of Nuseirat. They wound up there after fleeing the southern city of Rafah, where they landed after leaving their northern Gaza home. "If you try to sleep, flies, insects and cockroaches are all over you."

Over a million Palestinians had been living in hastily assembled tent camps in Rafah before Israel invaded in May. Since

fleeing Rafah, many have taken shelter in even more crowded and unsanitary areas across southern and central Gaza that doctors describe as breeding grounds for disease — especially as temperatures regularly reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius).

"The stench in Gaza is enough to make you kind of immediately nauseous," said Sam Rose, a director at the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees. Conditions are exacting an emotional toll, too.

Anwar al-Hurkali, who lives with his family in a tent camp in the central Gazan city of Deir al-Balah, said he can't sleep for fear of scorpions and rodents. (AP)

Bolivian general arrested after apparent failed coup attempt as government faces new crisis

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA (TIP): Led by a top general vowing to "restore democracy," armored vehicles rammied the doors of Bolivia's government palace on June 26 in what the president called a coup attempt, then quickly retreated — the latest crisis in the South American country facing a political battle and an economic crisis.

Within hours, the nation of 12 million people saw a rapidly moving scenario in which the troops seemed to take control of the government of President Luis Arce. He vowed to stand firm and named a new army commander, who immediately ordered the troops to stand down.

Soon the soldiers pulled back, along with a line of military vehicles, ending the rebellion after just three hours. Hundreds of Arce's supporters then rushed the square outside the palace, waving Bolivian flags, singing the national anthem and cheering.

The soldiers' retreat was followed by the arrest of army chief Gen. Juan José Zúñiga, after the attorney general opened an investigation.

Government Minister Eduardo del Castillo said that in addition to Zúñiga,



former navy Vice Adm. Juan Arnez Salvador was taken into custody.

"What was this group's goal? The goal was to overturn the democratically elected authority," del Castillo told journalists in announcing the arrests.

Late Wednesday, Defense Minister Edmundo Novillo said "everything is now under control." Surrounded by the

new military chiefs appointed by Arce, Novillo said that Bolivia lived a "failed coup."

The apparent coup attempt came as the country has faced months of tensions and political fights between Arce and his one-time ally, former leftist president Evo Morales, over control of the ruling party. (AP)

Kenya's president says he won't sign finance bill that led protesters to storm parliament

NAIROBI (TIP): Kenyan President William Ruto said on June 26 he won't sign into law a finance bill proposing new taxes, a day after protesters stormed parliament and several people were shot dead. It was the biggest assault on Kenya's government in decades.

The government wanted to raise funds to pay off debt, but Kenyans said the bill caused more economic pain as millions struggle to get by. The chaos on Tuesday led the government to deploy the military, and Ruto called protesters' actions "treasonous."

The president now says the bill caused "widespread dissatisfaction" and he has listened to the people and "conceded." It's a major setback for Ruto, who came to power vowing to help Kenyans cope with rising costs but has seen much of the country unite in opposition to his latest attempt at reforms.

"It is necessary for us to have a conversation as a nation on how to do we manage the affairs of the country together," the president said.

Kenyans faced the lingering smell of tear gas and military in the streets a day after the latest protests saw thousands storm parliament, an act of defiance that Ruto called an "existential" threat. At least 22 people were killed, a human rights group said.



Ruto acknowledged deaths, calling it an "unfortunate situation," and offered condolences.

The capital, Nairobi, has seen protests in the past, but activists and others warned the stakes are more dangerous. Ruto on Tuesday vowed to quash unrest "at whatever cost," even as more protests were called at State House on Thursday. Soldiers patrolled alongside police, who were accused of shooting several people dead on Tuesday.

Kenyans united beyond tribal and other divisions in a youth-led effort to keep the finance bill from becoming law. It would have raised taxes and fees on a range of daily items and services, from egg imports

to bank transfers. The government wanted the revenue to pay off debt in East Africa's economic hub.

There were no reports of violence Wednesday, but there was fear: Civil society groups have reported abductions of people involved in recent protests and expect more to come.

Many young people who helped vote Ruto into power with cheers for his promises of economic relief now object to the pain of reforms. Part of the parliament building burned Tuesday, and clashes occurred in several communities beyond the capital.

At least 22 people were killed, the Kenya National Human Rights Commission said. Commission chairperson Roseline Odede told journalists that 300 others were injured and 50 people were arrested.

The mother of a teenager who was killed, Edith Wanjiku, told journalists at a morgue that the police who shot her son should be arrested and charged with murder because her 19-year-old son had been unarmed.

"He had just completed school and was peacefully protesting," she said.

Parliament, city hall and the supreme court were cordoned off Wednesday with tape reading "Crime Scene Do Not Enter." Authorities said police fired over 700 blanks to disperse protesters in the Nairobi suburb of Githurai overnight. (AP)

A PALESTINIAN WAS SHOT, BEATEN AND TIED TO AN ISRAELI ARMY JEEP. THE ARMY SAYS HE POSED NO THREAT

JENIN, WEST BANK (TIP): When Mujahid Abadi stepped outside to see if Israeli forces had entered his uncle's neighborhood, he was shot in the arm and the foot. That was only the start of his ordeal. Hours later, beaten and bloodied, he found himself strapped to the searing hood of an Israeli military jeep driving down a road.

The army initially said Abadi was a suspected militant, but later acknowledged he had not posed a threat to Israeli forces and was caught in crossfire with militants.

Video showing the 24-year-old strapped to the jeep circulated on social media, sparking widespread condemnation, including from the United States. Many said it showed that Israeli soldiers were using him as a human shield — a charge Israel has frequently leveled at Hamas as it battles the group in Gaza.

The military said it was investigating the incident and that it did not reflect its values. But Palestinians saw it as yet another act of brutality in Israel's crackdown on the occupied West Bank, where violence has surged since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack triggered the war in Gaza.

Abadi, speaking to The Associated Press from a hospital bed on Tuesday, said he stepped outside his uncle's house in the volatile West Bank city of Jenin on June 23 after he heard a commotion.

"I went outside to see what was happening, and looked towards the neighbors' houses, where I saw the army," he said. "When I tried to return to the house, heavy and indiscriminate gunfire was suddenly directed at me. My cousin who was near me was also hit."

After he was shot in the arm, he hid behind his family's car. Then he was shot again, in the foot. Unable to move, he called his father and told him he was about to die.

"I told him to try not to lose consciousness and to keep talking to me," Raed Abadi said as he stood over his son's hospital bed. "Suddenly, the call was disconnected."

Raed later saw false reports on social media that a Palestinian had been killed in the raid. "I collapsed, because I was 90% sure it was my son," he said.

Abadi was not dead, but his suffering had just begun.

After a couple of hours, Israeli soldiers found him. He says they struck his head and face and in the areas where he had been shot. Then they dragged him by his legs, lifted him by his hands and feet and threw him onto the hood of the military jeep. (AP)

TWO MINISTERS ARRESTED OVER 'BLACK MAGIC' ON MALDIVES PREZ

MALE (TIP): Maldives police have arrested two serving ministers for allegedly performing black magic on President Mohamed Muizzu, local media reported on June 27.

Shamnaz Saleem, who was a state minister at the Environment Ministry, her ex-husband Adam Rameez, who was serving as a minister at the President's Office, and two others were arrested, local media said quoting the police, who, however, declined to share any information about the reasons or the alleged performance of black magic.

"Shamnaz, alongside two other individuals, was arrested on Sunday. All three of them have been remanded in custody for seven days. She was suspended from her post on Wednesday as per the Environment Ministry," news portal Sun.mv reported, adding Rameez too has been suspended on Thursday.

Both Shamnaz and Rameez have worked with Muizzu as members of the Male City Council. (PTI)

'LET'S SIT DOWN AND TALK': PAK PM TO IMRAN

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on June 26 extended an olive branch to his predecessor and political rival Imran Khan, offering to hold talks with him if he was facing "troubles" in jail.

"If their [PTI] founder is facing troubles [in jail], then I reiterate: come, let's sit down and talk," Sharif said in the National Assembly. "Let us sit together to take the country ahead. Let us talk..." (PTI)

EX-BANGLADESH PM KHALEDA ZIA ON 'DEATHBED'



DHAKA (TIP): Accusing PM Sheikh Hasina of a "personal political vendetta" against her political rival Khaleda Zia, a leader from her party BNP today claimed she is on her "deathbed" as she has been deprived of advance medical treatment abroad.

A report in The Daily Star said Zia, 78, was rushed to a hospital here around 3:30 am on June 23 as she fell ill. Hasina's action is a result of "personal political vendetta," BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir alleged. (PTI)

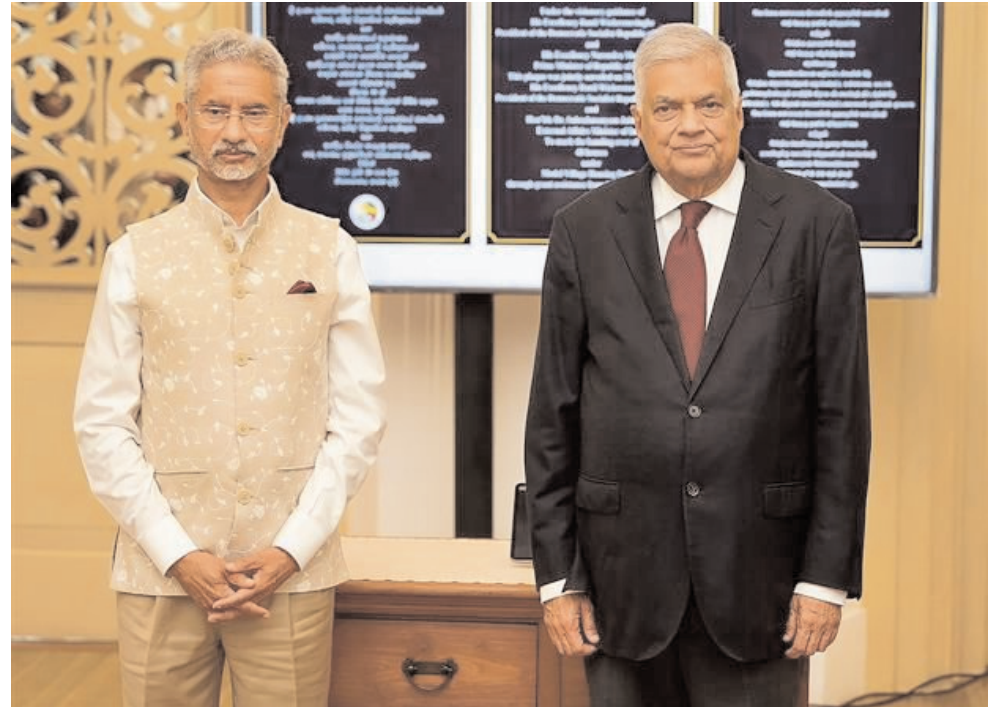
Sri Lanka survived economic crisis because of India's support: President

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka has survived two difficult years of its economic crisis and it was possible because of the financial support of USD 3.5 billion from India, President Ranil Wickremesinghe said and emphasised his commitment to maintain a strong partnership with New Delhi.

