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Netanyahu meets with Biden, Harris to narrow gaps on Gaza war ceasefire deal



U.S. President Joe Biden, right, shakes hands with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, on July 25, 2024. Photo credit : AP

JULY 26, 2024
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the White House Thursday, July 25, to discuss the war in Gaza - and the possibility of securing a cease-fire deal - with U.S. President Joe Biden and likely Democratic nominee Vice President Kamala Harris, an AP report says.

Mr. Netanyahu's first White House visit since 2020 comes at a time of growing pressure in Israel and the U.S. to find an endgame to the nine-month war that's left more than 39,000 dead in Gaza and some 1,200 dead in Israel. Dozens of Israeli hostages are still languishing in Hamas captivity.

Mr. Biden reiterated in their Oval Office meeting his calls for Israel and Hamas to quickly agree to a ceasefire deal that would bring home the remaining hostages, according to White House national security spokesman John Kirby.

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Kargil Victory Day : PM Modi pays homage to Kargil war martyrs in Drass



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays homage at the Kargil War Memorial on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the 'Kargil Vijay Diwas', in Dras, Friday, July 26, 2024.

Photo Credit: PTI

JULY 26, 2024
LADAKH (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari and Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K.

Tripathi paid tributes to soldiers at the Kargil War Memorial in Drass on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Kargil Vijay Diwas.

CONTD ON PAGE 42

Joe Biden says he ended 2024 U.S. presidential bid to unite Democratic party

JULY 25, 2024
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): U.S. President Joe Biden on July 24 delivered a solemn call to voters to defend the country's democracy as he laid out in an Oval Office address his decision to drop his 2024 presidential campaign and throw his support behind Vice President Kamala Harris.

Insisting that "the defense of democracy is more important than any title," Mr. Biden used his first public address since his announcement Sunday that he was stepping aside to deliver an implicit repudiation of former President Donald Trump. He did not directly call out Trump, whom he has called an existential threat to democracy. The 10-minute address also gave Mr. Biden a chance to try to shape how history will remember his one and only term in office. "Nothing, nothing can come in the



U.S. President Joe Biden addresses the nation from the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, on July 24, 2024, about his decision to drop his Democratic presidential reelection bid -Screen grab way of saving our democracy," Mr. Biden said.

CONTD ON PAGE 42



Senator Marco Rubio introduces U.S.-India Defense Cooperation Act

JULY 26, 2024
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): U.S. Senator Marco Rubio on July 25 introduced a bill in the U.S. Senate which proposes to treat India on par with its allies like Japan, Israel, Korea and NATO allies regarding technology transfers and supporting India in its response to growing threats to its territorial integrity. It also proposes to bar Pakistan from receiving security assistance if it is found to have sponsored terrorism against India.

contd on page 42

Senator Rubio's bill proposes to put India at the same level as allies like Japan, Israel, Korea and NATO; exempt India from CAATSA sanctions, and impose sanctions on Pakistan for promoting terrorism in India. -Credit: PTI



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EVER TRUTHFUL**PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER:**

Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja

VICE PRESIDENT:

Chitagam Saluja

CHIEF EDITOR:

Prof Indrajit S. Saluja

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Bidisha Roy

SPL. REPORTER UNO:

H.S. Panaser

GRAPHICS DIRECTOR:

Om Parkash Malik

DIRECTOR**ADMINISTRATION:**

Gauri Beri

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

Parminder S. Aujla

NEW YORK :

Chitagam

FRESNO:

Tarlochan Singh

DALLAS:

Harjit Dhesi, Amarjit Dhillon

OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENTS**LONDON**

Nirpal Singh Shergill

SPL CORRESPONDENT**DELHI BUREAU CHIEF:**

Chandan Singh

CHANDIGARH:

Manjit Sidhu

LUDHIANA:

A.S. Arora,

R.P.Sharma

JAIPUR :

Dr. Yashpaul Goyal

DALLAS BUREAU CHIEF & VP

Lovlien Kaurr

972-330-3139

editor@theindianpanorama.news

The Indian Panorama

P.O. Box No. 190067, South

Richmond Hill, NY 11419,

Tel: 646-247-9458

Email:

editor@theindianpanorama.news

GUEST COMMENT

More for more: On the Union Budget and allocations

Budget allocations have not helped States ruled by parties opposed to BJP

Budgets of the Union or the States, as much as they are revenue and expenditure statements for the upcoming fiscal year, are also an exercise in political economy, and the recently tabled Union Budget for 2024-25 is no different. Aside from the "nine priorities", beginning with provisions for the farm sector and attempts to boost employment, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman delved at some length on the special provisions made for the States of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. Both are headed by parties providing crucial support to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after its underwhelming performance in the 2024 general election. The Janata Dal (United) headed by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, and the Telugu Desam Party headed by his Andhra Pradesh counterpart N. Chandrababu Naidu are parties associated with the convenorship of the National Democratic Alliance in the past. These are also parties that severed long-standing ties with the BJP over issues that ranged from Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's alleged non-secular credentials to ignoring demands for increased central aid. Bihar has now received the largest chunk with outlays worth almost ₹59,000 crore. These include road infrastructure outlays for ₹26,000 crore, ₹21,400 crore for a 2,400 MW power plant, and ₹11,500 crore to address irrigation and flood mitigation. While Mr. Naidu had been more vociferous than Mr. Kumar with his demands for assistance worth ₹1 lakh crore, the cornerstone outlay in the Budget was a facilitation of 'special financial support' of ₹15,000 crore for the development of the State's new capital, Amaravati. While Ms. Sitharaman promised to hasten the completion of the Polavaram irrigation project 'to ensure food security of the nation', Budget documents do not mention concrete outlays.

Both States have unsustainable public debts of about one-third, that is the debt to Gross State Domestic Product ratio, and both deserve the special attention they have received. But by making piecemeal allocations for projects in the

rest of the country, as for the Mumbai Metro rail, and by ignoring other similar critical infrastructure spends in Opposition-ruled States (Chennai's Metro rail in Tamil Nadu and Kerala's Vizhinjam port project are examples), Ms. Sitharaman has failed to provide a fair and equitable distribution of the Union's finances. While the debt-ridden and poorer regions of the country rightly deserve greater attention, ignoring States that generate the most revenue for the Union runs the risk of slowing down development that has acquired critical mass to enable these States to become global economic powerhouses. As they have begun attracting cutting-edge technology, corporates, talent and creating the required research and development base to house next-generation industries on energy transition, automobiles, artificial intelligence, mobile and semi-conductors, the industrially and socio-economically advanced States too need a helping hand.

(The Hindu)

The Games begin-Sporting prowess on show in Paris

Football, archery, handball and rugby sevens events have already kicked off before the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympic Games. The 19-day spectacle will see 10,500 athletes from over 200 nations compete in 329 events across 32 disciplines. Aiming to attract a younger audience, breaking, skateboarding, surfing and sports climbing are being introduced. The seven-medal tally at Tokyo 2020 represented India's most triumphant Olympics performance. The US topped with 113 medals, followed by China at 89 and the Russian Olympic Committee at 71. This time, more than 100 athletes are representing India across 16 disciplines

in 69 medal events. As we cheer for the contingent, some questions will continue to be asked - why do some countries win more medals, and what explains the gap in the level of athletic prowess?

Raw talent and dedication are huge factors, but nothing can beat training and support. The ability to reach athletic potential depends upon the opportunities afforded to train in world-class facilities with top coaching. A country's GDP, studies have shown, is the single best predictor of its performance. In the case of the former Soviet and Eastern Bloc countries, their athletic success was attributed to the forced mobilization of resources. The Union

sports budget this year is Rs 3,442 crore, with the biggest share of Rs 900 crore allocated for Khelo India. Several states now offer cash rewards and jobs for medalists. Funding star athletes' training abroad is no more unusual. Is it enough? Not by any yardstick, certainly not for a country hoping to host the Games.

While the need for wholehearted investment cannot be overstated, protests by top women wrestlers in the recent past exemplify the systemic flaws in Indian sport administration. The politician-bureaucrat hold has proved difficult to break.

(Tribune, India)

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It was a 'Divine Party': Siddhguru showers grace at New York event

PARVEEN CHOPRA

JULY 25, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): Conscious filmmaker Neha Lohia hosted an extraordinary gathering in New York with co-host Parveen Chopra where invited guests had the unique opportunity to receive blessings individually from Sri Brahmurishi Siddhguru Gurudev fondly known as Siddhguru who came from Tirupati in India to America.

Siddhguru emphasized that the fortunate people in the room should thank their friend, Neha, for not organizing a wine party. Instead, she treated them to "a Divine Party", a transformative experience, raising spirits in a way New York has never seen before.

The recent event at the Marriott Marquis Hotel was a celebration of spiritual elevation. Souls and spirits were uplifted by Siddhguru's gracious presence and divinely inspirational messages.

He adroitly addressed the predominantly English-speaking audience in his uniquely innocent yet power-packed style.

Cautioning that modern life has numerous ways that deplete our soul energy, he encouraged the assembled people to follow and pursue all that strengthens soul energy as their primary to-do and to pay attention to their soul above all else.

Siddhguru, Sri Brahmurishi Siddheshwar Gurudev, is renowned for his profound knowledge of Vedic science including a PhD in astrology, and his perch at the pinnacle of consciousness after acquiring the rarest of rare 8 Siddhis and 9 Nidhis mentioned in ancient texts with his relentless sadhana of over five decades.

But he selflessly uses his miraculous abilities to heal all human beings at the soul level and helps lift their suffering and pain, often karmic.

He has devoted his potency to developing "Siddhasana," The Power Of The Soul, a holistic practice to empower all souls who need to be strengthened to do good work in the world. While just encountering him heals at unspoken levels, he says his practice will supercharge people's good agendas. This is what the world is ready for, and it is meant for the current and future generations who are ready for this truly revolutionary and powerful technology designed to make their individual soul powerful.

"We have advanced and created a lot of technology to be fit externally, to beautify from the outside but our souls are depleting and becoming weaker by the day. We need to strengthen our souls with active practice and utmost urgency," the Siddhguru emphasized.

Neha Lohia adds that this crucial and timely message will be explored further in her upcoming documentary, "Siddhi," centered on Siddhguru sharing more about this unique technology powered by deep and unspoken truths from sacred texts publicly for the very first time.



Siddhguru with invited guests

The event was co-hosted by Parveen Chopra, founder and editor of ALotusInTheMud.com web magazine, and attended by many notable dignitaries, doctors, scientists, artists, healers and light workers. They included Dr. Aleta St. James, Dr. Anna Yusim, Jodi Weiss, fashion designers Prashant Goyal and Jim Su, actors Alex Garfin of HBO Fame, Emmy-nominated filmmaker Tirllok Malik, latest Broadway sensation Kaitlyn Mitchell, CEO's Kunal Sood, Seth Rao, and representatives such as Dr Sumul Raval from AAPI World Health Congress, which was inaugurated the same morning at Marriott Marquis by Siddhguru and where Siddhasana became an integral part of this year's convention.

During his free-flowing yet focused discourse, Siddhguru addressed the growing rate of depression in affluent communities and emphasized the importance of increasing the power of faith in the creator and self among those gathered and striving for being the conduits of conscious change.

All those listening to him felt a surge of self-confidence and self-esteem when he told them, "Each one of you is unique - a Masterpiece. There is no one like you and your visions are entrusted in your soul alone because only you can make them happen."

The gracious guru led the attendees in chanting ancient and powerful mantras for health, abundance, and wish fulfillment. Each guest received personal blessings, including precious gems and rare gifts manifested by the Siddhguru, to propel them further towards their goals.

The evening also featured a glimpse of the Siddhasana technique, conducted by Shilpa Shyamsukha Mehta, one of Siddhguru's trained facilitators. Certain devotees whose lives have been transformed by following the guru's practices were present in support of the event and included Sharada and Chandra Bhansali PhD, Rajesh Choradia and Ashok Sancheti. The energy in the room was palpable and new followers alike were deeply moved by the Siddhguru's grace, blessings, and profound teachings.

Siddhguru's homilies, such as seeing the word FAILure as "First Attempt in Learning", NO as "Next Opportunity", 'Raise the quality of your words not your voice', and the new mantra "Know Faith, No Fear," resonated deeply, leaving a lasting impression on all present.

"This truly was a rare and special gathering," said one attendee, reflecting on the unique blend of wisdom and divine energy that permeated the event.

Photo Courtesy: Rob Klein, and Chirstine Mendes

"He is enlightened, and I am so fortunate that I followed my intuition and came to this event," said Aleta St. James, who empowers millions of American women with her life-shifting healing modalities.

The Siddhguru applauded Neha and all the women in the room, saying mothers had to be women -- never men - as compassionate hearts were entrusted to women alone. Everyone is born through a woman on this planet, and it is their growing and flowing expression of compassion that is healing for this world.

In the run-up to Guru Purnima, the master blessed all present and especially showered his abundant love on the hosts, empowering them to keep walking the path of dharma and creating more opportunities for sangha, the community of conscious friends who come together to share how to elevate consciousness.

For more information about Sri Brahmurishi Siddhguru Gurudev and the

Siddhasana practice or about the upcoming documentary 'Siddhi', please connect here filmwithher@gmail.com / parul@picturekraft.com / yashraj@picturekraft.com

ABOUT SRI BRAHMURISHI SIDDHGURU GURUDEV

Sri Brahmurishi Siddhguru Gurudev is an enlightened mystic, a powerful guru healing people at soul level, revered spiritual leader known for his mastery of Vedic sciences, astrology, and holistic ancient Indian practices. He is believed to have attained all eight Siddhis and nine Nidhis (treasures), using his gifts solely to heal and empower individuals at soul level. He constantly travels all over the world awakening people and blessing devotees. In India, his sprawling ashram is located in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. www.sribrahmurishiashram.org

ABOUT NEHA LOHIA

Neha Lohia is a conscious filmmaker dedicated to creating meaningful and transformative media. Her work focuses on bringing spiritual teachings to a broader audience through engaging and insightful storytelling. www.nehalohia.com

ABOUT ALOTUSINTHEMUD.COM

The wellness and spirituality web magazine was founded by Parveen Chopra as a not-for-profit. www.alotusinthemud.com

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Sudparikh@gmail.com | 9082794525

Mr. Anil Bansal (President, First National Realty Management)
bansalusa@gmail.com | 2014015100

Mr. Anil K. Monga (Chairman, Victory Intl.)
amonga@victoryinternational.net | 7328951905

Dr. Bharat Barai (Medical Director, Methodist Hospitals)
bhbarai@yahoo.com | 2196147810

Indian-origin Canadian MP Chandra Arya receives threat from Khalistani extremists after temple vandalism incident



Nepean MP Chandra Arya

Photo: X/@AryaCanada

JULY 24, 2024

OTTAWA (TIP): A prominent Canadian MP of Indian origin on Wednesday said the country was being "polluted" by Khalistani extremists who were "abusing" the freedoms guaranteed under the Charter of Rights, days after a Hindu temple was vandalized in Edmonton.

Amidst rising Hinduphobia in Canada, the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir was vandalized with alleged hateful and anti-India graffiti on Monday morning in Edmonton in Alberta state, about 3,400 km west-northwest of here.

Chandra Arya, a Member of Parliament from Nepean in the House of Commons, said in a post on his X account that separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun of Sikhs for Justice released a video demanding that Arya and his Hindu-Canadian friends go back to India after he (Arya) condemned the vandalism of the Hindu temple and other acts of hate and violence by Khalistan supporters in Canada.

"We Hindus have come to our wonderful country Canada from all parts of the world. From every country in South Asia, many countries in Africa and Caribbean, and many other parts of the world, we have come here and Canada is our land," Arya, a member of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party, wrote.

"We have made and continue to make immense positive and productive contributions to the socio-economic development of Canada. With our long history of Hindu culture and heritage, we have enriched the multicultural fabric of Canada," he said.

"Our land is being polluted by Khalistani extremists abusing our freedoms guaranteed by our Canadian Charter of Rights," Arya added.

Arya's statement comes against the backdrop of severe strain in India-Canada ties over the killing of Khalistan extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in Surrey, British Columbia, in June last year.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American billionaire Vinod Khosla clashes with Elon Musk over Trump on X

JULY 24, 2024

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (TIP): In a heated exchange on social media platform X, Indian American tech billionaire Vinod Khosla clashed with Tesla CEO Elon Musk over former President Donald Trump, mere minutes after President Joe Biden announced he was "standing down" from the presidential race.

Vinod Khosla, a Bay-area billionaire venture capitalist and co-founder of Sun Microsystems, ignited the conversation by calling for an open Democratic convention following Biden's announcement. He expressed his desire for a "more moderate candidate who can easily beat" Trump, reflecting his concerns over the former president's values and policies.

Responding to Khosla, Musk urged him to support Trump and his running mate, Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance, with an enthusiastic post: "Come on, Vinod. Trump/Vance LFG!!!"

Khosla did not hold back, replying, "Hard for me to support someone with no values, lies, cheats, rapes, demeans women, hates immigrants like me. He may cut my taxes or reduce some regulation but that is no reason to accept depravity in his personal values. Do you want President who will set back climate by a decade in his first year? Do you want his example for your kids as values?"

Musk countered by suggesting that Khosla meet Trump to form his own opinion. "He doesn't hate you. In fact, I



Vinod Khosla clashed with Tesla CEO Elon Musk over former President Donald Trump

think he likes you. Meet him and find out for yourself. How many times have you read something in the media where you know the real story, but what they printed was diabolically false? Well, it's way worse in politics, which is a blood sport."

Khosla, acknowledging Musk's point on media mistrust and meritocracy, raised concerns about Trump's stance on climate change and international relations. He replied, "Agree on not trusting media. Agree on meritocratic and promote individual freedoms. But abandon climate and 'drill baby drill'? Be MAGA and abandon NATO and American leadership and moral authority? I was a socially liberal registered fiscal Republican till climate made me switch to Independent. First used 'techno optimist' to describe myself on Twitter but have to add now 'with care and caring' to bring along people left

behind by the tech-driven acceleration and growth we love. Define my optimism & caution in 2016: Link

In response, Musk said, "Civilization has needed oil & gas for quite some time. I don't think we should demonize an industry that is essential for humanity to function. However, as you know, sustainable energy production and consumption is growing very rapidly and is tracking to exceed use of hydrocarbon fuels. That will happen no matter what Trump does. As for NATO, the amount contributed by the United States is absurdly higher than other allies. Why are American taxpayers paying for the defense of Europe when Europe is fully capable of doing so itself?"

Khosla concluded by highlighting the balance needed between energy consumption and climate change awareness. "GDP depends on energy consumption but that doesn't support climate change denialism. The fossil industry must acknowledge that. In fact, I was against the recent order to shut down coal plants by 2032 because there are better policies. Let's discuss live on X."

The exchange between Khosla and Musk not only highlighted their differing political views but also shed light on broader issues such as climate change, media trust, and international relations, sparking a conversation among their followers, besides getting worldwide media attention.

Indian-origin man charged with stealing \$1 million-winning lottery ticket in US

The alleged theft takes place in the petrol bunk in Murfreesboro in Tennessee state where Meer Patel was employed



Meer Patel has been charged with stealing a \$1 million-winning lottery ticket from the buyer at the petrol bunk he was working in

Photo for representation only

amount, which he paid the customer and threw the ticket into the trash, according to Detective Steve Craig quoted by Cheatham County Exchange newspaper.

After the man left the store, Patel picked it out of the trash, scratched the hidden part to find the winning amount on the ticket, and took it to the lottery office, where the staff became suspicious, the publication said quoting officials.

Investigators from the state lottery seized the videos in the petrol bunk's cameras which showed him picking the ticket out of the trash and "celebrating in the store after scratching off the front of the ticket and learning it was a \$1 million winner," Investigator Vic Donoho told the publication.

The Sheriff's Office was informed and Patel was arrested.

Meanwhile, Craig and Donoho went through the store videos to identify the buyer and informed him of his luck.

"The feel-good side of this story is the (the man) never knew he was the winner until we made contact with him," Craig told the publication.

"That is absolutely life-changing money." (Source: IANS)

CBI detains German national of Indian-origin with 6 kg of cocaine at Delhi airport



CBI detains German national of Indian-origin with 6 kg of cocaine at Delhi airport. The drug was concealed in 270 capsules hidden inside two soft toys, say officials

Photo for representational purpose only / iStock

JULY 25, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): The CBI has detained a German national of Indian origin with six kg of cocaine at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here on an input by the Interpol on Thursday, officials said.

The man who was travelling on an Indigo Airlines flight from Doha to New Delhi was detained and taken for questioning, they said.

The drug was concealed in 270 capsules hidden inside two soft toys, they said. (Source: PTI)

Barack and Michelle Obama endorse Kamala Harris for president

THE OBAMAS ARE THE FINAL KEY LEADERS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO UNITE BEHIND HARRIS AFTER PRESIDENT BIDEN ENDED HIS BID FOR A SECOND TERM

JULY 26, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Former president Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama endorsed Vice President Harris for president on Friday, becoming the final key leaders in the Democratic Party to unite behind Harris after President Biden abandoned his bid for a second term.

A video posted on social media shows the Obamas calling Harris to inform her of their endorsement.

"We called to say Michelle and I couldn't be prouder to endorse you and to do everything we can to get you through this election and into the Oval Office," the former president says to Harris.

Michelle Obama adds, "I can't have this phone call without saying to my girl Kamala: I am proud of you. This is going to be historic."

In a separate statement, the Obamas pledged to "do everything we can" to elect Harris and called on their legions of supporters to join the effort.

They praised Harris's record of accomplishments, listing each of her previous roles in what could be interpreted as a rejoinder to Republicans who have labeled her a "DEI hire" - a reference to "diversity, equity and inclusion" initiatives often used derisively to suggest that Harris only reached the upper echelon of American politics because of her race and gender.

"But Kamala has more than a résumé. She has the vision, the character, and the strength that this critical moment



Former president Barack Obama and Vice President Harris share a moment during an event at the White House in 2022 on the Affordable Care Act and lowering health-care costs for families

File photo / Washington Post

demands," they wrote. "There is no doubt in our mind that Kamala Harris has exactly what it takes to win this election and deliver for the American people. At a time when the stakes have never been higher, she gives us all reason to hope."

Their call with Harris took place on Wednesday, July 24. Barack Obama said the Democrats would be "underdogs" but pledged to work hard for her election.

"Bottom line is, we are ready to get to work," he said during the call, according to a transcript. "We are telling everybody to kick off those bedroom slippers and get off the couch and start knocking on doors and

making phone calls."

Many Republicans seized on the fact that Obama did not mention or endorse Harris in his initial statement responding to Biden's abrupt exit from the race Sunday.

"We will be navigating uncharted waters in the days ahead," he said in that statement. "But I have extraordinary confidence that the leaders of our party will be able to create a process from which an outstanding nominee emerges."

On Thursday, July 25, Donald Trump's campaign seized on Obama's lack of an endorsement to make the case that Harris's path to the nomination was not a

done deal. Steven Cheung, a campaign spokesman, said Trump would not agree to debate Harris until she was officially the Democratic nominee, suggesting without evidence that Obama and other top Democrats were considering backing a different candidate.

"There is a strong sense by many in the Democrat Party - namely Barack Hussein Obama - that Kamala Harris is a Marxist fraud who cannot beat President Trump, and they are still holding out for someone 'better,'" Cheung said in a statement Thursday evening. "Therefore, it would be inappropriate to schedule things with Harris because Democrats very well could still change their minds."

The Obamas' endorsement comes after Harris already secured enough pledges from delegates to become the likely nominee. Biden exited the race on Sunday and immediately endorsed Harris, who quickly coalesced much of the Democratic Party behind her bid.

Just before Biden dropped out of the race, Obama told allies that the president's path to victory had greatly diminished and he thought the president needed to seriously consider the viability of his candidacy, according to multiple people briefed on his thinking, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss confidential conversations. In those conversations, Obama emphasized he felt protective over Biden as a friend and was concerned about his legacy.

(Source: Washington Post)

Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller Endorses Kamala Harris for President

JULY 22, 2024

ANNAPOLIS, MD (TIP): Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, on July 22, 2024, endorsed Kamala Harris to be the next President of the United States.

In a statement, Aruna said: "Adlai Stevenson said, 'Patriotism is not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime.' President Biden is the quintessential example of this. His lifetime of dedication to our country shows what true patriotism looks like.

"From beginning his public service journey as a county councilman in 1970 to becoming one of the youngest U.S. Senators in history, Joe Biden's commitment to our nation is



When Vice President Harris is sworn in as the 47th President of United States in January 2025, after almost 250 years, a woman of color will write our nation's next chapter-one built on inclusivity, opportunity, and hope, showing the limitless possibilities that lie ahead for every young person in our nation", Miller said

unwavering. He served as Vice President to the first Black American President and now holds the highest office in the land, dedicating over 50 years to public service.

"President Biden has always been a proud partner for Maryland. His unwavering support during the FSK Bridge collapse brought hope to our state in one of its darkest moments.

"President Biden understands the threats we face to our democracy. He prioritized our nation's future in an ultimate display of patriotism, by placing country above self-interest. As he has done for more than five decades, President Biden continues to be the leader we need. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Texas Democratic National Delegation Endorses Kamala Harris as Nominee for President

JULY 22, 2024

AUSTIN, TX (TIP): The Texas Democratic delegation convened to discuss the path forward after President Biden declared he will not seek reelection in November. As we near the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, that path forward is clear: the overwhelming majority of the Texas Democratic National Delegation endorses Vice President Kamala Harris as our party's nominee for President of the United States.

Texas Democratic Party and Texas National Delegation Chair Gilberto Hinojosa released the following statement:

"Tonight, the Texas Democratic



Texas Democratic Party and Texas National Delegation Chair Gilberto Hinojosa in a statement said: "We proudly announce our endorsement of Vice President Kamala Harris as our party's nominee for President".

National Delegation proudly announced our endorsement of Vice President Kamala Harris as our party's nominee for President. Her historic tenure as the first Black and South Asian woman to hold the office of the Vice President has been marked by an unwavering commitment to justice, equity, and progress for all Americans. With her extensive experience, dedication to public service, and proven leadership, we believe Kamala Harris is uniquely qualified to defeat Donald Trump and lead our nation forward - championing the values and ideals that unite us as a country."

Energized IOC USA Expands its Outreach Creates 2 New Chapters, Appoints New Secretary

JULY 22, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): . At an animated gathering of over seventy Congress Party leaders and supporters, in East Brunswick, New Jersey, Mr. Jaswinder Singh Kang was appointed as a Secretary of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA. He is assigned to cover the adjoining states to recruit members.

Upon handing him his letter of appointment President Mohinder Singh Gilzian congratulated Mr. Jaswinder Singh Kang, a prominent member of the Indian community and extended him his best wishes. In his speech, President Mohinder Singh Gilzian welcomed the audience and explained how rapidly Shri Rahul Gandhi ji has become a favorite candidate of millions upon million people and now stands head and shoulder above all the leaders who poses a big threat to Prime Minister Modi. He encouraged everyone to stand united and work hard and prepare for the good days ahead in India under the Congress Party.

Secretary General Harbachan Singh explained that the Congress Party does not merely criticize Modi ji and his government for broken promises and innumerable failures, but also the Congress Party has a solid plan - its comprehensive manifesto - a development strategy based upon its long history of experience and professional literacy. It addresses all areas of essential needs and aspirations of the people requiring attention, priority national development and making India a great sovereign country once again. Sri Rahul Gandhi has the best pulse of the people gathered from the two gigantic "Yatras" that he undertook and



IOC USA General Secretary Harbachan Singh honors Jaswinder Singh Kang

today stands tall as the boldest and the most dynamic leader in India.

Vice President John Joseph thanked the people for their interest in joining the party and encouraged each person to recruit more members and establish teams to work in unison.

Vice President Baldev Singh Randhawa in his speech noted that Jaswinder Singh Kang brings new ideas and vision which will enrich IOC USA and lend his shoulder to uplift its role in Indian politics. He welcomed Mr. Kang to the Organization.

New Jersey Chapter President Peter Kothari felicitated Mr. Kang ji and spoke at length and traced the glory of the Congress Party and explained the need for unity, hard-work, consistency and the need to work in harmony with the guidelines of the Party and



The gathered IOC USA members

following the law - a recipe for success.

Several other leaders including Gurjinder Singh, Jagpal Singh, Nirmal Singh, Mukesh Moidh, Balhar Sindhar, Mahesh Patel, and Ms.Pamposh Shaikh also addressed the gathering. They manifested their commitment to work as a team and dedicate the requisite support and resources such as time, social media involvement, and physical presence back home during the elections time. They acknowledged the recent successes of the INDIA alliance which has sharply motivated and regenerated their enthusiasm, resolve and trust.

