



The

INDIAN



PANORAMA

18th YEAR

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1 INDIAN AMERICAN WEEKLY : SINCE 2006

VOL 18 ISSUE 47 • NEW YORK / DALLAS • NOV 29 - DEC 5, 2024

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WE WISH READERS



Fadnavis is the Frontrunner ; new Maharashtra Govt 'by Dec 2'

FINER DETAILS OF CABINET BEING WORKED OUT; SHINDE UNLIKELY TO BE DY CM, SAYS A SENA LEADER



At the Mahayuti meeting in New Delhi.

Left to right: NCP MPs Sunil Tatkare and Praful Patel, BJP chief JP Nadda, NCP chief Ajit Pawar, Home Minister Amit Shah, Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde and BJP's Devendra Fadnavis

NOVEMBER 29, 2024
NEW DELHI (TIP): Devendra Fadnavis of the BJP emerged a clear leader in the race for the Maharashtra chief ministership this evening as the ruling National Democratic Alliance partners assembled in Delhi to finalize government formation.

Top NDA sources told The Tribune

that the new state government would be sworn in by December 2 and Fadnavis was in all likelihood set to be the Chief Minister. A formal announcement would be made after the BJP sends central observers to Mumbai for a legislative party meeting where the MLAs would need to elect their leader. All three NDA partners - Ajit Pawar of the NCP, Eknath

Shinde of the Shiv Sena and expectedly Fadnavis of the BJP - would then go to the state Governor with letters of support for the CM-designate and stake claim. Finer details of the Maharashtra Cabinet formation - who will be the CM; which party will get how many ministries; and who will get which

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The INDIAN PANORAMA

Will bring out a profusely illustrated New Year edition to bid goodbye to 2024 and to welcome 2025. Articles and advertisements may please be emailed to salujaindra@gmail.com by December 10, 2024. Please email your queries, if any to salujaindra@gmail.com or call The Indian Panorama at 646-247-9458.

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Canada already examining tariffs on certain US items following Trump's tariff threat



US President Donald Trump and Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. -File photo / The White House

NOVEMBER 29, 2024
OTTAWA (TIP) : Canada is already examining possible retaliatory tariffs on certain items from the United States, should President-elect Donald Trump follow through on his threat to impose sweeping tariffs on Canadian products, a senior official has said. Trump has threatened to impose tariffs on products from Canada

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Hemant Soren begins fourth innings as Jharkhand Chief Minister



Jharkhand Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar (left) greets newly sworn-in Chief Minister Hemant Soren after the swearing-in ceremony in Ranchi on November 28, 2024.

Photo credit: PTI

NOVEMBER 28, 2024
RANCHI (TIP): Hemant Soren on Thursday, November 28, 2024, was sworn in as the 14th Chief Minister of Jharkhand at Morabadi Ground here. Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Soren. The Swearing-in ceremony was attended by the top leaders of INDIA bloc including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Aam Aadmi Party

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After Fitch, Moody's also switches outlook on Adani group firms to 'negative'

NOVEMBER 26, 2024
NEW YORK (TIP): Moody's Ratings has on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, affirmed the ratings of seven Adani Group companies from 'stable' to 'negative'. In a statement the global rating firm said, "At the same time, we

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Moody's Ratings has affirmed the ratings of seven Adani Group companies from 'stable' to 'negative'. Earlier, Fitch Ratings also put the firms on a negative rating watch. -File Photo

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COMMENT

A Happy Holidays Thought: New York City Mayor Eric Adams' Challenges and Opportunities

New York City Mayor Eric Adams finds himself navigating a labyrinth of challenges in his tenure as leader of the world's largest cosmopolitan hub. His administration faces criticism from multiple fronts-political opposition, a law-and-order crisis, an unrelenting influx of immigrants, strained city finances, and a visible decline in public services. With New York's reputation as a global epicenter at stake, Adams must address these pressing issues to restore the city's grandeur.

One of the foremost challenges facing Mayor Adams is the City Council, a body often seen as resistant to his policies. Dominated by opposing voices, the council has consistently pushed back against Adams' proposals, whether related to policing, housing, or budgetary measures. This gridlock has hindered swift decision-making, exacerbating the city's pressing problems. The clash between the executive and legislative branches of city governance underscores the need for greater collaboration and compromise to address New York's multifaceted crises.

New York City's law-and-order situation has reached a critical point. Crime rates, particularly violent crimes and property-related offenses have surged. For instance, NYPD statistics from 2023 revealed a 15% increase in felony assaults and a 10% rise in robberies compared to the previous year. This alarming trend has sparked widespread concern among residents and businesses alike.

Frequent changes in the police leadership further reflect the administration's struggle to find a stable, effective approach to policing. In just two years, the city has seen three different police commissioners. Each change signifies Mayor Adams' attempt to identify a leader capable of addressing these challenges, but stability and clear strategic direction remain elusive.

The influx of immigrants into New York City has added another layer of complexity. In 2023 alone, the city received over 100,000 migrants, many seeking asylum. This unprecedented wave has overwhelmed shelters, public schools, and healthcare facilities. According to city officials, the crisis could cost New York more than \$4 billion by 2024, straining an already tight budget.

Public sentiment toward the situation has also soured. Many New

BY
INDRAJIT SALUJA

Yorkers view the arrival of migrants as an unwelcome burden, leading to protests and growing divisions within the community. The city's inability to accommodate the influx effectively has amplified frustrations, making it a political and social powder keg.

New York's streets and public spaces have seen a noticeable decline in cleanliness and maintenance. Piles of garbage are a common sight along sidewalks, causing not only aesthetic concerns but also public health issues. Mayor Adams' recent initiative to implement covered garbage bins is a step in the right direction, but more comprehensive measures are needed to address the root causes of the problem.

The city's infrastructure further exacerbates the situation. Roads riddled with potholes and uneven surfaces make commuting a daily ordeal. For instance, a 2023 survey found that over 60% of New York's streets were rated in poor condition, with repair backlogs spanning years. The current 25-mile-per-hour speed limit is more a reflection of necessity than policy, as driving at higher speeds on these roads is virtually impossible.