ADDRESSING THE 31ST ALL INDIA PARTNERS MEET IN COLOMBO FROM JUNE 20-22, WICKREMESINGHE SAID THAT HE DURING HIS LAST VISIT TO INDIA TO ATTEND THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S SWEARING-IN DISCUSSED WITH INDIAN PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI THE CORE AREAS OF PARTNERSHIP.

Wickremesinghe said that sustainable energy is one of the grave areas that the two nations would be jointly working on.

"When I was in Delhi last week, I discussed with Prime Minister Modi the need to accelerate the joint programme that we have decided, agreed on. So the major ones are identified. Now this will



show the new path we are taking, and a number of projects, all will be in one parcel," he said.

He added that Sri Lanka had discussed a fair number of proposals. (PTI)

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif calls for united front against terrorism amid resurgence of Taliban militancy

ISLAMABAD (TIP) : Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on June 23 that fighting terrorism was a collective responsibility of all institutions, as the country battled a resurgent Taliban militancy.

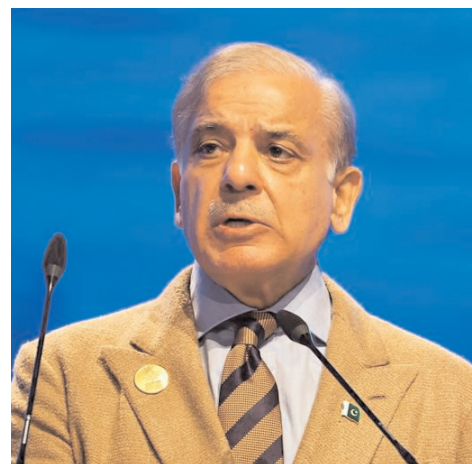
Addressing the apex committee meeting of National Action Plan (NAP), he said provinces should also play their role in combating insurgency in the country.

The apex committee is its highest body overseeing the implementation of measures to eradicate militancy from the country.

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FIGHTING AGAINST TERRORISM IS THE COLLECTIVE DUTY AND THE PRIMARY OBLIGATION OF ALL STATE INSTITUTIONS. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU AND ME, IT'S ABOUT US. WE HAVE TO TRAMPLE IT TOGETHER," SHARIF SAID.

The 20-point NAP agenda to eliminate terrorism was adopted by the government and approved by the opposition parties in the wake of Peshawar school attack on December 16, 2014.

The prime minister said Pakistan has been facing terrorism for the last two



and-a-half decades and it has become complicated due to the involvement of crime, drugs, smuggling, extremism and religious terrorism.

The apex committee meeting was held as Pakistan faced an uptick in the acts of terrorism in recent years. According to an annual security report issued by the Centre for Research and Security Studies, Pakistan witnessed 1,524 violence-related fatalities and 1,463 injuries from 789 terror attacks and counter-terror operations in 2023, marking a record six-year high.

The latest wave of terrorism is led by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Taliban (TTP), which according to Pakistan officials, has sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

Sharif acknowledged that some provinces had made progress in tackling militancy, but "it is my belief that we have all too easily left this matter to our armed forces" and both the provinces and federal government have left it for

the army.

"This is that dangerous practice that has become a custom in the past years that this is the army's job and its officers have to do this," he said.

Sharif said provinces were paying a price but the overall sense is that the army has to fight against terrorism. He said it would not eliminate terrorism from the country.

"We cannot even hope for strong stability without a complete system or a whole-of-the-government approach. This does not only refer to all agencies and ministries but the federal and provincial governments and all institutions," he said.

Sharif asked the political and religious leadership to be clear that this battle was for Pakistan's survival and "we are not fighting someone else's battle".

The premier also said that the rule of law and stability were important for growth and development in the country. "A soft state can never gain the trust of investors," he said, adding that a strong and healthy economy could not be envisioned in an unstable state gripped by terrorism. (PTI)



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Sikh History This Week

JUNE 28 TO JULY 04

28th June



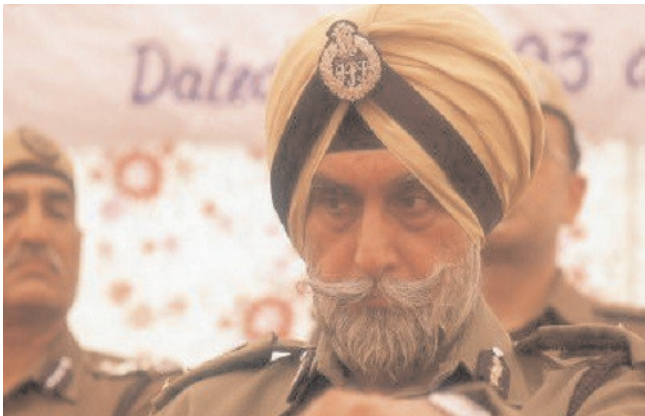
1984 Ujagar Singh, acting President, Akali Dal and Atma Singh, acting President SGPC were arrested from their temporary offices in Sri Guru Ram Das hospital. These arrests were conducted to sabotage the Akali Dal meeting announced for Jun. 29, 1984.

1996 Kamaljit Singh Sandhu's body found in a canal. He was one of the seven convicts in the hijacking of an Indian Airlines Boeing on August 23, 1984.

29th June

1924: 7th and 8th Sahidhi Jathas of 500 Akali Satyagrahies each, under the leadership of Karmveer Sardar Pratap Singh of Kuradpur (Jalandhar) and Sardar Man Singh Hunboo (Shakhupuraa) respectively, courted arrests upon reaching Jaito.

1984 First meeting of Akali Dal in Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, after Operation Bluestar. This meeting strongly condemned the attack and its resulting destruction, innocents killed.



K.P.S. Gill became the new Director General of Police in Punjab. Under Gill a fresh reign of terror was unleashed in Punjab. Numerous innocent families were destroyed; youth subjected to extra-judicial killings, women raped. Even the very young and old weren't spared.

30th June



1813 Raja Karam Singh became Maharaja of Patiala. Raja Karam succeeded Maharaja Sahib Singh at the age of 15. He helped the British in the conflict with the Gorkhas and was rewarded with 16 parganas (district sub-divisions) in Simla Hills as gifts.

1984 Indian government presents its inquiry finding into the operation Bluestar in form of a White paper. Then Governor of Punjab, B.D. Panday resigns.

1989 Babbar Khalsa International Conference, Montreal. Babbar Khalsa organization in Canada held its first conference in Montreal to commemorate the Sikh martyrs who laid their lives for the cause of the Sikh nation. The devout Babbars urged Sikhs to observe memories of their courage annually. About 500 Sikhs attended the conference.

1st July



1745 Martyrdom day of Bhai Taru Singh Ji, in Lahore. Bhai Taru Singh left his mortal remains. On Harbhagat Naranjania's complaint, Bhai Taru Singh of his village was arrested and accused of providing rations to the Sikhs. Bhai Taru Singh admitted the facts. Nawab Zakaria Khan ordered the removal of his scalp. Bhai Taru Singh said that the Governor would suffer as much torture. And Bhai Taru would take Zakaria Khan along with him to the other world. The Nawab's orders were carried out on June 27, 1745. The same day Zakaria Khan's urinary system stopped functioning, putting him in great pain. The Qazi addressed Bhai Taru Singh Oh Kafir, what have you done? The Nawab can't urinate. He is in great pain. Bhai Taru Singh told him to take his shoe and beat it on Zakaria's head to make him urinate. On the fifth day of shoe beating, Zakaria Khan died on July 1, 1745. On hearing of that the same day Bhai Taru Singh left his mortal remains.



1918 Maharaja Ranjit Singh conquered Kashmir and combined it with Sikh State.

1983 By now Indian Government had given gallantry awards to over 50 policemen for killing Sikhs. This was done to boost the morale of the policemen as well as create terror among Sikhs.

1984 Regional Conference at Kamloops.

The attack on the Golden Temple by the Indian army struck the Sikh world like a thunderbolt. All shades of Canadian Sikhs came together at the desecration of the supreme emblem of their faith. Because of the shortage of time, the Sikh institution's executives decided to take the Canadian Sikhs into immediate confidence on the kind of action required. This was done by holding regional conferences at Kamloops and Toronto. The Kamloops conference was attended by representatives of all Sikh Societies from Western. While the Toronto Conference was attended by the societies of the eastern region. The Calgary Sikh Society, which was not on good terms with the federation, provided unqualified support for any action the Federation recommended.

2nd July



1978 Reorganisation Of The Sikh Students Federation. Amrik Singh elected the President of All India Sikh Federation.

The Sikh Students Federation was reorganized in response to the Amritsar massacre in which Nirankaris kill 13 Gursikhs who protested their provocations against the Sikh faith. Since the elected official, while ruling Punjab, continually bowed before the Central (Hindu) Government and refused to ban the activities of this gang of bohemians. While simultaneously they addressed various Sikh congregations and spoke against the Nirankaris so that the Sikh masses should not become furious against them for their indifferent (or pro-Nirankari) attitude. Thus this became the starting point of the new phase of the struggle of the Sikh nation. The lead was given by the Sikh Youth under the guidance of the Sikh intelligentsia. They had to fight various platforms: the Hindus, the Communists and some of the pseudo-Akalis, who loved their office more than their nation.

4th July

1955 Indian police entered Darbar Sahib complex and arrested several Akali leaders.

1965 Nalwa conference Ludhiana asserted Sikh's right to self-determination.

Best position to sleep when you are pregnant

Between midnight bathroom runs, a racing mind, cramping legs, heartburn and a hopped-up metabolism that's turning up your internal thermostat — plus a growing baby bump that makes getting comfortable increasingly difficult — sleep can be challenging during pregnancy. Consider it preparation for the sleepless nights that lie ahead.

That said, getting enough sleep is more important than ever now that you're snoozing for two. Here's what you need to know about sleep during pregnancy, from the best positions to solutions for common problems and tips for getting a better night's rest.

Why is sleep so important during pregnancy?

Sleep is the time when your body resets and repairs itself. It's when your brain makes memories, making it an ally in your battle against baby brain. It's how your blood vessels restore themselves, which is especially important now that they're under increased pressure from the extra blood flow required to support your baby.

Sleep also keeps your immune system — which is suppressed to support your pregnancy — healthy. And sleep controls how your body reacts to insulin; not getting enough results in a higher blood sugar level, upping your risk of gestational diabetes. So even if life is getting in the way, make it a priority to set aside at least seven hours a night for sleep.

Best sleeping positions when you're pregnant



The best sleep position when you're expecting is on your left side — though your right is also perfectly acceptable. This position is ideal for your circulation, optimizing the oxygen and nutrients that get to your baby, as well as kidney function, reducing swelling. Past your first trimester, it becomes impossible to lie on your stomach for obvious reasons.

You should also avoid lying flat on your back all night long. The weight of your growing uterus presses on your vena cava, the artery running blood from your lower body back to your heart, disturbing circulation and possibly making you dizzy. Your womb also weighs on your intestines and back, making common pregnancy symptoms like backaches and hemorrhoids worse.