Jaswinder Singh thanked Mohinder Singh Gilzian ji and Harbachan Singh ji and other IOC.USA leaders present and appreciated the guests for their energy and commitment to work tirelessly to strengthen the Party.

(Based on a Press Release issued by Harbachan Singh)

Catskill Mountain Railroad Twilight Limited Special Train Ride



Twilight Limited Special train ride

JULY 25, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): This Saturday night, July 27th, 2024 at 7:30 pm, the Catskill Mountain Railroad will be hosting a Twilight Limited Special train ride with live onboard music provided by local entertainers for your listening pleasure as you enjoy the evening sky.

As dusk turns into night, enjoy a train ride to watch the beautiful moonlit sky full of stars. The train will cross the Esopus Creek on the restored C9 Bridge and go through the Hurley Flat farmlands, and then climbing up into the Hurley Mountain forest before returning to Kingston.

All trains are round trip from the Westbrook Lane Station located in the Kingston Plaza adjacent Uptown Kingston's Stockade District.

Ticket Prices are: \$23.00 Adult, \$21.00 Discount (Senior, Military, Veteran) \$17.00 Children (Ages 2 - 12) \$0.00 Toddler (Under 2 on Lap) with a paid Adult fare

Trains depart Westbrook station at 7:30 pm and the train ride is approximately 90 minutes long. Join us for a wonderful evening of live music on the Twilight Limited Special.

More information about the Catskill Mountain Railroad is available by visiting www.catskillmountainrailroad.com.

Legislator Davis Honors Rotary District Governor Beverly R. James



Nassau County Legislator Scott M. Davis congratulated Beverly R. James of the Hempstead-Uniondale Rotary Club after her installation as District 7255 Governor

Photo credit / Office of Legislator Scott M. Davis

Garden City, Hicksville-Jericho and Hempstead-Uniondale Clubs. In addition, she served as a member of the District Foundation Committee and sub-committee chair for Peace Fellow Scholarship and is a graduate of the Rotary Leadership Institute. Within the Hempstead-Uniondale club, she is a past Foundation Chair, has served two terms as President and two terms as Secretary.

"Beverly James is an outstanding public servant whose commitment to uplifting the residents of Hempstead and fulfilling the noble mission of Rotary is unparalleled," Legislator Davis said. "It has been a great privilege to witness her growth as a community leader, and I am excited to work with her and her Rotary colleagues on future projects to enrich the lives of Nassau County residents."

JULY 25, 2024
WESTBURY, N.Y.

(TIP): Nassau County Legislator Scott M. Davis (D - Rockville Centre) congratulated Beverly R. James of the Hempstead-Uniondale Rotary Club after her installation as District 7255 Governor during ceremonies held at Westbury Manor on Wednesday, July 10.

A Rotarian for 15 years, James assumes this new role after serving as Assistant Governor for the Williston Park, Mineola-

Nation's Largest Healthcare Union, 1199SEIU, Endorses Kamala Harris for President

JULY 23, 2024
NEW YORK (TIP):

1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East has endorsed Kamala Harris for President. The decision was made after the Union's Executive Council-the highest decision-making body comprised of elected officers and rank-and-file members from

every state and region of 1199SEIU-voted unanimously in support of her candidacy.

With 450,000 members across the East Coast, 1199SEIU's endorsement comes with a massive voter turnout and member engagement operation, ready to hit the streets to get out the vote to advance the most pro-worker agenda in US history.

"This is a unifying and electrifying moment for the Democratic Party and our country," said George Gresham, President of 1199SEIU. "Vice President Harris is the next-generation leader we need to defeat those who would turn back the clock on our rights and instead ensure that working families can prosper and thrive. As a former senator, attorney general, and prosecutor, she is more than up to the task to prosecute the case of why a twice-impeached and 34-times convicted felon-the person who instigated the assault on our nation's Capitol and who was also found liable for sexual assault-has no place anywhere near the Oval Office. As a Black and Asian woman, Kamala Harris will continue to shatter glass ceilings and inspire a new generation of Americans."



1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East has endorsed Kamala Harris for President

Suozzi Fights for Quiet Skies; Battles FAA to Stop Aircraft Noise

JULY 22, 2024

GLEN COVE, NY (TIP): "It's summertime, and the relentless noise from airplanes approaching JFK makes what should be the nicest time of the year unbearable. Residents are rightfully concerned and fed up," declared Congressman Tom Suozzi (D - Long Island, Queens).

Repeated reports of low-flying planes, loud air traffic noise, and other airplane-related disturbances have increased during the last few months.

Last week, Suozzi, joined by Sen. Jack Martins, Ed Scott from the Town of North Hempstead, and Mayors Barbara Donno of Plandome Manor, Bernie Ryba of Old Brookville, and Daniel Serota of Brookville, met with the FAA and the Port Authority officials.

"We discussed many issues; I asked the FAA to 1) evaluate "continuous descent final approach" protocols to optimize noise reduction and 2) reevaluate a procedure maintaining a minimum 3000' altitude on approach to 22L/R at JFK. The FAA has agreed to consider these proposals, and I will follow through," announced Suozzi.

Since taking office in 2017, Suozzi began traversing the complex maze of



Suozzi, joined by Sen. Jack Martins, Ed Scott from the Town of North Hempstead, and Mayors Barbara Donno of Plandome Manor, Bernie Ryba of Old Brookville, and Daniel Serota of Brookville, met with the FAA and the Port Authority officials.

the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), looking to sort out the jurisdictional issues. He became Co-Chair of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus in 2017.

Over the years, Suozzi testified several times before congressional hearings, chaired multiple meetings with relevant federal agencies, and secured significant noise and safety provisions in the FAA

Reauthorization Act of 2018.

"This is not my first time going toe-to-toe with the FAA," Suozzi said.

"We were able to reach a number of agreements with them in 2019 and 2020 to reduce noise; things got somewhat better after I left office at the end of 2022, but apparently, the FAA disregarded our agreements, and the situation has gotten worse," explained Suozzi.

"I am back...and I am committed to holding the FAA accountable and ensuring they take meaningful action-not just offer lip service-to address this deafening issue that, in addition to impacting one's quality of life, can negatively affect one's health," he warned.

On a second front, Suozzi continues his fight to stop the FAA's new attempt to reassign seventeen air traffic controllers from New York Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON/N90) to Philadelphia Tower/TRACON.

"These union employees are essential to the safety and smooth operation of almost 100,000 flights daily and work in high-stress, fast-paced environments with the utmost professionalism and dedication to excellence. They are the backbone of our nation's aviation system," Suozzi stated.

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Biden out, but Trump may still win

AT THIS STAGE, REPUBLICAN NOMINEE APPEARS TO HAVE A HEAD START OVER ANY DEMOCRATIC RIVAL



BY SHYAM SARAN

"Although Biden has endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris as the candidate he supports and has urged the party to rally behind her, there are indications that key figures like former President Barack Obama and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi may prefer another candidate. Any contestation at this late stage can only diminish any raised hopes which may have been generated by Biden's announcement."



President Joe Biden announced on Sunday, July 21 that he's dropping out of the 2024 presidential race and endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris as his replacement on the Democratic ticket.

US President Joe Biden announced on July 21 that he was dropping out of the presidential elections due in November. After his poor showing in the one-to-one TV debate with Donald Trump on June 27, there had been a rising crescendo of influential voices in the Democratic Party calling upon Biden to stand down as a candidate and allow a younger nominee to face Trump, the Republican candidate, in the elections. It has taken a precious three weeks since the debate for Biden to yield to pressure from within his party to finally stand down. There will be limited time available for party managers to home in on a credible candidate for endorsement at the Democratic Party convention scheduled to start on August 19. Although Biden has endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris as the candidate he supports and has urged the party to rally behind her, there are indications that key figures like former President Barack Obama and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi may prefer another candidate. Any contestation at this late stage can only diminish any raised hopes which may have been generated by Biden's announcement.

Trump's close brush with death is likely to galvanize his supporters to come out in large numbers to vote for him.

Assuming Harris does get the party's endorsement at the party convention next month, how do her chances stack up against Trump?

Harris has both Black and Asian credentials and should be able to mobilize the non-White constituency. She is a strong champion of women's rights and has been vocal in opposing anti-abortion laws. As a potential first woman President of the US, she may appeal to the large female constituency across the

racial divide. She has taken a strong position on the Gaza war, calling for an immediate ceasefire, which contrasts with Biden's continuing though reluctant support to Israel. This may be a nuanced difference with her boss but may make her more congenial to the pro-Palestinian Arab-Americans and a large section of the US youth. While these may be her assets, the downside would be the very limited time she has to mobilize support for her candidacy within the party in the less than four weeks available to her. She cannot afford to have a contested candidacy at the party convention. A quick and consensus endorsement by the party immediately in advance of the convention will free her to concentrate on campaigning against Trump rather than her possible contenders within the party. Even if she wins a contested candidacy at the party convention, legitimacy as a presidential contender will be contrasted with the overwhelming endorsement Trump has already received as the Republican nominee. And Trump would already have a head start in the campaign much before Harris gets her act together. Campaign finance may also be an issue. Some large contributors to the Democratic Party had held back on their contributions after Biden's poor showing at the June debate with Trump. Will they open their purse strings for Harris? There are many doubts on this score. Trump has no problem at all on the finance front. Taking all these factors into account, Biden stepping down and Harris being inducted into the race at this late stage is unlikely to improve the Democrats' chances significantly.

If not Harris, who? None of the possible contenders has the name recognition that Harris has and would have even less time to pose a serious and credible challenge to Trump. The best bet for the party is Harris, but a lack of a broad consensus over her candidature will diminish any positive outcome from Biden's exit from the race.

Trump has a solid base of support, perhaps as much as 40 per cent of the voting population. The assassination attempt against him has given him the benefit of the inevitable sympathy factor. But more than that, his close brush with death is likely to galvanize his supporters to come out in large numbers to vote for him. There is no comparable galvanizing factor on the Democratic side. Enthusiasm among Democratic supporters may be of a lesser order. At this stage of the political game, therefore, Trump appears to have a head start over any Democratic rival.

It is likely that Trump will heighten US contention with China, and not only on the trade issue. He has said that he will end the Ukraine war but not how. The large financial and military support the US has extended to Ukraine might be more easily suspended or significantly reduced. The European countries are unlikely to be able to make up for reduced US support. This may lead to Ukraine agreeing to a ceasefire along the existing battle-lines. This will be a plus for Russia though it is not expected that sanctions against Russia will be eased. A transactional Trump may seek a quid pro quo for that.

The worst affected, potentially, could be Europe. The pressure on European

allies in NATO to do more for their own security will mount and tariffs against European products may increase. There may be less pressure on allies in the Indo-Pacific given the China factor.

It is not clear whether Trump will force an end to hostilities in the Gaza war as he intends to do with Ukraine. The support to Israel is unquestioned and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu may feel encouraged to further escalate the war. But even Trump may not want to get embroiled in a wider regional war involving Hezbollah in Lebanon and Iran. It would be interesting to see how Trump handles these contradictory aims in West Asia. His instinct would be to focus on the Indo-Pacific without distractions elsewhere. This should be welcome to India.

There should be reasonable confidence in the Modi government on navigating a Trump 2.0 presidency with the experience gained in its earlier incarnation. Relations with India have enjoyed bipartisan support in the US. This is likely to continue. For the Modi government, on balance, a Trump presidency may appear more congenial. The two leaders enjoyed good chemistry during the previous Trump administration. That would be an asset if Trump comes back. There may also be expectations of less US focus on human rights and minority issues. What may be more difficult to navigate is an even more fluid and disruptive international geopolitical terrain which Trump will inevitably foist on the world.

(The author is a former Foreign Secretary of India)

Living in denial about unemployment



BY ARUN KUMAR

PUBLIC CONFUSION OVER THE EXTENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT IS A RESULT OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THE VARIOUS DATA BASES USED

"The ground-level situation of unemployment is apparent from the frequent reports about the youth struggling to get work and facing issues in examinations. But the government is in denial. Recently, the officials have denied the problems of using data that have holes in them or of citing KLEMS data from the RBI, which does not independently estimate employment. Why not admit the problem and act, lest the growing youth frustration boil over?"

Recently, citing a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report that said that 8 crore jobs have been created in the last 3-4 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the Opposition of creating false narratives about unemployment. He also said that a lot of infrastructure projects are coming up, which will create more jobs. This was not only an attempt to counter the narrative of high unemployment which has been bothering the ruling party, but also a response to a flurry of reports from financial institutions, such as Citigroup, in July, which pointed to inadequacy of employment generation in India.

Mr. Modi quoted an RBI 'Data Manual' released on July 7, called 'The India KLEMS Database', which "...describes the procedures, methodologies and approaches used in the construction of India KLEMS database version 2024. The dataset includes measures of Gross Value Added, Gross Value of Output, Labor Employment, Labor Quality, Capital Stock, Capital Composition... The database covers 27 industries comprising the entire Indian economy."

Soon after the RBI released this, the State Bank of India (SBI) came out with its own report to counter the financial institutions' reports. It said, "Even if we exclude Agriculture, the total number of jobs created in manufacturing and services is at 8.9 crore during FY14-FY23 and 6.6 crore during FY04-FY14." It added, "The total labor force in India is at 59.7 crore, which is nearly equivalent to 56.8 crore as per the recently released ASUSE [Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises] survey. This total number of

labor force is significantly different from private employment surveys."

However, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), a private data-gathering agency which publishes data on employment and unemployment, reported in July that in June 2024, the unemployment rate had risen to an eight-month high of 9.2% up from 7% in the previous month. This was contrary to the official narrative of massive employment generation.

What is a citizen to make of these conflicting reports and statements? Ground reports suggest that unemployment is a major issue. In February, about 47 lakh applicants appeared for an exam to select around 60,000 constables in Uttar Pradesh. In 2022, 1.25 crore aspirants applied for the Railway Recruitment Board's Non-Technical Popular Categories recruitment exam. There were protests in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and other States when the Agnipath scheme was announced in 2022. Indeed, the situation for the educated youth is grim, yet we expect them to be in the vanguard of 'demographic dividend'.

Opposition flags video from Gujarat, slams Modi government over 'disease of unemployment'

Public confusion over the extent of unemployment is a result of the differences in the various databases used. Let us examine these.

KLEMS DATA

The most recently cited KLEMS data is "a comprehensive measurement tool to monitor and evaluate productivity growth in the Indian economy". It does not estimate employment but uses the official data available. For labor input it uses the Employment and Unemployment Surveys (EUS) by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), conducted between 1983 and 2011-12, and the Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS)." Clearly, the KLEMS data is based on official data from the PLFS, the ASUSE survey, etc. Given this, why would the employment series from KLEMS differ from the total employment figure given by government agencies? So, neither the Prime Minister nor the SBI should present KLEMS data as an independent source of employment data. Clearly, the officers and economists briefing Mr. Modi misguided him.

Why do different sources give widely varying estimates of employment? This is due to the highly complex structure of the Indian economy and the paucity of reliable data. India consists of the organized and the unorganized sectors. The data for the organized sector is available from statutorily published annual data. That is not the case for the unorganized sector, which employs 94% of the labor force. No other big country has



Aspirants wait to board a train to go home after completing the Uttar Pradesh constable civil police direct recruitment examination in Lucknow -Photo credit : The Hindu

such a huge unorganized sector for which data are sparse. This sector consists of possibly 11 crore farms and 6.5 crore MSME units. Surveying them annually is difficult. Data have been collected periodically via the Census every 10 years and the ASUSE survey every five years. The government is now committed to bringing out the ASUSE survey annually. But ASUSE survey data in turn depend on data from the Census and the Urban Frame Survey (UFS). There has been no Census since 2011 and UFS data apparently pertain to 2012-17. So, outdated data are being used.

Normally, in the absence of current data, earlier data should be acceptable. But 2016-2024 was an abnormal period with four shocks to the economy: demonetization in 2016, introduction of the Goods and Services Tax, the Non-Banking Financial Companies crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic. When shocks occur, use of pre-shock data for sampling creates problems due to structural changes. These four shocks specifically impacted the unorganized sector, the one that the ASUSE survey seeks to estimate. Many units closed down due to lack of working capital. People migrated, the size of towns and villages changed. Thus, a sample based on the 2011 Census would not be appropriate. Closures will not be captured and only the surviving units will be a part of the sample. The ASUSE 2024 Report says, "... 16,382 FSUs (8,495 in rural and 7,887 in urban) have been surveyed; and the total number of establishments surveyed has been 4,58,938 (2,58,296 in rural areas and 2,00,642 in urban areas). ASUSE 2022-23 gives an estimate of 6.50 crore establishments..."

Due to the shocks, the rural-urban ratio and the ratio of smaller and larger units would have changed. This could give an upward bias to the number of establishments and their employment.

DIFFERENCES IN PLFS AND CMIE

PLFS is the other official data source quoted widely. It differs greatly from the CMIE data. This has to do with differences in definitions, such as who is counted as employed. The CMIE adopts the International Labor Organization definition and counts only those who get an income from work as employed. PLFS counts those who are working even if they do not get an income from it. So, those giving free labor or those who sit in fields but have no work also get counted as employed by PLFS. Consequently, in the last few years, PLFS has given around 50%-55% labor force participation, while CMIE says the figure stands at 40%-45%. That means there is a huge difference of about 90 million between the two. The question then is, doesn't nearly everyone do something or the other? There are millions of home makers doing work, for example. Further, PLFS counts the disguised unemployed and the under-employed. So, as far as PLFS is concerned, almost no one is unemployed, while CMIE tells us how many have simply given up looking for work. That is also unemployment, which the official data do not recognize.

The ground-level situation of unemployment is apparent from the frequent reports about the youth struggling to get work and facing issues in examinations. But the government is in denial. Recently, the officials have denied the problems of using data that have holes in them or of citing KLEMS data from the RBI, which does not independently estimate employment. Why not admit the problem and act, lest the growing youth frustration boil over?

(Arun Kumar is a retired professor of economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and author of Indian Economy's Greatest Crisis: Impact of the Coronavirus and the Road Ahead)

Budget 2024 - long on intent, short on details



BY M SURESH BABU

THE POLICY SLANT HIGHLIGHTS GOOD INTENTIONS, BUT THE WAYS AND THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THE AMBITIOUS GOALS SET OUT ARE HAZY

"Barring the announcement of tax benefits for Indian start-ups and their investors, including scrapping the contentious angel tax for all classes of investors and aligning capital gains rates between listed and unlisted equity and the increased limit of Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA) loans from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh, the big push for the industrial sector is conspicuously absent in the Budget. Neither was there any mention of the Railways, PLI Scheme, Gati Sakthi and the Census. The list of omissions could be longer, but a lack of clear initiatives towards the education and health sectors to tap demographic dividend might not augur well with the vision of 2047. Equally important is to strike a balance between cities and rural economy and to make a distinction between jobs and internships. With the macroeconomy well poised at the moment, some bold steps and details of the journey to 2047 could have been outlined."

The short Budget speech by the Union Finance Minister is marked by clarity on three aspects. First, the intentions and vision for Viksit Bharat@2047 are spelt out through the nine priority areas, a long-term vision, to which we expect that subsequent Budgets would adhere, to accomplish these goals. Second, there is an explicit recognition of the problem of unemployment in the economy.

Addressing this has been a challenge and the Budget devotes considerable space in listing out initiatives towards generating employment. Third, the compulsions of a coalition government surface in parts, but are hidden in some of the specificities. These three have guided the strategy and the approach of the Budget. On the face of it, the policy slant reveals good intentions, but the ways and the means to accomplish the ambitious goals set out are not divulged, casting a shadow on the possibility of realizing the targets set.

A SIGNAL OF CONTINUITY

The fiscal arithmetic and the macro-policy stance in the Budget signal continuity and a carrying on with fiscal consolidation efforts. The overall fiscal deficit has been lowered to 4.9% compared to 5.1% targeted in the interim Budget. A large part of the surplus received from the Reserve Bank of India has been used to buttress fiscal prudence. The anticipated reiteration of the reduction in the fiscal deficit to below 4.5% of GDP in FY2026 is welcome. The new medium-term fiscal consolidation path has been linked to a reduction in the debt/GDP ratio instead of continued compression of the fiscal deficit/GDP ratio. This will allow the government flexibility to chart an appropriate fiscal course that builds in higher capital spending as well as support to meeting climate goals in an uncertain global environment.

The size of the Budget has gone up only marginally. This also means that the overall borrowing programme of the government is almost unchanged - in fact, it has come down marginally though the cut in borrowings is smaller than what could have been possible with the buoyant revenue collections.

While there has been a slight increase in overall expenditure, capital expenditure remains more or less unchanged. There are two disconcerting trends on the expenditure side. First, the Budget estimates for 2024-25 show only marginal increase in allocation in most of the items of expenditure compared to that of 2023-24. In fact, in some of the key items, it shows a decrease. In the case of commerce, industry and energy, we find a decline in Budget estimates for 2024-25. Second, in many items of expenditure, the revised estimates for 2023-24 are lower than the Budget estimates for the same year. Social welfare and scientific departments are notable in this context.

Effective capital expenditure, which is capital expenditure plus the grant in aid for creation of capital assets, have come down when we compare revised estimates and provisional actuals for 2023-24. The decline in revised estimates compared to Budget estimates is an



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Seetharaman with her staff before presenting the budget

indication of the lack of capacity of the government to spend, which is likely to undermine the expected multiplier effects of such expenditures. Thus, we need to wait and watch as to how much of the proposed outlays are utilized. Further, the same levels of capital expenditure imply that the government would bank more on private investments, as indicated in the Economic Survey, which has not yet registered a significant increase in recent years.

CONSUMPTION AND EMPLOYMENT

The Budget relies on two measures to bolster demand and increase private consumption. It takes the route of tinkering with the new income-tax regime to leave slightly more disposable incomes for a section of taxpayers, which is expected to stimulate demand. Given the growth in indirect tax collections, there was more room for income-tax reliefs, which could have been useful to not only stimulate demand but also increase dwindling household savings. This is an opportunity missed. Second, the Budget expects employment growth to take place, imparting more incomes, and, hence, higher demand in the economy.

The internship scheme, the direct thrust on channeling funds to first-time employees with commensurate benefits to companies to incentivize a hiring of more people and providing salary top up for first time employed are unlikely to create more jobs as they do not address the questions of social aspirations and technological changes which directly impinge labor market outcomes. Moreover, implementing these schemes is not straightforward. The internship scheme has the additional risk of becoming a short-term urban employment programme, which only creates a pool of the unemployed in the future.

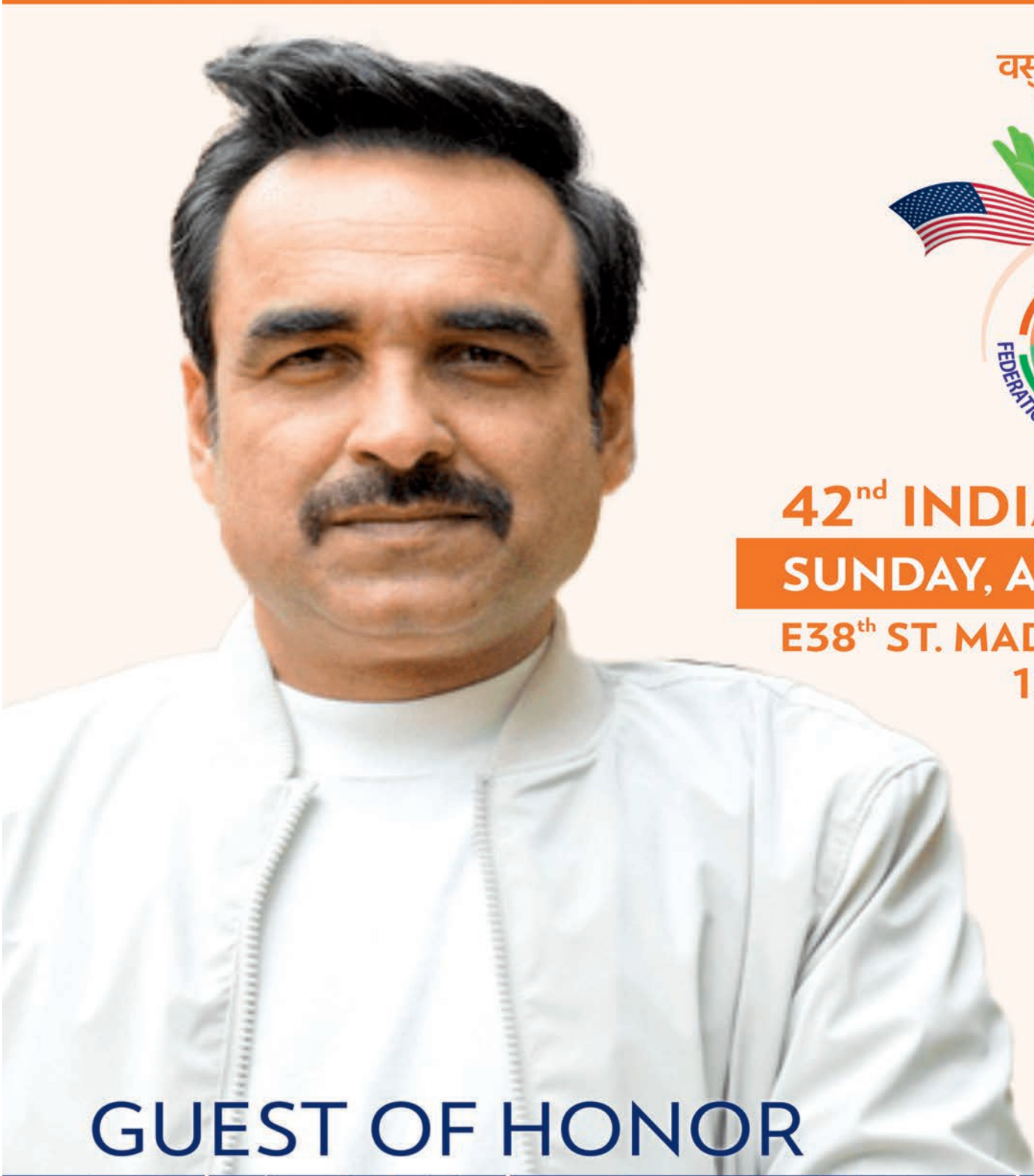
Employment growth is also expected to take place with the revival of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector through the credit route with a guarantee scheme being launched, besides asking banks to have their own models for lending that is not linked with collateral. Assistance to States such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand is also expected to give an indirect push to investment and employment along with the thrust to housing in urban and rural areas.

It needs to be noted that MSMEs need to have not only credit but also a conducive environment to operate for their growth. Hence, the efficacy of providing only credit and leaving the rest to market forces might not generate the desired results.

THE OMISSIONS

Barring the announcement of tax benefits for Indian start-ups and their investors, including scrapping the contentious angel tax for all classes of investors and aligning capital gains rates between listed and unlisted equity and the increased limit of Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA) loans from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh, the big push for the industrial sector is conspicuously absent in the Budget. Neither was there any mention of the Railways, PLI Scheme, Gati Sakthi and the Census. The list of omissions could be longer, but a lack of clear initiatives towards the education and health sectors to tap demographic dividend might not augur well with the vision of 2047. Equally important is to strike a balance between cities and rural economy and to make a distinction between jobs and internships. With the macroeconomy well poised at the moment, some bold steps and details of the journey to 2047 could have been outlined.

(M. Suresh Babu is Director, Madras Institute of Development Studies)



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Biden committed to attending QUAD Summit in India: White House



"We're still committed to there being a Quad leader summit this year, but there's nothing on the calendar right now for it," White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby told reporters at a news conference on July 25.

JULY 26, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Joe Biden is still committed to attending the annual leadership summit of the QUAD countries which is scheduled to be held in India this year, the White House said on Thursday, July 25.

"We're still committed to there being a Quad leader summit this year, but there's nothing on the calendar right now for it," White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby told reporters at a news conference here.

QUAD, comprising Australia, Japan, India and the US, is an initiative of Biden. In the first 100 days of his presidency, he convened a virtual leadership summit of the QUAD countries in 2020. Since then, QUAD leaders have been holding an annual summit on a rotation basis. India is scheduled to host the QUAD leadership summit this year.

Kirby said now that Biden is not running for reelection, certainly, one can expect there will be opportunities on the calendar that may not have been before.

"So, we're all exploring what those opportunities can look like in terms of advancing his foreign policy agenda and national security opportunities here and around the world. But I don't have anything on the schedule to speak to now, but I mean, stay tuned," he said.

"I think there'll be some opportunities that the president is going to want to explore. Look, I mean, we've still got a war in Ukraine, still got a war in Gaza, still got climate change to deal with. We've still got a very restless Indo-Pacific. I mean, I could go on and on. There's plenty of things for the national security team to try to continue to get done," Kirby said in response to a question.