Another area of concern is the near disappearance of greenery in the city. Parks and tree-lined streets, once a hallmark of New York's urban charm, have given way to concrete expanses. Restoring greenery would not only improve the city's aesthetic appeal but also provide much-needed environmental and mental health benefits for its residents.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor dining structures were a lifeline for restaurants and a creative solution to social distancing measures. However, their continued presence in a post-pandemic era has become a source of contention. These structures occupy valuable street space, contributing to traffic congestion and reducing already limited parking availability.

With winter approaching, the utility of these outdoor spaces is further diminished. Mayor Adams has the opportunity to take decisive action by ordering their removal, offering both residents and visitors a more navigable and less cluttered urban

experience. Such a move would also symbolize a shift toward normalcy and signal that New York is ready to reclaim its pre-pandemic vibrancy.

Despite these challenges, New York City's potential for greatness remains undiminished. Mayor Adams must adopt a multi-pronged approach to tackle the city's issues effectively:

Strengthening Law and Order: Establishing a clear, long-term strategy for crime reduction is paramount. Stability in police leadership, combined with community policing initiatives, could help restore trust and safety.

Managing Immigration: The city must collaborate with state and federal governments to secure additional resources for housing, healthcare, and education for migrants. A transparent and equitable approach can mitigate public backlash.

Improving Cleanliness and Infrastructure: Expanding sanitation services, enforcing stricter waste disposal regulations, and accelerating road repair projects are critical steps. Increasing greenery through tree-planting drives and park restoration could also rejuvenate public spaces.

Addressing Political Gridlock: Mayor Adams must work toward building consensus with the City Council. Open communication and shared priorities can pave the way for more effective governance.

Removing Pandemic-Era Structures: Clearing outdoor dining setups and reclaiming street spaces for traffic and parking can significantly improve the city's functionality and aesthetics.

New York City is undeniably at a crossroads. The challenges facing Mayor Eric Adams are formidable, but they also present an opportunity for transformative leadership. By addressing the city's most pressing issues with urgency and vision, Adams can restore New York's reputation as a global beacon of culture, innovation, and resilience.

A concerted effort to clean up the streets, enhance public safety, and invest in infrastructure can make the city not just livable but exceptional once again. In the words of those who hold New York close to their hearts, "Let's make New York a great city again." With the right measures, Mayor Adams has the potential to deliver on that promise.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

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Diwali "Power of One" Awards to be presented on December 6th at United Nations HQ

I.S. SALUJA

NOVEMBER 29, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): Diwali "Power of One" Award, established by Diwali Foundation, USA, Inc. chaired by Ranju Batra, in 2017 is to celebrate and highlight the vital and important work done across the world in a peaceful manner, especially at the United Nations.

To be eligible for the Award, one has to be a former Permanent Representative or former high-level member of UN Secretariat, or soon to be former, who has toiled selflessly to "help form a more perfect, peaceful and secure world for all".

The 2024 Diwali Power of One Award will be presented to F.M. Juan Ramon de la Fuente (Mexico); Amb. Ferit Hoxha (Albania); Amb. Tarek Ladeb (Tunisia); and Amb. Olof Skoog (Sweden & EU).



The Annual Event of presentation of Power of One Award- also known as Oscar of Diplomacy - on 6 December, 2024 at Delegates Dining Room, United Nations HQ from 3 PM to 6 PM, is hosted by Permanent Mission of Georgia.



Diplomats and Diwali Foundation Chairperson Ranju Batra and Ravi Batra at the lighting ceremony of Diwali 2023 Power of One Award presentation. On extreme left is Ban Ki-moon, who served as the Secretary General of the United Nations from 2007 to 2016. -Photo / Jaffer-SnapsIndia

A Dazzling Diwali Celebration with U.S. Representative-Elect George Latimer

NOV 9, 2024

NEW ROCHELLE, NY (TIP): Amidst the mixed feelings within our community and country, a radiant celebration of Diwali took place at the Mamaroneck Library on November 9. Community members from Rye, Larchmont, New Rochelle, Harrison, and Mamaroneck gathered to honor this significant occasion for the Hindu community. Organized by Sonal Seth and Terry Numa, this vibrant event brought families together to connect through the thread of diversity.

U.S. Representative-Elect George Latimer delivered inspiring opening remarks on cultural diversity and community spirit. Shree Seth and Samara Karkara met with Latimer to discuss their initiatives for advancing community engagement.

The event also highlighted shared cultural practices, with participants exchanging insights about the Jewish use of light during Hanukkah, Latin traditions of Día de los Muertos with marigolds and candles, and Christian customs of lighting candles.



2 girls who gave a performance with the U.S. Representative-Elect George Latimer



The family members of Sonal Patel-Sheth and Terry Numa at the Diwali celebration

For seven years, Sonal Patel-Sheth and Terry Numa have collaborated with a passionate desire to unite the community. This year's celebration invited attendees to immerse themselves in the rich traditions of

Diwali, featuring diya painting, henna tattoos, and a sari-wearing demonstration. Many dressed in traditional Indian attire, enhancing the festive atmosphere.

The Government of India Announces the Thrilling 5th Edition of the Bharat Ko Janiye

Know India Online Quiz 2024-2025!

Get ready to dive into India's rich culture, history, and heritage! The Government of India proudly presents the 5th edition of the Bharat Ko Janiye (Know India) Online Quiz, live from 11th November to 10th December 2024. This exciting quiz is designed to engage Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), and foreign nationals in a journey through India's incredible legacy.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The quiz invites participants aged 14 to 50 years (as of 10th December 2024) in the following categories:

1. Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)
2. Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Foreign Nationals

Amazing Prizes & Unforgettable Experiences!



The top 15 winners from each category will receive a unique, all-expenses-paid trip to India in January 2025! Winners will embark on the Bharat Ko Janiye Yatra (Know India Tour), a two-week journey to experience India up-close, and they'll also attend the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) 2025 celebrations. The Government of India will cover both international airfare and local hospitality for each winner.

QUIZ DETAILS:

1. **Format:** 30 multiple-choice questions
2. **Time Limit:** 17 minutes per attempt

3. **Scoring:** No negative marking! Rankings are based on the best score and time taken.
4. **Attempts:** Participants can try up to 5 times per day, with unlimited attempts over the quiz period. (Only the best attempt will count).
5. **Mock Quiz:** A handy mock quiz is available to help participants get comfortable with the format.