Common pregnancy sleep problems & solutions

All of the following pregnancy

sleep problems can make getting a solid night of shut-eye harder. A few tips to help you sleep better:

You don't like sleeping on your side. Place pillows between your legs and behind your back; full-body and wedge pillows, in particular, are a pregnant woman's best friend. Otherwise try sleeping in a recliner or other comfy armchair, if you have one, in a semi-upright position.

You're restless. Work out during the day, and you'll likely feel sleepier at night — though try to avoid exercising within a couple of hours of bedtime, since that can ramp you up.

You've got a busy mind. If stress at work or about your impending new arrival is keeping you up at night, talk to a friend, parent or your partner earlier in the evening to get your worries off your mind before your head hits the pillow.

FOOD CORNER

Chicken Gilafi Kebab

Chicken kebabs cooked in a Gilaf which means a cover. Chicken mince is mixed with an array of aromatic spices, nuts and a tang of lime along with kewra water. Baked to perfection, serve these mouth-watering kebabs with mint chutney.

Ingredients

300 gms chicken mince, 50 gms onion, chopped, 50 gms tomatoes, chopped, 50 gms green capsicum, chopped, 30 gms coriander leaves, chopped, 20 gms green chilli, chopped, 5 gms salt, 20 ml oil, 20 gms cashew, 20 gms almonds, peeled, 10 gms mint, chopped, 5 gms red chilli powder, 5 gms masala powder, 5 gms ginger garlic paste, 3 gms cumin powder, 10 ml lemon juice, 10 ml fresh cream, 5 ml kewra water

Method

- In a grinder add mince, onion, salt, red chili powder, garam masala, ginger garlic paste, cumin powder, lemon juice, coriander leaves, mint leave, green chillies, fresh cream, kewra water, cashew and almonds.
- Grind all these ingredients well.
- Skewer the mince on to wooden skewers.
- Take chopped onion, capsicum and coriander leaves in a flat plate.
- Wrap these chopped vegetables around the kebabs.
- Bake them in oven at 180 degree for 8 to 10 minutes.
- Your Gilafi kebabs are ready to serve.



Home remedies to get rid of blemishes

There are some home remedies for treating blemishes naturally that can fight them off without any side effects. The home remedies offer a more painless and cheaper alternative to the clinical ones along with having long-term benefits. The best part is that they cost nothing except few household items laying around and some time.

Tomato juice

Apply on the Blemishes and massage. Leave it for 15 minutes. Use this remedy daily for removing skin blemishes naturally.

Lemon juice

Apply fresh lemon juice for 20 minutes on the blemishes for a month

or two for lightening up the blemishes.

Cocoa butter

Massage blemishes with cocoa butter and leaves it overnight. Cocoa butter has anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidants which help in fighting blemishes.

Baking soda

Mix few drops of olive oil or water to baking soda and make a paste. Apply the paste on the blemishes and leave for 10 minutes. Scrub off the paste and wash with clean water.

Egg white

Apply egg white on a clean face and wash it after 10 minutes. Apply a moisturizer. This would lighten your

skin and blemishes.

Tips to Prevent Blemishes

Preventing the blemishes from occurring on your skin is always a better option than trying to fight with it. Here are some tips to prevent blemishes. It is vital to keep your face cleaned daily with occasional exfoliation to remove impurities, dirt, oil and dead skin cells that lead to blemishes.

Use a noncomedogenic moisturizer on your skin for hydration.

Avoid using excessive makeup on a breakout skin. Wash off the makeup after the day and sleep with a clean hydrated face.

Certain hair oils can clog your face. It is a good idea to keep your hair away from your face.

Small changes to make today if you want to lose weight

Losing excess weight is important because it reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension, improves mobility, enhances mental health, and boosts overall quality of life. Small changes in routine can effectively help reduce weight by creating sustainable habits that lead to a caloric deficit and healthier lifestyle. In this article, we share some simple tips to help you lose weight effectively. These manageable adjustments, when consistently applied, can lead to significant and lasting improvements in weight and health.

Drink more water

Drinking water can boost metabolism, reduce hunger, and help you feel full, leading to lower calorie intake. Aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day. Start your day with a glass of water and drink a glass before each meal to help control portion sizes.

Increase fibre intake

Fibre slows digestion, promotes satiety, and helps regulate blood sugar levels, reducing overeating. Incorporate high-fibre foods like fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains into every meal. Consider adding flaxseeds or chia seeds to your breakfast or snacks.

Eat protein with every meal

Protein increases feelings of fullness, reduces appetite, and helps maintain muscle mass during weight loss. Include lean proteins such as chicken, fish, tofu, beans, or Greek yogurt in each meal. Aiming



for 20-30 grams of protein per meal can be beneficial.

Practice mindful eating

Mindful eating encourages you to pay attention to hunger and fullness cues, reducing overeating. Eat slowly, savour each bite, and avoid distractions like TV or smartphones while eating. Focus on the taste, texture, and smell of your food.

Get enough sleep

Poor sleep can disrupt hunger hormones, leading to increased appetite and cravings for unhealthy foods. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night. Establish a regular sleep schedule and create a relaxing bedtime routine.

Reduce portion sizes

Smaller portions help control calorie intake without feeling

deprived. Use smaller plates and bowls to naturally limit portion sizes. Serve yourself smaller portions and avoid eating directly from large packages.

Limit sugary drinks & snacks

Sugary drinks and snacks are high in empty calories which can lead to weight gain. Replace sugary drinks with water, herbal teas, or black coffee. Choose healthy snacks like fruits, nuts, or yogurt instead of sweets and processed snacks.

Stay active throughout the day

Regular movement increases calorie expenditure and supports overall health. Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine, such as taking the stairs, walking during breaks, or doing short exercise sessions. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate activity most days.



Plant-based alternatives healthy for your heart than meat: Study

Eating plant-based meat alternatives may have profound benefits against cardiovascular disease risk factors, such as cholesterol levels and blood pressure, according to a review of research published from 1970 to 2023.

Plant-based meat alternatives are highly processed plant-based food products that typically replace meat in the diet.

While there is substantial variability in the contents and nutritional profiles of these alternatives, the findings detailed in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology, showed that the nutritional profiles tend to reflect a heart-healthy dietary pattern.

“While the plant-based meat market has experienced significant growth in recent years and more people are enjoying plant-based burgers, surprisingly little is known about how these meat alternatives may impact health and in particular cardiovascular disease risk,” said lead author Matthew Nagra, from the University of British Columbia, Canada.

“Thus, we sought to review the available literature on the topic to identify what is currently known and to provide direction for future research,” he added.

The researchers reviewed the research on plant-based meat alternatives, their contents, nutritional profiles, and impact on cardiovascular disease risk factors, such as cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

Their analysis shows that on average, the plant-based alternatives tend to have a more heart-healthy nutritional profile than meat, although the high sodium content of some products may be of concern.

However, these alternatives do not raise blood pressure, but instead improve some cardiovascular risk factors, including cholesterol levels, in several randomised controlled trials.

“There is currently a lack of long-term research evaluating how these alternatives may affect the risk of developing a heart attack or stroke,” the researchers said.

Source: IANS

UK boy receives world's first epilepsy device in skull

A schoolboy from England has made medical history as the first in the world with severe epilepsy to trial a new device implanted in his skull to control seizures. The neurostimulator, which sends electrical signals deep into the brain, has reduced Oran Knowlson's daytime seizures by 80%. Oran has Lennox-Gastaut syndrome, a treatment-resistant form of epilepsy that he developed at age three. Since then, he has experienced daily seizures ranging from a few dozen to hundreds.

His mother, Justine had said that Oran had a variety of seizures, including ones where he fell to the ground, shook violently, and lost consciousness. At times, he would stop breathing and require emergency medication to resuscitate him.



The surgery, which lasted around eight hours, took place in October 2023. It was part of a trial at Great Ormond Street Hospital in collaboration with University College London, King's College Hospital, and Oxford University.

Oran, now 13, was 12 at the time of the surgery.

Epilepsy seizures are caused by

abnormal bursts of electrical activity in the brain. The device, which emits a constant pulse of current, aims to block or disrupt these abnormal signals.

According to University College London, the rechargeable device is mounted onto the skull and is attached to electrodes deep in the brain to reduce seizure activity.

This is the first UK clinical trial measuring this type of treatment for children with epilepsy. The CADET pilot (Children's Adaptive Deep brain stimulation for Epilepsy Trial) will now recruit three additional patients with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome, which is funded by the Royal Academy of Engineering before 22 patients take part in the full trial, which is being funded by GOSH Charity and LifeArc.

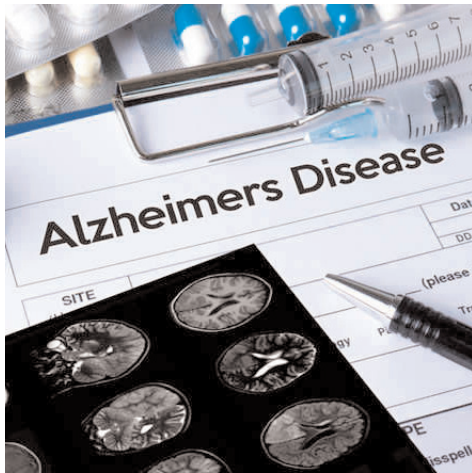
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Scientists develop speech recognition tool to predict Alzheimer's onset

A new AI-based model could predict the onset of Alzheimer's disease by analysing an individual's speech, the developers said.

Trained on audio recordings of patients with mild cognitive impairment—early stages of memory loss, the model achieved 78.5 per cent accuracy in forecasting whether patients would remain stable or progress to dementia within six years, according to the researchers.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and impacts one's everyday activities by impairing memory and thinking.

The researchers at Boston University, US, used recordings of initial interviews of 166 patients aged 63-97 and trained the model using machine learning to discern patterns between speech, demographics, diagnosis, and how their condition was worsening.

The model analyses interview content such as spoken words and sentence structure, rather than speech features such as enunciation or speed, showed the study published in the journal *Alzheimer's and Dementia*.

"We combine the information we extract from the audio recordings with some very basic demographics - age, gender, and so on - and we get the final score," said Ioannis C. Paschalidis, a professor of engineering and the study's corresponding author.

"You can think of the score as the likelihood, the probability, that someone will remain stable or transition to dementia. It had significant predictive ability," said Paschalidis.

The researchers said that the model was able to perform well, despite challenges like low-quality recordings and background noise.

The researchers emphasised that early prediction is crucial as current diagnostic tests often identify Alzheimer's disease only after significant cognitive decline has occurred such as memories starting to slip away and personality traits beginning to shift.

Source: PTI

AI is set to change phone experience as Apple, Realme rush to add generative tools

Just like the flip phones in the '90s, the QWERTY phones in the aughts, and the big battery and big camera phones in the 2010s, the trend that will define the 2020s is going to be artificial intelligence (AI) in phones. AI and machine learning (ML) have been integrated into smartphones for about a decade now with features like Siri on iPhones, smart text suggestions in Google Keyboard, etc. But it is only in the past one year that we are truly seeing this integration on both hardware and software levels. The Google Pixel 8s and Samsung Galaxy S24 series really set the ball rolling by placing generative AI features right at the centre of the smartphones with features like circle to search and upgraded Magic Editor that can now regenerate backgrounds, reposition people, and upscale low-resolution images using AI.