NHRC, India Secretary General, Bharat Lal speaks on 'India: Challenges & Opportunities'

JULY 25, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): NHRC, India Secretary General, Bharat Lal spoke on 'India: Challenges & Opportunities' at Aspen Security Forum, Colorado, USA.

In the session moderated by Ravi Agrawal, Editor-in-Chief of Foreign Affairs, Mr Lal highlighted India's progress in ensuring an improved quality of life & dignity for its citizens, contributing to international peace, prosperity and providing soft power for the good of the world.

Mr Lal said that India assists other countries including the global South in times of need given its value system of empathy and compassion. In a highly conflicted world, India stands for reason and dialogue.

He said that today, India produces 1.5 million engineers, 110 thousand doctors and many other professionals. The Indian Diaspora, known for being model citizens in their adopted countries, contributes to global peace and prosperity.



Mr Lal highlighted India's progress in ensuring an improved quality of life & dignity for its citizens, contributing to international peace, prosperity and providing soft power for the good of the world.

He also highlighted the role of NHRC, India in protecting and promoting the human rights of every citizen. India serves as a model for development and democratic governance. The recent general elections demonstrate how Indian democracy functions and provides a model to many nations.

Underscoring the scale of work in India with facts and figures, Mr Lal

said the country has the skill and aptitude to convert crisis into opportunity. Today, India offers opportunities for development, prosperity and good governance.

He said that the governance in India is non-discriminatory and focuses on ensuring basic amenities for all. Indian governance mantra is that no one is left out. The session was followed by insightful Q&A.

Join FOGA Convention 2024

JULY 24, 2024



DALLAS (TIP): Federation of Gujarati Associations, USA is organizing a 3-day convention to celebrate the glory of the State of Gujarat, and showcase the unity of Gujaratis in North America, according to the information provided to The Indian Panorama by Gunjan Shah and

Gayatri Joshi.

The convention will be held from August 2 to August 4, 2024 at Hyatt Regency DFW International Airport, TX 75261, Dallas, TX.

ABOUT FOGA: The Federation of Gujarati Associations of USA (FOGA) was established in 2021 to connect all Gujaratis living in the United States and provide a platform as "One United Voice of Gujaratis." FOGA embodies the values of the diaspora uniting major Gujarati associations across the USA. FOGA continues to significantly impact Gujaratis by supporting important causes, expanding its global reach, and giving back to the community and our motherland.

KEY FEATURES OF THE FOGA CONVENTION: The Federation of Gujarati Associations - FOGA will host its first annual convention on Aug 2, 2024. A three-day event filled with fun, thought-provoking, entertaining, informative, and exhilarating activities. It's an opportunity to meet, reconnect, and renew the spirit of being a Gujarati.

A melting pot for leading Gujaratis from different walks of life: political leaders, spiritual leaders, Industrialists, Philanthropists, film and TV celebrities, Poets, Singers, Entrepreneurs, Sports personalities, and many more.

- Dance to the tunes of Garba,
- People will be dressed in traditional Gujarati attire.
- Knowledge sessions on youth, finance, business, health, matrimony.
- Exhibition with over 60 stalls.
- Youth conference and awards ceremony.
- Strong business networking opportunities.

Come and join the convention to learn what makes a Gujarati... "The Gujarati"

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS: US Senators, US Congressmen, State level Political leaders from the USA and India, Celebrities from Culture, Folk Arts, Bollywood, and Spirituality.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Protestors raise Palestinian flag, take down and burn US flag near Congress



Protestors in front of the Union Station, near the US Congress, where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed a Joint Session of the US Congress. -Photo credit : Al Jazeera

JULY 25, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Pro Palestinian-protestors on Wednesday, July 24, lowered an American flag and burned it down a few blocks away from the US Congress and hoisted a Palestine flag in its place. The incident happened in front of the Union Station, near the US Congress, where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed a Joint Session of the US Congress. The protestors in several hundreds were protesting against the US policy in the Middle East and the bombing of innocent civilians by Israelis in Gaza and parts of Palestine.

Six people were arrested by the local police. Videos posted online showed that the protestors were shouting pro-Hamas and anti-Israeli slogans. They lowered a huge American flag in front of the busy Union Station and burned it down, then they raised the flag of Palestine which was much smaller.

The protests were also held in several parts of the city as Netanyahu addressed the Congress. Many of them were seen shouting slogans against him outside the hotel he stayed in. Several other protestors were seen defacing some of the historic monuments in the city and writing Hamas over the wall and statue. Barricades were installed around important government buildings and offices in the city, including the White House and the US Congress. Police used pepper spray against the protestors outside the US Capitol.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Harris' endorsement as presidential nominee created burst of energy in Democratic Party: Krishnamoorthi

JULY 25, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): President Joe Biden's decision to endorse Kamala Harris as the presidential nominee has generated a burst of energy and enthusiasm within the party and it now has the chance to win back the White House, prominent Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi has said.

Over the weekend, Vice President Harris was endorsed by Biden, who announced his decision to drop out of the race for the White House.

On Wednesday, July 24, he told the nation that he did this to unite the party. Following Biden's dismal performance at the debate against Donald Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, there was a sense of disappointment in the party.

"It's exciting. I mean, I think there's no other word for it. It's exciting. It created a burst of energy and enthusiasm, positivity within the Democratic Party," Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi told PTI in an interview.

Krishnamoorthi, a 51-year-old Democratic Party lawmaker from Illinois, said he plans to campaign for Harris in the key battleground state of Wisconsin on Saturday.

"She's hit the ground running, been

greeted by boisterous crowds. I think that people feel like, nothing's a guarantee, but we have a shot. We have a chance now to win back the White House, and we need somebody who can take the case to Donald Trump. I can't think of someone else better than Kamala Harris to do that right now," Krishnamurthi said.

In three days after she became the party's likely presidential candidate, Harris' campaign has raised over USD 130 million.

"If you do this every three days, it's going to be a pretty tremendous amount of money at some point. It's actually a fabulous sum as it is. All that being said, we're up against forces that can tap into unlimited amounts of money. So, it's significant that she's able to raise that much money from so many people. Remember, these are grassroots supporters who are putting in money, and I think that's a big deal," he said.

Responding to a question on the rise of Indian Americans in politics, Krishnamoorthi, who serves as a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Committee On Oversight And Reform, said they are following a well-worn path that various immigrants have taken in this country.

"There's this old saying in Washington DC, if you don't have a seat at the table, you're on the menu. Now, I think Indian Americans in a big way are pulling up the proverbial seat to the table and making sure that their issues are addressed, that their concerns are met, and that they are also contributing back to society as a whole and paying it forward," he said.

Over the next 100 days, he said there's going to be a constant requirement to continue to raise resources, but there's also a requirement to set forth a message, to be disciplined in talking about priorities, making sure those priorities are ones that resonate with everyday people and families who are watching carefully to see whether the person in the White House or the next person in the White House is going to be fighting for them.

Responding to a question, Krishnamoorthi said the next president is going to have a lot on his or her plate.

"I think the next president is going to need to both deal with certain issues which the electorate is very concerned about right now, such as, for instance, protecting reproductive freedom, making sure that we take care of the border and the immigration system which is really tied together. We have to



Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi has said that Biden's endorsement of Harris created a burst of energy and enthusiasm, positivity within the Democratic Party

solve our legal immigration system problems which are a mess and deal with the border simultaneously," he said.

"They also want an elected official who's going to look forward. What are the challenges of the future? How do you defeat the Chinese Communist Party in this global technological competition that we have? How do we make sure that we continue to raise our standard of living so that our children are better off than we are? Those are the types of questions that she's going to need to face going into the Oval Office," he said.

(SOURCE: PTI)

Three Indian American lawmakers endorse Kamala Harris for president



Representatives Khanna, Thanedar and Jayapal have endorsed Kamala Harris for President

JULY 24, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): All five Indian American lawmakers have hailed President Joe Biden's decision to withdraw from the presidential race and three of them threw their weight behind Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic Party's likely presidential nominee.

Biden, 81, announced on Sunday that he had decided to give up running for re-election as president of the United States and endorsed his deputy Harris to be the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party-with just 107 days left until the November 5 elections.

There are five Indian American lawmakers in the current House of Representatives - Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ro Khanna, Shri Thanedar, Pramila

Jayapal and Ami Bera. They all are Democrats.

Three of them - Khanna, Thanedar and Jayapal -- have endorsed Harris, 59, so far. Harris is the first-ever Indian American to be elected as the vice president of the country.

Congresswoman Jayapal was the first of the five Indian American lawmakers to endorse Harris to be the presidential nominee. "Kamala Harris for President. Let's beat Donald Trump and make history," Jayapal said in a post on social media throwing her full support to Harris.

The two spoke over the phone as well.

"Vice President Kamala Harris just called me, and I told her I am 1,000 per cent in for her to be our President! She has the smarts, the experience, the accomplishments and the agenda to lead us to victory in November. Let's go!" Jayapal said.

The four-term lawmaker, Jayapal is the first Indian American woman to be elected to the House of Representatives. Over the last few years, she has emerged as a powerful voice in the party and is considered one of the most influential Democratic lawmakers.

"I am proud to endorse Kamala Harris as our nominee. Her trailblazing

candidacy as the first African American woman and first Asian-American will be a jolt of energy in our party. Our party can now run on a message of hope and a vision for the future," Khanna said.

Khanna said Biden would be remembered as an extraordinary President for starting to reverse 40-plus years of economic policy that has devastated working-class communities.

"He showed us what it means to put country first to save American democracy and now he is putting our country ahead of self-interest," he said.

Thanedar in a statement said he had no doubt that President Biden would have beaten Trump.

"But I respect his decision and fully support and echo his endorsement of Vice President Kamala Harris. She would be a fantastic nominee and would be an amazing President. I look forward to another four years of a Democratic presidency that puts people first," Thanedar said.

"President Biden's policy achievements have already established his place as one of the most consequential presidents in American history," Congressman Krishnamoorthi said.

"Through his decision today, Joe Biden has demonstrated the true and selfless

nature of a life committed to putting the country, and his fellow Americans first," he said in a statement.

Congressman Bera said Biden is the most consequential and effective president of his lifetime.

"From passing historic investments in infrastructure to restoring American leadership on the world stage, I am proud of what we've been able to accomplish under his leadership. Thank you for your 50-plus years of unwavering service and dedication to our great nation," he said.

Virginia State Senator Suhas Subramanyam also announced his endorsement.

"I'm proud to endorse Vice President Harris as our standard-bearer this year. Kamala Harris is the right leader at the right time to get the job done. But, we won't be able to accomplish anything next year if we don't win the House and the Senate," he said.

"With President Biden's announcement that he will no longer seek the Democratic Party's nomination, I am beyond proud and excited to endorse Vice President Kamala Harris for this historic opportunity," said Neil Makhija, Montgomery County Commissioner.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Must respect LAC, past pacts, EAM S Jaishankar tells China

NEW DELHI (TIP)

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday, July 25, underlined the need for "full respect" for the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and said that it is in the "mutual interest" of both India and China to "stabilise" diplomatic ties as he met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Laos.

The two leaders met in Laos's capital Vientiane to participate in the meetings of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It was the second meeting between Jaishankar and Yi within a month.

Jaishankar and Yi also agreed on the need to give "strong guidance" to fulfil the disengagement process following the military standoff in eastern Ladakh in May 2020.

"Met with CPC Politburo member and FM Wang Yi in Vientiane today. Continued our ongoing discussions about our bilateral relationship. The state of the border will necessarily be reflected on the state of our ties. Agreed on the need to give strong guidance to complete the disengagement process. Must ensure full respect for the LAC and past agreements. It is in our mutual interest to



EAM S Jaishankar with Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Laos. PTI

stabilise our ties. We should approach the immediate issues with a sense of purpose and urgency," Jaishankar tweeted.

Wang Yi hoped that the two nations would work together to "actively explore" for the two neighbours to get along with each other, and guide all communities to develop positive perceptions of each other, according to an official statement.

The Chinese Foreign Minister further stated that having the China-India relationship back on track would also be

in the interest and "shared aspirations" of countries of the 'Global South'.

India has been maintaining that its relations with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border regions. The Jaishankar-Wang Yi talks came amid the dragging border row in Ladakh that entered its fifth year.

The two leaders last met on July 4 in Kazakhstan's capital of Astana on the sidelines of the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

After July 25th meeting, the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement that the talks gave both Jaishankar and Wang Yi an opportunity to review the border situation since their Astana meeting. Also, both sides will hold an early meeting of the Working Mechanism on Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) to take discussions forward, the statement added.

Both sides must fully abide by relevant bilateral agreements, protocols, and understandings reached between the two governments in the past, the Ministry said in the statement.

India and China have so far engaged in 21 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks to resolve the Ladakh standoff, which marked the most serious military conflict between the two neighbours in decades. India has been pushing for China to disengage from the Depsang and Demchok areas.

The last round of high-level military talks was held in February. Though no breakthrough was reached, both India and China agreed to maintain "peace and tranquillity" on the ground and continue communication on the way ahead.

Royalty on minerals not tax; states competent to impose taxes on mineral rights: SC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Holding that royalty payable on minerals is not a tax, the Supreme Court on Thursday, July 25, said states have the legislative competence to impose taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land.

"Royalty is not a tax. Royalty is a contractual consideration paid by the mining lessee to the lessor for enjoyment of mineral rights. The liability to pay royalty arises out of the contractual conditions of the mining lease. The payments made to the Government cannot be deemed to be a tax merely because the statute provides for their recovery as arrears," a nine-judge Constitution Bench led by CJI DY Chandrachud said.

"The legislative power to tax mineral rights vests with the State legislatures. Parliament does not have legislative competence to tax mineral rights under Entry 54 of List I, it being a general entry. Since the power to tax mineral rights is enumerated in Entry 50 of List II, Parliament cannot use its residuary powers with respect to that subject-matter," the Bench said in an 8:1 verdict.

"The State legislatures have legislative competence under Article 246 read with Entry 49 of List II to tax lands which comprise of mines and quarries. Mineral-bearing land falls within the description of "lands" under Entry 49 of List II," the majority said. While justices Hrishikesh Roy, Abhay S Oka, JB Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih agreed with the CJI, Justice BV Nagarathna dissented to say that states do not have the legislative competence to levy taxes on minerals and mineral-bearing land. She said it "would lead to a breakdown of the federal system envisaged under the Constitution in the context of mineral development and exercise of mineral rights."

As the Bench pronounced the verdict, senior advocates representing various states urged it to make the verdict operational with retrospective effect to ensure refund of taxes from the Centre even as Solicitor General Tushar Mehta insisted that the verdict should be made effective prospectively.

Source: TNS



Chinese embassy calls for resuming flights with India

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Chinese embassy in India took to social media Thursday to urge New Delhi to restore direct passenger flights between the two neighbouring countries.

Direct passenger flights have not been operating between India and China for the last four years, since the Covid-19 pandemic. Direct cargo flights, however, are continuing.

"Share[d] a video clip made by a Chinese media based on their research and data sources. They cannot help but ask: why is India distancing itself from China?" a spokesperson of the Chinese embassy posted on X.

China has been pressing India to resume direct flights, and the subject was even brought up by former Chinese foreign minister Qin Gang during his meeting with external affairs minister S. Jaishankar in New Delhi in March 2023, on the sidelines of the G20 foreign ministers' conclave.

New Delhi has remained reluctant to resume direct flights due to the border dispute between the two countries that remains a flashpoint for ties.

While flights were originally cancelled due to the pandemic in March 2020, the Galwan clashes in eastern Ladakh in June that year – the biggest military confrontation between the two neighbours in decades – led to the



continued restriction on direct flights between the two countries, according to reports.

After the clashes, India banned a raft of popular Chinese social media applications and restricted visas to Chinese nationals – both tourist and business visas.

According to media reports, India issued around 47,000 business visas to Chinese nationals in 2018 and close to 1,50,000 e-visas. However, by 2023-2024, only about 2,500 business visas and 3,000 e-visas were issued to Chinese companies and workers.

In 2019, a total of 3,39,442 tourist arrivals from China were documented by the Indian ministry of tourism. By 2021, this number dropped to 3,502. In 2022, a total of 11,762 tourist arrivals from China were documented by the ministry.

Have old ties with Russia, free to choose allies: India to US

A day after a top US official, briefing the US Congress, expressed 'disappointment' at the timing of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia, the Ministry of External Affairs on July 25 retorted, saying that India had a longstanding relationship with Moscow and every country had freedom of choice in a multipolar world.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said: "India has a long-standing relationship with Russia that is based on mutuality of interests. In a multipolar world, all countries have the freedom of choice. It is essential for everybody to be mindful of and appreciate such realities."

On July 24, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs in the US, Donald Lu, had expressed "disappointment" over the timing of PM Modi's visit to Russia and said Washington was holding "tough conversations" with New Delhi on these concerns.

PM Modi, on an official visit to Moscow (July 8-9) recently, had met Russian President Vladimir Putin. Lu's remarks were not the first sign of irritation at India-Russia ties. US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, had on July 11 warned to "not take the relationship for granted" and went on to say that "there is no such thing as strategic autonomy".

Reacting to this, the MEA had said India valued its strategic autonomy and had its own views. It also stated that the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two nations gave them the space "to agree to disagree" on certain issues, while respecting each other's viewpoints. *Source: TNS*

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

Pak using 'terrorism, proxy war' to stay relevant, will be given a tough response: Modi

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, July 26, said Pakistan has failed in all its nefarious attempts in the past but it has not learned anything from its history. Paying homage to the Kargil war heroes at Kargil War Memorial in Drass to mark the 25th anniversary of India's victory over Pakistan in 1999, PM Narendra Modi said Pakistan is still trying to keep itself relevant with the help of terrorism and proxy war.

Warning supporters of "terrorism" that they would never be successful, Modi said the "enemy" would be given a tough response. "Today, I am speaking from a place where the masters of terror can hear my voice directly, I want to tell these patrons of terrorism that their nefarious intentions will never succeed. Our soldiers will crush terrorism with full force and the enemy will be given a befitting reply," Modi said.

The prime minister laid a floral wreath at the Drass War Memorial to pay tributes to officers and soldiers of the armed forces who made the supreme sacrifice in service of the nation.

On July 26, 1999, the Indian Army announced the successful culmination of "Operation Vijay", declaring victory after a nearly three-month-long battle on the icy heights of Kargil in Ladakh.

The day is observed as 'Kargil Vijay Diwas' to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in the war.

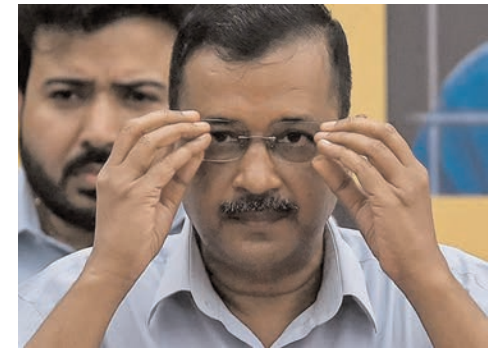
PM Modi slams Opposition on Agnipath scheme

Speaking on Centre's Agnipath scheme, PM Narendra Modi said it is also an example of the necessary reforms done by the Indian Army, adding that some people used to think that the Army means saluting politicians, doing parades. "But for us, the Army means the faith of 140 crore countrymen," he said.

Defending Agnipath, Modi said the goal of the scheme is to make the Indian Army young, to keep the Army continuously fit for war. "Unfortunately, some people have made such a sensitive issue related to national security a subject of politics. These are the same people who weakened our Army by committing scams worth thousands of crores in the Army," Modi said.



KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS



Liquor policy case: Delhi court extends Kejriwal's remand till August 8

Delhi Court extended judicial custody of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the CBI case registered in connection with alleged liquor scam till August 8.

Hearing the case on Thursday, July 25, the Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court extended Kejriwal's judicial custody in the case probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation on the expiry of his remand period. The Aam Aadmi Party leader was produced via video conferencing from Tihar prison.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had granted interim bail to Kejriwal in the money laundering case registered by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the alleged scam. However, he was not released from prison owing to the CBI case.

The ED arrested Arvind Kejriwal on March 21 in connection with an alleged scam in the scrapped Delhi liquor policy. The CBI arrested him from Tihar prison on June 26 in a prevention of corruption case registered in connection with the alleged scam. The matter relates to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-22, which has now been scrapped.

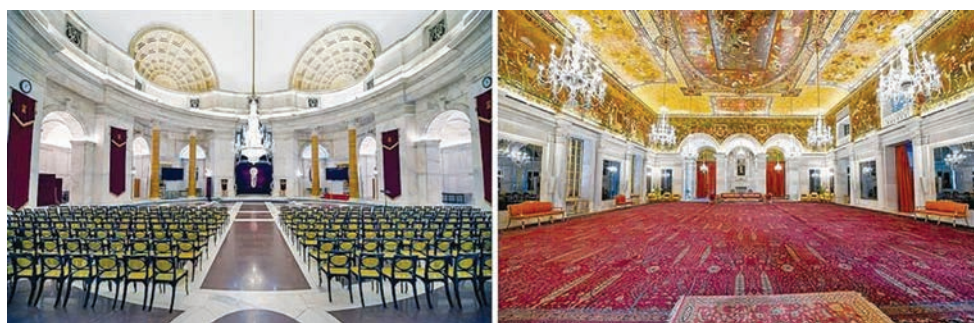
Rashtrapati Bhavan sheds 2 more colonial tags, renames halls

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Rashtrapati Bhavan's iconic Durbar Hall and Ashok Hall will now be called Ganatantra Mandap and Ashok Mandap, respectively.

President Droupadi Murmu renamed the halls on Thursday, July 25, as she marked the completion of her two years in office. A statement from the President house said the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the office and the residence of the President of India, is a symbol of the nation, and an invaluable heritage of the people and continuous efforts are being made to make it more accessible to people. "There has been a consistent endeavour to make the ambience of the Rashtrapati Bhavan reflective of the Indian cultural values and ethos," the communique said.

It said the Durbar Hall is the venue of important ceremonies and celebrations such as the presentation of National Awards. "The term 'Durbar' refers to courts and assemblies of Indian rulers



Durbar Hall now Ganatantra Mandap, (R) Ashok Hall rechristened Ashok Mandap.

and the British. It lost relevance after India became a Republic, that is, 'Ganatantra'. The concept of 'Ganatantra' is deeply rooted in Indian society since the ancient times, making 'Ganatantra Mandap' an apt name for the venue," the Rashtrapati Bhavan said as a reason behind rechristening an important feature of the complex.

Ashok Hall, the President house said, was originally a ballroom. "The word

'Ashok' connotes someone who is 'free from all sufferings' or is 'bereft of any sorrow'. Also, 'Ashoka' refers to Emperor Ashok, a symbol of unity and peaceful co-existence. The National Emblem of the Republic of India is the lion capital of Ashok from Sarnath. The word also refers to the Ashok tree, which has a deep significance in Indian religious traditions as well as arts and culture. Renaming 'Ashok Hall' as 'Ashok Mandap' brings uniformity in

President Droupadi Murmu has renamed two important halls of Rashtrapati Bhavan—Durbar Hall and Ashok Hall—in keeping the Narendra Modi government's efforts to shed the vestiges of colonial past.

language and removes the traces of anglicisation while upholding the key values associated with the word 'Ashok'," the President house said.

Last year, the famous Mughal Gardens on the Rashtrapati Bhavan premises was rechristened 'Amrit Udyan'.

Taking a swipe at the Modi government, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said: "There is no concept of 'durbar' but a concept of 'shehanshah'... Interesting." Party MP Karti Chidambaram termed it BJP government's "fetish" for changing names, saying by doing so, they thought they were bringing back some past glory. *Source: TNS*

India in history this Week

JULY 26 TO AUGUST 1

26 JULY



2008 There were 21 blasts in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat. 56 people were killed and more than 200 injured in this accident.

1876 Establishment of Indian Association in Calcutta.

2005 Unprecedented rain in Mumbai stalled life, killing more than a thousand people.

2002 The first Chhattisgarh State Shooting Championship started.

2009 India becomes the sixth country to launch nuclear submarine.

27 JULY



1897 Bal Gangadhar Tilak was arrested for the first time.

1982 The first American visit of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in nearly 11 years.

1994 Shooter Jaspal Rana won the gold medal in the World Shooting Championship.

1839 Central Reserve Police Force was established.

2015 The 11th President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam died in Shillong.

1889 The branch of the Indian National Congress was opened in London in 1889 under the leadership of Dadabhai Naoroji, William Wedderburn, WS Cann and William Digby in London.

1935 Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's wife Mata Ramabai died in 1935.

1891 Eminent scholar Rajendralal Mitra died in 1891 in matters related to Bharat Vidya.

28 JULY

1914 Kamagata Maru was evacuated from Venkuvar and sent to India.

1979 Charan Singh became the fifth Prime Minister of the country.

29 JULY

1876 Science organization was established in India.

1891 Famous social reformer, educationist and freedom fighter Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar died.

1996 Aruna Asaf Ali, one of the prominent women who contributed to the Indian freedom struggle, died in

Kolkata.

1748 The first army of the British Army arrived in India in 1748 to assist the East India Company.

1911 Mohun Bagan won the IF Shield for the first time in 1911.

2000 Seema Bhadauria pulled a 3390 kg aircraft with her teeth on 29 July 2000.



1904 Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoi Tata, one of the industrial personalities who laid the foundation of modern India, was born.

30 JULY

1886 India's first female legislator, S. Muthulakshmi, was born.

2012 In India, 300 million people had to live without electricity due to major power grid failure.

2012 In 2012, 32 people died and 27 were injured when a train caught fire in Andhra Pradesh.

31 JULY



1880 Famous Hindi storyteller and novelist Premchand was born.



1940 Freedom fighter Amar Shaheed Udham Singh died on the day.

1924 The Madras Presidency Club pioneered the conduct of radio broadcasts.

1933 Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi left the

Sabarmati Ashram.

1948 Establishment of the first state transport service in Calcutta in India.



1980 The great playback singer of Hindi films, Mohammed Rafi passed away.

1993 Inauguration of India's first floating maritime museum in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

2007 Indian-American doctor Sudhir Parikh was awarded the Pal Harris Award.

1861 Cherrapunji in Assam received 9,300 milliliters of rain, which became a world record.

1950 India and Nepal signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950.

2000 The Lok Sabha passed the Chhattisgarh State Construction Bill in 2000 by voice.

2012 Ashok Sen was declared one of the nine winners of the first Yuri Milner Fundamental Physics Prize (Fundamental Physics Award).

01 AUGUST

1920 Mahatma Gandhi started the Non-Cooperation Movement.

1957 National Book Trust was established.

1999 Bengali and English writer Nird.C. Chaudhary died in Britain.

1920 Mahatma Gandhi returned the Kesar-e-Hind Award given by the British Government in 1920.

1947 The partition of powers between India and Pakistan in 1947.

1985 In 1952, the first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurated Nationalized Airways at Safdarjung.

1953 All airlines in the country were nationalized on 1953.

1992 The then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao dedicated the Vizag Steel Plant to the nation in 1992.

2008 In 2008, the Board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) approved India's Special Monitoring Agreement.

1899 Kamala Nehru, the wife of the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, was born.



1932 Famous Hindi film actress Meena Kumari was born.

1916 Annie Besant, former president of the Indian National Congress, launched the Home Rule League.

2004 Sri Lanka won the Asia Cup of Cricket by defeating India.

QUEENS-BASED FESTIVAL OF CINEMA RETURNS

BY MABEL PAIS

Featuring
Directors GUR-INDER SINGH & MAHESHINDER SINGH's Short 'HAFIZ'
Writer ASHISH SAXENA's Script (in competition) 'AVA'S NEW WORLD'
Director ALEXANDER NILSEN's Short 'THE LOST JEWS OF PAKISTAN'

And many more

FESTIVAL OF CINEMA NYC returns to the Regal UA Midway in Forest Hills for the 8th edition of the popular Queens-based film festival, running from August 2-11. Additional venues this year include the Queens Public Library at Forest Hills, and Yant Tattoo Studios - the Official Filmmaker Lounge. This year the festival expands its programming with special presentations at the Queens Center Mall in Rego Park.

Festival of Cinema NYC will once again celebrate the film festival's attending filmmakers with a pre-launch party inside Resorts World NYC's famous 360° Bar and Lounge (110-0 Rockaway Blvd) on Thursday, August 1, In addition, FOC NYC will have an opening reception the following night featuring the top 10 winning designs from the 2024 Festival of Cinema NYC poster design contest. The reception will take place at Yant Tattoo Studios in Forest Hills, the official filmmaker lounge for the 2024 festival. Artwork will be on display for the entirety of the event from August 2 - 11.