HOW TO JOIN:

Participation is free, and registration is mandatory. Head to the official Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz portal to register and read the full guidelines: <https://www.bkjquiz.com>

KEY DATES:

Quiz Period: 11th November to 10th December 2024
Winners Announced: Shortly after the quiz ends
Don't miss this incredible opportunity to connect with India and immerse yourself in its legacy!

University of Oxford appoints Indo-British Dr Jaskiran Kaur Bhogal to Guru Nanak Research Fellowship

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

LONDON (TIP): Wolfson College, University of Oxford, has appointed Dr Jaskiran Kaur Bhogal to the newly established Guru Nanak Stipendiary Research Fellowship. This prestigious position, which will commence in February 2025, was made possible by a fundraising campaign primarily supported by the Punjabi Sikh community in Britain.

Dr Bhogal, who holds a BSc in Economics and an MSc and PhD in Anthropology from the London School of Economics, will focus her research on exploring the preservation of intangible heritage in the Sikh community. Her



project will examine how Sikh families in Britain maintain their connection to their spiritual and cultural heritage

Dr Bhogal is going to research the preservation of intangible heritage, deeply rooted in the historical and spiritual context of Punjab

preservation of intangible heritage, deeply rooted in the historical and spiritual context of Punjab, through childbirth, child-rearing, and homemaking practices, drawing upon traditions and the teachings of Guru Nanak Sahib. This project will explore how the Sikh community maintains a connection to their spiritual and cultural heritage in a British diaspora context. She will explore how Sikh families create Sikh spaces within their homes and everyday lives, where the cultural and spiritual heritage of Punjab is preserved and transmitted across generations.

(Based on a press release issued by Wolfson College, University of Oxford)

through childbirth, child-rearing, and homemaking practices.

Dr Bhogal is going to research the

Indian-Origin Neurosurgeon Fined Over \$2 Million For Medicare Fraud



Indian-Origin Neurosurgeon Dr Rajesh Bindal pays \$2M to settle allegations involving false procedures

Photo / Texas Spine & Neurosurgery Center

NOV 28, 2024

HOUSTON (TIP): A 53-year-old Indian-origin neurosurgeon from Sugar Land was fined over USD 2 million for Medicare fraud after falsely claiming to perform surgeries to implant electroacupuncture devices.

Dr Rajesh Bindal from the Houston area was fined USD 2,095,946 after being accused of defrauding Medicare and the Federal Employees Health Benefits

Program (FEHBP), US Attorney Alamdar S Hamdani said on Wednesday, November 27.

According to federal investigators, Bindal billed for invasive procedures typically requiring operating rooms, yet no such surgeries were conducted. Instead, the devices were merely taped behind patients' ears, often falling off within days.

In some cases, the procedures were performed not by Dr Bindal himself but by a device sales representative or a physician assistant at his clinic, Texas Spine & Neurosurgery Center P.A., rather than in a proper surgical setting.

"A neurosurgeon like Dr Bindal knows the difference between real surgery and sticking a device behind someone's ear," said US Attorney Hamdani. "Despite being among the highest-paid specialists in medicine, he chose personal greed over integrity and patient care."

"This type of fraud not only wastes taxpayer dollars but undermines trust in healthcare providers and critical programs like Medicare. Dr Bindal's actions deceived both the system and vulnerable patients," said Jason E Meadows, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Inspector General.

(Based on a press release issued by U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas)

Indian American arrested at airport with 71 lbs. of meth-soaked clothing

NOVEMBER 28, 2024

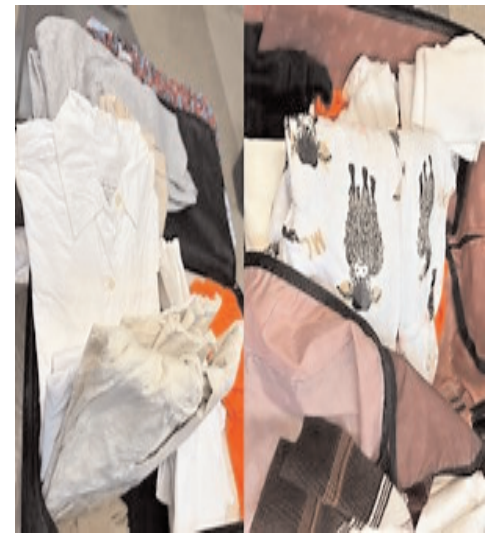
LOS ANGELES, CA (TIP) : An Indian American man from Southern California was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) after authorities discovered his luggage contained clothing soaked in methamphetamine.

Raj Matharu, 31, of Northridge, was attempting to board a flight to Sydney, Australia, on Nov. 6 when Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers flagged his checked luggage for "irregularities" during an X-ray screening. A subsequent inspection revealed over a dozen clothing items, including a cow-patterned pajama onesie, coated in a white residue.

Tests confirmed the substance was methamphetamine, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. The total weight of the drug-laden clothing was approximately 71.5 pounds, with authorities extracting over one kilogram of meth residue from the items.

Matharu was intercepted on the jet bridge to his flight and taken into custody. He was later released on a \$10,000 bond.

"Drug dealers are continually inventing creative ways of smuggling dangerous narcotics in pursuit of illicit profit - as alleged in the facts of this case," U.S. Attorney Martin Estrada said in a statement. "In the process, they are



Raj Matharu, 31, of Northridge was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) after authorities discovered his luggage contained clothing soaked in methamphetamine.

poisoning communities throughout the world. Law enforcement is committed to fighting drug trafficking, knowing that every seizure saves lives."

Matharu is scheduled to be arraigned on Dec. 2 in U.S. District Court in downtown Los Angeles. If convicted, he faces a potential prison sentence of 10 years to life.

Authorities continue to investigate the case as part of their ongoing efforts to combat drug trafficking.

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Indian American Sunita Williams To Celebrate Thanksgiving In Space

NOVEMBER 28, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Indian American NASA astronaut Sunita Williams is set to celebrate Thanksgiving in space with 'smoked turkey, mashed potato'.

Thanksgiving is observed every year in the US on the fourth Thursday of November to honor the blessings and harvest of the year.

"Our Crew up here just wanted to say Happy Thanksgiving to all our friends and family who are down on Earth and everyone who is supporting us," Williams said in a video message, shared by NASA on Wednesday.