Thanks to how fast-paced AI tech is evolving, features that were groundbreaking in 2023 are almost the norm in 2024. This year, brands like OpenAI, Google, Apple, Nothing and Realme are all talking about bringing AI into the hands of people. This year, OpenAI held its Spring Update event where it announced updates to the phone app that allow users to interact with the chatbot via voice and video. Then Google I/O happened, and some big updates were announced to Gemini and its app, which now allows users to just point



their camera at a location and the app will tell you your exact location. We are also hearing announcements from brands like Nothing, Realme and Oppo. Nothing said it is working on deep AI integration into the Nothing Phone 3 that will launch in 2025. Realme announced the GT6 (quick review) as its new AI phone and said by the end of 2024, all its smartphones will use AI features.

And then came the big announcement by Apple. You know it's a trend to bet on when Apple dives into it head-first. At WWDC 2024, Apple declared it is joining the AI army, and announced its own Apple Intelligence. A select few existing iPhones and all the future ones will now take advantage of generative AI features like allowing you to generate your own

emojis in iMessage, or the Notes app doing the math for you.

But here is where I ask you to take a step back. We have been hearing "AI phones" a lot lately. Samsung calls it Galaxy AI, Realme has tagged its latest phone, Realme GT 6, as the "AI flagship killer". But what is an AI phone? "A true AI phone will come with on-device Gen AI apps, seamless system-wide integration, AI-optimised processors, and powerful hardware to run AI models locally. The initial wave of Gen AI phones will deliver fast photo and video editing, enhanced speech-to-text and translation capabilities, and enhanced gaming to redefine smartphone experiences", explains Prabhu Ram, industry analyst at CyberMedia Research.

Source: India Today

WhatsApp soon lets you dial numbers to place calls directly from app

Meta-owned WhatsApp is reportedly working on a new in-app dialer feature that will allow users to make calls directly from the app.

According to WABetaInfo, they will not need to add contacts to their address book to make calls from the app.

According to WABetaInfo, they will not need to add contacts to their address book to make calls from the app.

People will find a new floating action button located within the calls tab that will enable access to the in-app dialer.

In addition, the report mentioned that after entering a phone number, users will also have the option to save the number to the address book as a new contact or add it to an existing contact card.

A messaging shortcut will also be available within the dialer screen that will allow them to quickly send a message to a phone number they initially planned to dial but chose to message instead, the report added.

The feature is presently available to some beta testers who install the latest updates of WhatsApp beta for Android from the Google Play Store, and will roll out to even more people over the coming days, the report said.

Meanwhile, WhatsApp is reportedly working on a new feature that will allow users to see all media shared in community group chats.

This feature will let community members see an overview of



all images, videos and other media files shared within the community, which will make it easier for them to locate and access shared content.

Source: IANS



Airtel announces 10-21% hike in mobile tariffs from July 3

Bharti Airtel on Friday, June 28, announced between 10 and 21 per cent hike in mobile tariffs, a day after larger rival Reliance Jio announced an increase in rates.

Airtel, in a release, said that the revision in mobile tariffs will be effective from July 3.

“We have ensured that there is a very modest price increase (less than 70 paise per day) on entry-level plans, in order to eliminate any burden on budget challenged consumers,” the Sunil Mittal-led telecom firm said announcing the revision in mobile tariffs.

Bharti Airtel said it has maintained that the mobile Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) needs to be upwards of Rs 300, to enable a financially healthy business model for telecoms in India.

“We believe that this level of ARPU will enable the substantial investments required in network technology and spectrum and offer a modest return on capital,” the telco said.

Among the unlimited voice plans, Airtel has raised tariffs in the ballpark range of about 11 per cent. Accordingly, rates are revised from Rs 179 to Rs 199; from Rs 455 to Rs 509; and from Rs 1,799 to Rs 1,999. In the daily data plan category, the Rs 479 plan has been increased to Rs 579 (20.8 per cent increase). The mobile tariff hike from mobile operators comes immediately after the 10th spectrum auction, which ended in just two days with muted response from the industry.

The country's top telecom operator Jio will also increase mobile services rates by 12-27 per cent from July 3 and at the same time restrict the access of unlimited free 5G services for customers, according to a company statement.

This is the first hike in mobile services rates by Jio after a gap of about two-and-a-half years.

Jio has over 47 crore mobile subscribers accounting for about 41 per cent market share.

Foreign investors find it hard to invest in Indian government bonds due to heavy paperwork

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Despite India's \$1.3 trillion sovereign bond market becoming very attractive for foreign investors, they face a lot of challenges ranging from lengthy documentation to the intricacies of settling a trade and the complexities of paying taxes on any profits, Bloomberg reported. This became obvious as foreign investors are eagerly buying bonds before they're added to JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s main emerging market debt index from Friday, June 28.

India opened a segment of the sovereign bond market to overseas investors only due to record borrowing during the pandemic.

To trade directly in the Fully-Accessible Route (FAR) bonds, which are the types eligible to be added to JPMorgan's index, foreign funds must complete a registration process for each account via a custodian.

Investors found it frustrating that the documentation required is more complex than in other countries, according to the Bloomberg report, which cited sources who did not wish to be named.

For example, electronic signatures aren't available for non-residents.

While on-boarding typically takes eight weeks, there have been cases of it taking as little as seven days or as long as two years, the report read.

Still, global funds bought roughly \$10 billion of FAR bonds since index inclusion was announced in September



DESPITE INDIA'S \$1.3 TRILLION SOVEREIGN BOND MARKET BECOMING VERY ATTRACTIVE FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS, THEY FACE A LOT OF CHALLENGES RANGING FROM LENGTHY DOCUMENTATION TO THE INTRICACIES OF SETTLING A TRADE AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF PAYING TAXES ON ANY PROFITS.

suggesting logistical headaches are not deterring investors, according to the report.

India's sovereign bonds are traded and settled on the central bank's trading platform. Foreign funds not registered onshore typically place orders through custodian banks, making the process cumbersome, the report read.

How is India's taxation different from China?

India, cautious of hot money flows

that led to the Asian financial crisis, chose not to follow in the footsteps of China, which provided concessions such as exempting investors from taxes ahead of joining major debt indexes.

However, India has agreements with dozens of countries, allowing some investors to benefit from lower rates than the 30% for short-term capital gains and 10% for long-term gains. Interest income is taxed at 20%, but tax treaties can reduce this rate, the report read. *Source: HT*

Indian banks' bad loan ratio at a 12 year low

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of scheduled commercial banks, which moderated to a 12-year low of 2.8 per cent in March 2024, may further improve to 2.5 per cent by March 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Thursday, June 27.

The estimate for GNPA ratio for March 2025 is based on the macro stress tests, performed to assess the resilience of banks' balance sheets to unforeseen shocks emanating from the macroeconomic environment.

“The asset quality of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) recorded sustained improvement and their GNPA ratio moderated to a 12-year low in March 2024 (to 2.8 per cent). Their net NPA (NNPA) ratio too improved to a record low of 0.6 per cent,” the RBI said in its Financial Stability Report (FSR) for June 2024, released on Thursday, June 27.

Under the baseline stress scenario, the GNPA ratio of all banks may improve to



2.5 per cent by March 2025. If the macroeconomic environment worsens to a severe stress scenario, the GNPA ratio may rise to 3.4 per cent, the RBI's half yearly report said.

In the severe stress scenario, the GNPA ratios of public sector banks (PSBs) may increase from 3.7 per cent in March 2024 to 4.1 per cent in March 2025, whereas it may go up from 1.8 per cent to 2.8 per cent for private sector bank (PVBs) and from 1.2 per cent to 1.3 per cent for foreign banks (FBs).

Stress tests are conducted covering

credit risk, interest rate risk and liquidity risk and the resilience of commercial banks in response to these shocks is studied. Using the stress tests, the RBI projects impairment or bad loans and capital ratios over a one-year horizon under a baseline and two adverse scenarios – medium and severe.

The FSR report said that in the second half of FY2025, public sector banks recorded a substantial reduction (76 basis points) in their gross NPA ratio.

“While the GNPA stock decreased across all bank groups, active and deep provisioning by PSBs and FBs resulted in an improved provisioning coverage ratio (PCR) in March 2024,” the report said.

The half-yearly slippage ratio (new NPA accretions as a share of standard advances) decreased across bank groups. Though the amount of write-offs declined during the year, the write-off ratio remained almost at the same level as a year ago, due to reduction in GNPA stock, it said.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JULY 1 TO JULY 7, 2024 , 2024

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



ARIES

Ganesha says this week is going to be very good for Aries people. This week you will get great success in your work. You may get a good opportunity to realize your dreams. This week can also prove to be golden for your career and you may get good opportunities. You need to use those opportunities at the right time. This week can be very auspicious for students preparing in the field of science. This week can also be very auspicious for you in the field of business and you may get a good opportunity to earn money. After the hustle and bustle of the day, you may also get a chance to spend time with your loved ones in the evening, which will be very comfortable for you. To make this week successful, keep your hard work and determination strong and try to take advantage of opportunities on time.



TAURUS

Ganesha says this week you may have to face many problems related to business and job. You should be a little sensible in your work and try to stick to your routine. You may need support from people around you. You should also spend more time with your family members. To stay healthy, you should take care of your eating habits. This week you may face a shortage of money. To improve your financial condition, you may need to control your expenses. This week you will also have to take care of your health. You will get support from people around you and you will be able to complete your work successfully. This week you may need to protect your rights.



GEMINI

Ganesha says this week is going to be very good for Gemini people. You will have a good time in your work and you will be able to complete your work on time. You may get the responsibility of a new project and you will participate in it enthusiastically. This will also give you a chance to meet new colleagues and associates. People investing in the stock market will also get good profits from their investments. You will find many ways to earn money in business also. This week you will also get new ideas to promote your business. This week will be very good for you and your loved ones. You will get a chance to spend romantic time with your partner. You can take your partner on a romantic dinner date and enjoy relaxing moments with them. Along with this, you can also make your plans and share them with your partner.



CANCER

Ganesha says this week's horoscope will be uncertain and unwanted for Cancer people. Along with your work, you also have to take care of your home and family. This week you will have to maintain control over your thinking and speech. You will have to control your emotions and stay away from arguments with relatives. Employed people are advised to avoid office politics today. Along with paying attention to your work, you will also have to take care of your health. You may get a chance to spend time with your loved ones and you may have to spend on your means of entertainment. People eligible for marriage may get a good marriage proposal this week. You may get a chance to buy a new vehicle or some items for the home. However, you have to take care of your financial situation.



LEO

Ganesha says for Leo people, this week's horoscope is going to be very auspicious for you. This week you will get success in most of the tasks of your life. You should work with more zeal and enthusiasm in your work. This week you may see many improvements in your relationships. To express your intentions, you have to have confidence in yourself and control your speech. This week you are likely to get financial benefits in a job or business. You should try to build good relations with your superiors and colleagues. You should share your plans regarding your work with your superiors. You have to stay away from your office politics, otherwise you may face problems at work. At the beginning of this week, you may feel a little tired at work.