Along with its presentation of more than 100 screenings, and FOC NYC's popular Red Carpet entrances flush with seemingly countless filmmakers, actors, documentary subjects, and below-the-line talent, the film festival's footprint will expand beyond the Regal UA Midway, by adding additional programming that is free and open to the public, at the Queens Library of Forest Hills, Yant Tattoo Studios, and Queens Center Mall. The jam-packed week and a half of screenings and events will conclude with an Awards Ceremony on August 11th at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center in Jamaica Queens.

Festival of Cinema NYC Founder and Executive Director Jayson Simba, said, "This year's edition of the film festival continues the growth of our event. Our mission to establish a bridge between community and the arts, by exhibiting the work of talented filmmakers, gets stronger every year. It always begins and ends with great films, but it becomes special by highlighting why we love to come to the movie theater and celebrating the artistic accomplishments of our filmmakers who foster that connection between us."

TICKETS

Tickets and Festival Passes for the 2024 Festival of Cinema NYC can be purchased by visiting FestivalofCinemaNYC.com. General admission tickets, opening and closing



Hafiz



Lost Jews of Pakistan



Script - Ava's New World

Credit / FestivalofCinemaNYC.com

nights tickets are available. Discounts are offered to seniors and individuals with disabilities. Tickets to the Closing Awards Dinner are available for a special price. All programming at the Queens Library at Forest Hills, The Queens Center Mall, and Yant Tattoo Filmmaker Lounge is free and open to the public.

2024 FESTIVAL OF CINEMA NYC EVENTS LINEUP

OPENING NIGHT

Out of My Comfort Zone
Director: Ivy Vale; USA; 105m
Preceded by

Groomed & Bridled
Director: Raymond-Kym Suttle; USA; 6m

CLOSING NIGHT

A Wonderful Way with Dragons - World Premiere
Director: Delfine Paolini; USA; 110m

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURE FILMS

A/way
Director: Derek Shane Garcia; USA; 62m
Bo Nan Za - North American Premiere

Director: Andrey Getov; Bulgaria; 61m
Encontro - North American Premiere
Director: François Manceaux; France; 116m

House Of Waltz
Director: Rodney Ferrer; USA; 104m
I Know You (Io Ti Conosco) - World Premiere

Director: Laura Angiulli; Italy; 77m
I Want to Live on Mars

Director: Mariya Somova; USA; 80m
The Imposters

Director: Nicholas Winter; UK; 87m
The Last Front

Director: Julien Hayet-Kerknawi; Belgium; 98m

Merry Good Enough
Directors: Caroline Keene, Dan Kennedy; USA; 94m

Mortimer - World Premiere
Director: Harrison Dillingham; USA; 40m

Once and For Real (Einmal richtig) - North American Premiere

Director: Holger Borggreffe; Deutschland; 98m

Second Chance City
Director: Chris Cardillo Jr; USA; 86m

Sorry, We're Dead
Director: Alex Zajicek; USA; 86m

Third Week - North American Premiere

Director: Jordi Torrent; USA/Spain; 90m

Threads of Blue
Director: Kenichi Sono; Japan; 93m

Wolfpack
Director: Cédric Peyster; France; 52m

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILMS

Hollywood Takeover: China's Control in the Film Industry

Director: Penny Zhou; USA; 64m - North American Premiere

No Farmers No Food: Will You Eat the Bugs? - North American Premiere

Director: Roman Balmakov; USA; 65m

The First Wave
Director: Matthew Heineman; USA; 93m

The Old Ballgame: The QBH Story - World Premiere

Director: Charles Caracciolo; USA; 54m

SHORT FILMS

There are 84 short films. UNPRODUCED SCRIPT COMPETITION - Top 10 Finalists Ten finalists have secured a place in the script competition.

FESTIVAL OF CINEMA NYC:

Festival of Cinema was founded by local independent filmmakers with a passion to get movies made and to expand the reach of artists' work. Recognizing the challenges filmmakers face in the film industry, the festival's aim is to establish a presence, and spread awareness, of cinematic creativity.

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

BROOKLYN FILM FEST PRESENTS OSCAR-QUALIFYING FILMS



Skin to Skin Credit: greenpointfilmfestival.org

BY MABEL PAIS

Featuring

Co-Director A. PATTANASHETTY's Narrative Short: 'SKIN TO SKIN' - US Premiere
Director ANDREW NADKARNI's Documentary Short: 'BETWEEN EARTH & SKY'
And Many More

Brooklyn's Greenpoint Film Festival (GFF) annual 13th edition takes place August 7-11. The film festival has more than doubled the number of films screened from last year, now totaling 118 films (20 feature-length, 95 shorts, and 3 XR exhibits). GFF's footprint has also become larger with additional screens added to The Boiler / ELM Foundation location (191 N. 14th Street), and Film Noir (122 Meserole Avenue) also added to the mix.

The screenings at Film Noir will be a special Polish Cinema Heritage Program offered free-to-the-public. Once again, the Greenpoint Film Festival will be dedicated to its mission to create a platform for local filmmakers to showcase films that carry riveting and thought-provoking stories, which strive to help others find meaning for a more insightful journey in their lives. GFF will also offer additional panels, workshops, and events focused on expanding the local film network in North Brooklyn with the goal of helping local filmmakers make connections and gain support for their projects. That will include GFF's signature Green Carpet, and the Filmmaker Awards including the presentation of their special festival awards dedicated to films that champion environmental and social justice.

Greenpoint Film Festival Creative Director Ricardo Vilar, said, "Our film festival has grown with leaps and bounds both with the number of films offered and the expansion of our footprint here in Brooklyn. But it all still starts with our mission on behalf of the filmmakers and giving them a platform to tell their stories and connect with audiences and each other. As we continue to build our reputation as a place and event to celebrate cinema here in North Brooklyn, we are thrilled with each step we take to bring recognition to their work and talent."



DOC-NYC-2023_BETWEEN-EARTH-AND-SKY_2. Nalini Nadkarni revisiting the tree she fell from

Credit : Derek Knowles

TICKETS

To purchase passes and tickets and to find more information on the Greenpoint Film Festival, visit greenpointfilmfestival.org.

2024 GREENPOINT FILM FESTIVAL LINEUP

OPENING NIGHT SELECTION

Lucha: A Wrestling Tale
 Director: Marco Ricci; USA; 96m
'Lucha' tells the story of the Taft High School Women's wrestling team, one of the first girls wrestling programs in NYC. In particular, it tells the story of four young women who view wrestling as their ticket to acceptance and progress. Shirley wants a college scholarship, Nyasia wants to get in shape, Mariam is juggling studies and sports, and Alba is a recent immigrant looking for a home.

CENTERPIECE SELECTION

Unicorns
 Director: Alex Lora; Spain; 94m
Isa is a Feminist and polyamorous posh girl; she passionately defends her life. When Guillem proposes to be a monogamous couple, Isa is not sure if he wants to change her life and, given her lack of decision, Guillem decides to break the relationship. Living in a world of appearances and comforts, her contradictions come to light and her universe is crumbling at the blow of likes and moral judgments in this web that social networks have become.

PRECEDED BY

The Masterpiece
 Director: Alex Lora; Spain; 20m
Leo and Diana, a rich couple, bring a broken TV to a recycle point. They meet Salif and his son, two scrap dealers. Diana asks them to come to their house to get more objects. Once there, Leo looks at them collecting objects with mistrust, until they see the scrap dealers have an expensive painting.

CLOSING NIGHT SELECTIONS

Drum Song: The Rhythm of Life - US Premiere
 Director: Kelly MoneyMaker; USA; 49m
'Drum Song: The Rhythm of Life' explores the climate crisis through the eyes of Alaska's Indigenous peoples as they utilize their ancestral knowledge and modern science to adapt to the changing rhythms of seasons, cycles, and

movements across eroding lands and melting Arctic ice. The global impact of the story feeds into the current and worldwide surge of politically conscious indigenous peoples demanding human rights, food sovereignty, and self-governance.

Miwene

Directors: Keith Heyward, Jennifer Berglund, Gange Anita Yeti Enomenga, Obe Beatriz Nenquimo Nihua; Ecuador; 105m

Steeped in the long oral tradition of Waorani storytelling, Gange Yeti shares her own coming-of-age story as a young Waorani woman living deep within the Amazon rainforest. Following Gange and her community for over 11 years, the film captures her transition from a quiet teenager into a confident young mother at a critical turning point for her culture and rainforest.

NARRATIVE FEATURES

In addition, there are 12 narrative features.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

There are 4 documentary features.

NARRATIVE SHORTS

There are 74 narrative shorts.

DOCUMENTARY SHORTS

There are 15 documentary shorts.

ANIMATION SHORTS

There are 5 animation shorts.

XR EXHIBIT

Three fit into this category.

For a complete list of films and events, visit greenpointfilmfestival.org

GREENPOINT FILM FESTIVAL (GFF)

Learn more at greenpointfilmfestival.org
ABOUT ELM FOUNDATION/THE BOILER

Learn more at elmfoundation.art

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

OSCAR-QUALIFYING HOLLYSHORTS FEST RETURNS

BY MABEL PAIS

Screening

Director ADAM J GRAVES'S
'ANUJA'

Co-Producer MURUGAN
THIRUCHELVAM'S

'AN ANGEL ON OXFORD STREET'

And many, many more

(Photo here)

The Oscar® Qualifying HOLLYSHORTS FILM FESTIVAL returns for its much-anticipated annual 20th edition. HollyShorts screenings will take place from August 8-18th. This year's hybrid celebration of short films takes place in person, with screenings at the world-renowned TCL Chinese Theatres, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., 3rd Level, Hollywood, CA, 90028 and virtually through the official festival streaming platform, BITPIX. The annual awards gala takes place on August 18.

From over 6000 entries, over 400 films form this year's anniversary program. On Friday, July 12, HollyShorts shared the entire 2024 selection on YouTube. For the complete list of films and more information, visit hollyshorts.com.

Last year, the Academy® granted the festival their 4th OSCAR®-qualifying award for Documentary Short Film, this accolade joined their other three top awards, Best Short Film Grand Prize, Best Short Animation and Best Short



Anuja

Credit: hollyshorts.com

Live Action. The winners of these awards will be eligible for consideration for a 2025 Academy® Award.

SOME OF THE HOLLYSHORTS FESTIVAL CATEGORIES ARE

DOCUMENTARY, LIVE ACTION, ANIMATION, SCI-FI, MUSIC VIDEO, WEB SERIES, MIDNIGHT MADNESS, PODCAST, TELEVISION.

Learn more at hollyshorts.com.

INAUGURAL SPORTS CATEGORY

HollyShorts has also launched an inaugural Sports category with NBA Champion, Metta World Peace as the head judge.

TICKETS

For tickets and passes, visit hollyshorts2024.eventive.org/passes/buy

HOLLYSHORTS FILMS

HollyShorts is devoted to showcasing

the best and brightest short films from around the globe, advancing the careers of filmmakers through screenings, networking events, and various panels and forums. The festival showcases the top short films produced in 40 minutes or less. Learn more at hollyshorts.com.

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

Get to the Point



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www.theindianpanorama.news

Key takeaways from Union Budget 2024-25

FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT, SKILLING, MSME AND MIDDLE CLASS; TAX STRUCTURE UNDER NEW REGIME REVISED

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Union Budget-2024 presented on Tuesday, July 23, unveiled a concerted jobs push and a raft of schemes for young people ranging from internship guarantees to employment-linked incentives even as it laid out a bouquet of sops for critical allies and attempted to balance the exigencies of running a coalition with maintaining fiscal discipline.

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman's second-shortest budget speech, and her seventh overall, also focussed on changes in direct and indirect tax regimes – including a hike in long term capital gains tax for listed assets from 10% to 12.5%, the scrapping of indexation (which took inflation into account while calculating asset values) and introduction of a flat 12.5% rate for real-estate, the removal of the angel tax for all investors, and a sharp reduction in customs duties for items such as gold, silver and mobile phones, which will make these items cheaper for consumers.

She announced some tweaks in the new tax regime that will save taxpayers up to Rs 17,500 annually and a review of the income tax act, hinted that the government was moving towards next-generation reforms, and announced that the fiscal deficit stood at 4.9%, keeping India firmly on the fiscal glide path first announced three years ago.

"The #BudgetForViksitBharat ensures inclusive growth, benefiting every segment of society and paving the way for a developed India," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

The budget largely steered away from populist announcements, although chunks of the 85-minute budget speech were devoted to schemes and sops aimed at Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, two states governed by allies Janata Dal (United) and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) whose support is crucial for the survival of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

Sitharaman announced a cluster of projects and packages – roads and highways, airports, flood control, irrigation schemes, tourist hubs, industrial nodes and power projects – totalling roughly Rs 59,000 crore for Bihar, which goes to the polls next year.

For Andhra Pradesh, the finance minister announced Rs 15,000 crore for the construction of the state capital Amaravati and additional funds if required, completion of the Polavaram



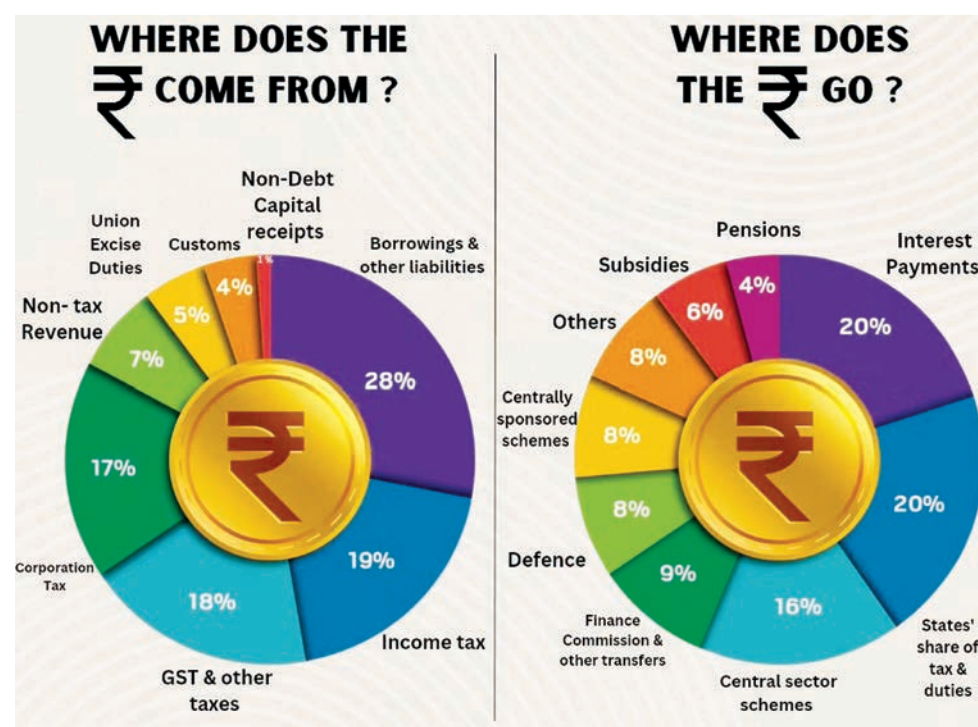
The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman departs from Ministry of Finance in North Block to Rashtrapati Bhavan and Parliament House, along with the Ministers of State for Finance, Shri Pankaj Chaudhary as well as her Budget Team/senior officials of the Ministry of Finance to present the first Union Budget 2024-25 of Modi 3.0, in New Delhi on July 23, 2024. Photo: PIB

dam project and two industrial nodes. "Our government has made efforts to fulfil the commitments in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. Recognising the state's need for capital, we will facilitate special financial support through multilateral agencies," Sitharaman added.

The Opposition flayed the budget, pointing out that not only did it not contain specific schemes for other states but also held little for Maharashtra and Haryana, two states ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that are slated to go to the polls later this year. The Congress also alleged that two of the five schemes announced for young people were lifted from its manifesto.

"Kursi Bachao [save your chair] Budget. Appease Allies: Hollow promises to them at the cost of other states. Appease Cronies: Benefits to AA with no relief for the common Indian. Copy and Paste: Congress manifesto and previous budgets," Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi said on X.

But NDA members welcomed the announcements. "From the beginning, we had requested special assistance for Bihar. In response, they have announced help in several areas. We are doing a lot of work, and we will receive additional support in many aspects, which will be beneficial," said



a beaming Bihar chief minister, Nitish Kumar.

This was the first budget presented by the third iteration of the NDA, mere weeks after the BJP suffered a setback in the general elections and failed to garner a simple majority in the Lok Sabha. The party won 240 seats in the 543-member House, giving space to allies to make greater demands for their respective states.

The BJP's sobering performance

was attributed to slipping support among key demographics such as young people, women, marginalised castes and rural poor over bread-and-butter issues such as a crippling lack of jobs.

The budget sought to address this lacunae by unveiling nine priority areas for the government – productivity and resilience in agriculture; employment and skilling; inclusive human resource

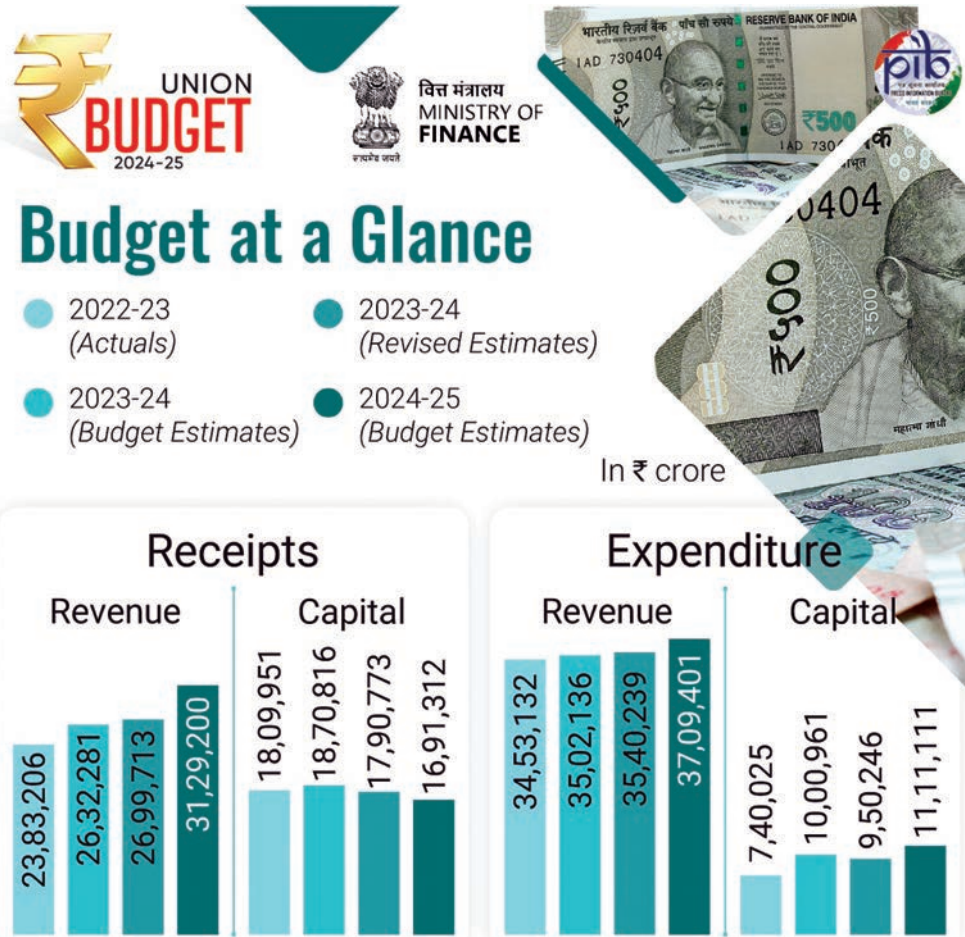
development and social justice; manufacturing and services; urban development; energy security; infrastructure; innovation, research, and development; and next-generation reforms – while maintaining fiscal prudence.

The sharpest focus was on young people. The government announced five schemes with an aggregate spend of around Rs 2 lakh crore for roughly 41 million people – it will pay one month's wage up to Rs 15,000 in three instalments to every new person entering the workforce, incentivise employers up to Rs 3,000 a month for two years towards their EPFO contribution for new employees, offer a direct incentive to both employer and employee for their EPFO contribution for the first four years, skill two million people over five years, and offer internship opportunities at 500 top companies for 10 million people over five years. The focus was on generating employment, a key grassroots grievance that hurt the BJP in the recently concluded polls. In addition to the five schemes listed above, the government also announced upgradation of 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes, government-backed skilling loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh and financial support for loans up to Rs 10 lakh for higher education in domestic institutions, making up its second thrust area – jobs.

Sitharaman made further commitments to women, including working women's hostels and cheap loans. "For promoting women-led development, the Budget carries an allocation of more than Rs 3 lakh crore for schemes benefitting women and girls," she said.

A third priority of the budget was maintaining fiscal discipline. It lowered its fiscal deficit target for the current year to 4.9% of the Gross Domestic Product, from the 5.1% target set in the interim budget in February and from 5.6% in the previous year. It lowered its gross borrowing target to Rs 14.01 lakh crore rupees but said it still plans to spend a record Rs 11.11 lakh crore rupees in capital expenditure on long-term infrastructure.

"The fiscal consolidation path announced by me in 2021 has served our economy very well, and we aim to reach a deficit below 4.5% next year. The government is committed to staying the



course. From 2026-27 onwards, our endeavour will be to keep the fiscal deficit each year such that the central government debt will be on a declining path as a percentage of GDP," Sitharaman said.

A revenue windfall this year has boosted the government coffers, giving it ample resources to boost spending while narrowing the fiscal deficit. The Reserve Bank of India paid the government a record Rs 2.1 lakh crore dividend this year, while tax revenues surged on the back of a stronger economy.

Taxes were a fourth key area. The government raised the short-term capital gains tax – on stocks held for less than one year – to 20% from 15%, and the long-term capital gains tax – for stocks held for over one year – to 12.5% from 10%. The step was seen as an effort to arrest the frenzy that has propelled the markets to record highs, a day after the economic survey sounded a word of caution on galloping markets. It caused a temporary slide in India's benchmark indices but they recovered shortly after and ended the day flat.

Sitharaman reduced customs duties on items ranging from cancer drugs, mobile phones, chargers, seafood, gold, critical minerals and seafood. She also tweaked the new tax regime slabs and raised the standard deduction limit from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000. "As a result of these changes, a salaried employee in the new tax regime stands to save up to Rs 17,500 in income tax," she said.

There were a string of other announcements – more funding for agricultural research, a movement towards small nuclear reactors and solar power for energy security, credit guarantee schemes and cheap loans for micro, small and medium enterprises, expanded urban housing, a new scheme for tribal people, and digitised land records – that hinted that the government was thinking about initiating next-generation reforms and a simplification of the tax framework.

But the four main priorities outlined the government's immediate and medium-term outlook – resolve the lingering problem around too few new jobs, win back key demographics such as young people disillusioned over bread-and-butter issues, shun populism as much as possible by training focus on fiscal prudence, but also ensure that allies critical to its survival remain in good humor.

SECTOR-WISE ALLOCATION FROM BUDGET 2024

Defence:	Rs 6,21,940 cr
Rural:	Rs 2,65,808 cr
Agriculture:	Rs 1,51,851 cr
Home affairs:	Rs 1,50,983 cr
Education:	Rs 1,25,638 cr
IT & Telecom:	Rs 1,16,342 cr
Health:	Rs 89,287 cr
Energy:	Rs 68,769 cr
Socia welfare:	Rs 56,501 cr
Commerce & Industry:	Rs 47,559 cr

RURAL HOUSING PUSH WITH 68% HIKE IN FUNDS

The central government will help build an additional 30 million houses in both urban and rural areas under the PM Awas scheme, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced in her seventh budget speech in Parliament, allocating an additional 68% funds for rural areas compared with the revised estimates of the previous budget. "Three crore additional houses under the PM Awas Yojana in rural and urban areas in the country have been announced, for which the necessary allocations are being made," Sitharaman said. "The government allocated Rs 54,000 crore for the rural housing programme in the FY 24-25 budget as against Rs 32,000 crore in the revised estimates in the last budget." Under the rural housing scheme, the government has constructed 2.63 crore dwelling units against a target of 2.94 crore.

Mobile phones, gold to cost less: What's cheaper and costlier in Budget 2024

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her seventh Union Budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025 on July 23.

The things that will get cheaper after the budget 2024 are mobile phones, chargers after a reduction of 15% custom duty.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that customs duties on cancer medicines and mobile phones will be significantly reduced, leading to lower retail prices for these items. Additionally, the cost of imported gold, silver, leather goods, and seafood is also expected to decrease. The customs duty on gold and silver will be lowered to 6%, while the duty on platinum will be reduced to 6.5%. "To enhance domestic value addition in gold and precious metal jewellery, I propose to reduce customs duties of gold and silver to 6%," said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said that the government would exempt customs duty on 25 critical minerals.

Which items have become cheaper?

Following the Budget 2024 announcement, several items are set to become more affordable.

Customs duty on mobiles, chargers, and accessories has been reduced to 15%. The duty on gold and silver is now 6%, while platinum is set at 6.4%. Additionally, three cancer treatment medicines are exempt from basic customs duty.

The government has also removed basic customs duties on ferro nickel and blister copper. The Finance Minister has proposed expanding the list of exempted capital goods for solar panel manufacturing.

Customs duties on 25 critical minerals have been fully removed, and duties on shrimp and fish feed have been lowered to 5%.

What will get costlier?

The government plans to increase customs duties, raising the rate on ammonium nitrate by 10% and on non-biodegradable plastics by 25%.

Additionally, telecom products will become more expensive due to a rise in the basic customs duty from 10% to 15% on certain telecom equipment.

Plastic products will also see a price increase following a hike in customs duty on these items.

In the previous budget, the Finance Minister reduced import taxes on several components, including camera lenses, to promote mobile phone manufacturing in India.




Additionally, the tax rate on lithium-ion batteries, crucial for phones and electric vehicles, was cut to lower production costs.

According to the Economic Survey 2024, India's GDP is expected to grow between 6.5% and 7% this year. Retail inflation has also declined to 5.4% in 2023-24, down from 6.7% the previous year. The survey, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on July 22, 2024, highlighted the importance of service and growth for the economy.

Continuing the trend from previous years, Budget 2024 will be delivered in a paperless form. An Interim Union Budget was presented on February 1, 2024, as the country prepared for general elections.

Overall, the upcoming budget holds promise for making some everyday items cheaper while addressing the expectations of various segments of society. As the Finance Minister prepares to present the budget, all eyes will be on the potential changes and how they will shape the economic

CHEAPER		COSTLIER	
 Cancer Drugs	 Fish & Marine Products	 Plastic & Related Goods	
 Mobile Phones & Accessories	 X-ray Equipment	 Ammonium Nitrate	
 Precious Metals (Gold, Silver)	 Essential Metals & Minerals	 Telecom Equipment	
 Solar Panels	 Leather Goods	 Garden Umbrellas	
 Footwear & Textiles		 Laboratory Chemicals	

Tax Relief and Revised Tax Slabs in New Tax Regime

0-3 lakh rupees	Nil
3-7 lakh rupees	5 per cent
7-10 lakh rupees	10 per cent
10-12 lakh rupees	15 per cent
12-15 lakh rupees	20 per cent
Above 15 lakh rupees	30 per cent

- Income tax saving of up to ₹ 17,500/- for salaried employee in new tax regime

Income Tax Relief for around Four Crore Salaried Individuals and Pensioners

- Standard deduction for salaried employees to be increased from ₹ 50,000/- to ₹ 75,000/-
- Deduction on family pension for pensioners to be increased from ₹ 15,000/- to ₹ 25,000/-

future of India.

New Tax Slabs Announced

Standard Deduction limit increased to Rs 75,000 from Rs 50,000 under New Tax Regime

Deduction on family pension for pensioners increased from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000 under New Tax Regime

Lowest Slab In New Tax Regime Increased To Rs 3 lakh From Rs 2.5 lakh.

This is 'kursi bachao' budget: Opposition slams Budget 2024

The Opposition on Tuesday slammed the NDA-led Central government for the Budget stating that it has nothing for the poor and more about saving the government. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today presented the first budget of the Modi 3.0 government.

'kursi bachao budget'

Taking a dig at the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Kalyan Banerjee said it is a budget for the ruling NDA and not for India. "This is a 'kursi bachao budget' (budget to save the chair). This budget is aimed at saving (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi's position. It is a budget for the NDA, not for India," Banerjee said.

Banerjee further said, "Last time they gave so many projects to Odisha. Now they (BJP) have won (the Assembly polls in the state), so there is nothing for Odisha. There is also nothing for Bengal." Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav claimed that it has ignored the interests of the youth and farmers. Yadav linked Sitharaman's announcements of several development measures for Bihar and Andhra Pradesh to the BJP's political compulsion to "save" its government and asked if there was anything for Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state.