The astronauts shared that NASA has provided them with food items like butternut squash, apples, sardines, and smoked turkey for the occasion.

In a recent interview with NBC News, Williams shared her plans of celebrating the day, along with other astronauts -- Butch Wilmore, Nick Hague and Aleksandr Gorbunov -- aboard the



Sunita Williams is set to celebrate Thanksgiving in space with 'smoked turkey, mashed potato'.

Photo / NASA

International Space Station (ISS).

The plans include watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and a lavish feast with "some smoked turkey, some

cranberry, apple cobbler, green beans and mushrooms and mashed potatoes."

In June Williams and Butch Wilmore became the first to ride the much-delayed

Starliner, developed by Boeing.

What began as an eight-day sojourn on the International Space Station (ISS) has now extended to eight months in space for Williams and Wilmore as the faulty Starliner was declared unfit for human travel by NASA.

While Starliner is back on Earth unharmed, Williams is expected to return to Earth onboard a SpaceX Dragon capsule in February 2025.

Amid concerns for their prolonged stay in space, NASA recently said that both Williams and Wilmore "are safe aboard the space station". Williams also said that she is "feeling good, working out, and eating right," amid claims of her weight loss in space.

The Indian American astronaut also celebrated Diwali "from 260 miles above the earth on the ISS".

According to NASA, "Sunita has spent a cumulative total of 322 days in space", and she is the second woman astronaut with the highest number of spacewalks.

Trump picks Indian American doc to head top health institute



Dr. Jay Bhattacharya has been picked by Trump as director of the National Institutes of Health, the country's top health research and funding institutions.

NOVEMBER 28, 2024
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) : US President-elect Donald Trump has picked Indian American scientist Jay Bhattacharya as the director of the National Institutes of Health, the country's top health research and funding institutions.

With this, Bhattacharya becomes the first Indian American to be nominated by Trump for a

top administrative position.

Earlier, Trump picked Indian American Vivek Ramaswamy to lead the newly created Department of Government Efficiency along with Tesla owner Elon Musk. However, that is a voluntary position and does not need confirmation from the US Senate.

"I am thrilled to nominate Jay Bhattacharya, MD, PhD, to serve as Director of the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Bhattacharya will work in cooperation with Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to direct the Nation's Medical Research and to make important discoveries that will improve Health, and save lives," Trump said.

"Together, Jay and RFK Jr. will restore the NIH to a Gold Standard of Medical Research as they examine the underlying causes of, and solutions to, America's biggest Health challenges, including our Crisis of Chronic Illness and Disease. Together, they will work hard to Make America Healthy Again," he said.

Jay Bhattacharya, a Stanford health policy professor, was an outspoken critic of the US government's Covid-19 policies during the pandemic. Along with two other academics, he published the Great Barrington Declaration in October 2020, which called for a return to life as normal for those who were not vulnerable to the virus. He sued the government afterwards, alleging that it pressured social media platforms to censor his opinions.

Mohammad Rafi of East Africa: At 87, Didar Singh Pardesi recalls with pride his engagement with Punjabi music

BY PARAMJIT SINGH BATALVI
NOVEMBER 27, 2024

CHANDIGARH (TIP): The one memory that Didar Singh Pardesi perhaps cherishes the most in his illustrious music career is when his idol, Mohammad Rafi, came on stage and embraced him after hearing him sing.

"He was adorable and so affectionate. I was left entirely speechless. He not only appreciated my singing, but showered a big bundle of blessings upon me... After that, people started calling me the 'Rafi of East Africa'," recalls Pardesi, now 87 and settled in London.

Pardesi has recorded several literary compositions of Punjabi poets like Shiv Batalvi, Prof Mohan Singh, Sohan Singh Josh, Surjit Patar and many others, but his name became synonymous with 'Raat chaanani main turan te mera naal turey parchavaan ni jindey meriye' (O my love, you walk along me like my shadow in the moonlit night).

A cousin of the late poet Surjit Patar, Didar was born in 1937 at Pattar Kalan village in Jalandhar. He was just two when his mother passed away. "My grandmother raised me. We were poor and my father went to Kenya to earn a living. When I was 14, I joined him. I graduated there and became a teacher in a government school. I taught for 37 years and retired as a headmaster, before shifting to the UK."

Didar was five when he started performing at religious congregations in his village gurdwara. "When I went to Kenya, I retained my passion for singing Punjabi songs and gave a good number of musical performances on stage and radio. During my visits to Punjab, I would sing for Jalandhar Doordarshan and Akashwani Radio," he recalls.

Several of his albums were well received - 'Ambi Da Boota', 'Kach Da Glass', 'Hasratyein', 'Tutte Dil', 'Salma Ki Yaad Mein', 'Dashmesh Da Darbar', 'Nangiyan Shakhaan' and 'Pyasian Roohan'.

"I was the first Asian singer to have been recorded by Phillips Record Company in East Africa. In 1969, I was invited to Bollywood for recording songs for Hindi movies like 'Do Shikari', 'Anjana Safar' and 'Mehmaan'.



Didar Singh Pardesi with singers Parkash Kaur (L) and Surinder Kaur.

I was on 15 days' leave for these recordings. I consider myself the luckiest to have recorded songs with singers I adored, like Mohd Rafi, Asha Bhosle, Hemlata and Meenu Purushottam," he says. The lyrics were penned by Sahir Ludhianvi and the music was composed by Ravi and Chitragupt.

"Sahir Ludhianvi advised me to shift to Bombay and make a fortune there, but my job security and pressure from my wife and two daughters put me in a fix. I ultimately chose to continue with my job and returned to East Africa."

Didar Singh Pardesi has a glint in his eyes when he recalls his meeting with the famous sarod player Ustaaad Ali Akbar Khan. "He asked me to sing 'Heer Waris Shah'. When I did, he was so elated that he blessed me with his diamond ring and gold buttons of his shirt and said, 'Didar Singh, my child, you have won my heart, I have nothing else to offer; you are marvelous and matchless. Keep it up my son and keep on serving your mother tongue and your folk music.' These words still resound in my ears and I consider them as priceless and eternally unforgettable."