VIRGO

Ganesha says this week's horoscope will not be favorable for Virgo. You may have to face many types of problems. This week can be very challenging for you. You will need to maintain patience in your work. You may also have to face negative comments from some people. This week you will have to clarify your thoughts and take your decisions thoughtfully. This week you may also have to face some problems in terms of work. You have to be very careful about your work. You will have to be patient in your work and not make decisions without thinking. You will need to focus on your work and work hard to achieve your goals. This week will be very favorable for students. You may be successful in your favorite subjects.



LIBRA

Ganesha says this week's horoscope will not be favorable for Libra people. You may have to face many problems this week. You will not find favor in your business or job and may

face difficulties. This week you will have to take care of your financial situation and try to improve it. You should make your financial plans ahead of time and run them as per your business or job. Apart from this, you will also have to take care of your health. You should develop good eating habits and do yoga or other exercises to maintain good health. This week you should spend more time with your family and partner. You must support them and meet their needs. You should interact more with your family members and support them. This will create an atmosphere of happiness and joy in your family.



SCORPIO

Ganesha says this week will be very good for the zodiac sign Scorpio. You will get success in your work and you will get to see a new tone in your life. New and better relationships will be formed in your life which will make you very happy and satisfied. You will get an opportunity to recognize the power within you and start new endeavors in your life. You will see many positive changes in your personal life which will make you quite satisfied. This week you will achieve great success in your work. There will be new flavor and enthusiasm in your work and you will perform your tasks perfectly. You will need to put a lot of time and enthusiasm into your work and you will accept this challenge with great enthusiasm. Getting success in work will give you a lot of satisfaction and you will start new and better plans in your life.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week's horoscope indicates that it will be great for Sagittarius people. During the week, you will get a chance to work with great zeal and enthusiasm in your workplace. You will be successful in your work and you will be successful in achieving your goals. You also have to take care of your health and consume regular exercise and a healthy diet. This week you will also get a good opportunity to increase your intuition. You will have time to gain some new knowledge and understand your thoughts more deeply. This week you will see a lot of positive changes in your personal life and share a lot of happiness with your loved ones. This week you will get a lot of success in your work also. Your dedication and enthusiasm towards work will allow you to progress in your work.



CAPRICORN

Ganesha says Capricorn people, the coming week will not be favorable for you. You may face difficulties and may face inconvenience even in normal tasks. You may need to focus on your work and work hard to complete your projects on time. There may also be some problems in money-related

matters and you may need to control your expenses. You may also need to pay attention to your health. Along with your work, you will have to pay attention to your health also. This week you may get a chance to spend time with your loved ones and express your feelings to them. But you have to be careful with your words and express your feelings properly.



AQUARIUS

Ganesha says this week may give adverse results for Aquarius people. You may have to face financial problems. Your financial condition may improve but for this, you will have to work hard. This week will not be favorable for Aquarius people from the beginning. You may face difficulties in your daily tasks. You will have to think carefully before implementing new plans in your business or workplace. You have to focus on managing your money and handling your expenses. You have to take care of your health and try to keep yourself away from stress. You will have to try to spend more time with your family and relatives. It will be auspicious for you to participate in religious and spiritual activities. This week may be a time for you to face challenges in financial relationships as well.



PISCES

Ganesha says your weekly horoscope will be excellent for Pisces people. This week you may experience more happiness and joy than usual. Your health will also be good and you will be more excited and efficient in your daily tasks. You may get a chance to spend time with your family and friends and you may also get a chance to have a good, pleasant time with them. This week you will have to give more time and attention to your work and reach a new level in your life to accomplish your goals. This week you may need to control your expenses and take care of your budget. You will have to focus more on your work and make your plan clear to accomplish your goals. This week you have to take care of your health.

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

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JULY 1 TO JULY 7 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

JULY 1

Ganesha says today is a great day for wisdom and introspection. You may find yourself making connections, understanding complex situations, and uncovering never-before-seen truths. Use this day to learn new things and communicate effectively. Listening to others may provide a solution to a question you have been pondering over for a long time.

JULY 2

Ganesha says this day is inspiring you to embrace your dreams and ambitions. There is an energetic wave of motivation within you that can be used to make progress on projects or ideas you are passionate about. You may face some challenges, but remember, they are meant to make you stronger. Accept them and let them be stepping stones towards your goals.

JULY 3

Ganesha says today is a day of balance and harmony. You will discover a way to harmonize different aspects of your life, whether it is a work-life balance or aligning your actions with your values. You will feel a sense of balance, and the harmony you achieve today will lay the foundation for future success.

JULY 4

Ganesha says today calls for introspection and self-awareness. Delve deep into your mind and understand your true desires and motivations. Indulge in activities that help you connect with your inner self. Whether it is meditation, journaling, or simply spending time in solitude, wisdom and peace await you.

JULY 5

Ganesha says today is a day of

expansion and progress. You are on the cusp of an important personal growth phase. This could be learning a new skill, broadening your perspective, or stepping out of your comfort zone. Accept the opportunities that come your way, as they are playing a vital role in your growth.

JULY 6

Ganesha says this is a day of creativity and intuition. Your artistic abilities flourish and your intuition grows. Express your creativity and trust your inner feelings. You may surprise yourself with your insights and your artistic accomplishments.

JULY 7

Ganesha says today is a day of discipline and determination. Focus on your goals and make a structured plan to achieve them. Whether it is a



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

professional objective or a personal dream, putting in effort and staying committed will take you closer to your aspirations. Let your determination be your guide and let discipline be your guide.

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A true extraordinaire, Odisha is the quiet and serene part of India. Fringed by the Bay of Bengal, and flaunting a long coastline, this east Indian gem has some of the most stunning beaches that are often less-frequented. Home to a plethora of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites, Odisha is a place that will take you back to the glorious time of Ashoka the Great. Explore the majestic Jagannath Temple at Puri and learn about its many mysteries, view the medieval architecture of Odisha's temple and Buddhist monasteries, attend the annual Sand Art Festival, go boating in the Chilika Lake, or walk on the sea at Chandipur Beach. There's so much to do in Odisha.

At this time, Odisha remains the center of attraction for the country, because the Jagannath Rath Yatra is going to take place on 7th July.

On the day when the Jagannath Rath Yatra starts from the holy land of Odisha, Krishna devotees from every corner of the country and the world reach here to join the Yatra. Apart from joining this Yatra which takes place in July, many people also come here to enjoy the monsoon.

Yes, July is such a month of the year when it rains heavily along the sea coasts from West Bengal to Odisha. In this article, we are going to tell you about some such places where you can enjoy the monsoon to the fullest.

Chilika Lake

When it comes to visiting a beautiful place in Odisha during drizzling rains, many people first name Chilika Lake. Many people also know this beautiful lake by the name of Chilika Lake.

Chilika Lake is said to be Asia's largest and the world's second largest saltwater lagoon. This lake is also considered home to migratory birds. It is said that during monsoon, birds come here from places like Siberia, Australia, Russia, Canada, France, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Daringbadi

Daringbadi, located in the Kandhamal district of Odisha, is a beautiful and charming tourist destination. Many people also consider this beautiful place as a popular hill station of Odisha. It is the dream of many people to explore Daringbadi in monsoon.

The high mountains, dense forests and lakes and waterfalls add to the beauty of Daringbadi. For your information, let us tell you that this beautiful place is called 'Kashmir of Odisha'. This place is considered a paradise for nature lovers. Here you can enjoy monsoon trekking.

Khandadhar Waterfall

If you want to see the beauty of a magnificent and famous waterfall during your trip to Odisha, then you should reach Khandadhar Waterfall. This beautiful waterfall is located in Nandapani of Bonaigarh in Sundargarh district. It is said about Khandadhar waterfall that when water falls here from a height of 800 feet, one feels like just watching the surrounding scenery. The greenery around this waterfall also



Odisha: The gem of East India

attracts a lot of tourists. For your information, let us also tell you that Khandadhar waterfall is considered to be the 9th highest waterfall in India.

Konark

It is very rare to talk about visiting any wonderful and popular place in Odisha during monsoon and not mention Konark located in Puri district. Konark, located at a short distance from the Jagannath temple, is considered a world famous tourist destination.

Konark is not only known for its beauty but also for the world famous Konark Sun Temple. Thousands of domestic and foreign tourists visit Konark Sun Temple every month. Being located on the beach, there is a different fun in visiting Puri and Konark during monsoon. You can also visit Lord Jagannath Temple in Puri.



The Land of Unique Temples

Jagannath Temple

The Jagannath Temple at Puri, Odisha is among the most revered Hindu temples in India and is dedicated to Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Being among the 4 Char Dham temples, Jagannath Temple attracts hordes of people every year who come to visit this religious site. Built in the 10th century, the holy temple is equally puzzling as it is lovely and is known for its unexplained mysteries.

Panchalingeswar Temple

Named after the 5 Shivalingas within the temple, the Panchalingeswar Temple is located near the Nilagiri Hill and is dedicated to Lord Shiva which makes it a popular pilgrimage site for the Shaivites. The temple has a perennial stream through which the shiva lingas are forever bathed. According to legends, the shiva lingas were installed here by Goddess Sita, the wife of Lord Rama during their exile whereas another story tells that they were put here by the demon king Banasura to appease Lord



Shiva.

Ghanteswari Temple

The beautiful Ghanteswari Temple is dedicated to the Goddess Ghanteswari and is adorned with bells all over, which the devotees have offered to the Goddess as a prayer. A must visit place in Odisha,

the temple is based along the River Mahanadi, and its bells made it work as a lighthouse in the past. Since the river near the temple could get rough and cause boats to drown, the bells in the temple alerted the boats beforehand during strong winds caused by the sound of the bells.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Biden, Trump trade barbs in a lackluster US Presidential Debate

"Inflation is killing our country," Mr. Trump said. "It's absolutely killing us."

The next question related to abortion rights. Biden blamed Trump for eroding abortion rights after the Republican's three appointees to the U.S. Supreme Court voted to reverse Roe v. Wade, which had recognized a nationwide constitutional right to abortion.

"It's been a terrible thing what you've done," Biden said. He pledged to restore the law under Roe if given a second term but didn't say how he'd accomplish that. He said the idea of turning abortion laws back to states "is like saying we're going to turn civil rights back to the states."

Trump said his presidency returned the issue of abortion to the people through state laws. He said he supports abortion ban exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother, and he repeated his claim that Biden supports abortion up to and after birth.

"We think the Democrats are the radicals, not the Republicans," Trump said.

On the question on January 6 "insurrection" Trump's answer was rather elusive. He lied about his role in the January 6, 2021 attack by his supporters on the U.S. Capitol, and tried to deflect by pivoting to other issues. Pressed on his role, he said he encouraged people to act "peacefully and patriotically," then changed the subject to launch an attack on former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

He said Biden ought to "be ashamed" for the way the January 6 defendants have been handled.

On the question of health and fitness, both the candidates claimed they were absolutely fit. It was amusing to hear Trump challenge Biden to hit a ball for 50 yards which he said he could do easily.