Yadav said, "Sarkaar bachani hai toh acchi baat hai ki Bihar aur Andhra Pradesh ko vishesh yojnao se joda gaya



"KURSI BACHAO BUDGET. APPEASE ALLIES: HOLLOW PROMISES TO THEM AT THE COST OF OTHER STATES. APPEASE CRONIES: BENEFITS TO AA WITH NO RELIEF FOR THE COMMON INDIAN. COPY AND PASTE: CONGRESS MANIFESTO AND PREVIOUS BUDGETS."

Rahul Gandhi

hai'...They have increased unemployment in the last 10 years."

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor termed it an 'underwhelming budget'. he said that there is no mention of MNREGA and insufficient mention of steps taken to improve the income of a common person. "I didn't hear anything about the key issues facing the common man. We have seen far too little from govt on addressing income disparity. On job creation, a token gesture was made. I welcome only one provision which is abolishing of tax on angel investors. I had recommended it to Arun Jaitley more than 5 years ago," he added.

'Glad Nirmala Sitharaman read Congress manifesto'

Congress leader P Chidambaram said,

"I am glad to know that the Finance Minister has read the Congress Lok Sabha Manifesto after the election results. I am happy she has virtually adopted the Employment-linked incentive outlined on page 30 of the Congress Manifesto. I am also happy that she has introduced the Apprenticeship scheme along with an allowance to every apprentice spelt out on page 11 of the Congress Manifesto. I wish the FM had copied some other ideas in the Congress Manifesto."

RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha said that this Budget is again a disappointment. "The country's primary concern is unemployment. The organic model should have been introduced. The core sectors like labour, farmers, youth...there is no out-of-the-box

thinking for them," he said.

'Pradhan Mantri Sarkar Bachao Yojana'

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi termed this Budget as 'Pradhan Mantri Sarkar Bachao Yojana'. She said, "In an attempt to save their government for five years, they have given a package to their alliance partners in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. They should be ashamed... they have two alliance partners in Maharashtra. Maharashtra is the biggest tax-paying state, but it has never received funds from the Centre. Don't we have infrastructure needs?"

Samajwadi Party MP Awadhesh Prasad said that this Budget presented by PM Modi's minority government aims to save itself and has ignored Uttar Pradesh and Ayodhya. "This will be costly for the BJP," he added.

CPI(M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury said, "The issues like increasing unemployment, inflation and food prices were not addressed properly as they should have been. The government expenditure as per GDP has decreased. The economy will contract so the problem of the people will increase... Subsidies have been decreased... The economic activity has to be increased to increase the employment generation... The incentives to the employers will not increase the employment generation opportunities..."

Bihar, Andhra Pradesh get lion's share in Budget

Ruling BJP allies — Janata Dal (United) and Telugu Desam Party — emerged top beneficiaries of the Union Budget 2024-25 with Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, where the two respectively rule along with the BJP, taking the cake. Slamming it as a "bribe" to coalition partners, the Opposition said the disproportionate allocation was "critical to the survival of the NDA government led by the BJP".

Copious mention of Bihar (five times) in Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's record seventh Budget speech and announcement of generous assistance of Rs 15,000 crore to Andhra Pradesh riled the Opposition MPs, who made it a point to register their protest every time the FM cited Bihar in her 84-minute presentation.

The Budget offered no sops for poll-bound Maharashtra or Jharkhand — the latter found a single mention during the minister's reference to the new "Purvodaya" scheme aimed at developing all eastern states, while Maharashtra found none. Odisha, Andhra, Bengal also found one mention each in the speech as did Assam, HP, Uttarakhand and Sikkim, which managed assurance of help in the wake of rain and flood fury. Bihar, which the BJP rules in alliance with the JD(U) — a key government partner at the Centre — bagged promises of a whopping Rs 60,000 crore assistance by way of flood control, power generation, highway and heritage conservation projects.

Comprehensive development initiatives for Rajgir (home to a famous Jain Temple) and Nalanda — projects close to Bihar Chief Minister and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar's heart — were also announced, besides a Rs 11,500-crore flood control package. "Bihar has frequently suffered from floods, many of these originating outside the country. Plans to build flood control structures in Nepal are yet to progress. Our government, through the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme and other sources, will provide financial support for projects, with an estimated cost of Rs 11,500 crore, such as the Kosi-Mechi intra-state link and 20 other ongoing and new schemes," Sitharaman said.

For the new Andhra capital, the minister assured Rs 15,000 crore through multilateral development agencies and early completion of the Polavaram Irrigation Project, the lifeline of state's farmers.

The JD(U) and TDP hailed the Budget, saying "this is the start, more will come as the government runs its full course". Union Minister and senior JD(U) leader Rajeev Lallan Singh termed the Budget a "Modi googly". JD(U)'s Sanjay Jha, who had demanded a special category status for Bihar at the Sunday meeting convened by the government, also welcomed it. "We had asked for giving either special status or assistance to Bihar. We have received generous help today. The flood-control package will be a game-changer as thousands of

crores are lost annually to floods, which are the principal drivers of migration to Punjab and other states," Jha told The Tribune.

Slamming the government, TMC's Sudip Bandopadhyay called it "a Budget to bribe allies". Punjab Congress MPs led by Amrinder Raja Warring and SAD's Harsimrat Badal questioned the government over giving nothing to Punjab.

The TMC and BJD even walked out of the RS protesting the laying of the Budget. In the LS earlier, Tamil Nadu MPs asked "what about us" every time Sitharaman mentioned Bihar.

The Communist Party Of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau said the Budget should have focused on expanding economic activities, but instead its proposals are "contractionary and regressive". This will only impose further miseries on the people and depress the levels of investment and employment generation. "The Budget figures show that the revenue earnings of the government increased by 14.5% while the expenditures grew only by 5.94%. Instead of using these revenues for expanding economic activity, it has been used to reduce the fiscal deficit, to appease International Finance Capital, from 5.8% to 4.9% of the GDP," the Polit Bureau stated. The party also called the government's Employment-Linked Incentive a ruse to subsidise the corporates.



Salman Khan celebrates rumored girlfriend Iulia Vantur's birthday

Salman Khan and his family came together to celebrate the birthday of Iulia Vantur on July 24. A picture featuring Arpita Khan, Aayush Sharma, Alvira Agnihotri, Arhaan Khan, and other members of Salman's family and their close friends was shared on Instagram Reels by Salman's brother-in-law, former actor Atul Agnihotri.

The Romanian actor-singer reshared the group picture on Instagram Stories and wrote, "I love you." She wore a metallic dress for her birthday party.

More inside photos and videos of the birthday girl were shared by singer Mika Singh and other guests from the party that took place in Mumbai.

"Happy birthday to the most beautiful Iulia Vantur. God bless you with lots of happiness and success," wrote Mika on Instagram Stories alongside a video of himself with the actor from the party.

Singer and music composer Himesh Reshammiya along with wife-actor Sonia Kapur posed with Mika and the birthday girl in another inside photo from the night. Mika wrote, "Thank you for a wonderful party."

The Romanian singer-actor is often spotted at rumored boyfriend Salman's parties, which are attended by his close friends and family. She has not yet confirmed her relationship with the Bollywood actor, but has often spoken about him in interviews.

Iulia, who is rumored to be dating Salman since many years, opened up about the pros and cons of being associated with the actor in a 2022 interview. Iulia and Guru Randhawa's song Main Chala was released in 2022 and in the song's video, Salman was seen romancing actor Pragyajaiswal.

Iulia told ETimes at the time, "It is an honour, blessing and joy to work with Salman. He is such a great person first of all and a great actor and experienced in the field. When you are around him, you learn so much. I feel for me, at the moment, I wanted to work on my own identity. I am working on that, especially because people don't know me so well here and I think it is important to do that."

Aaj Ki Raat: Fans compare Tamannaah's dance number from Stree 2 to Nora's Kamariya

The first track from Stree 2 featuring Tamannaah Bhatia was released on July 24. Fans are divided over the dance number on social media. While a section of movie buffs have praised Tamannaah's screen presence and her moves, others have compared it to Nora Fatehi's Kamariya from Stree (2018).

The song starts with Tamannaah getting ready for her stage performance as Rajkummar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Aparshakti Khurrana and Abhishek Banerjee stare at her. As the actor dances to slow qavvali music, the song catches the pace. Later Rajkummar, Pankaj, Aparshakti and Abhishek also join her as they are mesmerised by the captivating dance.

Tamannaah and Maddock Films shared the song in a joint Instagram post and captioned it as, "#AajKiRaat hogi tabaahi ki raat! (ghost, blast and heart-shaped-eye emojis)." Fatima Sana Shaikh commented, "Hottie."

A user commented, "Nothing compared to kamariya from stree." Another user wrote, "Sabse bekar gana." A user also captioned his comment as, "Totally disaster song bad music and singer and vibe." While pointing out at the choreography, a user wrote, "what's wrong with the choreography these days from bad to terrible."

However, a section of users differed from the negative reviews. A fan commented, "I'm the only one who like this song i mean it's not that bad (blessings emoji) why half of comment section full of bad song bad songRs" Another fan wrote, "She ate it! (fire emoji)." While giving reference from the prequel, a fan wrote, "Finally pata chal gaya ki Rudra bhैया ki shama kaun hain 2018 ka mystery solved." A fan complimented Tamannaah and wrote, "Woahh !! Tamannah just rocked (heart and fire emojis)."



Janhvi Kapoor embodies flirtatious energy in 'Shaukan' from 'Ulajh'

The makers of the upcoming Janhvi Kapoor and Gulshan Devaiah-starrer film 'Ulajh' have released the first song from the film.

Talking about the song, Janhvi said, "I have always been a fan of Neha's songs, and collaborating with her for the first time on 'Shaukan' is one thing off my wish list. This song is incredibly upbeat and will make you want to hit the dance floor. It's hot, glamorous, and groovy. I think Shashwat, Jubin, and Neha have created another masterpiece."

For Neha Kakkar, singing 'Shaukan' along with Jubin was a terrific experience.

The singer said, "Kudos to Shashwat for making this banger. 'Shaukan' is not just another party number; it's a vibe. Can't wait for my fans to hear the song and groove to the beats."

Jubin Nautiyal added, "It's a pleasure



to collaborate with Shashwat and Neha. They are incredible artists, and our tastes in music align perfectly. Janhvi and Gulshan's on-screen chemistry has taken the song a notch higher. I hope all

my fans love the track as much as I do." 'Shaukan' is released under the label of Sony Music India and is available to stream on all major audio streaming platforms.



Gigi Hadid 'furious' at Suki Waterhouse over comments about Bradley Cooper

Gigi Hadid is reportedly seething over remarks made by former pal Suki Waterhouse after the model-turned-actress made disparaging remarks about her boyfriend, Bradley Cooper. Sources close to Hadid reveal that tensions have escalated, leading to a fallout between the former friends. The supermodel is said to be particularly upset by Waterhouse's negative comments about the Oscar winner who once dated Pattinson's fiancée. "They've fallen out, and there's no indication that things will ever be the same for them," a source told Life & Style. Gigi is rumoured to have been dating Bradley Cooper for some months now, and although the couple has not made their relationship public, they have been spotted together multiple times. "Gigi is totally team Bradley and taking this up as her own cause," the insider added.

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt set to reunite next month for 'special reason' amid nasty feud

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, are reportedly set to reunite next month if things go as planned. Hollywood's former power couple, whose acrimonious divorce has played out in public for years, will find themselves under the same roof at the same time, despite their ongoing legal battles. The anticipated reunion at the Venice Film Festival comes on the heels of their shared children dropping Pitt's surname, leaving the actor 'hurt' by the situation.

The high-profile split announced in 2016 has dragged on for eight years with no resolution in sight, as the feud continues to grow 'bitter.' The former couple has largely avoided each other at major events and awards shows, ensuring their paths rarely cross. However, they may be forced to encounter each other at the upcoming Venice International Film Festival. Angelina and Brad are both going to have their new movie debut at the big, star-packed event that kicks off on August 28.

The Maleficent star, whose last film was Marvel's Eternals in 2021, will debut her new biopic Maria, a tribute to opera singer Maria Callas, directed by Pablo Larraín. On the other hand, the Moneyball actor will return with a new film, Wolves, featuring George Clooney as his co-star and friend.

The biopic Maria centres on the life of the legendary opera singer Maria Callas. Written by Steven Knight and bankrolled by Fremantle, the film is helmed by Pablo Larraín, known for directing the biopics Jackie and Spencer, which starred Natalie Portman and Kristen Stewart. Maria is set to show up at the 81st Venice International Film Festival, where it's going to be in the running for the Golden Lion award.

Brad, who is currently filming his Formula 1 movie, will attend the Venice Film Festival for Wolves. The movie, made by Jon Watts, is all about two fixers who get paid to clean up a big-time crime. Things get crazy when one of them has to team up with someone they didn't see coming. It's also got a bunch of famous actors in it, like Austin Abrams, Amy Ryan, and Poorna Jagannathan.

Source: HT



Comic-Con fans assemble as Marvel eyes major reboot

Comic-Con returns in full force to San Diego this week, where a hugely anticipated Marvel superhero film event is among the draws for tens of thousands of hyped-up fans dressed as fantasy heroes and sci-fi villains.

One of the world's largest pop culture events, Comic-Con began five decades ago a humble comic book-themed gathering in a hotel basement, but today draws vast crowds and A-list stars promoting new movies and television shows.

Last year's edition was dampened by Hollywood strikes which prevented actors from attending, and quelled fan interest but Comic-Con is expected to draw 130,000 attendees back to the southern Californian city this time around.

The hottest ticket is the Saturday night Marvel movies presentation, at which parent company Disney is expected to unveil plans to reboot its mega-grossing superhero film franchise, after years of high-profile missteps.

The Marvel movies dominated Hollywood and global box offices for years, with 2019's "Avengers: Endgame" briefly becoming the highest-grossing film of all time at more than \$2.79 billion.



Cosplayers dressed as Marvel's Shadow Knight and Lady Loki pose outside the San Diego Convention Center on the first day of Comic Con International in San Diego, California, on July 24, 2024.

But the past few years have brought more flops than hits, as fans complained about over-complicated plotlines and mourned the departure of favorite characters like Robert Downey Jr's "Iron Man." And the franchise has been rocked by domestic violence revelations about

actor Jonathan Majors, who had been set to become the major new supervillain across multiple films.

Majors, who was convicted for assaulting and harassing his then-girlfriend, has been dropped by Marvel, but there is no word on who or what will

replace him. Saturday's presentation is expected to reveal how Disney will move forward without him, and has been billed as a potential "make or break" moment by some observers. It will take place inside the 6,000-capacity Hall H, where many camp in line for days to gain access.

"If the company wants to lure in anyone besides the dwindling ranks of... diehards, it needs to bring the answer to these questions to Hall H," wrote Susana Polo, for entertainment news outlet Polygon.

Also on the Comic-Con lineup from Disney are a look at "Alien: Romulus," the latest in the long-running sci-fi saga, and a "celebration" event for this weekend's major superhero release, "Deadpool & Wolverine."

Rival studio Warner, which runs the DC superhero movies, is keeping a lower profile, but will offer a glimpse at its Batman spinoff TV series "The Penguin," starring Colin Farrell.

Elsewhere, "Those About To Die," a bloody romp through Ancient Rome and its macabre world of chariot races and gladiator fights, starring Anthony Hopkins, will host multiple fan events.

Source: AFP

RUSSIAN DRONES ATTACK UKRAINE PORT SECOND NIGHT IN A ROW

KYIV (TIP): Russian drones attacked the southern Ukrainian port city of Izmail for a second straight night damaging infrastructure, Kyiv said on July 25, claiming several Russian attack drones entered Romanian airspace.

Moscow has targeted ports in the southern Odesa region persistently since it exited an accord last year brokered by the United Nations and Turkey allowing Ukraine to export grain via the Black Sea.

Local authorities in Izmail said "port infrastructure facilities were damaged" in the Russian attack and that two civilians were wounded.

The Ukrainian Air Force said Russia had launched 38 Iranian-designed attack drones and that air defence systems had downed 25.

"Another three Shaheds were lost after crossing the state border with Romania," it said.

The governor of the Odesa region, which borders EU and NATO member Romania, said the attack had damaged an administrative building.

Three people were wounded in the Russian attack one day earlier on Izmail, local authorities had said.

Romania's military carried out a search for drone debris near the border with Ukraine following the attack on Wednesday, with Romanians reporting hearing explosions.

People in 17 cities and villages in Romania's southeastern Tulcea county got alerts on their mobile phones early July 24 after "several objects" were observed "approaching the northern area" of the county. (AFP)

RUSSIAN MISSILES KILL 31 IN UKRAINE, GUT KYIV CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

KYIV (TIP): Russia struck cities across Ukraine on July 23 with a missile barrage that killed 31 people and heavily damaged a Kyiv children's hospital in an assault condemned as a ruthless attack on civilians.

Dozens of volunteers, doctors and rescue workers were digging through debris of a part of Okhmatdyt paediatric hospital in a desperate search for survivors after the rare day-time bombardment, AFP journalists on the scene saw.

The first responders ran for cover when sirens and an explosion sounded after the initial strikes -- a repeat attack that left four dead at a maternity hospital in a separate district of Kyiv, emergency services said.

President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russian forces fired more than 40 missiles toward at least five major civilian hubs, mainly in the south and east of the country, as well as the capital. (AFP)

You have officially become Iran's useful idiots: Netanyahu to protestors

WASHINGTON (TIP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on July 24 slammed Iran for funding and supporting groups against Israel and asserted that defeating the brutal enemies requires both courage and clarity.

For all we know, Iran is funding the anti-Israel protests that are going on right now outside this building not that many, but they're there and throughout the city.

Well, I have a message for these protestors: When the Tyrants of Tehran, who hang gays from cranes and murder women for not covering their hair, are praising, promoting and funding you, you have officially become Iran's useful idiots, Netanyahu said.

It's amazing, absolutely amazing. Some of these protestors hold up signs proclaiming 'Gays for Gaza'. They might as well hold up signs saying 'Chickens for KFC'. These protestors chant 'From the river to the sea'. But many don't have a clue what river and what sea they're talking about. They not only get an F in geography, they get an F in history.

They call Israel a colonialist state. Don't they know that the Land of Israel is where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prayed, where Isaiah and Jeremiah preached and where David and Solomon ruled? he said.

In his fourth address to the Joint Session of the Congress, the most by any foreign leader, Netanyahu alleged that in the Middle East, Iran is virtually behind all terrorism, turmoil, chaos and killing. And that should come as no surprise.

When he founded the Islamic



Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini pledged, We will export our revolution to the entire world.

We will export the Islamic revolution to the entire world.

Now, ask yourself, which country ultimately stands in the way of Iran's maniacal plans to impose radical Islam on the world? And the answer is clear: It's America, the guardian of Western civilization and the world's greatest power. That's why Iran sees America as its greatest enemy, he said.

Iran, he said, understands that to truly challenge America, it must first conquer the Middle East. And for this it uses its many proxies, including the Houthis, Hezbollah and Hamas.

Yet in the heart of the Middle East, standing in Iran's way, is one proud pro-American democracy my country, the State of Israel, he said.

Asserting that victory is in site, Netanyahu said the day after they defeat

Hamas, a new Gaza can emerge.

My vision for that day is of a demilitarized and deradicalized Gaza. Israel does not seek to resettle Gaza.

But for the foreseeable future, we must retain overriding security control there to prevent the resurgence of terror, to ensure that Gaza never again poses a threat to Israel, he said.

Gaza should have a civilian administration run by Palestinians who do not seek to destroy Israel.

That's not too much to ask. It's a fundamental thing that we have a right to demand and to receive. A new generation of Palestinians must no longer be taught to hate Jews but rather to live in peace with us.

Those twin words, demilitarization and deradicalization, those two concepts were applied to Germany and Japan after World War II, and that led to decades of peace, prosperity and security, he added. (AP)

Philippine tanker carrying 1.4 mln litres of oil capsizes off Manila

MANILA (TIP): A Philippine-flagged tanker carrying 1.4 million litres of industrial fuel oil capsized and sank off Manila on July 25, authorities said, as they raced to contain a spill.

The MT Terra Nova was heading for the central city of Iloilo when it capsized in Manila Bay, nearly seven kilometres (4.3 miles) off Limay municipality in Bataan province, near the capital, in the early hours.

The vessel went down as heavy rains fuelled by Typhoon Gaemi and the seasonal monsoon have lashed Manila and surrounding regions in recent days.

An oil spill stretching several kilometres has been detected in the busy waterway.

"We are racing against time and we will try to do our best to contain it immediately and stop the fuel from leaking," Philippine Coast Guard spokesman Rear Admiral Armando Balilo said at a briefing.

He warned that if all the oil in the

tanker were to leak, it would be the biggest spill in Philippine history.

"There is a big danger that Manila will be affected, even the shoreline of Manila, if the fuel will leak, because it is within Manila Bay," Balilo said.

Thousands of fishermen and tour operators are dependent on the waters for their livelihoods.

Transport Secretary Jaime Bautista said 16 of the 17 crew members had been rescued from the stricken vessel.

A search was underway for the missing crew member, but Bautista said strong winds and high waves were hampering response efforts.

Four of the crew were receiving medical treatment.

A photo released by the coast guard showed the MT Terra Nova almost entirely submerged in rough seas.

Investigation ordered

An oil slick stretching about 3.7 kilometres was being carried by a "strong current" in an easterly, north-

easterly direction, the coast guard said in a report.

Coast guard Commandant Admiral Ronnie Gavan said he ordered a probe into the incident.

Marine environmental protection personnel have been mobilised to help contain the slick.

"It will definitely affect the marine environment," Balilo said, describing the amount of oil on the ship as "enormous".

One of the worst oil spills in the Philippines was in February 2023, when a tanker carrying 800,000 litres of industrial fuel oil sank off the central island of Mindoro.

Diesel fuel and thick oil from that vessel contaminated the waters and beaches along the coast of Oriental Mindoro province, devastating the fishing and tourism industries.

The oil dispersed over hundreds of kilometres of waters famed for having some of the most diverse marine life in the world. (AFP)

Search continues for possible survivors after Ethiopia landslides kill 229

ADDIS ABABA (TIP): Rescuers aided by drones were continuing a desperate search on July 24 for possible survivors of devastating landslides in an isolated area of southern Ethiopia that have killed 229 people and affected thousands more.

Humanitarian agencies were also scrambling to rush emergency relief aid to the stricken community, the deadliest such incident recorded in Ethiopia, a country highly vulnerable to climate-related disasters.

About 14,000 people need to be evacuated from the area urgently because of the risk of further landslides, a UN source told AFP.

Local residents have been using shovels and their bare hands to dig through the vast mounds of mud to hunt for victims and survivors of the landslides in Kencho Shacha Gozdi, a hard-to-access locality in the regional state of South Ethiopia hundreds of kilometres from the capital Addis Ababa.

So far, 148 men and 81 women are confirmed to have died in the disaster, which struck the remote and mountainous area, the Gofa Zone Communications Affairs Department which covers the locality, said Tuesday.

Senait Solomon, head of communications for the South Ethiopia regional government, said eight people had been pulled from the mud alive and taken to medical facilities for treatment.

The number of people still missing is not known, but Senait said updated tolls might be issued later Wednesday.

"The search for survivors is ongoing



and is currently being supported by drones operated by experts from the Information Network Security Administration (INSA)," Firaol Bekele, early warning director at the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC) told AFP Wednesday.

"The government is addressing urgent needs for food, water, medicine and shelter," he said.

Officials have said that most of the victims were buried after they rushed to help other residents hit by a first landslide following heavy rains on Sunday.

The UN's humanitarian response agency OCHA said more than 14,000 people had been affected in the area, which is roughly 450 kilometres (270

miles) from the capital Addis Ababa -- about a 10-hour drive.

The UN source told AFP that about 125 people had been displaced, and that the 14,000, including 5,000 pregnant or lactating women and 1,300 children needed to be evacuated fast because of the risk of another landslide.

Children and pregnant women affected More than 21 million people or about 18 percent of the population rely on humanitarian aid in Ethiopia, the second most populous country in Africa, as a result of conflict and natural disasters such as flooding and drought.

"I am deeply saddened by this terrible loss," Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed had said on X on Tuesday in his first reaction to the calamity. (AFP)

France announces major operation against cyber-spying

PARIS (TIP): French authorities have launched a major operation to clean up computers infected by a cyber-espionage programme that has struck millions of users worldwide, a senior prosecutor said on July 25.

"On the eve of the Olympics, this operation demonstrates that different players in France and abroad are mobilised to fight against all forms of cybercrime," Paris chief prosecutor Laure Beccau said in a statement.

She said investigators were targeting a network of bots suspected of infecting computers with PlugX malware and of stealing data from them "notably for purposes of espionage".

She said analysts and investigators had managed to take control of a server that was controlling millions of the infected computers and were administering a fix.

They launched the operation on July 18 and it is expected to last several months, having already aided victims in several European countries, the statement said.

It did not cite a specific threat to the Paris Olympics. But separately, the French government's cyber security agency warned last week that ransomware attacks will be "inevitable" during the Games, which officially open Friday. (AFP)

Under Milei, the worst economic crisis in decades puts Argentine ingenuity to test



Buenos Aires (TIP) : In the crush of anti-government protests paralyzing downtown Buenos Aires in the last months, some Argentines saw a traffic-induced headache. Others saw a reaction to President Javier Milei's brutal austerity measures.

Alejandra, a street vendor, saw people with nowhere to urinate.

Plazas provided no privacy and cafes

insisted on pricey purchases to use the toilet. With little more than a tent and a bucket, Alejandra started a small business that has surged alongside Argentina's angry rallies and sky-high inflation rate. She charges whatever people are willing to pay.

"I haven't had a job for a year, it's now my sole income," said Alejandra, who declined to give her last name for fear of reprisals from neighbors. Every four or five patrons, she puts on gloves and empties her bucket into the trash.

The political establishment's failure to fix decades of crisis in Argentina explains the tide of popular rage that vaulted the irascible Javier Milei, a self-declared "anarcho-capitalist," to the presidency.

But it also explains the emergence of a unique society that runs on grit, ingenuity and opportunism — perhaps now more than ever as Argentina undergoes its worst economic crisis since its catastrophic foreign-debt default of 2001.

"It's the famous resilience of

Argentines," said Gustavo González, a sociologist at University of Buenos Aires. "It's the result of more than three generations that have grappled with adverse circumstances, great uncertainty and abrupt changes."

The libertarian leader warned that things would get worse before they got better.

To reverse the decades of reckless spending that brought Argentina infamy for defaulting on its debts, Milei scrapped hundreds of price controls. He slashed subsidies for electricity, fuel and transportation, causing prices to skyrocket in a country that already had one of the world's highest inflation rates.

He laid off over 70,000 public sector workers, cut pensions by 30% and froze infrastructure projects, pushing the country deeper into recession. Supermarket sales fell 10% last month. The International Monetary Fund lowered its 2024 growth outlook for Argentina, projecting a 3.5% contraction.

Poverty now afflicts a staggering 57% of

Argentina's 47 million people, and annual inflation surpasses 270% — a level unseen in a generation.

"Argentina is at a turning point," Milei said in his Independence Day speech on July 9. "Breaking points in the history of a nation are not moments of peace and tranquility but moments of difficulty and conflict."

Well-heeled Argentines have responded by stashing stacks of \$100 bills in safe-deposit boxes and resorting to cryptocurrency to avoid their country's chronically depreciating pesos.

Middle-class families — whose energy bills shot up last month by 155% — have pared down comforts they once took for granted: No more eating out. No more travel. No more private school. Public hospitals say they're overwhelmed.

In a country where barbecued beef, or asado, is not only a national dish but a social ritual, meat consumption has dropped to the lowest level ever recorded, according to the Rosario Board of Trade. (AFP)

18 KILLED AS PLANE SLIPS OFF RUNWAY, CRASHES AT KATHMANDU AIRPORT; PILOT SOLE SURVIVOR

KATHMANDU (TIP): A passenger plane carrying 19 people crashed during takeoff in Kathmandu on July 24, killing 18 and leaving the pilot as the sole survivor, police in the Nepali capital told news agency AFP.

The plane belongs to the domestic Saurya airline and was en route to the resort town of Pokhara, an important tourism hub in the Himalayan republic. It crashed at around 11:00 am, with police and firefighters engaged in rescue efforts.

The Saurya Airlines flight was carrying a two-member crew and 17 of the company's staff members for a test flight, Nepali police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki told AFP.

Police official Basanta Rajauri said authorities have pulled out all 18 bodies. The only survivor was the pilot, who was taken to Kathmandu Medical College Hospital for treatment, said a doctor at the hospital who was not authorised to speak to media. The pilot has injuries to the eyes but is not in any danger, the doctor said, reported News agency AP.

AP also reported that the bodies have been taken to the T.U. Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu for autopsy. The airline manifest showed there were two pilots and 17 passengers on board, among them there was only one female. The crew and 16 passengers were Nepali nationals with one identified as foreigner, a Yemeni national.