If Didar Singh Pardesi has one regret, it is that the people of Punjab are losing their traits of love, affection and respect for one and all. "The modern Punjabi singers do not exhibit any responsibility towards their mother tongue and for their age-old folk music. They are merciless businessmen," he feels.

It is high time the Punjab government honored the veteran artist. (Source: Tribune)

Fund for the City of New York announces the winners of the 2024 Sloan public service awards

THIS YEAR'S HONOREES REPRESENT A RANGE OF CITY AGENCIES, BOTH LARGE AND SMALL, WITH INDIVIDUAL CAREERS SPANNING FROM 11 TO 32 YEARS OF SERVICE.

NOVEMBER 19, 2024

NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP): The Fund for the City of New York (Fund) proudly announced on November 19, the winners of the 2024 Sloan Public Service Awards. Known colloquially as the "Nobel Prize for New York City public servants" the awards celebrate the extraordinary contributions of the city's dedicated government employees. For over 50 years, the Fund has honored the unsung heroes who exemplify the strength, ingenuity, and resilience of New York's public workforce.

The 2024 Sloan winners were selected by an esteemed panel of civic leaders chaired by Georgia Boothe, Executive Vice President of Child Welfare & Family Services at Children's Aid. This year's honorees represent previously unrecognized agencies- including the Conflicts of Interest Board, the Department of Design and Construction, the Fire Department, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and the Department of Transportation. After an extensive vetting process, the winners emerged from a pool of more than 300,000 eligible city employees from both mayoral and non-mayoral agencies.

"By celebrating these dedicated civil servants, we honor their personal achievements and those of their agencies, while inspiring future generations to consider a career in public service," said Adam F. Falk, President of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. "The Sloan Public Service Awards highlight careers that truly make a difference in the lives of New Yorkers."

The 2024 Sloan winners are: Vimi Bhatia; Deputy Chief Elder Abuse Unit, Special Victims Division, New York County District Attorney's Office, James Reichman; Captain the Fire Department of the City of New York, Celestina Leon; District Manager, Brooklyn Community Board 4, Margaret Forgionne; First



Deputy Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation, Jade Bailey; Director, Design-Build Unit, NYC Department of Design and Construction and Alexander Kipp; Director of Education and Engagement, New York City Conflicts of

time-honored tradition-allows the recipients to be celebrated in the presence of their colleagues where their accomplishments have taken place. Each winner receives a prize package that includes \$10,000, a portrait, a video



Interest Board.

The winners will be honored on November 21, 2024, at their respective offices by the Fund's executive team and members of the Sloan Selection Panel. The day-long, cross-borough bus trip-a

retrospective, and a commemorative plaque and brochure.

"Public service is the lifeblood of our democracy, and civil servants are the unsung heroes who keep our communities thriving. The Fund for the City of New York's Public Service Awards Program has honored outstanding civil servants making a profound impact on our city since 1973," said Lisette Nieves, President of the Fund for the City of New York. "The Sloan Awards provide an opportunity to share their achievements with the citizens of New York City, who benefit from their work every day."

"The Sloan winners-extraordinary civil servants whose efforts benefit New Yorkers every day, exemplify the remarkable talent within New York City's 300,000 government workers. Despite facing significant challenges, these individuals serve the city with expertise and integrity," said Aldrin Rafael Bonilla, Executive Vice President of the Fund for the City of New York.

"The six awardees represent diverse fields including the Conflicts of Interest Board, the DOT and the Department of Design and Construction. Their integral yet often overlooked contributions are essential to New York City's vitality. The Sloan Public Service Awards are a heartfelt expression of gratitude for their exceptional service to the community we cherish."

The Fund for the City of New York was established by the Ford Foundation in 1968 with the mandate to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers. For over five decades, in partnership with government agencies, nonprofits and foundations, the Fund has developed and helped to implement innovation in policy, programs, practices and technology to advance the functioning of government and nonprofit organizations in New York City and beyond. The Fund seeks out, adapts, applies and assesses was to enable government and nonprofit agencies to develop leadership talent, achieve programmatic excellence and optimal service-delivery performance through its core programs-Cash Flow Loan Program, Partner Project Program, Sloan Public Service Awards, Sloan Awards for Excellence in Teaching Science and Mathematics, Community Planning Fellowship Program, Center for Youth and the Future of Work, and related strategic initiatives.

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation is a not for profit, mission driven grantmaking institution dedicated to improving the welfare of all through the advancement of scientific knowledge. Founded in 1934 by industrialist Alfred P. Sloan Jr., the Foundation disbursed approximately \$80 million in grand each year in four broad areas: direct support of research in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and workforce; projects to deepen or leverage technology to empower research; and efforts to enhance and deepen public engagement with science and scientists. Sloan Foundation grantmaking helped create some of the country's most influential and enduring scientific institutions, including Memorial Sloan bettering Cancer Center, the MIT Sloan School of Management, and the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. Sloan support has also played a critical role in the early development of many scientific fields, including cognitive science, behavioral economics and indoor microbial ecology. The Foundation strives to be guided in all its actions by the values of the scientific enterprise: impartiality, empiricism, curiosity, rigor and the conviction that a reasoned, systematic understanding of the forces of nature and society, when applied inventively and wisely, can lead to a better world for all.



AFTER THE SUCCESS OF KASHMIR FILES, ANOTHER FILM BASED ON KASHMIR PREMIERES AT SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - 'THE COLLABORATOR'

NOVEMBER 15, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): The Collaborator is a coming-of-age story set in the 1990's about a "Boy" growing up during the height of the conflict on the border of Kashmir, also known as the "Line of Control". As war rages, he is recruited by an army officer to perform a grim task, to go into the conflict zone where militants have been killed and retrieve their weapons and ID cards. Each day the "Boy" fears that he will find one of his missing friends lying amongst the dead.

The story is produced by all women producers and investors to drive awareness, helping the audience rally for tolerance and peace. This is the first feature for director Travis Hodgkins, who also adapted the script from Mirza Waheed's New York Times bestseller and a finalist for the Guardian First Book Award and the Shakti Bhat Prize.

Hodgkins says that he felt honored to be trusted with this very delicate subject matter. He was drawn to the novel's unique descriptions of the confusion a teenager experiences when the veil between being a child and an adult is suddenly lifted. "It's like suddenly being lost in a storm without any heading, and the only people you can take a reckoning from are the adults around you, assuming you can trust them to guide you safely to a port. What our protagonist realizes is he can only trust himself because all around him are just as lost."