Their showdown took a bitter and personal turn. Biden highlighted Trump's criminal convictions. Trump responded by invoking Biden's son, hunter, who was recently convicted. Biden also spoke about Trump having sex with a porn star Stormy Daniels while Trump's wife was pregnant. Trump rebutted Biden's accusation denying that he had sex with the porn star. "I didn't have sex with the porn star", Trump said.

The first Presidential debate failed to interest or enthuse the American people, many said. (With inputs from agencies)

India's President Murmu calls upon Members of Parliament to rise above party politics to find solutions to paper leaks

We have to rise above party politics and find comprehensive solutions to this problem. Paper leaks have been seen across states off and on. The government is working on major reforms in the academic and examination sector," Murmu said amid opposition MPs chanting 'NEET, NEET' slogans.

"Sunu, sunu (listen, listen)," the President said to protesting MPs, adding that Parliament had passed a stringent law to deal with paper leaks.

The Congress-led opposition is determined to make paper leaks a major political standoff point in the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha which ends on July 13.

The opposition MPs will raise the issue when discussions are held on the President's address starting Friday, June 28. (Source: TNS)

India defeat England to barge into T20 World Cup Final

a space of 12 months -- 2023 World Test Championship, 2023 ODI World Cup and now the T20 World Cup.

The Indian skipper, who has always received flak for

not scoring on big days, contributed an invaluable 57 off 39 balls on a track where the ball consistently kept low, as India posted 171 for 7 in 20 overs.

Credit should also be given to Suryakumar Yadav for his 47 off 36 balls and Hardik Pandya for his two mighty sixes in a 13-ball-23. Ravindra Jadeja (17) and Axar Patel (10) also chipped in with useful contributions.

In reply, England lost five wickets at the halfway stage and never recovered to be all out for 103 in 16.4 overs.

Axar (3/23 in 4 overs) and Kuldeep Yadav (3/19 in 4 overs) shared the spoils with the ball. The redoubtable Jasprit Bumrah (2/12 in 2.4 overs) did his bit with a classic slow off-cutter that saw the back of the dangerous Phil Salt.

The 2007 champions will meet South Africa in the final in Barbados on Saturday, June 29. (Source: PTI)

Speaker recognizes Rahul Gandhi as Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

National Congress, as the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha "with effect from June 9, in terms of Section 2 of the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act 1977."

This is the first time in 10 years that the Lok Sabha has got a Leader of Opposition - a post for which the claimant party must win 10 per cent seats of the House strength of 543. In 2014 and 2019, the largest Opposition party, Congress, had 44 and 52 MPs respectively, short of the strength needed to officially claim the LoP post.

In his first constitutional role, Gandhi will sit in high-powered committees alongside Prime Minister Narendra Modi to appoint top officials - Lokpal, Chief Election Commissioner, CBI chief, Central Vigilance Commissioner, Central Information Commission members, NHRC chief.

Gandhi will also get Cabinet rank and an office in the new Parliament.

CONTD FROM PAGE 4

SBS COMMISSIONER KEVIN D. KIM CELEBRATES YEAR OF MILESTONES FOR NYC ENTREPRENEURS, WORKERS, AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Supporting a record number of M/WBEs to get certified and win more than \$3B in city contracts under Local Law 1;

Hiring more than 170 new agency staff, drastically reducing the agency's vacancy rate from a high of 30% to a low of 2%; and,

Growing SBS social media's impact with an increase of total followers by 175%, video views by 372%, and engagement rate by 398%.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FY24 INCLUDE:

Bringing All of Government Under One Roof: During the city's second NYC Small Business Month, SBS convened the first-ever NYC Small Business Month Expo at Pier 36 in Manhattan. More than 10,000 New Yorkers signed up for the event, with nearly 3,000 participating in person. More than 150 free government resources and over 40 city agencies congregated under one roof. Mayor Adams also announced the investment of \$10M to seed a new, major small business loan fund to be developed by SBS.

Landmark Opportunity Loan Fund: In FY24 SBS concluded its historic NYC Small Business Opportunity Fund - the largest public-private loan fund directed at small businesses in the city's history, with flexible terms to eliminate minimum credit score requirements and application fees. The Opportunity Fund distributed \$85M to 1,046 businesses, including 80% to BIPOC communities.

Navigating Government with MyCity: SBS launched the Business site on the MyCity portal, sharing actionable and trusted information from more than 2,000 NYC Business web pages and articles. Since its launch, MyCity Business has received more than 1.3M unique visitors to the portal.

Reaching New Yorkers Where They Are: SBS engaged 40% more New Yorkers than FY23 at 100 events through the SBS outreach team and the innovative SBS Mobile Unit, "Mobie," which brings SBS resources directly into neighborhoods across all five boroughs.

Expanding SBS's Digital Footprint: In FY24, SBS recorded 138.2k fans & followers on social media, with 114k video views, and a 5.33% engagement rate.

Supporting Minority and Women-owned Businesses: SBS hosted the 2023 Citywide M/WBE Procurement Fair, which saw a record of 1,254 M/WBEs in attendance.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

CONTD FROM PAGE 12

Looking forward to the results of India's inquiry into Pannun case: US

"We have had constructive dialogue with India on this topic and I would say that they have been responsive to our concerns," he said.

"We've made clear that we seek accountability from the Government of India and we have consistently asked for updates on the Indian committee of inquiry's investigations," Campbell said.

"And I would just simply say that we raised this issue directly with the Indian government...at the most senior levels between our two sides," he said.

He was replying to a question on whether the 'murder-for-hire' plot targeting Pannun was raised during meetings that he and Sullivan held with their Indian counterparts.

Responding to another question on the Lok Sabha elections in India, Miller said, "When it comes to the Indian elections, we have been quite clear on behalf of the United States government that we celebrate what was the largest exercise of democracy in the history of the world."

"It was an extraordinary achievement. And then when it comes to the outcome of the election, we obviously take no side. That's a question for the people of India to decide," Miller said. (Source: PTI)

India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, maximum from US: World Bank report

The World Bank said remittances to India are forecasted to grow at 3.7 per cent to USD 124 billion in 2024, and at four per cent to reach USD 129 billion in 2025.

India's efforts to link its Unified Payments Interface with source countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Singapore are expected to reduce costs and speed up remittances, it said.

"Most importantly, the diversification of India's migrant pool between a large share of highly skilled migrants employed mostly in high-income OECD markets and the less-skilled migrants employed in the GCC markets is likely to lend stability to migrants' remittances in the event of external shocks," the bank said. "Migration and resulting remittances are essential drivers of economic and human development," said Iffath Sharif, Global Director of the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice at the World Bank.

"Many countries are interested in managed migration in the face of global demographic imbalances and labor deficits on the one hand, and high levels of unemployment and skill gaps on the other."

"The resilience of remittances underscores their importance for millions of people," said Dilip Ratha, lead economist and lead author of the report.

"Leveraging remittances for financial inclusion and capital market access can enhance the development prospects of recipient countries. The World Bank aims to reduce remittance costs and facilitate formal flows by mitigating political and commercial risks to promote private investment in this sector," he said.

Amarnath Yatra

Amarnath Yatra is among the most revered pilgrimage circuits among Hindus. This annual event starts in July and goes on till mid-August every year. This holy Yatra lasts for around 45 days and is undertaken by thousands of people from all over the country.

This year, the Amarnath Yatra starts from June 29 and will end on August 19.

Nestled in the lap of the mighty Himalayas in the Anantnag District of Kashmir, Amarnath Cave is one of the most celebrated Hindu shrines that hold spiritual significance among the devotees.

Situated at an altitude of 3,888 m above sea level, Amarnath Cave houses an ice stalagmite that symbolizes the mythical power of Lord Shiva. This ice Shiva Lingam is the prime attraction of the Amarnath Cave, which shrinks and grows with the phases of the moon.

This prominent Hindu shrine is dedicated to Lord Shiva, which has many lore and legends related to pilgrimage and Amarnath Yatra.

Here is the religious significance of Amarnath Yatra along with the significance and history of the shrine and Yatra.

Amarnath History: Who discovered the Amarnath Cave?

According to the local folklore, the Amarnath Cave was discovered by a Muslim shepherd Buta Malik in 1850. According to the lore, he was roaming with his herds in the mountains, and a saint met him there.

The saint gave him a bag full of coal, and when he reached home, he opened the bag, and he found a bag full of gold instead of coal. He was overjoyed and ran back to the same place to thank the saint, but he did not find the saint. Instead, he found the cave and the ice Lingam.

He informed the villagers about this and shared this story, after which the pilgrimage to Amarnath Cave started.

According to myths, the Kashmir Valley was submerged underwater, and Sage Kashyap drained it through a series of rivers and creeks. After this incident, Rishi Bhrgu was the first to have discovered Amarnath.

He has had a darshan of Lord Shiva at Amarnath, and after listening to this story, people started to undertake the pilgrimage circuit to Amarnath Cave.

Legends and Mythology of Amarnath Cave

There are numerous legends related to the Amarnath Cave. Among them, there is a most famous legend, which depicts that Lord Shiva has chosen this place to share the secret of immortality and the process of formation of the universe with Goddess Parvati.

He shared the story with Goddess Parvati about why he wears a bead of heads and what it implies. He told her that the head in the bead increases every time she is reborn. To this, Goddess Parvati asked about the reason behind Lord Shiva's immortality.

He told her that she demanded to hear Amar Katha, which is a difficult task to listen for a human in one go and without sleeping.

She keeps insisting on Lord Shiva narrating the story, and then after a long time, he agrees to tell her the story at this place. For this, he was looking for a lonely place where no one could hear the story except for Mata Parvati.

On the way to Amarnath Cave, he left all these belongings en route, including his snake at Sheshnag Lake, Nandi bull at Pahalgam, his moon at Chandanwari, his son at Mahagunas Parvat, and at Panjtarni he left his five elements (Earth, Fire, Water, Air, and Sky).

Lord Shiva entered the holy cave with Goddess Parvati, sat on the deerskin, and took a Samadhi. To ensure that there was no one in the cave, he created a Rudra named Kalagni and ordered him to set the cave ablaze so that everything living there will be destroyed.

He then started narrating the story of immortality to the Goddess Parvati. But, Lord Shiva was unaware that there was an egg that remained protected under the deerskin on which the Lord was sitting.



A pair of pigeons were born out of that egg and allegedly became immortal after listening to the story while in the egg form.

Today, after all these years, the pilgrims can see the pair of pigeons while going towards the Amarnath Cave. They are fondly referred to as 'Amarnath Pigeon,' and it is believed that they are the same pigeons who have listened to the story of immortality.

Significance of Amarnath Temple

The most prominent feature of Amarnath Cave Temple is the Shiva Lingam, which is 40 m inside the cave. It is formed due to the dripping of freezing water from the cave's ceiling and grows vertically on the cave floor to form the Lingam.

As per scientific terms, it is a stalagmite. As per Hindu mythology, the Lingam comprises the mythical energy of Lord Shiva. It is believed that the Shiva Lingam grows and shrinks as per the phase of the Moon, although there is no scientific proof for the same. Apart from the main Linga, two other ice formations can be seen in the cave, which is believed to be Goddess Parvati and Lord Ganesha.

Now, you have gained knowledge about the religious and mythological significance of Amarnath Yatra. As Amarnath Cave is where Lord Shiva narrates the Amar Katha or story of immortality to Goddess Parvati, it is one of the holiest pilgrimage sites for devotees.