Images of the aftermath shared by Nepal's military showed the plane's fuselage split apart and burnt to a husk.

Around a dozen soldiers in camouflage were standing on top of the wreckage, with the surrounding earth coated in fire retardant.

The plane crashed at around 11:15 am (0530 GMT), the military said in a statement, adding that the army's quick response team had been lending assistance with rescue efforts.

News portal Khabarhub reported that the airplane had caught fire after skidding on the runway.

The plane was scheduled to fly on Nepal's most-trafficked air route between Kathmandu and Pokhara, an important tourism hub in the Himalayan republic.

Saurya Airlines exclusively flies Bombardier CRJ 200 jets, according to its website.

Nepal's air industry has boomed in recent years, carrying goods and people between hard-to-reach areas as well as foreign trekkers and climbers. But it has been plagued by poor safety due to insufficient training and maintenance—issues compounded by the mountainous republic's treacherous geography. (Agencies)

Bangladesh eases nationwide curfew amid ongoing student protests

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh further eased a nationwide curfew on July 25 as students weighed the future of their protest campaign against civil service hiring rules that sparked days of deadly unrest last week.

Last week's violence killed at least 191 people including several police officers, according to an AFP count of victims reported by police and hospitals during some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's tenure.

Thousands of troops are still patrolling cities and a nationwide internet shutdown remains largely in effect, but clashes have subsided since protest leaders announced a temporary halt to new demonstrations.

Hasina's government ordered another relaxation to the curfew it imposed at the height of the unrest, allowing free movement for seven hours between 10:00 am and 5:00 pm.

Streets in the capital Dhaka, a sprawling megacity of 20 million people, were choked with commuter traffic in the morning, days after ferocious clashes between police and protesters had left them almost deserted.

Banks, government offices and the country's economically vital garment factories had already reopened on Wednesday after all being shuttered last week.

Student leaders were set to meet later Thursday to decide whether or not to again extend their protest moratorium, which is due to expire on Friday.

Students Against Discrimination, the group responsible for organising this month's rallies, said it expected a number of concessions from the government.



"We demand an apology from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to the nation for the mass murder of students," Asif Mahmud, one of the group's coordinators, told AFP.

"We also want the sacking of the home minister and education minister."

Mahmud added that the estimated toll in the unrest was understated, with his group working on its own list of confirmed deaths. Police have arrested at least 2,500 people since the violence began last week, according to an AFP tally.

Protests began after the June reintroduction of a scheme reserving more than half of government jobs for certain candidates, including nearly a third for descendants of veterans from Bangladesh's independence war.

With around 18 million young people in

Bangladesh out of work, according to government figures, the move deeply upset graduates facing an acute jobs crisis.

Critics say the quota is used to stack public jobs with loyalists to Hasina's Awami League.

The Supreme Court cut the number of reserved jobs on Sunday but fell short of protesters' demands to scrap the quotas entirely.

Hasina, 76, has ruled the country since 2009 and won her fourth consecutive election in January after a vote without genuine opposition.

Her government is also accused by rights groups of misusing state institutions to entrench its hold on power and stamp out dissent, including the extrajudicial killing of opposition activists. (AFP)

Japan resumes funding Sri Lanka after debt restructure

COLOMBO (TIP): Japan will resume funding stalled infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka, including the expansion of the main international airport, government officials said July 24, after the bankrupt island nation successfully restructured its foreign debt.

Bilateral lenders including Japan had cut project funding when Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$46 billion in foreign borrowings two years ago during an unprecedented economic crisis.

"Japan is the first country to resume financing for the suspended projects," its ambassador to Sri Lanka Hideaki Mizukoshi told reporters.

A Sri Lankan finance ministry official said Japan will in the coming weeks release the first tranche of about \$75 million for 11 projects suspended after Colombo's sovereign default, including the Colombo airport expansion.



Japan's loan portfolio in Sri Lanka is estimated at \$2.3 billion with another \$1.1 billion committed for ongoing projects and is to be disbursed in the next five years, Sri Lankan officials said.

The ambassador said Tokyo was satisfied that bilateral debt restructuring had been done in a fair manner with "comparability of treatment" for all creditors.

Japan is the second largest bilateral creditor to Sri Lanka after China.

Colombo clinched a restructuring deal four weeks ago with its bilateral lenders covering up to \$10 billion in debt, a critical step towards recovery after its 2022 financial crash.

A collapse in foreign exchange reserves at the time left Sri Lanka unable to import food, fuel and other essentials, leading to months of widespread shortages.

Public anger culminated in a huge crowd storming the home of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, forcing him to temporarily flee abroad, from where he resigned.

His successor Ranil Wickremesinghe sealed a \$2.9 billion International Monetary Fund rescue package.

He has also hiked taxes and cut generous public subsidies to help restore the nation's ruined finances. (AFP)

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Skin facts you should be aware about

Improve your skin complexion and texture with simple tips.

Consider Your Water

Soft water doesn't remove soap well, so it can leave a residue on your skin. If your water is soft, use face and body cleansers sparingly (no more than a nickel- or quarter-size amount, respectively). Hard water, on the other hand, doesn't allow washes to lather easily, prompting you to use even more cleanser, which can cause dryness. Gentle, nonsoap formulas, which aren't meant to lather, can minimize this.

Drink Green Tea

If your complexion is red or blotchy, this tea's anti-inflammatory properties can be soothing. Iced is best because hot beverages can worsen redness and other symptoms of rosacea. Another benefit: The epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) in green tea may help prevent the collagen destruction that leads to wrinkles as well as sun-induced DNA damage in the skin (think lines and discoloration), according to some experts. Consider sipping tea for your morning mug of coffee.

Keep Stress in Check

It takes a toll on nearly every part of your body, including your skin. In a study conducted at Stanford University, researchers found that during exam time, students who felt stressed had more severe acne breakouts than did those under less pressure. That's because stress increases the body's production of hormones such as cortisol, which can make skin oilier and decrease its ability to fight off acne-causing bacteria. To keep that frazzled feeling under control, regularly practice stress-management techniques, like yoga, deep breathing, and meditation. This "can help conditions such as acne, psoriasis, rosacea, and seborrhea.

Improve Your Air Quality

Avoiding smoky environments is smart since just being around smoke can lead to the release of free radicals that damage skin and hasten aging. Other indoor pollutants can adversely affect skin, too. Change the air filter in your



furnace regularly and, if you cook with oil, use the fan over your range. Also keep in mind that dry indoor air can dehydrate skin and make fine lines more noticeable.

Switch to Plain Toothpaste

Those with tartar-control ingredients or added flavors, like cinnamon, may contribute to a common skin condition called perioral dermatitis. It looks like pimples, redness, and scaling around the mouth.

Watch Sun Exposure

UV rays (in particular UVA rays) can penetrate the windows in your home and office and cause wrinkling and brown spots. The same goes for car windows: Studies have found higher rates of skin cancers on the left side of the face and upper body than on the right, since that side is more exposed when you're driving. Cancers aside, "many people have more wrinkles and sun damage on the left side of their faces, too.

Monitor Your Dairy Intake

Research from the Harvard School of Public Health found that teenage girls who consume a lot of milk are almost 30 percent more likely to have acne than those who drink less, and experts believe the same holds true for adult women prone to serious breakouts. Surprisingly, skim milk seems to be a worse offender than whole milk. Scientists don't understand exactly why milk products can lead to acne, but some surmise that the natural hormones present in dairy may be to blame, says a dermatologist.

FOOD CORNER

Rava Ladoo

Ingredients

Rava (Sooji) - 1 cup, Dry Coconut (Koppara Thenga) - 1, grated, Sugar - 1 cup, Ghee - 4 tsp, Hot Water - 2 tblsp
Cardamom Powder - 1/4 tsp, Fried Cashewnuts - 10
Fried Raisins - 30,



Method

- Heat ghee in a pan over medium flame.
- Add the rava, fried cashewnuts and raisins.
- Mix well till the rava is lightly roasted.
- Add the grated coconut and reduce flame to low.
- Continue to fry till golden.
- Transfer to a shallow bowl and add the sugar.
- Mix well.
- Add cardamom powder and add the hot water.
- Make small balls of the mixture.
- Press them tightly so that they hold the shape and keep aside to cool.
- Store in an airtight container.

Rasgulla

Ingredients

Paneer - made from 500 ml milk, Water - 500 ml, Sugar - 300 gms, Flour - 1/2 tsp, Rose Water - 1/2 tblsp

Method

- Place the paneer, flour and 1/2 tsp of sugar in a bowl. Knead well till smooth.
- Make small balls from this dough.
- Ensure the balls are smooth and crack-free.
- Make a thin syrup with the sugar and water.
- When it is slightly thick, drop the paneer balls and cover the pan. Boil for 5 to 8 minutes.
- As soon as the syrup starts thickening, add 1 tsp of hot water. Reduce flame and simmer.
- Add 1 tblsp hot water and continue to simmer.
- Once the rasgullas start to puff up (light and spongy) and rise to the top, transfer the them to a bowl that has a little cold water. 12.
- Once cool, refrigerate for a few hours.
- Add the rose water before serving and serve them in a sugar syrup.

The secret to happy marriage is a good night's sleep

If you wish to give your marriage a smooth ride, make sure both of you get sound sleep every night. A new study has found that a good night's sleep can buffer the effects of negative events on a couple's general satisfaction with their marriages.

When husbands and wives get more sleep than on an average night, they are more satisfied with their marriages, at least the following day, the findings showed.

"The universality of our findings is important," said one of the researchers, Heather Maranges from Florida State University in the US.

"That is, we know all people need sleep. Regardless of the stage at which a couple is in their relationship or the cultural context in which they're embedded, each member of the couple can be adversely affected by not getting



enough sleep," Maranges said. The researchers conducted their research with 68 newlywed couples. Over a seven-day period, couples recorded the number of hours they slept and then responded to two sets of questions on a scale of one to seven. The first set measured overall relationship satisfaction, asking

husbands and wives to respond to questions such as, "How satisfied were you with your marriage today?"

The other set focused on relationship experiences in nine areas including chores, the amount of time spent together and conflict resolution. Husbands especially were less negatively

affected by bad experiences in those nine areas when they got more sleep, showed the findings published in the Journal of Family Psychology.

That is, sleep buffered the effects of specific negative events and evaluations on their broader, more general satisfaction with their marriages, the study said. The findings highlight the significance of sleep as it relates to self-regulation or self-control, which influences how married couples feel and think about their partner.

Self-control requires energy that can be replenished when our bodies are in the resting period known as sleep. In other words, sleep offers self-regulatory benefits to relationships.

"Up to one-third of married or cohabiting adults report that sleep problems burden their relationship," the researchers wrote in the paper.

Amazing benefits of quitting sugar

Sugar is a type of simple carbohydrate found naturally in many foods, including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, and added to countless processed foods and beverages. Common forms of sugar include sucrose (table sugar), fructose (found in fruits), and lactose (found in dairy). While natural sugars in whole foods come with essential nutrients and fibre, added sugars provide empty calories without nutritional value. Quitting added sugar is generally beneficial for health. In this article, we share a list of health benefits you can achieve from quitting sugar.

Here are benefits of quitting sugar

1. Improved energy levels

Eliminating sugar helps stabilise blood sugar levels, preventing the spikes and crashes associated with high sugar intake. Stable energy levels enhance productivity and reduce feelings of fatigue and sluggishness throughout the day.

2. Better weight management

Quitting sugar reduces caloric intake and decreases insulin resistance, which can contribute to weight loss. Maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of obesity-related conditions like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers.

3. Enhanced mental clarity and mood

Stable blood sugar levels prevent mood swings and mental fog, which are often exacerbated by sugar highs and lows. Improved mental clarity and mood can enhance cognitive function, concentration, and overall mental well-being.

4. Reduced risk of heart disease

Lower sugar intake reduces triglycerides, blood pressure, and inflammation, all of which are risk factors for heart disease. Reducing the risk of heart disease promotes cardiovascular health and longevity.

5. Healthier skin

Cutting out sugar reduces inflammation and



decreases the production of advanced glycation end-products (AGEs) that damage collagen and elastin. Healthier skin appears more youthful, with fewer wrinkles and acne, improving overall appearance and confidence.

6. Decreased risk of type 2 diabetes

Quitting sugar improves insulin sensitivity and reduces the burden on the pancreas. Lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes helps prevent the associated complications, such as nerve damage, kidney disease, and vision problems.

7. Improved dental health

Sugar is a major contributor to tooth decay and gum disease. Reducing sugar intake minimises the risk of cavities and oral infections. Better dental health prevents tooth decay, gum disease, and the associated pain and costs of dental treatments.

8. Stronger immune system

High sugar intake can suppress the immune system, making it easier for infections to take hold. Reducing sugar strengthens the immune response. A stronger immune system improves the body's ability to fight off infections and recover from illnesses more quickly.

Source: NDTV



Lesser Googling and more naps may help reduce dementia

People can reduce their risk of age-related dementia by exercising their brains through simple daily habits instead of just relying on smartphones and Googling, according to a report.

Professor Mohamed I. Elmasry, a professor at the University of Waterloo, in his new book titled *iMind: Artificial and Real Intelligence*, emphasises nurturing real intelligence over artificial intelligence (AI), saying that the focus has shifted from the former to the latter and it can have far-reaching, debilitating consequences.

He says in *iMind* that "none comes close to duplicating the capacity, storage, longevity, energy efficiency, or self-healing capabilities of the original human brain-mind. The useful life expectancy for current smartphones is around 10 years, while a healthy brain-mind inside a healthy human body can live for 100 years or longer".

Smart devices, while increasingly advanced, cannot duplicate the human brain's storage, longevity, or self-healing abilities. The book is inspired by his personal losses to dementia.

He contrasts the brain's long-lasting power with the limited lifespan of smartphones, noting that a healthy brain can last over 100 years if nurtured.

Daily brain exercises like memory workouts, developing an associative memory, moderating alcohol, using rest days and regular naps help enhance brain health.

Elmasry feels healthy aging is a critical but underpublicised issue compared to climate change.

Source: IANS

Twice-a-year anti-HIV injection shows 100 percent efficacy Study

An HIV-preventive drug showed 100 per cent efficacy and "no safety concerns" in women, according to a study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Lenacapavir, injectable twice a year, is developed by the US-based biopharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, Inc. as a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) drug. These drugs prevent the spread of infection in people not yet exposed to the disease-causing agent.

The study, a phase-3 trial involving teenage girls and young women in South Africa and Uganda, showed that lenacapavir "demonstrated zero (HIV) infections" and "100 per cent efficacy," Gilead Sciences, Inc. said



in a statement. HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus, spreads from the body fluids of an infected person. Untreated, the infection can progress to AIDS or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome over years. In the PURPOSE 1 trial, 5,338 participants, who were HIV-negative, to begin with, were

divided into three groups - 2,134 receiving lenacapavir injections 26 weeks apart; 2,136 receiving the daily oral tablet Descovy (F/TAF); and 1,068 receiving the daily oral tablet Truvada (F/TDF).

Researchers, including those from the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre, University of Cape Town, South Africa, observed a total of 55 infections - zero in the Lenacapavir group, 39 in the Desovy group and 16 in the Truvada group.

"No participants receiving twice-yearly lenacapavir acquired HIV infection," the study authors wrote.

The most common adverse effects were injection-site reactions experienced by close to 70 percent of the participants in the Lenacapavir group.

Source: PTI

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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



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

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



CrowdStrike blames update for letting bad data slip through causing global tech outage

CrowdStrike is blaming a bug in an update that allowed its cybersecurity systems to push bad data out to millions of customer computers, setting off last week's global tech outage that grounded flights, took TV broadcasts off air and disrupted banks, hospitals and retailers.

CrowdStrike also said it would take measures in the future to prevent similar outages, including staggering the rollout of updates, giving customers more control over when and where they occur, and providing more details about the updates that it plans.

The company on Wednesday posted details online from its "preliminary post incident review" of the outage, which caused chaos for the many businesses that pay for the cybersecurity firm's software services.

The problem involved an "undetected error" in the content configuration update for its Falcon platform affecting Windows machines, the Texas company said.

A bug in the content validation system allowed "problematic content data" to be deployed to CrowdStrike's customers. That triggered an "unexpected exception" that caused a Windows operating system crash, the company said.

CrowdStrike has said a "significant number" of the approximately 8.5 million computers that crashed on Friday, causing global disruptions, are back in operation as customers and regulators await a more detailed explanation of what went wrong.

Once its investigation is complete, CrowdStrike said that it will publicly release its full analysis of the meltdown. The outage caused days of widespread technological havoc, highlighted how much of the world depends on a few key providers of computing services and drawn the attention of regulators who want more details on what went wrong.

Source: AP

OpenAI enters Google-dominated search market with SearchGPT

OpenAI is venturing into a territory long dominated by Google with the selective launch of SearchGPT, an artificial intelligence-powered search engine with real-time access to information from the internet.

The move, announced on Thursday, July 25, also places the AI giant in competition with its largest backer Microsoft's Bing search and emerging services such as Perplexity — a search-focused AI chatbot firm backed by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and semiconductor giant Nvidia.

Shares of Google's parent company Alphabet ended 3% lower on Thursday, July 25, after OpenAI's announcement.

OpenAI said it has opened sign-ups for the new tool, which is currently in the prototype stage and is being tested with a small group of users and publishers. The company plans to integrate the best features from the search tool into ChatGPT in the future.

"AI-powered search tools from OpenAI and Perplexity re-affirm search as a content engagement model but pressure Google to be better at its own game," Canaccord Genuity analyst Kingsley Crane said.

Google dominates the search engine market with a 91.1% share as of June, according to web analytics firm Statcounter.

SearchGPT will provide summarized search results with source links in response to user queries, OpenAI said in a blog post. Users will also be able to ask follow-up questions and receive contextual responses.

The company will give publishers access to tools for managing how their content appears in SearchGPT results. News Corp and The Atlantic are publishing partners for SearchGPT.

SearchGPT signals a closer collaboration between publishers and OpenAI, following content licensing agreements with major organizations like Associated Press, News Corp and Axel Springer. "Newer AI-powered search providers could face challenges of their own, with Perplexity already facing pending legal action from publishers like Wired and Forbes, and Condé Nast," said Crane.

Major search engines have been trying to integrate AI into



search since ChatGPT first launched in November 2022. Microsoft, through its early investment, adopted OpenAI technology for its Bing search engine, while Google rolled out AI-powered summaries for the wider public at its developer conference in May. Google did not respond to a Reuters query on the potential impact of SearchGPT on its business.

Google AI systems make headway with math in progress toward reasoning

Alphabet's Google unveiled a pair of artificial intelligence systems on Thursday that demonstrated advances in solving complex mathematical problems, a key frontier of generative AI development.

The current class of AI models, which work by statistically predicting the next word, have struggled with abstract math, which requires greater reasoning capabilities resembling human intelligence. DeepMind, the company's AI unit, published results showing that its new AI models in development, called AlphaProof and AlphaGeometry 2, solved four out of six questions at the 2024 International Math Olympiad, a prominent competition for high school students.

Source: Reuters

Chinese scientists find traces of water in lunar soil brought by Chang'e-5 mission

Chinese scientists studying the soil samples of the moon brought by Chang'e-5 mission found water molecules in lunar soil, according to the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

The research, carried out jointly by researchers from the Beijing National Laboratory for Condensed Matter Physics and the Institute of Physics of CAS and other domestic research institutions, was published in the peer-reviewed journal Nature Astronomy on July 16, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Based on lunar soil samples returned by Chang'e-5 mission in 2020, Chinese scientists have found a hydrated mineral "enriched" with molecular water, CAS said.

In 2009, India's Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft detected signs of hydrated minerals in the form of oxygen and hydrogen molecules in sunlit areas of the moon.

Among its suite of instruments, it



carried NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper (M3), an imaging spectrometer that helped confirm the discovery of water locked in minerals on the Moon.

In 2020, NASA announced the discovery of water on the sunlit surface of the moon based on data from the airborne Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy, which detected water molecules in the Clavius crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, in the moon's southern hemisphere.

But the lack of returned lunar samples from high latitude and polar regions means that "neither the origin nor the actual chemical form of lunar hydrogen has been determined", according to the Nature article.

The Chinese scientists studying the lunar soil isolated more than 1,000 mineral "clasts". The researchers said that among them was a platelike transparent crystal, dubbed "unknown lunar mineral" (ULM-1), that contained water molecules, the Post reported.

The researchers ruled out the possibility that the water-bearing mineral was contaminated by terrestrial sources or rocket exhaust.

But one geochemist said he expected the team to find more evidence in their further study. "If this water-bearing mineral is present in the lunar samples, more than one piece should be found," said the scientist who asked not to be named and was not associated with the study.

Source: PTI

Musk to discuss \$5 billion xAI investment with Tesla board

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said on Thursday, July 25, he will discuss a \$5 billion investment in artificial intelligence startup xAI, as the electric-vehicle maker looks to double down on efforts to expedite the development of its robotaxi and self-driving products.

The ambitious self-driving project has faced numerous technical and legal hurdles in recent years, and the automaker is now bolstering its AI infrastructure to train models for Tesla's autonomous technology.

"Looks like the public is in favor. Will discuss with Tesla board," Musk said in a post on X after a poll on the social media platform showed nearly 68% of respondents said the company should invest in xAI, the Grok chatbot developer.

Earlier this week, during Tesla's earnings conference call, Musk said xAI would be "helpful in advancing full self-driving and in building up the new Tesla data center," adding that there are opportunities to integrate Grok with Tesla's software.

Tesla's second-quarter automotive gross margin and profit fell short of Wall Street estimates on Tuesday as the company cut prices and offered incentives to boost sales.

Musk, the world's richest person, launched xAI last year, in a bid to compete with ChatGPT maker OpenAI, its backer Microsoft and Alphabet's Google.

Source: Reuters

US economy regains speed in second quarter; price pressures easing

WASHINGTON (TIP)

The U.S. economy grew faster than expected in the second quarter amid solid gains in consumer spending and business investment, but inflation pressures subsided, leaving intact expectations of a September interest rate cut from the Federal Reserve.

Growth last quarter also received a boost from inventory building as well as increased government spending, the Commerce Department's advance report on second-quarter gross domestic product on Thursday showed. The housing market recovery, however, regressed and was a small drag on the economy. The trade deficit widened further, subtracting from GDP growth.

The report dispelled concerns that the economic expansion was in danger of an abrupt end, which had been stoked by a lackluster performance in the first quarter and in April.

The economy continues to outperform its global peers, despite hefty rate hikes from the U.S. central bank in 2022 and 2023, thanks to a resilient labor market.

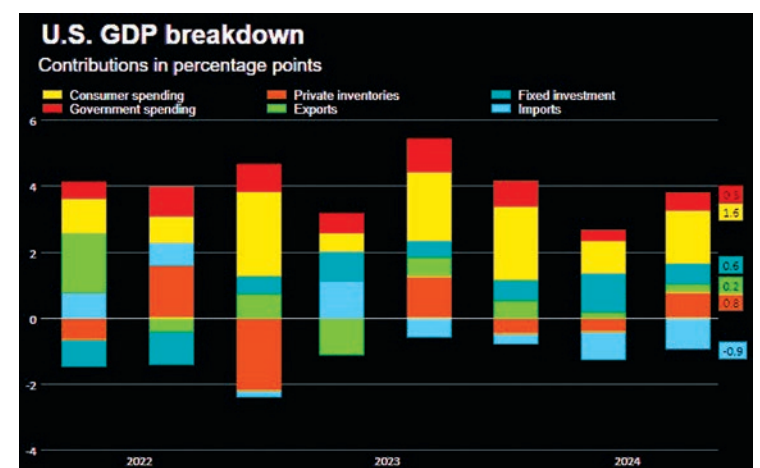
"Economic growth is solid, not too hot and not too cold," said Christopher Rupkey, chief economist at FWDBONDS. "Inflation looks to be going the Fed's way and an easing of monetary restraint with an interest rate cut is likely in September."

Gross domestic product increased at a 2.8% annualized rate last quarter, the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis said in its advance estimate of second-quarter GDP. That was double the 1.4% growth pace in the first quarter.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast GDP rising at a 2.0% rate. Estimates ranged from a 1.1% rate to a 3.4% pace.

The growth rate in the first half of the year averaged 2.1%, half the 4.2% pace logged in the last six months of 2023. That is just above the 1.8% pace viewed by U.S. central bank officials as the non-inflationary growth rate.

Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the economy, increased at around a 2.3% rate after slowing to a 1.5% pace in the January-March quarter. Spending



was driven by increased outlays on services like healthcare, housing and utilities as well as club memberships, visits to sports centers, parks, theaters and museums, and gambling.

Consumers also boosted outlays on goods, including new light trucks, recreational goods and vehicles, furnishings and durable household equipment as well as energy products.

Spending was in part supported by wage gains. A separate report from the Labor Department on Thursday showed the labor market steadily easing, with initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropping 10,000 to a seasonally adjusted 235,000 for the week ended July 20.

Business investment picked up as spending on equipment, mostly aircraft, surged at an 11.6% rate after rising at only a 1.6% pace in the first quarter. Spending on intellectual property products continued to rise, though the pace slowed from the brisk rate in the January-March quarter.

Businesses also accumulated more inventory, which increased at a \$71.3 billion rate after rising at a \$28.6 billion pace in the prior quarter. Inventories added 0.82 percentage point to GDP growth after being a drag for two straight quarters. That more than offset a 0.72 percentage point hit from a wider trade gap.

Source: Reuters

MUMBAI (TIP)

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pulled out almost Rs 10,710 crore from the Indian stock market in three days since the Union Budget after the government raised taxes on derivatives trades and on capital gains from equity investments.

As per stock exchange data, FPIs sold equities worth Rs 2,975 crore on July 23, another Rs 5,130 crore on July 24 and Rs 2,605 crore on July 25. During the same time, domestic institutional investors bought stocks worth around Rs 6,900 crore since July 23.

Ahead of the Budget, FPIs had bought equities worth around Rs 18,000 crore between July 12 and 22 as they anticipated a host of reform measures. In the Budget, Nirmala Sitharaman made major announcements with respect to capital gains tax whereby the rate of tax on long-term capital gains (LTCG) is proposed to be made 12.5 percent for all types of assets, irrespective of the transferor being a resident or a non-resident.

A report from Nishith Desai Associates, "While this simplification of

Foreign investors take out Rs 10,000 crore from Indian stock market after Budget



the capital gains regime is a welcome move, and in some cases the rates have decreased, the non-resident investors will suffer from a higher rate of LTCG tax across all types of assets. Even for FPIs, the tax rate for listed securities has been increased from 10 per cent to 12.5 per cent in case of LTCG and 15 percent to 20 per cent in case of STCG."

VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said, "the most significant feature of institutional equity flows into the Indian market is the erratic nature of FPI flows and the steady growth nature of DII flows. DIIs have been sustained buyers in all months of CY 24 so far whereas FPIs alternated between buying and selling."

Markets extend losses for 5th session

Equity market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty stayed on the back foot for the fifth straight session on July 25 as investors offloaded metal, banking and finance stocks amid a lacklustre trend in global markets. Heavy foreign fund outflows after a hike in securities transaction tax and short-term capital gains tax also impacted markets' sentiment negatively. After a sharp fall in intra-day trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex managed to recover some of the lost ground to settle 109.08 points or 0.14 per cent lower at 80,039.80, as a sharp rally in Tata Motors and Larsen & Toubro restricted markets fall. During the day, it tanked 671 points or 0.83 per cent to 79,477.83. The NSE Nifty dipped 7.40 points or 0.03 per cent to 24,406.10. Intra-day, it tumbled 202.7 points or 0.83 per cent to 24,210.80.

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The holy month of Sawan began on July 22. This month is auspicious for the devotees of Lord Shiva and Maa Parvati. It marks the onset of the monsoon in India. Celebrated by the Hindu devotees, the worshippers observe a fast on Monday, popularly known as Sawan Somwar. While Mahadev is worshipped on Sawan Monday, the Mangalgaury form of Mata Parvati is worshipped on Sawan Tuesday. It is believed that worshipping Mangala Gauri on this day brings happiness in life. Women receive the blessings of good fortune from Mata Parvati on this day, if they keep fast; while unmarried women are believed to be blessed with their desired groom.

As per Hindu mythology, it is believed that the Mangala Gauri fast was kept by Mata Parvati to win the love of Lord Shiva. Astrologer Acharya Pandit Yogesh Choure from Bhopal claims that keeping Mangala Gauri fast can help cure all the problems in life. Here are some of the benefits which Astrologer Acharya Pandit Yogesh Choure lists for the Hindu devotees.