The film was in official competition at the 2024 San Diego International Film Festival, and stars an international cast, from the United Kingdom and India. UK's Rudi Dharmalingam (Control, The Lazarus Project, Wakefield) stars in the role of "Captain Kadian"



Anastasia Jairath plays the role of 'Asma'

opposite newcomer Nikhil Singh Rai, who won the role of "The Boy" after an exhaustive two-year search. Nitin Ganatra (Eastenders) in the role of Village Headman leads the ensemble cast, along with Vikram Kapadia (The Night Manager), as one of the senior Kashmiri villagers.

The film marks the second feature film collaboration this year between producers Rashaana Shah (Blowing Up Right Now, IFC's Bollywood Hero) and Cristy Coors Beasley (The Westsiders, Lonelygirl15)

The feature is a co-production between the Republic of Georgia, India and the USA, shot in the gorgeous Caucasus mountains in Georgia. It is executive produced by MXW Ventures and CnR Films, with Chaitra Vedullapalli, Namrata Sharma and Swetha Pakala serving as executive producers. Below the line includes



From L to R : Namrata Sharma (EP), Swetha Pakala (EP), Cristy Coors Beasley (Producer), Rashaana Shah (Producer), Chaitra Vedullapalli (EP), Amanda Thompson (EP)

award-winning Swedish cinematographer Johan Holmqvist (Springfloden), award-winning editor Jamie Kirkpatrick (Old Henry, Critical Thinking), and award-winning composer Wayne Sharpe (Resilient).

"The Collaborator" was also an official selection in Antakya Film Festival, Turkey.

This year also marked the partnership of EP Chaitra Vedullapalli, Founder of Women In Cloud and San Diego International Film Festival to launch AI scholarships worth 2.25 Mil dollars for emerging filmmakers.

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Adani ripples in the neighborhood

"Over the last few years, as the Adani juggernaut struck deals in the neighborhood, apparently with help from the topmost echelons in Delhi, the government shook off the controversies and saw this as a no-brainer in a tough region where it has to rival China for influence and money power. The deals were controversial. Their review in Dhaka and Colombo after dramatic changes of government in both capitals, with the US indictment of Gautam Adani and others in his companies on charges of bribery strengthening public and political sentiment against them, should make it clear they were never cool."

For several decades of the 20th century, American diplomacy in its neighborhood was identified with a US multinational called the United Fruit Company (UFC). How the UFC influenced the economies of Central America and even orchestrated a coup with the CIA in Guatemala to protect its interests is a story of 'banana republics' too well-known to recount here. India now has its own version of this story, with a twist in the tale.

Over the last few years, as the Adani juggernaut struck deals in the neighborhood, apparently with help from the topmost echelons in Delhi, the government shook off the controversies and saw this as a no-brainer in a tough region where it has to rival China for influence and money power. The deals were controversial. Their review in Dhaka and Colombo after dramatic changes of government in both capitals, with the US indictment of Gautam Adani and others in his companies on charges of bribery strengthening public and political sentiment against them, should make it clear they were never cool.

In Bangladesh, Adani Power Jharkhand Ltd, which sends electricity to that country from a coal-fired thermal plant in the specially created Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Godda (Jharkhand), has been in the eye of a storm since December 2022. Seven years earlier, during his June 2015 visit to Dhaka, PM Narendra Modi pushed to "widen the cooperation" between the two countries in the power sector. According



For India, Adani indictment damage is more than just reputational.

to the joint statement from the visit, Modi, lauding the efforts of Sheikh Hasina, then Bangladesh PM, to achieve a higher installed power capacity, "conveyed that India can be a major partner in achieving this goal and many Indian corporates have the capacity to cooperate with Bangladesh in this endeavor". He requested Hasina to facilitate "the entry of Indian companies in the power generation, transmission and distribution sector of Bangladesh".

Gautam Adani was in the PM's delegation. In August 2015, Adani Power Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) for exporting 1,600 megawatts of electricity. In 2017, the deal was finalized and signed in Bangladesh under the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010, enabling Dhaka to bypass the requirement of floating tenders.

In India, Jharkhand silenced local protest to 'secure consent' from landowners across several villages in Godda district. Two months ahead of the 2019 elections, the Central Government fast-tracked approval for the SEZ, which would enable Rs 14,000 crore to export the electricity generated at the plant. When Hasina visited India in August 2022, Adani called on her at Delhi, tweeting later that the plant would begin the transmission of 1,500 MW from Bijoy Dibosh, December 16, Bangladesh's liberation anniversary.

With the terms of the agreement shrouded in secrecy, the Adani-BPDB agreement was hardly

known until a Washington Post report revealed that Bangladesh would purchase Adani electricity at an exorbitant price. Outrage at the one-sided agreement fed into the public anger against Hasina. Ahead of the 2024 elections, some media reports projected Hasina's agreement to the deal as quid pro quo for the Modi government's continued support. Inevitably, it was one of the first bilateral deals to come under the scanner after Hasina's ouster.

In Sri Lanka, Adani made a trip to Colombo in October 2021 to meet then President Gotabaya Rajapaksa soon after Adani Ports signed a deal to develop and run Colombo Port's West Container Terminal. By then, Sri Lanka's economic woes had surfaced, and the President was being advised by insiders, including his brother Basil, to reach out to India for assistance. Gotabaya recorded the Adani visit as a meeting with "an old Indian friend". The head of the Ceylon Electricity Board announced that the visiting Indian tycoon was interested in green energy investments. Adani was flown to the north-western Mannar district in a Sri Lanka Air Force plane to inspect a wind farm.

Six months later, in March 2022, Sri Lanka's The Sunday Times was the first to report that the country had signed an MoU to set up two renewable energy projects in Mannar district and at Pooneryn in Killinochi district. The terms of the agreement, signed between the Lankan Government and the Adani Group on March 12, were not made public. The MoU was signed



BY NIRUPAMA
SUBRAMANIAN

at a time when the Sri Lankan economy was in meltdown, the streets were filled with protesters and India was helping Colombo with credit lines and other financial assistance to tide over a full-blown crisis. In a down-and-out country, news of the Adani deal added to the public sentiment that India's assistance came with a price tag. Later in 2022, that sentiment got a new wind when the Ceylon Electricity Board chairman revealed that he was ordered by President Rajapaksa to sign off on the unsolicited project because "he [Rajapaksa] was under pressure from Modi". Rajapaksa denied the statement attributed to him. The official retracted the statement and resigned, but the matter was hardly forgotten.