Plan your pilgrimage to Amarnath cave and witness the spiritual charm of Baba Barfaani. This serene place's breathtaking landscape and mystical vibes can leave anyone captivated and awe-struck.

Due to heavy snowfall and extremely bad weather throughout the year, devotees can access the cave only



for 2 months, which are July and August. According to the Hindu calendar, the month of Shravan is when the cave becomes accessible, and the Ice Shivaling is at its fullest. This trek, which has two routes, one via Pahalgam (45 km long route) and the second via Baltal (14 km shorter but steep route), witnesses devotees from 13 to 70 years of age walking with the same zeal and enthusiasm. Both routes will take you through beautiful snow-capped mountains and breathtaking views and will challenge you physically and mentally as well.

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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."

"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

History This Week JUNE 27 - JULY 3

JUNE 27



Birthday - American musician Mildred J. Hill (1859-1916) was born in Louisville, Kentucky. She composed the melody for what is now the world's most often sung song, Happy Birthday to You.

JUNE 28

June 28, 1862 - During the American Civil War, the siege of the Confederate city of Vicksburg began as Admiral David Farragut succeeded in taking a fleet past the Mississippi River stronghold. The siege continued over a year.



June 28, 1914 - Archduke Francis Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Austria and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo, touching off a conflict between the Austro-Hungarian government and Serbia that escalated into World War I.

June 28, 1919 - The signing of the Treaty of Versailles formally ended World War I. According to the terms, Germany was assessed sole blame for the war, forced give up Alsace-Lorraine and overseas colonies, and pay reparations of \$15 Billion. The treaty also prohibited German rearmament.

Birthday - Flemish painter and diplomat Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) was born in Siegen, Westphalia, Germany. Regarded as the greatest of Flemish painters, he was considered the master artist of his day. He was also skilled in science and politics and spoke seven languages. Among his masterpieces; Le Coup de Lance and The Descent from the Cross.

Birthday - Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was born in Geneva, Switzerland. His book The Social Contract stated that no laws are binding unless agreed upon by the people, a concept that deeply affected the French. In his novel Emile he challenged harsh child-rearing methods of his day and argued that young people should be given freedom to enjoy sunlight, exercise and play. "Man is born free," he wrote in The Social Contract, "and everywhere he

is in chains."

Birthday - German-American physicist Maria Goeppert Mayer (1906-1972) was born in Kattowitz, Germany. She participated in the secret Manhattan Project, the building of the first atomic bomb. She later became the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize, sharing the 1963 prize for physics for works explaining atomic nuclei, known as the nuclear shell theory.

JUNE 29

June 29, 1972 - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled (5-4) that capital punishment was a violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibiting "cruel and unusual punishment." The decision spared the lives of 600 individuals then sitting on death row. Four years later, in another ruling, the Court reversed itself and determined the death penalty was not cruel and unusual punishment. On October 4, 1976, the ban was lifted on the death penalty in cases involving murder.



Birthday - Social worker Julia Lathrop (1858-1932) was born in Rockford, Illinois. She fought to establish child labor laws and was instrumental in establishing the first juvenile court in the U.S. In 1912, President Taft named her to head the newly created Children's Bureau. In 1925, she became a member of the Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations.

Birthday - American surgeon William Mayo (1861-1939) was born in LeSeuer, Minnesota. He was one of the Mayo brothers, pioneers of the concept of the group clinic, bringing together specialists from a number of medical fields to better perform diagnoses and treatment. The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, became an internationally known medical center.

JUNE 30

June 30, 1971 - The 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was enacted, granting the right to vote in all federal, state and local elections to American citizens 18 years or older. The U.S. thus gained an additional 11 million voters. The minimum voting age in most states had been 21.

June 30, 1997 - In Hong Kong, the flag of the British Crown Colony was officially lowered at midnight and replaced by a new flag representing China's sovereignty and the official transfer of power.

JULY 1



July 1st - Canada Day, a national holiday in Canada, formerly known as Dominion Day, commemorating the confederation of Upper and Lower Canada and some of the Maritime Provinces into the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1867.

July 1, 1862 - President Abraham Lincoln signed the first income tax bill, levying a 3% income tax on annual incomes of \$600-\$10,000 and a 5% tax on incomes over \$10,000. Also on this day, the Bureau of Internal Revenue was established by an Act of Congress.

July 1, 1863 - Beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg during the American Civil War.

July 1, 1893 - President Grover Cleveland underwent secret cancer surgery aboard a yacht owned by his friend, Commodore E.C. Benedict. The surgery was performed on a cancerous growth in his mouth. The entire left side of his jaw was removed along with a small portion of his soft palate. A second, smaller operation was performed on July 17th. Cleveland was then fitted with a rubber prosthesis which he wore until his death in 1908. The secrecy was intended to prevent panic among the public during the economic depression of 1893.

JULY 2

July 2, 1776 - The Continental Congress in Philadelphia adopted the following resolution, originally introduced on June 7, by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia: "Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved. That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances. That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation."

July 2, 1788 - Congress announced the United States Constitution had been ratified by the required nine states and that a committee had been appointed to make preparations for the new American government.

July 2, 1881 - President James A. Garfield was shot and mortally wounded as he entered a railway station in Washington, D.C. He died on September 19th.

July 2, 1917 - A race riot occurred in St. Louis, Missouri, resulting in an estimated 75 African Americans killed and hundreds injured. To protest the violence against blacks, W.E.B. DuBois and James Weldon Johnson later led a

silent march down Fifth Avenue in New York.

July 2, 1964 - President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race in public accommodations, publicly owned or operated facilities, employment and union membership and in voter registration. The Act allowed for cutoff of Federal funds in places where discrimination remained.

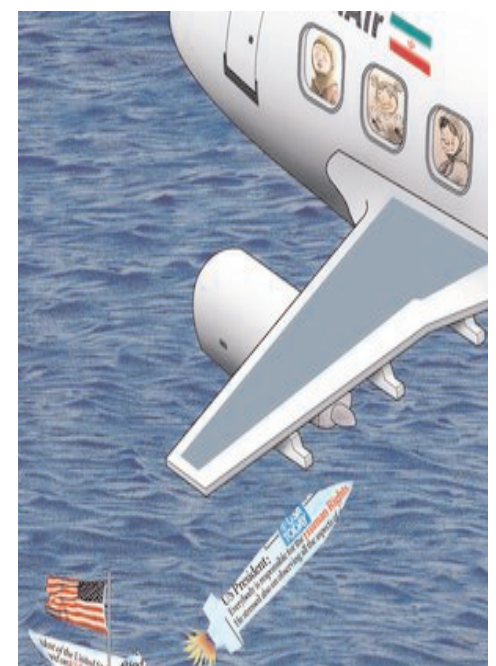


Birthday - The first African American on the U.S. Supreme Court, Thurgood Marshall (1908-1993) was born in Baltimore, Maryland. Nominated by President Johnson, he began his 24-year career on the High Court in 1967.

JULY 3

July 3, 1775 - During the American Revolution, George Washington took command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

July 3, 1976 - The raid on Entebbe airport in Uganda occurred as an Israeli commando unit rescued 103 hostages on a hijacked Air France airliner. The jet had been en route from Tel Aviv to Paris when it was hijacked by pro-Palestinian guerrillas. Three hostages, seven hijackers and twenty Ugandan soldiers were killed during the rescue.



July 3, 1988 - Iran Air Flight 655 was destroyed while flying over the Persian Gulf after the U.S. Navy Warship Vincennes fired two surface-to-air missiles, killing all 290 passengers aboard. A subsequent U.S. military inquiry cited stress related human failure for the mistaken identification of the civilian airbus as an enemy F-14 fighter jet.



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India majestically walks into T20 World Cup final with a splendid 68-run win over England

AVENGES ITS 2022 SEMI-FINAL DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF ENGLAND



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

In a superb display of team effort, India set up its summit clash with South Africa for the coveted T20 World Cup Trophy. India defeated defending champions England convincingly by 68 runs with 20 balls to spare to end its decade-long wait for a T20 World Cup final. India was the winner of the inaugural edition in 2007.

India also avenged its 2022 semi-final defeat at the hands of England.

Helped by batters to put up a challenging target of 172 for an outright winner, Indian bowlers, especially spinners - Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav - did more than expected of them. England were sent packing for 103. Reliable Jasprit Bumrah chipped in with two for 12. He claimed the first and the last wicket of England in a game dominated by India.

Skipper Rohit Sharma led from the front scoring a brisk fifty while Surya Kumar Yadav (47) and Hardik Pandya (23) came in with useful contributions in a game that was disrupted by rain.

But for skipper Jos Buttler (23 made from 15 balls with four boundaries), Harry Brook 25 from 19 balls with three boundaries) and Jofra Archer (21 from 15 balls with a boundary and two sixes), other English batters wilted the Indian bowling attack and went back to the pavilion without putting up any worthwhile resistance.

Incidentally, both the semi-finals were a disappointment for the spectators as the fireworks expected of games of this level were conspicuous by their absence. How dominant Indian bowling was can be judged that except for Jofra Archer's two big hits to the maximum, no other English batter had a six to his credit.

Statistics make cricket an interesting game. Before the start of the second semi-final, lots of statistics came to mind, including that the same two teams met in the semi-finals of the 2022 T20 World Cup as well. India was beaten by 10 wickets. Skipper Rohit Sharma was eager to bury the ghosts of the past and move one step closer to the silverware. It was also the time for India to add an ICC Trophy to its cabinet.

Besides, it was also slated to be a battle of tactics, nerves and skills as both teams had high stakes in the game. England wanted to break the jinx of winning the



Axar Patel spearheaded the Indian bowling attack and took three wickets for 26 runs.

T20 World Cup back-to-back while India wanted to add an ICC Trophy to its cabinet.

In 2022, India had set up a target of 168 for England. England achieved it without losing a wicket. This time, things were different. Indian spinners were quick to get in the groove. Axar Patel with his variation and accuracy had the English batters tied in his web. His three-wicket haul came in 2.1 overs for 11 runs. It was he and Kuldeep Yadav who brought England to the defensive. Kuldeep Yadav clean bowler dangerous looking Harry Brooks to make England 68 for six. Brooks was gone for 25 made from 19 balls. He was the second victim of Kuldeep who had earlier sent back Sam Curran for 2, trapping him leg before.

Kuldeep gave yet another blow to England as he foxed Chris Jordan with his flight and variation. Chris had the ball wrapped in his pads. After the ground umpire, he sought review before marching back to the pavilion. England was now in dire straits having lost seven wickets for 71. It was Kuldeep Yadav's



Virat Kohli, after hitting Reece Topley for a six maximum, was bowled for nine.

third wicket. Both Axar (three for 26) and Kuldeep not only justified the confidence the skipper Rohit Sharma placed in them but also wreaked havoc with the English

batters. England 73 for seven in 13 overs. What a game!

Looking back, no team has won the T20 World Cup back-to-back. Joss Buttler,

however, was keen to reverse the trend.