Mangal Dosha

Pandit Yogesh Choure of Bhopal claims that if you have Mangal Dosha in your horoscope then you can get rid of this by worshipping Mangala Gauri on Tuesday in the month of Sawan. Women facing delays in their marriage and who have manglik dosha in their kundli must observe this fast to reduce the malefic effects. You can also recite Sundarkand on this day.

Happy Marriage

If there are obstacles in your marriage, then you can get rid of this problem by observing the fast of Mangala Gauri. For this, on the day of Gauri's fast, float an empty earthen pot in flowing water. Apart from this, donate honey to a needy person on Sawan Tuesday for a long and happy married life.

Blessings of Shiva-Parvati

Keep a fast of Mangala Gauri in Sawan and feed Brahmins along with the puja. By doing this, you will get the blessings of Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati, which will help you live a prosperous life. Married women must seek the blessings of their in-laws by touching their feet on this day.

Mangala Gauri Vrat Rituals and Significance

The Mangala Gauri Vrat is marked by a series of rituals that are believed to invoke the blessings of Goddess Gauri. Women wake up early, take a holy bath, and establish an idol or image of Goddess Gauri adorned with flowers and jewelry. They offer prasadam, fruits, sweets, and other delicacies to the deity. The fasting women recite specific mantras and listen to or read the Mangala Gauri Vrat Katha, which narrates the significance and benefits of the vrat.

The significance of this vrat lies in its association with marital bliss and prosperity. It is believed that observing this vrat brings happiness, harmony, and longevity to the lives of married couples. Additionally, unmarried women also observe this vrat to seek a suitable life partner.

Do's:

- Wake up early and take a bath.
- Clean the puja area and place an idol or image of Goddess Gauri.
- Decorate the idol with flowers, turmeric, vermilion, and jewelry.
- Offer prasadam, fruits, sweets, and flowers to the deity.
- Recite the Mangala Gauri Vrat Katha and chant mantras dedicated to Goddess Gauri.
- Observe a strict fast from sunrise to sunset.

Don'ts:

- Avoid consuming non-vegetarian food and alcohol.
- Refrain from using garlic and onion in food preparations.
- Do not break the fast before sunset.
- Avoid wearing black or dark-colored clothes.

Mangala Gauri fast



The story

A story related to Mangala Gauri fast is also told, according to which a seth named Dharmapala is living happily with his wife in a city in the Oriental period. There was no lack of wealth in his life. But the only thing that bothered him was that he had no children. For which he used to do a lot of pooja recitation and charity. Pleased with his good deeds, by the grace of God, he received a son, but the son did not have much age, according to astrologers, his son will become a eraser of death due to snake bite in the sixteenth year.

Knowing the young age of his son, his father was very hurt but who can change the fate, Atru, Seth left everything to God and after some time married his son to a worthy cult girl. Mother's mother always worshiped the fast of Mangla Gauri. Atari, the girl born due to the effect of this fast was blessed with unbroken good luck, which resulted in the length of Seth's son.

Udyaapan Vidhi

It should be used after fasting on Tuesdays of Shravan month. Food is prohibited in industry. Worshiping with henna should be done. Worship should be done with four Brahmins. On the four corners of a checki, four clams of bananas should be tied on the pavilion with an odor. Mangalagauri should be set in the bowl by placing a bowl on the urn. All the items of saree, nath and suhag should be kept. Aarti should be done after listening to the story after the Havan. Sixteen laddus of flour, rupees and sari in silverware should be given to Sasu ji to touch his feet. The pandits who perform the puja should also be given food and washed and washed. The next day, Sohal Brahmins should be given food including pairs, dhoti, angocha and Brahminis, suhag-pittari. In the Suhag plate, there are accessories and sarees of Suhag. After doing all this, you should eat yourself.

7 Things You must Offer To Mata Parvati

- Kumkum: Sindoor (Vermillion) or Kumkum is a symbol of all auspiciousness, especially for married women. Offering Kumkum to Maa Parvati

“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 humanRs ”

-- Arish K Sahani

brings immense fortune - “Akhand Saubhagya”, especially for married women.

- Chunri Or Saree: Offer a beautiful red or pink chunri or saree to Mata Parvati while observing the Mangala Gauri vrat to seek her divine blessings.
- 16 Shringar Samagri: 16 Shringars or adornments are considered to be highly auspicious for married women as per Hinduism. Offering Shringar samagri to Maa Parvati on the day of Mangala Gauri vrat can bring happiness in married women's lives.
- Haldi: Turmeric or Haldi is considered a vital component during any worship ceremony in Hinduism as it symbolises auspiciousness. Women can also offer Haldi to Mata Parvati to amass good luck.
- Hibiscus Flower: This red flower is considered to be the favourite flower of the divine goddess. Offering Hibiscus flowers to Maa Parvati on the day of Mangala Gauri vrat might help the devotees to receive her choicest blessings.
- Kheer: It is believed that the magnificent goddess Parvati is fond of Kheer, and hence, devotees might offer kheer as bhog to Mata Gauri and ask for her divine grace.
- Mehendi: Offering henna or mehendi to Mata Parvati on the day of Mangala Gauri Vrat symbolises auspiciousness for both married and unmarried women.

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arish.sahani@gmail.com

“If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save itRs ”

“If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard itRs ”

“Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one.”



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



ARIES : Ganesha says this week is going to be mixed for Aries people. People who are trying to expand their business will get success. People working will get promotions in jobs. A new job offer will also come. Will get support from family. There will be tension in love relationships due to misunderstandings. There may be debate on some issues in marital life also. Students will concentrate completely on their studies instead of paying attention here and there, which will lead to success. Time is good for higher education. Your financial condition will be good. Expenses will be higher. Can invest in the stock market. If you want to buy any land or house then you can buy it this week. You need to take care of your health. An auspicious program will be organized at home. You will get the company of your mother.



TAURUS : Ganesha says considering the economic situation, this week is going to be better. You will get a promotion in the job. The time is not right for a new job. You can get help from someone to take your business forward. The married life of married people will be full of happiness. You just have to control your anger. Your love life will be better, but there may be discord due to some other person. You will achieve success in the field of education. Students who are preparing for the competition need to work harder. Your health will be better than before. There may be fluctuations due to changing weather. You will talk to your acquaintances about the education of your siblings. You will receive good news from your children. Will attend a party with my family.



GEMINI : Ganesha says this week will be good for people living a love life. You can tell your mind to your partner. Single people will also get a good life partner. Married people will seem happy in their domestic life. People who are working will also get new job offers. There are chances of going on a trip related to your job and business, which will be very beneficial for you. Contact will be made with new people. You will get new contacts. Your financial condition will improve. If you want to buy land then you can buy it at this time. You can also invest in the stock market. Your health will improve more than before. You will achieve success in the field of education. Students will not be able to concentrate fully on their studies due to distractions here and there.



CANCER : Ganesha says this week will be full of happiness for people with the Cancer zodiac sign. Married people will move forward after erasing old bitterness with their spouse. Your love life will be better. Single people will get the life partner of their choice. You will achieve success in the field of education. You have to stay away from such friends who waste your time. Those who are preparing for the competition will have to work harder, only then they will be successful. Your financial condition will improve. You will spend all your expenses happily. You can also invest in the stock market. Will get support from family. Will plan a trip to some religious place with family members. Health will gradually improve. Going on a trip will make you feel tired. If any of your government work is pending, it will also be completed.



LEO : Ganesha says people with the Leo zodiac sign will have to try to maintain love and harmony in their relationships this week. One has to be very careful in love relationships. It will be better for you if you spend time with each other. You will achieve success in the field of education. You will get a chance to work on a new project. Health will gradually improve. This week you can buy a vehicle for yourself. If you invest in the stock market for a long time, you will get profits. For employed people, the week will be full of hard work and struggle, and your hard work will be successful. People involved in business may suddenly get a big order, from which you will benefit. Students pursuing higher education will get support from their teachers. The people participating in the competition will win.



VIRGO : Ganesha says this week will bring good news for people with the Virgo zodiac sign. You will look happy in your married life. All the ongoing problems will end. Your love life will be better. You will achieve success in the field of education. You can think about some new research. People who are working will get a new job offer. You can also go away from home to do business. You will get new opportunities, which will strengthen your financial position. Your health will be better than before but it will be better if you keep getting your routine checkups done. The financial situation will be good. You will also spend a lot of money on repairing your house. If you want to invest somewhere, it will be better for you if you invest for a long time. You will get full support from your children.



LIBRA : Ganesha says this week, people of the Libra zodiac sign will get support from family. You will spend time with family members and will

also plan to travel somewhere, where everyone will seem very happy. There may be discord in family life due to someone else's interference. There will be some ups and downs in your love life too. You will achieve success in the field of education. Students will be very aware of any new subject. Your financial condition will improve. You will be successful in restarting the stalled plans in your business. People who are working will get a new job offer and will get to learn something new in their old job also. You can invest in land or property. Time is also good to invest in the stock market.



SCORPIO : Ganesha says this week is going to be better than before for Scorpio people. Unmarried people will get their desired life partner. Love life will be better. Married people will seem happy in their domestic life. Your spouse will be successful in work. The financial situation will be good. If you want to buy any land or property then this is a good time for you. You are also likely to get financial benefits from your spouse. This week is good for the stock market. People doing business will get new contracts. If any of your government work is pending, it will also be completed. A new job offer will also come. Students will spend more time with their friends, which will harm their studies. Your health will be better than before, but due to changing weather, your health may fluctuate.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says this week will be very romantic for you. You will spend loving moments with your spouse. Will go out somewhere also. You will also get a good gift from your spouse. A new guest will arrive in the house. A good relationship will come for married people. This week you may spend more of your money on unnecessary things. Avoid investing more money in the stock market. Your financial condition will be good. This week will be full of hard work for people associated with business. New contracts will be available. This is not a good time to change jobs. People doing art, designing, and marketing work will get good benefits. Students will pay less attention to their studies due to paying attention here and there. There will be ups and downs in health due to changing weather. Time is good for higher education. You will get a chance to study your favorite subject.



CAPRICORN: Ganesha says luck will be on your side this week. You will get new contacts from abroad also. You will be successful in taking your business forward. People who are working will get a new job offer. If you want to change job then this is the best time. You will go on a romantic dinner with your spouse or will be seen talking about love. Your love life will be better. If you are

thinking of investing money in the stock market, then invest very thoughtfully. This time will be better for taking or giving loans. Students will participate in some competitions, in which they will win. Will get support from family. You will get a chance to spend time with family members. Your health will be better than before. You will get full support from your children. You can buy a new vehicle for yourself. There can be talk of relationships among bachelors.



AQUARIUS : Ganesha says this week is going to be special for the people of the Aquarius zodiac sign. Your love life will be better. Do not let ego come into your family life, otherwise there may be discord in the relationship. The financial situation will be better. This will also become a source of online income. You will also spend some of your time in religious activities. Before investing in the stock market, invest wisely. If you are thinking of changing your job, you will get better opportunities in your old job also. Bhajan-kirtan etc. will be organized at home. You can get your spouse to start some new work. The responsibilities of children will be fulfilled. You will achieve success in the field of education. Health will improve. You will do some shopping for home decoration. It would be better for you to make a budget for all your expenses.



PISCES : Ganesha says this week is going to be better for you than before. Will get support from family. Will spend some time with family members. Everyone will plan together to visit some religious place. Your health will be better than before. Avoid eating or drinking outside. The financial situation will be better. People doing business will get new opportunities. Employed people will also get new job offers. You will achieve success in the field of education. Time is good for higher education. People who are working away from home may miss their families. A good relationship will come for unmarried people. You will also spend a lot of money on home repairs. You will spend some of your time in religious programs, which will bring peace to your mind. Parents will invest money for the future of their children.

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 29 TO AUGUST 4 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

JULY 29 : Ganesha says your friends and family will be charmed by your kindness and at the same time they will be attracted to you. There is a possibility of getting favor from the government and the judiciary in the coming times. If someone of the opposite sex suddenly enters your life, your life will take a new and interesting turn. Avoid strangers who are too friendly and give everyone the benefit of the doubt when they ask you for a short-term loan or financial help. Long-standing disagreements will be resolved and important relationships will play a vital role in improving your financial situation.

JULY 30 : Ganesha says you will always have faith in yourself and rely largely on the choices you make for yourself. You will be in a good financial position and you will not need parental encouragement. There will be happiness at home, but you may feel stressed due to a slight change in the health of others. Even though you have to spend more time alone, the possibility of an affair at work will help you feel better. This is the time to take advantage of your openness and clear concentration. You can become a good advisor.

JULY 31 : Ganesh says that you can change your behavior according to the situation. You spend too much time in your boring job, which gives you very little time to achieve your goals. You have a strong desire for acceptance, and you will make plans to achieve your goals. You need to mold your family's pessimistic attitude into a different one before it is too late. The love and affection of your loved ones towards you will increase day by day. If your medications are unbalanced, you may need to get your health checked again. You constantly ask yourself what more you can do to make your relationship more passionate.

AUGUST 1 : Ganesh says that you will constantly desire a respectable, prosperous existence and will want to make a place for yourself both in society and at work. To achieve all your goals and aspirations in life, you will have to work tirelessly and continuously. Matters related to money and property will be good in the coming times. You will be able to increase your wealth by adding a second source of income or a family member who will help you. Your position will improve and you will get a

generous compensation package.

AUGUST 2 : Ganesha says that in important matters, you are encouraged not to trust others. Revealing private details will not be in your best interest. The strong influence of a spiritual person will bring significant changes in your life. Your partner and family will understand your concerns and show you love and affection. Long-distance travel, even foreign travel for some people will give positive results. You will need to take more responsibility for important tasks at the workplace due to the environment.

AUGUST 3 : Ganesha says that everyone will be mesmerized by your charming nature. You should do your best in your field of endeavor. The energy graph showed a declining trend before suddenly rising. The ideas and opinions of your business plan will probably make your wallet bigger. Be careful of any extra expenses you incur. You will move ahead if you continue to talk about your company. You may experience some pressure to maintain your relationships. You always believe in using your freedom to uplift and bless others.

AUGUST 4 : Ganesh says you are about

to embark on an adventure that has been in your dreams for a long time. You are a useful and successful resource for your business. Your employees will always be pleased with you wherever you go. When you talk to your blood relatives, you need to be open and expressive. Doing so will avoid all kinds of resentment among family members. Your sensible and practical approach will serve as a role model for others. You have a deep affection for the destitute people.

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

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Sikh History This Week

JULY 26 TO AUGUST 1

26th July

1940 4 Sikhs of No.4 Regiment were hanged to death.
1981 World Sikh Convention held at Manji Sahib, Amritsar resolved to initiate Dharam Yudh morcha to seek Sikh's righteous demands. A list of 45 demands was submitted to the government. Aug. 31 was set as the deadline for government's acceptance of Sikh demands. Harchand Singh Longowal was elected as the Morcha Director.

27th July

1649 Janam Utsav, Shaheed Baba Jorawar Singh Ji.
1925 Akali prisoners released upon victory of Jaito Morcha.
1984 and July 28, an International Sikh Convention was held at New York city, in the wake of June 5 and 6, 1984, when the Indian army stormed the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar. A group of Sikhs in New York formed an ad-hoc International Sikh Organization to represent Sikhs interests.

28th July

1925 Punjab Governor gave his assent to the Sikh Gurudwara Act.
1991 Sikhs continue to be harrassed under Section 216 of the Indian Penal Code.

29th July



1873 Initial establishment of Singh Sabha in Amritsar. Singh Sabha, a reform group of Amritdhari Gur Sikhs who objectively sought the eradication of the wrong practices in re-establishing the true traditions of GurSikhism. Their initial efforts for religious propagation and education resulted in the establishment of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Amritsar, in 1872. Sardar Thakur Singh Sandawalaia was the first chief, while the temporary offices and gathering facilities were organized at Guru Ka Bagh. The objectives of Singh Sabha, Amritsar, were to inculcate the principles of Sikh religion as preached by the Sikh Gurus among the Sikhs with a view to restoring Sikhism to its pristine purity, preach the principles of Sikh religion by word of mouth, by publication of historical and religious books, and through magazines and newspapers, encourage propagation of Punjabi, reclaim apostates and attract the sympathies of those highly placed in public administration to the educational progress of the Sikhs. The Singh Sabha was to shun politics.

1984 Sardar Sadhu Singh Hamdard, Editor of Punjab's voice, Ajit, daily newspaper, died of a heart attack. He was deeply disturbed by the Indian Army's attack on Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. In protest, he had returned his Padam Sri honor to the Indian government.

30th July



1822 Sangat Singh, son of Fateh Singh became Raja of Jind.
1950 Akali Dal's working committee orders all members who defected to Congress to return.
1995 Amar Singh Ambalvi, first Vice-President of AISFF, passed away.

31st July

1788 Agreement reached between the Dal Khalsa and Maharaja Vijay Singh of Jodhpur.



1940 Sardar Udham Singh was hanged to death in London for killing Michale O'Dwyer, Governor of Punjab during the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. A meeting was called in 1919 to protest – the arrest of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, two prominent leaders in Punjab at the time and – against the repressive Rowlette Act of the British Government. Several hundred people had assembled at Jallianwalla Bagh, Amritsar to participate in this protest. Brigadier General Dwyer was sent to disperse the assembly. He initially proceeded with an armoured car. However, the streets leading up to the Jallianwalla bagh were too narrow for the armoured vehicle and consequently the soldiers had to abandon the vehicle and travel by foot. Upon reaching the Jallianwalla bagh, Brigadier General Dwyer opened fire on the innocent and unarmed people, killing almost all. When the firing stopped, a total of 1302 people been killed, including 799 GurSikhs. Udham Singh from Sunam (Punjab), was a child at that time, whose father was among the killed. He vowed to kill the cruel General. A subsequent enquiry was held into the shooting. As a result, Brigadier General Dyer retired, went back to England, and subsequently died six years after the Jallianwalla massacre. However, The Sikh community felt further insulted, when Rur Sngh, the

custodian of the Golden Temple, offered a Saropa to Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutnant Governor of Punjab. General Dwyer was also offered a Kirpan (Sword of honor) and it was quoted in the British Parliament by Lord Finlay that he had been made a Sikh.

Udham Singh came to England and spent many years of hard work planning ways to fulfill his childhood vows. It is said that Udham Singh took up work in Sir Michale O'Dwyer's residence in England, who was the Governor of Punjab during the Jallianwala massacre. Udham Singh worked there for sometime and therefore got to know Sir O'Dwyer very well. Seeing an opportune moment Udham Singh gunned down Sir O'Dwyer at a public meeting in England as he stood to address the gathering.

1st August

1863 Maharani Jind Kaur, mother of Maharaja



Dalip Singh, passed away in Kaesington, England and was cremated in Nasik Nagar on the outskirts of Bombay, India. She was arrested by the British government in 1847 and imprisoned at the Shaekhpura fort. After numerous efforts, she managed to join Maharaja Dalip Singh in England. She was by Lord Dalhousie as "the only woman in the Punjab with manly understandings." Jind Kaur was daughter of Sardar Manna Singh Auhlakh, a resident of village Chandh, district Sialkot, Tehsil Jafarwall. She was wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and mother of Maharaja Dalip Singh. Once the British government gained control of the Khalsa Raj's affairs, she was initially kept under house arrest at Saekhpura and subsequently jailed at Chunar fort (U.P. district Mizapur). However, she escaped in a beggar's attire and reached Nepal, where she lived with dignity. In 1861, Maharani Jind Kaur reached England to visit her son Maharaja Dalip Singh, where she died on Aug. 1, 1863 at the age of 46. Her body was brought back and cremated in Nasik Nagar, on the outskirts of Bombay.

On March 27, 1924, Maharaja Dalip Singh's daughter, Bamba Dalip Singh, brought the ashes of Maharani Jind Kaur from Nasik Nagar and buried it next to Maharaja Ranjit Singh's samadh. Sardar Harbans Singh Rais of Atari performed the last rights (antim Ardas) on this occasion.

1944 The Working Committee of the All Parties Sikh Conference met at Amritsar. It held that the C. Rajagopalachari's formula "was manifestly unfair and detrimental to the best interests of the country and the Sikh Community." It regarded Gandhi's approval of the same as "breach of faith" on the part of the Congress leaders and violative of assurances to the Sikhs "at its Lahore session in 1929".

1980 Khalistan Flag Hoisted for the first time. The Sikh Youth Organisation, Dal Khalsa, hoisted the flag of Khalistan at the very spot where 13 GurSikhs fell martyr while defending the Guru Khalsa Panth against the Nirankaris, on April 13, 1978.

Hampi: A historical town of Karnataka

Hampi is a village and temple town recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, listed as the Group of Monuments at Hampi. In northern Karnataka, India. It was one of the richest and largest cities in the world during its prime. It is located within the ruins of the city of Vijayanagara, the former capital of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Hampi is a place like no other and so are the activities that you can indulge in when here. Test yourself at bouldering over the hills, ride a bicycle all across the village, row a coracle in the calm waters of River Tungabhadra, spot some Indian sloth bears or get blessed by an elephant—Hampi has a lot to keep you busy. Watching a sundowner across its famous temple ruins is, of course, a delight.

BOULDERING

Hampi is a boulderers' heaven. With its endless trails of boulder hills and right terrain, it has emerged as the country's hotspot for anyone with a love for the sport. While the more experienced ones can get bouldering and rock climbing equipment from one of the many stores and travel operators in the village, newbies can learn sport tactics with experts who often camp by the boulders. A closely-guarded secret, bouldering in Hampi came into spotlight with Pilgrimage, the much acclaimed climbing movie by Chris Sharma, Katie Brown and Nate Gold; climbers from all over the world made Hampi a favourite soon after its release. You would know the lure of those flat, looming boulders once you set eyes on them. A must-do in Hampi.

BEAR WATCHING

Wildlife lovers can head off the Daroji Sloth Bear Sanctuary for jungle safaris. The sanctuary is some 20 km away from Hampi and doubles up as a conservation centre for the Indian sloth bear. Perfect to escape to from the more touristy lanes of Hampi, it is quite offbeat and houses more than 100 sloth bears, 90 bird species and an impressive variety of butterflies as well. You can either drive across the sanctuary or sit in the watch tower with a pair of binoculars and picnic lunch. Great place for kids.

GET BLESSED BY AN ELEPHANT

This one would never lose its charm! Lakshmi, the temple elephant at Virupaksha Temple, blesses visitors early in the morning with a gentle touch of her trunk. Anyone looking for a greater adrenalin rush should get into the river when she is in for a bath; a gentle shower from her awaits everyone who is eager enough to go near. Those not in a mood to get drenched can stay at the banks and watch the ritual-like bathing ceremony when Lakshmi splashes in the water, eagerly listening to her mahout's calls.

BICYCLE TOURS

If there is one thing that you must do in Hampi, it is to get a bicycle and roam around the ruins and this sleepy village at a pace that keeps you discovering its beauty. Hampi is not a place to strike off



from your wishlist in a rush; so let it work its magic on you—slowly. A number of bicycle rental points are in the lane that houses Virupaksha Temple.

CORACLE HOPPING

A walk by riverside is passe when you can go right in the middle of one in coracles, the coolest designed boats ever. Crossing River Tungabhadra to reach Aneundi, the hippie side of Hampi and back, becomes all the more inviting when you wade across it in a coracle. Watch a brilliant sunset, visit the drum circle and other live music sessions on the other side, photograph the Hampi ruins that look all the more fascinating from across the river or just enjoy some calm, away from the touristy clamour of the village in one.

VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE

Dedicated to Lord Virupaksha, the main deity of the Vijayanagara rulers, the temple is an important pilgrimage centre and one of the main attractions of Hampi. Also known as Pampapati Temple, it has a 50-metre high tower at the entrance and displays beautiful architecture throughout. The miniature paintings on the ceilings make your visit worthwhile. Built in the beginning of the 7th century, it is one of the oldest functioning temples in India. The temple received a major overhaul and renovation at the beginning of the 19th century.

VITTALA TEMPLE

Dedicated to Lord Vittala, a form of Lord Vishnu, the temple was built in the 15th century. It is an exemplary symbol of the Vijayanagara style of art and



architecture and one of the top attractions of Hampi. No words can describe the magnificence of the hundred pillared pavilion or mandapa that lies in the south-west part of the temple. The sculptures that adorn the eastern and northern gateways are also splendid. The composite pillars of the 'sabha mandapa' are massive and when tapped gently produce musical notes. The temple complex houses a number of important monuments including the famous stone chariot.

STONE CHARIOT

Considered as the most popular attraction of Hampi, this architectural marvel is located within the Vittala Temple complex. It is actually a shrine built in the form of a chariot and rests on a platform that is about a feet high. The shrine is dedicated to Garuda who is the carrier of Lord Vishnu. This stunning

piece of architecture is among the three famous stone chariots in India, others being Konark (Odisha) and Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu). The carvings and sheer beauty of this structure make it a 'must-visit' attraction of Hampi.

UGRA NARASIMHA SWAMY STATUE

This is the largest statue in Hampi and depicts Lord Narasimha in a terrifying or angry form. Narasimha which means half-man and half-lion is one of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. This monolithic structure, which is 6.7 m in height, has the lord sitting cross-legged position on the coil of a giant seven-headed snake Adishesha. Originally the statue also had Goddess Lakshmi sitting on lord's lap, but according to history it was vandalised and damaged in the year 1565. The statue of Goddess Lakshmi can now be seen in Kamalapuram Museum.

Olympic Games-2024: A Curtain Raiser

**WHEN AGE FAILS TO COME IN THE WAY OF SPORTS RIVALRIES!
WILL ROHAN BOPANNA BREAK RAJEEV RAM'S WINNING STREAK?**



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

Prabhjot Singh, a senior sports journalist, in his career spanning 40 years, has witnessed, and reported on six summer Olympic games, one winter Olympic games, seven World Cups in Hockey, FIFA World Cup in 2006, besides three World Cups in Cricket, and two editions of Pan Am Games (Toronto and Lima). He has also covered Asian Games (New Delhi and Jakarta) and Commonwealth games in Melbourne and New Delhi.

He will be in Paris from July 23, 2024 till August 13, 2024 to cover the Olympic Games 2024 in Paris which has the distinction of hosting the Olympic Games for a third time. Earlier, Paris hosted the Olympic Games in 1900 and 1924. The only other city to host Olympic Games three times is London which hosted Olympic Games in 1908, 1948 and 2012.

Readers of THE INDIAN PANORAMA will get to read Prabhjot Singh's special reports on Olympic Games 24 straight from Paris on a daily basis at www.theindianpanorama.news besides selected reports in the weekly editions. Prabhjot Singh can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com

Rivalries, traditional or otherwise, enliven sports competitions. Suppose the fight for Ashes between Australia and England enthuses cricket followers worldwide. In that case, the India-Pakistan game in hockey gets the South Asian community on the edge of their seats. Have you ever wondered about the tennis rivalry that has been growing between India and the United States since the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games?

Individual rivalries apart, they become so exciting and animated that they get linked to national pride and honor.

In the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, Indian ace Leander Paes made the medal round in men's singles. In the semi-finals, he was drawn to meet the challenge of Andre Agassi of the hosts, USA.

Though Leander lost to his much-fancied opponent, he made amends by winning the bronze medal, the first individual medal for an Indian athlete since the 1952 Helsinki Olympic games.

The defeat of Leander set in motion a rivalry that has since then been growing steadily. The USA has been triumphant in most of the prestigious events against its Indian opponents. Twenty years later, when the Indian mixed doubles pair of Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza faced Rajeev Ram and Venus Williams in the semi-finals in the Rio Olympic games, the Americans were unstoppable.

It was a golden opportunity for the Indian pair to end the 20-year drought in tennis, but it went down fighting to a Czech Republic pair in the bronze medal game.

The rivalry did not end with the second successive reverse for India in Olympic tennis, it got extended to one of the grand slams, the US Open. In the 2023 US Open, Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner lost the men's doubles title to Rajeev Ram and Austin Krajicek.

Rohan Bopanna, one of the oldest players on the tennis circuit, may still be hopeful of ending his career with a medal in tennis. He may again run into Rajeev Ram in the men's doubles event. This time, Rohan Bopanna will be paired with Sriram Balaji. The tennis competition will be held from July 27. Rohan, now 44, is the oldest while Rajeev is not far behind as he crossed 40 in



Rohan Bopanna, one of the oldest players on the tennis circuit, may still be hopeful of ending his career with a medal in tennis. He may again run into Rajeev Ram in the men's doubles event. This time, Rohan Bopanna will be paired with Sriram Balaji. Rohan, now 44, is the oldest while Rajeev is not far behind as he crossed 40 in March this year. Photo: Reuters file

March this year.

Rajeev Ram is one of the illustrious members of the Indian Diaspora who has won several honors for the US in Grand Slams and even a silver medal in the Olympic Games (2016). Rohan lost a chance to become the second Indian player after Leander to win an Olympic medal in Tennis in Rio. Paris may be his last chance.