In 2023, more outrage followed the Sri Lankan Government's announcement that it would convert the project into a 'government to government' agreement to get around the rule of competitive bids for such projects. Earlier this year, then President Ranil Wickremesinghe's government announced a 20-year \$440-million agreement with the Adani Group for the proposed wind farms. However, environmentalists and local residents have petitioned the Supreme Court against the project, citing a lack of transparency in awarding the project and high tariff rates.

Prior to his election, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake had declared that he would scrap the project. At the last court hearing on October 15, he requested that the hearings be put off until after the parliamentary elections, when his government could review the deal. The next hearing is reported to be in March 2025. Meanwhile, last week's damaging indictment may hurt Adani's Colombo port project too. The US Development Finance Corporation, which had announced in 2023 an investment of \$550 million in the West Container Terminal, has said that it is still "conducting due diligence" of the project.

For India, the damage is more than just reputational. Instead of strutting in lockstep with a businessman, Delhi mandarins should have seen the risks of nurturing an Indian 'United Fruit Company' to the country's national interest, especially its strategic objectives in the neighborhood. Instead, they shrugged their shoulders and called it a win-win. Many in India believe that the Modi government can do a deal with Trump that will let Adani off the hook. Maybe, though what it will cost India is not clear. The reckoning, as it unfolds in the neighborhood, will be even more difficult.

(The author is National Editor (Strategic Affairs). She writes on India's foreign policy and national security issues)

Why the Anglo-Saxon West hates Russia



BY ABHIJIT
BHATTACHARYYA

"The short of the long story, therefore, is the revival of Anglo-Saxon versus Russia rivalry on the fringe of Europe. The imperial sea powers of the West would prefer to continue with the proxy conventional war in land owing to their inherent discomfiture to take a direct fight with a monstrous land power which has traditionally thrived on protracted conflict away from the water. The Anglo-Saxons may like to think that the long war on land would weaken the Slav Russia both economically and demographically, but that may not turn out to be so."

This is the taunting remark made by the then UK Defense Secretary Ben Wallace on February 23, 2022, even before Russia had invaded Ukraine: "The Scots Guards kicked backside of Tsar Nicholas-I in 1853 in Crimea and we can always do it again." He was referring to the 170-year-old Crimean War between Moscow and the tripartite forces of London, Paris and Ankara's Ottoman Empire which defeated Russia to conclude with the Treaty of Paris in 1856. The palpable hatred of the West's Anglo-Saxon people towards Russia is unmistakable.

Fast forward one month, to March 22, 2022, and one finds Joe Biden, President of the US (POTUS), blurting out another verbal bullet in Warsaw: "For God's sake, this man Putin cannot remain in power."

What message was POTUS giving to the world? Was he in charge of the regime change of Moscow and judge, jury and arbitrator, with powers of the world supercop on the prowl? Or, was he heading the sole superpower state? For a minute, however, POTUS acted like a non-state actor of a tinpot dictatorship!

True, Biden was referring to the wrong and illegal Russian invasion of the sovereign Ukraine. But, did he remember the plethora of worse wrongdoings of his own country committed in the 21st century? Again, it's true that two wrongs cannot make

Biden has allowed US-made lethal weapons to be targeted deep into Russia. -CNN Screen shot



one right, yet one has to be rational, restrained and reticent while uttering words to make a point on an international platform dealing with such crisis situations as the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Russia was wrong on all counts to invade Ukraine on February 24, 2022, and under no stretch of the imagination can the Moscow aggression be defended. It's a naked 18th-20th century imperial-type aggression by the powerful to conquer the weak. Moscow had no business to trample upon Ukraine's sovereignty.

Nevertheless, on closer scrutiny, it is seen that the Russian invasion of Ukraine was born of a ceaseless two-decade-plus shameless US-led NATO and EU provocation, which posed a dire and direct existential threat to Moscow's geography through her underbelly of Kiev.

Hence, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin being wrong, he had reason to be wrong, and reason to be not right. It's the blatant West-plotted expansion towards the East that Russia couldn't have ignored beyond a point. All the more so because the once-sovereign USSR had already been broken into 15 states in December 1991, with Russia being one of the new states.

The shrunkened and weakened Russia, thus, constituted a fresh opportunity for the traditional imperialist powers of the West to get back to their favorite pastime: Of expanding territory, controlling resources and subjugating local manpower to subservience to bolster their own economy and multiply their growth chart, the way it zoomed from the 17th to the 20th century.

Today, the Russia-Ukraine war is more than a local conflict of the Balkan-Black Sea belt. The outgoing POTUS, Biden, has suddenly escalated the war, which could be potentially disastrous for Europe if it remains just a conventional conflict. However, in the unlikely event of the use of nuclear wares, one cannot

predict the conflict's outcome.

Indeed, whatever the future course of the Ukraine war, Biden (the Anglo-Saxon who hates Russia), for sure, will go down as a would-have-been hero who fell as a tragic villain in the history of the USA in general and the history of European warfare in particular for escalating the war zone into a potential Armageddon.

Ironically, the villain should have been Putin for initiating the war. But the role has been diametrically reversed as Biden seems to have taken over the mayhem mantle from the Moscow man.

Thus, Biden has perfectly fitted into Putin's shoes by allowing US-made lethal weapons to be targeted deep into Moscow's land. Obviously, Moscow will react and go for reprisals on the source of the weapons' launch pads.

And the launch pads may be any country, but certainly not the US or the UK, the two Anglo-Saxon nations whose hatred for the eastern state of Russia constitutes permanent chapters of world history.

Where, then, do things go from here? The biggest puzzle at this point in time to the world in general and the West in particular is US president-designate Donald Trump, whose dislike for Biden is too conspicuous to be ignored.

Biden inherited the Trump legacy of the Afghan war end-game. And August 2021 is a bad dream come true for the new POTUS. The retreat after the 20-year war made Biden a bitter man. The October 2024 escalation of the present Ukraine war is the right punch for Biden to deliver as a revenge trophy to Trump, his 2021-predecessor-cum-2025-successor.