As statistics show, both Rohit Sharma and Joss Buttler had scored the same number of runs in this marquee event. In six innings each played so far, both skippers have scored 191 runs each with the same strike rate of 159.16. This semi-final was interesting for them as it would have determined which one of them would fire and set the tone for the other. Rohit did. He out-batted Joss Buttler.

About Guyana National Stadium, the venue, experts felt that the pitch would be low and skiddy, promising an average score of 167, depending further upon what captains decide after winning the toss. Intermittent showers not only delayed the start but also disrupted the game when India went to bat. India crossed this mark by finishing with 171 for seven thus setting a challenging total of 172 for the defending champions for a place in the summit round.

Rohit Sharma and Virat started well, scoring 19 for the opening wicket before Kohli, after hitting Reece Topley for the maximum, was clean bowled for nine made from as many balls. Many expected after that mighty six that Virat Kohli would now fire as he is known to be a man of big matches. It was, however, not his day as he left quickly afterwards.

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh, who came next, did not last long and departed when the total reached 40. He made 4, his lowest score in this tournament.

Surya Kumar Yadav, who joined Rohit Sharma, signaled his arrival with a towering six off Chris Jordan as India moved to 65 for two in 8 overs before the rain stopped the game again. Rohit was on 37 and Surya Kumar on 13. Though the rain stopped after a while, it left a huge accumulation of water on the covers. The ground staff took upon itself the job of cleaning water from covers before attempting to work on the wet patches in the outfield.

When the game resumed after a long break, England pressed into action its spinners - Liam Livingstone and Adil Rashid. Rohit Sharma pulled the last ball of the 11th over long on for a mighty six to move inches closer to his 50. India was 86 for two with Rohit on 48. In the next over, Rohit and Surya Kumar completed their 50-run partnership for the third wicket.

Joss Buttler brought back Sam Curran into the attack. He was greeted with a huge six by Surya Kumar Yadav. It was useful over as it not only saw the completion of 50 by Rohit Sharma but also 100 of the Indian total on the scoreboard. Rohit celebrated with another mighty hit to the maximum before Surya Kumar executed a brilliant stroke for a boundary to make 19 from the over and take the Indian total to 110 for 2 in 13 overs.

Rohit left shortly afterwards when he was clean bowled by Adil Rashid for 57 made from 39 balls. India had reached 113 for 3 in 13.4 overs. Rohit hit six boundaries and two sixes. Adil completed his spell conceding 25 runs for the prize wicket of Rohit Sharma in his four overs.

Surya Kumar was unlucky to miss his half-century as he was caught by Chris Jordan off Jofra Archer. Surya made 47 and India were 124 for 4 from 15.4 overs.



He and Rohit had put on 73 runs for the third wicket. The next man, Ravindra Jadeja, in the company of Hardik Pandya, was required to give India a safe defending total in the remaining little more than four overs. When the 17th over ended, India was 132 for four. Livingstone conceded 24 runs in his 4 overs and ended wicketless.

Hardik Pandya punished Chris Jordan when he returned to the attack for his second spell. Hardik hit him for two mighty sixes before falling into the bowler's trap. He was caught by Sam Curran while attempting another hit to the maximum to make India 146 for 6 in 17.5 overs. Chris Jordan had the last laugh as he claimed the next Indian batter, Shivam Dube, for a blob. Shivam was caught behind by Joss Buttler. India slumped to 146 for six.

With two overs left, India was still short of its projected target of scoring 170 runs. Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja were at the crease. Jadeja hoisted India's 150 with a well-executed boundary of Jofra Archer. He followed it with another boundary to end the over-19 with a score reading 159 for six. On the penultimate ball of the innings, Axar left but not before hitting Chris Jordan for the maximum to take India to 170. India's innings folded up at 171 for seven with Ravindra Jadeja remaining unbeaten on 17 from nine balls with two boundaries.

Chris Jordan (three for 37) was the most successful bowler for England. Three other bowlers - Reece Topley, Adil Rashid and Sam Curran - claimed one wicket each, conceding 25 runs each while Jofra Archer ended one for 33.

Jasprit Bumrah in his pre-match comments said that expectations were high from both the teams. Since India has played a lot of ICC tournaments as a team, it was confident of a good showing here. More than focusing on the outside noises, "we are going to be in the



Reliable Jasprit Bumrah chipped in with two for 12. He claimed the first and the last wicket of England in a game dominated by India.

present. You can control only the controllable. It is important to put the best foot forward. The wicket is crucial and there are lot of variables which must be considered as well."

While the rain was playing hide and seek, the South Africans, celebrating their maiden entry into the T20 World Cup, must be watching the developments amusingly. Men from the "Rainbow

Nation" packed too many surprises for the Afghans, who took the world by storm by making their maiden entry into the semi-finals but lacked the energy. Confidence alone did not carry them through against experienced Proteas as the first semi-final turned out to be a damp squib and ended in almost half of the stipulated requirement of 40 overs.

T20 Cricket: Confidence and energy carried men from 'Rainbow Nation' to the summit clash with Men in Blue

By Prabhjot Singh

South Africa organized the first T20 World Cup in 2007 but never made it to the final till the current or the ninth edition. The history of the T20 - the shortest version of the game - World Cup is dotted with amazing statistics. The ICC trophy awarded to the champion team of this 20-over each rivalry between bat and ball has been following an unusual trail. Though both England and West Indies have won the trophy twice, it has never stayed with any nation for two consecutive times. It has stayed in Asia for the longest as three South Asian nations - India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka - have won this coveted trophy once each.

There have been three occasions when the summit clash featured only Asian teams - in 2007 when India beat Pakistan by five runs for its maiden triumph followed by Pakistan defeating Sri Lanka in 2009 by eight wickets and in 2014 when Sri Lanka defeated India by six wickets. In the last edition in 2022, England played Pakistan in the final and won by five wickets for its second title success in the tournament.

When India takes on South Africa this Saturday, it will be the sixth time that a South Asian team will feature in the final. In 2010 when West Indies played host to third edition, England and Australia played the first final without an Asian team. Subsequently, in 2016, when India organized the event, West Indies and England played the final. Five years later, when the competition returned to Asia and was held in UAE, Australia and New Zealand met in the final. The million-dollar question on everybody's mind is who will win the 2024 T20 World Cup? India or South Africa!

Organized for the first time by the United States and West Indies, this 55-match marquee event was not only new to the North American continent but also witnessed several stunning firsts. The foremost of these has been one of the co-hosts, USA, an associate member, stunning the regular member and more fancied Pakistan, in Group games by extending the contest to a Super Over.

Pakistan, winner of the second edition and a runner-up in the last (2022) edition could never recover from the initial shock and failed to progress even to the Super 8 round. It led to a lot of severe criticism at home and even the coach of the team had to admit that "it was not a team but a collection of individuals" led by one of the star contemporary batters Babar Azam.

Though many believed that cricket was new to the North American continent, they did not realize what the history of the game had to say. The



history of Test cricket dates to 1877 when Australia played England, USA and Canada played an international 3-day game in 1844 in New York which they later won by 23 runs. This oldest rivalry was revived when the opening game of the tournament was played between two North American neighbors which the co-host US won in one of the tallest-scoring games. Canada batting first made 194 for five and the US responded by scoring 197 for three.

After the US recorded an upset win over Pakistan, Canada followed with an exciting win over Ireland by 12 runs. Canada made 137 for seven and restricted Ireland to 125 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs.

The most pleasant surprise of the Group matches was the qualification of the USA for the elite Super 8 group.

The group matches saw two of the former champions - Sri Lanka (winner of 2014) and Pakistan (winner of 2010) - touching their nadir as they failed to progress to the Super 8.

India and South Africa emerged as the only unbeaten teams in the tournament till it reached its final round. India won seven of its eight games as the match

against Canada was abandoned due to inclement weather. South Africa won all its eight matches though wins in two of these games came by the skin of the teeth. South Africa beat Nepal by a solitary run, perhaps the narrowest win ever recorded in the fiercest match where both the teams lost seven wickets and played full 20 overs each.

Going by the performance of various teams, India emerged as the most cohesive squad with both batters and bowlers putting up superlative performances. Though India's star batter Virat Kohli failed to fire so far, he is known to rise when faced with bigger challenges. Well-wishers of Indian cricket hope he will be in his natural flow in the game against men from "Rainbow Nation". After all, "Rainbow has a special attraction for "Blue" and Men in Blue would love to peak in Saturday's game.

Skipper Rohit Sharma has led by example. His 92 against Australia and 57 against England were innings of class. He has been ably supported by Suryakumar Yadav and Shivam Dube besides wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant. Indian pacers - Arshdeep Singh and Jasprit Bumrah - have left an indelible

JOURNEY TO FINAL

India

- India beat England by 68 runs with 20 balls to spare.
- India beat Australia by 24 runs.
- India beat Bangladesh by 50 runs.
- India beat Afghanistan by 47 runs.
- India vs Canada: Match abandoned.
- India beat the USA by seven wickets with 10 balls to spare.
- India beat Pakistan by six runs; and
- India beat Ireland by eight wickets with 46 balls to spare.

INDIA'S HIGHEST SCORER: Rohit Sharma 92, scored 248 runs in seven innings. He hit 15 sixes and 22 fours and made three 50s; Suryakumar Yadav 196 with two 50s.

INDIA'S BEST BOWLING: Arshdeep Singh four for nine; 15 wickets and Jasprit Bumrah 13 wickets in seven matches each

South Africa

- South Africa beat Sri Lanka by 6 wickets with 22 balls to spare.
- South Africa beat the Netherlands by 4 wickets with 7 balls to spare.
- South Africa beat Bangladesh by four runs.
- South Africa beat Nepal by 1 run.
- South Africa beat the USA by 18 runs.
- South Africa beat England by seven runs.
- South Africa beat West Indies by 3 wickets with 5 balls to spare.
- South Africa beat Afghanistan by nine wickets with 67 balls to spare.
- South Africa's highest scorer: Quinton de Kock 204 runs with two 50s.
- South Africa's best bowler: Anrich Nortje 13 wickets and best figures of 4 for seven.

mark on the teams they played against. Rest, Indian spinners - Axar Patel, and Kuldeep Yadav - too, have their spells of brilliance that stood their team in hours of need. Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja have also been chipping in with their all-round performances.

For South Africa, the batter to watch will be Quinton de Kock, skipper Aiden Markram and Reeza Hendriks besides bowlers Marco Jansen, Anrich Nortje, Kesigo Rabada and Tabraiz Shamsi. They all have had a good tournament so far. A lot will depend on the toss as Kensington Oval in Barbados is expected to produce an excellent battle between bat and ball.

(Prabhjot Singh is a senior journalist. He writes with equal aplomb on sports and politics. He can be reached at Prabhjot416@gmail.com)



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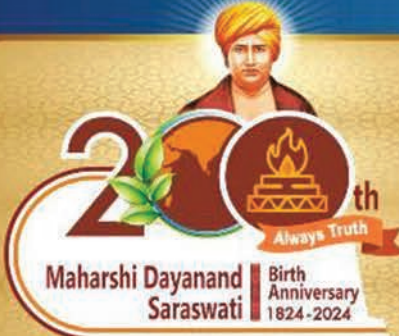
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