Other than Rajeev Ram, Kanak Jha is another player of Indian origin who will be donning US colors for the third consecutive Olympic Games. Kanak plays Table Tennis but has never progressed to the medal round in his previous Olympic participations.

When the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee announced its 592-member 2024 Olympic team to compete at the 2024 edition of the

Games, it included both Rajeev Ram and Kanak Jha. Before Rajeev Ram won a silver medal in 2016, cyclist Alexi Singh Grewal held aloft the US flag with a gold medal triumph in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Alexi Singh has been the torch-bearer of sportspersons of Indian origin representing the US in various major international sporting events.

Paris returns as the host nation of the Olympic Games Paris 2024, which is taking place exactly 100 years since Paris hosted the Olympic Games back in 1924. Paris joins London as the only two cities to host the Olympic Games three times. Paris hosted in 1900, 1924 and now 2024, while London hosted in 1908, 1948 and 2012.

An estimated 10,500 athletes from more than 200 National Olympic Committees and the IOC Refugee Olympic Team will

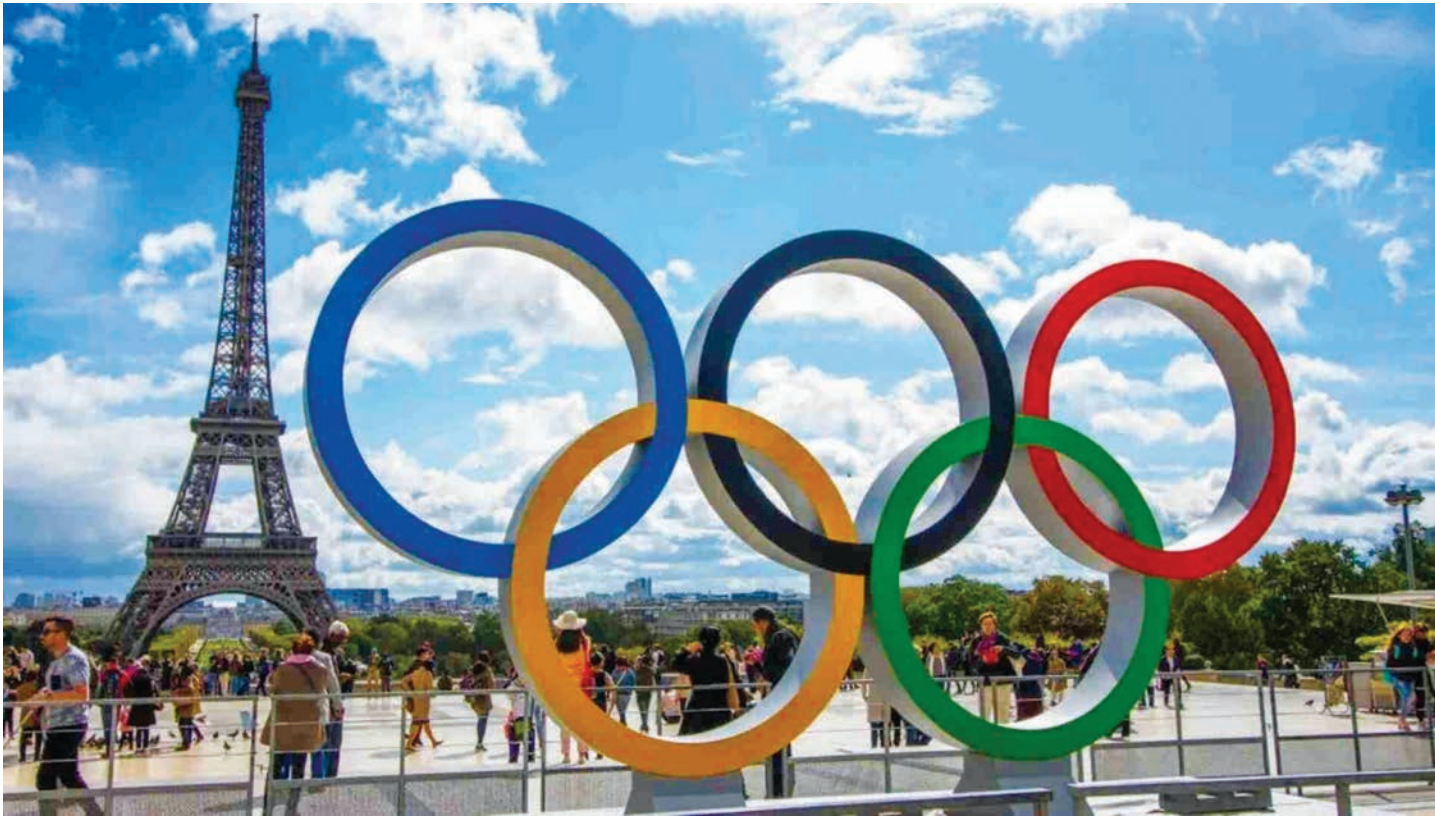
take to Paris to compete on the world stage. Thirty-two sports will be contested during the Olympic Games Paris 2024, with 329 medal events in total.

The Paris 2024 Olympic Games will make history by achieving numerical gender parity on the field of play, ensuring equal representation of male and female athletes. For the 2024 U.S. Olympic team, the roster comprises of 314 females and 278 males.

"It is with immense pride and excitement that we announce the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team and the exceptional athletes that embody the spirit of dedication, resilience, and excellence, continuing the proud history of Team USA at the Olympic Games," said USOPC CEO Sarah Hirshland. "As they prepare to represent our nation on the greatest stage in all of sports, we honor their personal achievements and celebrate the unwavering support of the people that make it possible -- their families, teammates, National Governing Bodies, coaches, and communities around the country. In the true spirit of 'One for All,' we join a proud nation of fans in cheering them on through inspiring performances and unforgettable moments."

The 2024 U.S. Olympic Team has over





250 returning Olympians - including three five-time, four four-time, 16 three-time and more than 50 two-time Olympians. The slate of veterans features 122 Olympic medalists, including 66 Olympic champions who have won 110 gold medals. Forty-five athletes have won multiple Olympic medals, while 23 have won multiple Olympic gold medals.

The multiple medalists are led by Katie Ledecky (swimming) who leads the team with 10 Olympic medals, including seven golds and three silvers. Simone Biles (artistic gymnastics) and Caeleb Dressel (swimming) enter Paris 2024 with seven medals each, while Ryan Murphy (swimming) has six, and Diana Taurasi (basketball), Lilly King (swimming) and Simone Manuel (swimming) have five each.

The three five-time Olympians on the roster include Taurasi, Steffen Peters and McLain Ward (equestrian). The four four-time Olympians feature Brady Ellison (archery), Gerek Meinhardt

(fencing), Stu McNay (sailing) and Vincent Hancock (shooting).

"These athletes of Team USA have demonstrated unparalleled dedication and passion in their pursuit of excellence on their road to earning a place on the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team and representing the United States in Paris," said Rocky Harris, USOPC chief of sport and athlete services, and Chef de Mission for the Olympic Games Paris 2024. "Their journey to the Games exemplifies the Olympic spirit-pushing boundaries, breaking records, and captivating millions around the country and the world, and I am so proud to be a part of a team of colleagues at the USOPC and across the National Governing Bodies who support them. This summer, Team USA athletes will amaze us with extraordinary talent and indomitable spirit - and they will undoubtedly inspire the next generation."

Of the collective of 592 U.S. athletes competing in Paris, 75% (444 athletes) competed collegiately at

169 schools. Twenty-one teams have at least 80% collegiate participation on their U.S. Olympic rosters, including 15 teams that are comprised of 100% college athletes: women's basketball, men's and women's 3x3 basketball, beach volleyball, men's and women's indoor volleyball, diving, fencing, women's field hockey, women's rugby, modern pentathlon, men's and women's water polo, rowing and triathlon. College athlete representation on the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team spans all three NCAA Divisions (I, II and III), as well as junior colleges and collegiate club programs.

Forty-six states are represented on the U.S. roster, with California (120), Florida (42), Texas (41), Illinois and Pennsylvania (27) leading the way. Three athletes identify international hometowns, including Ian Barrows (sailing) from St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Maximilian Dietz (soccer) from Frankfurt, Germany, and Luca Cupido (water polo) from Santa Margherita Ligure, Italy.

AT A GLANCE

- It also includes 314 women and 278 men, marking the fourth straight Olympic Games with more women on the U.S. roster than men.
- Artistic gymnast Hezly Rivera is the youngest of three athletes who are age 16, while equestrian Steffen Peters will be competing at age 59.
- The 2024 team features more than 250 returning Olympians and 122 Olympic medalists, including 66 Olympic champions.
- Three five-time Olympians decorate the roster, including Diana Taurasi (basketball), Steffen Peters (equestrian) and McLain Ward (equestrian). The four four-time Olympians include Brady Ellison (archery), Gerek Meinhardt (fencing), Stu McNay (sailing) and Vincent Hancock (shooting).
- The United States will be represented in 44 sports in Paris. Of the 329 medal events contested in Paris, Team USA will have at least one entry (athlete/team) in 253 of these events.
- There are at least six sets of siblings on the team, including twins Annie and Kerry Xu (badminton), Brooke and Emma DeBerdine (field hockey), Alex and Aaron Shackell (swimming), Gretchen and Alex Walsh (swimming), Juliette and Isabella Whittaker (track and field) and Chase and Ryder Dood (water polo).
- Twelve athletes on the roster self-identify ties to the military, including 10 with the Army, one with the Navy and one with the Marines.
- Forty-six athletes on the roster self-identify as parents, including 34 dads and 12 moms.
- March is the most popular birthday month with 59 athletes.



(Photo by Christian Petersen/Getty Images for World Athletics)



CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Netanyahu meets with Biden, Harris...

White House officials say the negotiations are in the closing stages, but there are issues that need to be resolved.

"The gaps are closable," Mr. Kirby said. He added, "But it's going to require, as it always does, some leadership, some compromise."

Mr. Netanyahu, last at the White House when former President Donald Trump was in office, is headed to Florida on Friday to meet with the Republican presidential nominee.

The conservative Likud Party leader Netanyahu and centrist Democrat Biden have had ups-and-downs over the years. Mr. Netanyahu, in what will likely be his last White House meeting with Mr. Biden, reflected on the roughly 40 years they've known each other and thanked the president for his service.

"From a proud Jewish Zionist to a proud Irish American Zionist, I want to thank you for 50 years of public service and 50 years of support for the state of Israel," Mr. Netanyahu told Mr. Biden at the start of their meeting.

A U.S.-backed proposal to release remaining hostages in Gaza over three phases is something that would be a legacy-affirming achievement for Mr. Biden, who abandoned his reelection bid and endorsed Ms. Harris. It could also be a boon for Ms. Harris in her bid to succeed him.

Following their talks, Mr. Biden and Mr. Netanyahu met with the families of American hostages.

For Ms. Harris, the meeting with Mr. Netanyahu is an opportunity to demonstrate that she has the mettle to serve as commander in chief. She's being scrutinized by those on the political left who say Mr. Biden hasn't done enough to force Mr. Netanyahu to end the war and by Republicans looking to brand her as insufficient in her support for Israel.

A senior administration official, who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House, said there is "no daylight between the president and vice president" on Israel. Ms. Harris' last one-on-one engagement with Mr. Netanyahu was in March 2021, but she's taken part in more than 20 calls between Mr. Biden and Mr. Netanyahu.

Mr. Netanyahu is trying to navigate his own delicate political moment. He faces pressure from the families of hostages demanding a cease-fire agreement to bring their loved ones home and from far-right members of his governing coalition who demand he resist any deal that could keep Israeli forces from eliminating Hamas.

Mr. Netanyahu, in a fiery address before a joint session of Congress on Wednesday, offered a robust defense of Israel's conduct during the war and lashed out against accusations by the International Criminal Court of Israeli war crimes. He made the case that Israel, in its fight against Iran-backed Hamas, was effectively keeping "Americans boots off the ground while protecting our shared interests in the Middle East."

"Remember this: Our enemies are your enemies," Netanyahu said. "Our fight, it's your fight. And our victory will be your victory." (Agencies)

Kargil Victory Day : PM Modi pays...

Mr. Modi said that Pakistan has not learnt any lessons from history and has faced defeat whenever it carried out any misadventure. He noted that Pakistan was trying to remain relevant through terror and proxy war, but it has faced defeat whenever it has carried out any misadventure. "Today, I am speaking from a place where masters of terror can hear my voice directly. I want to tell patrons of terrorism that their nefarious designs will never succeed," he said.

"Our Bravehearts will crush terrorism and enemy will be given a befitting response," he asserted. The prime minister's remarks come in the backdrop of a surge in terror incidents in Jammu. Mr. Modi said, "In Kargil, we not only won the war, we gave a wonderful example of truth, restraint and strength".

President Droupadi Murmu hailed the "courage and extraordinary valor" of the armed forces and urged all the countrymen to "draw inspiration from the sacrifice and valor" of the soldiers.

In a post on X, she said, "Kargil Vijay Diwas is an occasion for a grateful nation to pay tribute to the indomitable courage and extraordinary valor of our armed forces. I pay tribute to each soldier who made the supreme sacrifice while protecting Mother India on the peaks of Kargil in the year 1999 and bow in reverence to their sacred memory."

"I am confident that all countrymen will draw inspiration from their sacrifice and valor. Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!," she added.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh also offered tribute to the soldiers to commemorate the occasion. In a post on X, he heaped praise on the "unwavering commitment, valor and patriotism" of the soldiers ensuring the safety and security of the country.

"Today, on the 25th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas, we remember the indomitable spirit and courage of the brave soldiers who fought valiantly in the 1999 war. Their unwavering commitment, valor and patriotism ensured that our country remained safe and secure. Their service and sacrifice will continue to inspire every Indian and our coming generations," Mr. Singh mentioned in the post.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that Kargil Vijay Diwas is a symbol of the unwavering resolve and valor of the brave soldiers of the army. "Kargil Vijay Diwas is a symbol of the unwavering resolve of the valor of the brave soldiers of the army. In the Kargil war, the brave soldiers displayed the ultimate valor in the inaccessible hills of the Himalayas and forced the enemy army to kneel down, and made the country proud by hoisting the tricolor again in Kargil," he said in a post on X. "Today on 'Kargil Vijay Diwas' I salute the brave soldiers who protected the motherland with their courage in this war. The nation will never forget your sacrifice, dedication and sacrifice," he added.

Minister of External Affairs (EAM) S. Jaishankar also took the opportunity to "salute the valor and dedication of soldiers" on the occasion. "On Kargil Vijay Diwas, salute the valor and dedication of our brave soldiers. The legacy of their courage and patriotism acts as a guiding light for all Indians," he said in a post on X.

In a post in Hindi on X, the Congress said, "Kargil Vijay Diwas' is a symbol of the indomitable courage and determination of the country's heroes. On this day, the brave sons of Mother India, on the strength of their amazing valor, drove away the enemy from Kargil and hoisted the tricolor flag." "We are proud of the heroes dedicated to protecting the nation. We salute them," the party said.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, in a post on X, said, "Congratulations to our brave soldiers, their families and all Indians on the occasion of 25th 'Kargil Vijay Diwas'. We bow our heads in tribute to the martyrdom of our heroes who made the supreme sacrifice while protecting our motherland in the Kargil War." "We are proud of their indomitable courage and valor," he said.

"On Kargil Vijay Diwas, my salutations to the immortal martyrs who sacrificed themselves to protect India. The country will always be indebted to them for their supreme sacrifice," Rahul Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said Kargil Vijay Diwas is that golden page of Indian military history which reminds us of the valor and sacrifice of our brave soldiers. "In the Kargil War, the brave soldiers of our army, while facing difficult conditions, put their lives at stake and drove away the enemy and made the country proud by hoisting the tricolor on the high peaks of the Himalayas," she said. "Salute to all the brave soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice to protect the country! The country will always remain indebted to our brave martyrs," she added.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Senator Marco Rubio introduces...

"Communist China continues to aggressively expand its domain in the Indo-Pacific region, all while it seeks to impede the sovereignty and autonomy of our regional partners. It's crucial for the U.S. to continue its support in countering these malicious tactics. India, along with other nations in the region, is not alone," Mr. Rubio said after he introduced the U.S.-India Defense Cooperation Act in the Senate.

The bill notes that the U.S.-India partnership is vital to countering China's influence. It is essential to enhance our strategic diplomatic, economic, and military relationship with New Delhi, the bill asserts.

Among other things, the bill would set a Statement of Policy that the U.S. will support India in its response to growing threats to its territorial integrity, provide necessary security assistance to India to deter adversaries and cooperate with India for defense, civil space, technology, medicine and economic investments.

Given the short timeline of a bitterly divided Congress in an election year, the bill is unlikely to make much headway but it might be reintroduced in the next Congress, given that there is bipartisan support on the India-U.S. relationship.

When passed into law, it would provide a limited exemption for India from CAATSA sanctions for purchases of Russian equipment that are currently used by the Indian military and expedite the process to sell defense articles, services, design and construction services, and major defense equipment to India.

It proposes to treat India as if it were of the same status as the U.S. allies such as Japan, Israel, Korea, and NATO allies regarding technology transfers; authorize the Secretary of State to enter into a memorandum of understanding with India to increase military cooperation; expedite excess defense articles to India for two years and grant India the same status as other allies; and expand International Military Education and Training Cooperation with New Delhi.

It requires a report to Congress on Pakistan's use of offensive force, including through terrorism and proxy groups, against India; and bar Pakistan from receiving security assistance if it is found to have sponsored terrorism against India.

This is the first time that such an India-centric bill has been introduced in the U.S. Congress - it proposes to put India at the same level as that of its treaty allies, exempt it from CAATSA sanctions, and impose sanctions on Pakistan for promoting terrorism in India. (Source: PTI)

Joe Biden says he ended 2024...

"And that includes personal ambition." It was a moment for the history books - a U.S. President reflecting before the nation on why he was taking the rare step of voluntarily handing off power. It hasn't been done since 1968, when Lyndon Johnson announced he would not seek reelection in the heat of the Vietnam War.

"I revere this office," Mr. Biden said. "But I love my country more." Trump, just an hour earlier at a campaign rally, revived his baseless claims of voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election, which he lost to Mr. Biden. His refusal to concede inspired the Capitol insurrection of Jan. 6, 2021, which Mr. Biden called "the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War." Mr. Biden skirted the political reality that brought him to that point: His abysmal performance in a debate against Trump nearly a month ago, where he spoke haltingly, appeared ashen and failed to rebut his predecessor's attacks, sparked a crisis of confidence from Democrats. Lawmakers and ordinary voters questioned not just whether he was capable of beating Trump in November, but also whether, at 81, he was still fit for the high-pressure job.

Mr. Biden tried to outlast the skepticism and quell the concerns with interviews and tepid rallies, but the pressure to step aside only mounted from the party's political elites and from ordinary voters.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

History This Week JULY 26 - AUG 1

JULY 26



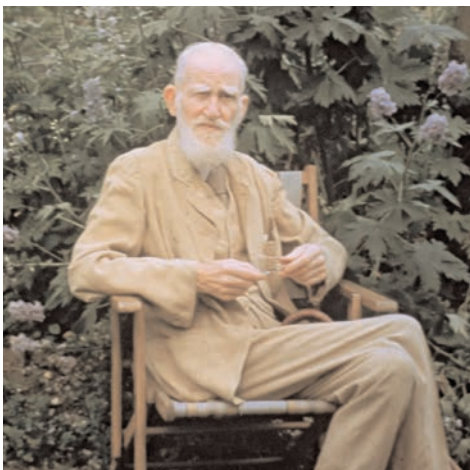
July 26, 1944 - The U.S. Army began desegregating its training camp facilities. Black platoons were then assigned to white companies in a first step toward battlefield integration. However, the official order integrating the armed forces didn't come until July 26, 1948, signed by President Harry Truman.



July 26, 1945 - The U.S. Cruiser Indianapolis arrived at Tinian Island in the Marianas with an unassembled Atomic bomb, met by scientists ready to complete the assembly.



July 26, 1953 - The beginning of Fidel Castro's revolutionary "26th of July Movement." In 1959, Castro led the rebellion that drove out dictator Fulgencio Batista. Although he once declared that Cuba would never again be ruled by a dictator, Castro's government became a Communist dictatorship.



Birthdays - Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was born in Dublin, Ireland.<

JULY 27



July 27, 1953 - The Korean War ended with the signing of an armistice by U.S. and North Korean delegates at Panmunjom, Korea. The war had lasted just over three years.

JULY 28



July 28, 1932 - The Bonus March eviction in Washington, D.C., occurred as U.S. Army troops under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, Major Dwight D. Eisenhower and Major George S. Patton, attacked and burned the encampments of unemployed World War I veterans. About 15,000 veterans had marched on Washington, demanding payment of a war bonus they had been promised. After two months' encampment in Washington's Anacostia Flats, forced eviction of the bonus marchers by the U.S. Army was ordered by President Herbert Hoover.

July 28, 1943 - During World War II, a firestorm killed 42,000 civilians in Hamburg, Germany. The firestorm occurred after 2,326 tons of bombs and incendiaries were dropped by the Allies.



Birthdays - Jackie Kennedy (1929-1994) was born in Southampton, New York (as Jacqueline Lee Bouvier). She was married to John Fitzgerald Kennedy and after his death later married Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis.

JULY 29



Birthdays - Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) was born in Dovia, Italy. He ruled Italy from 1922-1943, first as prime minister and then as "Il Duce," the absolute dictator.

JULY 30



July 30, 1975 - Former Teamsters Union leader James Hoffa was last seen outside a restaurant near Detroit, Michigan. His 13-year federal prison sentence had been commuted by President Richard M. Nixon in 1971. On December 8, 1982, seven years after his disappearance, an Oakland County judge declared Hoffa officially dead.



Birthdays - Automotive pioneer Henry Ford (1863-1947) was born in Dearborn Township, Michigan. He developed an assembly-line production system and introduced a \$5-a-day wage for automotive workers. "History is bunk," he once said.

JULY 31

July 31, 1776 - During the American Revolution, Francis Salvador became the first Jew to die in the conflict. He had also been the first Jew elected to office in Colonial America, voted a member of the South Carolina Provincial Congress in January 1775.



July 31, 1790 - The U.S. Patent Office first opened its doors. The first U.S. patent was issued to Samuel Hopkins of Vermont for a new method of making pearlsh and potash. The patent was signed by George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

AUGUST 1

August 1, 1838 - Slavery was abolished in Jamaica. It had been introduced by Spanish settlers 300 years earlier in 1509.



August 1, 1944 - Anne Frank penned her last entry into her diary. "[I] keep on trying to find a way of becoming what I would like to be, and what I could be, if...there weren't any other people living in the world." Three days later, Anne and her family were arrested and sent to Nazi concentration camps. Anne died at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp on March 15, 1945, at age 15.

August 1, 1944 - The Warsaw Uprising began as the Polish Home Army, numbering about 40,000 Polish patriots, began shooting at German troops in the streets. The Nazis then sent eight divisions to battle the Poles, who had hoped for, but did not receive, assistance from the Allies. Two months later, the rebellion was quashed.



Birthdays - Star-Spangled Banner author Francis Scott Key (1779-1843) was born in Frederick County, Maryland. After witnessing the British bombardment of Fort McHenry on the night of September 13-14, 1814, he was enthralled to see the American flag still flying over the fort at daybreak. He then wrote the poem originally entitled Defense of Fort McHenry which became the U.S. National Anthem in 1931.



Birthdays - Moby Dick author Herman Melville (1819-1891) was born in New York.



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SALES OFFICE
224 West 30th St., #604, New York, NY 10001
Mail: P.O. Box 7304, Hicksville, NY 11802

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Very clear about his intent, communication: Gill on Gambhir as head coach

India's newly appointed vice-captain, Shubman Gill, opened up on his first impression of Gautam Gambhir as a head coach, saying that the former Indian opener is very clear about his intent, communication and player roles with the team.

India's tour of Sri Lanka begins with a T20I on Saturday, July 27, and consists of three T20Is and three ODIs each. Gill will be the deputy to Suryakumar Yadav and Rohit Sharma in the short format and 50-overs, respectively. This is Gambhir's first assignment as head coach after being appointed to the position earlier in July after Rahul Dravid vacated the post following ICC T20 World Cup win in West Indies.

Speaking ahead of the first T20I in Pallekele in the pre-match presser, Gill said, "We have had just two net sessions together, and this is the first time I am working with him. But whatever he has told me during these two sessions, his intent and communication have been very clear—he knows what he wants from which player, and what he thinks will work for each player." Gill also opened up on his equation with the newly-appointed T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav, saying that they are "alike".

"We think alike. I have played under Surya bhai's captaincy in the South Africa tour," he said.

Source: ANI

PARIS (TIP)

Led by the in-form Dhiraj Bommadevara and Ankita Bhakat, India's campaign at the Paris Olympics began on a positive note as the country's archers secured a direct entry into the quarterfinals of both the men's and women's team events after finishing third and fourth, respectively, in the ranking round here on July 25.

Debutants Dhiraj and Ankita produced a spectacular show in the qualifications to help India finish in the top-four, giving them favourable draws. The top-four in the team standings directly advance to the quarterfinals, while the 5th to 12th play the Round of 16 fixtures.

The Indian men's team is seeded third, which means they will not feature in the same pool as the South Koreans in the next round. The duo of Ankita and Dhiraj will be seeded fifth in the mixed team Round of

Paris Olympics: Are India ready to spring a surprise?

PARIS (TIP)

Failing to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Games was a watershed moment for the India men's hockey team. It was a new low for the eight-time Olympic gold medallists since their 1975 World Cup triumph. That was the last major title India had won, notwithstanding their gold medal at boycott-marred 1980 Olympics at Moscow. A heavy injection of funds to reverse fortunes saw India make a comeback in the line-up at the London Olympics in 2012. It turned out to be a disaster. India finished at the bottom the 12-team competition and the approach of the players was shocking.

Michael Nobbs, the chief coach and a former Australia player, was left dejected by players showing they were satisfied at merely being Olympians. "I am struggling to figure out how any player could shy away from hard tackles in combative encounters. It does not get any bigger than the Olympics and some of the players are even casual in executing shots that they have practised for years," Nobbs said as the team lurched from one disastrous outing to another.

"As an Australian, I find this lack of killer instinct disheartening. When players step on to the pitch wearing the Australian colours, they are willing to be taken off only on stretchers. That's the commitment I was expecting from a side representing the hopes of millions."

Proof of what Nobbs said came in seasoned defender Matt Dawson having part of his finger amputated to stay in contention for Paris. A silver medallist in Tokyo, Dawson was eager to play in his third Olympics but that looked difficult when he injured his ring finger in training. Dawson amputated the injured top part of the digit so that it would heal faster and in



India will take on New Zealand in their first pool match on Saturday, July 27. (HI)

10 days, he was available for selection. It is against such determination that India will find itself as it seeks to repeat its medal-winning show of the last Olympics in Tokyo.

International hockey is no longer an exhibition of soft skills in which India once excelled. Against top-ranked teams what matters is the amount of physical risk players are willing to take.

Hockey has become so fast and competitive that a small margin separates the crack outfits from others in terms of quality. With little to separate them in calibre, these teams go heavy on analysis. Which means that only an element of surprise can lift a team's fortunes. The results achieved, or not achieved, in the recent FIH Pro League will have no bearing on the Olympic Games.

In India's case that could help cast aside recent indifferent performances provided the team executes plans or moves coach Craig Fulton introduces for the Games. We will know soon enough.

For six years, between his debut in 2016 and the Tokyo Olympic bronze in 2022, Harmanpreet's drag flicks produced outstanding results. But at the 2023 World Cup, opponents had a strategy to neutralise the risk posed by his penalty-corner shots. That hampered India's

results.

With penalty corners deciding majority of games, the India captain is aware that his team's success will depend a great deal on the new elements he manages to introduce in his shots. As rival analysts study videos of penalty corner execution, variations become key in fetching goals from them.

Source: HT



Dhiraj shines as archers secure quarters berths

16. World Cup bronze medallist Dhiraj, who defeated Tokyo Olympics silver winner Mauro Nespoli in Antalya, lived up to the expectations by finishing fourth in the individual round. Dhiraj scored 681 points. Appearing in his fourth Olympics, Tarundeep Rai ended 14th with 674 points while Pravin Jadhav finished 39th with 658 points. Earlier in the day, Ankita left behind seasoned campaigners like Deepika Kumari to emerge as the best-placed Indian at 11th in the women's individual qualifications. The 26-year-old shot 666 and was followed by Bhajan Kaur (22nd with 559 points) and Deepika (23rd with 658 points).

South Korea's Lim Sihyeon smashed a world record score of 694 to top the standings.



Dhiraj Bommadevara finished fourth in the ranking round. PTI



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Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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