The short of the long story, therefore, is the revival of Anglo-Saxon versus Russia rivalry on the fringe of Europe. The imperial sea powers of the West would prefer to continue with the proxy conventional war in land owing to their inherent discomfiture to take a direct fight with a monstrous land power which has traditionally thrived on protracted conflict away from the water. The Anglo-

BIDEN INHERITED THE TRUMP LEGACY OF THE AFGHAN WAR END-GAME. AND AUGUST 2021 IS A BAD DREAM COME TRUE FOR THE NEW POTUS. THE RETREAT AFTER THE 20-YEAR WAR MADE BIDEN A BITTER MAN. THE OCTOBER 2024 ESCALATION OF THE PRESENT UKRAINE WAR IS THE RIGHT PUNCH FOR BIDEN TO DELIVER AS A REVENGE TROPHY TO TRUMP, HIS 2021-PREDECESSOR-CUM-2025-SUCCESSOR.

Saxons may like to think that the long war on land would weaken the Slav Russia both economically and demographically, but that may not turn out to be so.

The dynamics of political alignments are changing rather fast, with land powers uniting to take on the comparatively smaller sea powers with diminishing demography and challenging economy.

In fact, that's the reason the Anglo-Saxons are emphatically propounding the importance of long-range high-tech weapons to target deeper into the unending land of Moscow. Unfortunately, perhaps, it's a tad late to be successful. The vastness of Moscow is far too much and way superior than the proximity of Europe for Putin.

The West's hatred for Moscow has made things too complicated to be untied any time soon, it appears. Biden's hatred for both Putin and Trump may have tied the latter's hands to the military industrial complex of California, Texas and Kansas and the US Mid-West corporations of combat weapons for a longer-than-expected haul.

(The author is Advocate, Supreme Court of India. Defense Analyst, Ex Civil Servant)

The Constitution has kept the nation united

NOVEMBER 26 IS CELEBRATED AS CONSTITUTION DAY OF INDIA



BY SY QURAISHI

In 2015, on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar, the government decided to celebrate November 26 as the Constitution Day to highlight the importance of the event and commemorate its chief architect.

On this day in 1949, the Constituent Assembly had adopted the Constitution of India which came into effect on January 26, 1950. This is when the foundation for the world's largest democracy was laid. For 75 years, this document has been serving as the guiding light for the running of the country. Among its many remarkable features, the principles of secularism and pluralism stand out as cornerstones of India's democratic identity.

SECULARISM IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

A unique model unlike the western model of complete separation between religion and state, the Indian Constitution adopts a model of "equal respect for all religions", ensuring that the state neither favors nor discriminates against any religion.

What makes the constitution secular is its key features, namely, freedom of religion (Articles 25-28), equality of all before the law (Articles 14 and 15) and neutrality of the State in matters of religion (Articles 27-28) guarantee the right to freedom of religion, allowing every individual to profess, practice, and propagate their faith. At the same time, these provisions protect individuals from being coerced into following a particular religion. Article 14 guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on religion, caste, or gender. Article 15 specifically forbids discrimination on religious grounds.

Neutrality of the state is ensured by Article 27 which prohibits the use of public funds for promoting or maintaining any religion and Article 28 that prohibits religious instruction in government-run educational institutions. Pluralism and diversity are the next distinguishing features of the country mandated by the Constitution which reinforce secularism.

India is home to over 1.45 billion people, speaking 22 official languages listed in the Eighth Schedule and practicing a multitude of religions. Ethnologue, an encyclopedic reference work cataloging all of the world's 7,111 known living languages, reports India as a home to 398 languages besides thousands of dialects. Article 29 protects the rights of minorities to conserve their language, script, and culture. Article 30, much in the news lately, empowers religious and linguistic minorities to



The Constitution has kept the Indian nation united

Photo for representation only

Photo credit: ANI

THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION THUS IS A UNIQUE MODEL WHERE FLEXIBILITY AND RIGIDITY ARE INTERTWINED. WHILE 105 AMENDMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE SINCE 1951 TO KEEP PACE WITH THE CHANGING TIMES, THE BASIC CHARACTER HAS REMAINED PROTECTED. THIS IS WHAT HAS KEPT THE LARGEST NATION IN THE WORLD UNITED.

establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. This ensures the preservation of cultural identity.

Universal adult suffrage is another important feature that empowers every section of society with right to vote to all adults regardless of caste, religion, gender, or economic status. For protection of the marginalized communities, the Constitution includes provisions for affirmative action, ensuring political, educational, and employment opportunities for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.

The coexistence of secularism and pluralism are two basic features that are central to India's unity in diversity. By respecting minority rights, the Constitution prevents the dominance of any single group over others, while pluralism fosters inclusivity, ensuring that all communities feel valued and represented in the nation-building

process.

I have often said that India is secular because Hindus are secular and the living proof is our constitution. When the country was partitioned in the name of religion, Pakistan became an Islamic republic whereas India chose to be secular unanimously in the Constituent Assembly where an overwhelming majority (82 per cent) of members were Hindus! The reason India is looked upon by the world community with awe and respect is its unique plural and secular identity which has kept the exceptionally huge and diverse country united. It is noteworthy that the word "secular" was added to the Preamble of the Indian Constitution by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976, during the Emergency under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government. The amendment inserted the words "secular" and "socialist" into the Preamble, making the description of India as: "Sovereign

Socialist Secular Democratic Republic." The necessity of adding the term "secular" has been debated extensively, especially in the last couple of decades. Was it really necessary when secularism oozes from most articles?

One section of the population is fighting for its deletion from the Preamble, especially because it was brought in by their bete noire Indira Gandhi and that too during the much despised emergency. They overlook the fact that it would not alter the secular character of the Constitution one bit. While some think it is redundant, for others it is reinforcement. Either way the debate is superfluous.

Secularism and pluralism are considered parts of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution, as affirmed by various judgments of the Supreme Court. The basic structure doctrine, established in the landmark Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala (1973) case, identifies certain fundamental principles of the Constitution that cannot be amended by Parliament, even through its constitutional amending power under Article 368.

In the case of SR Bommai v Union of India (1994), the Supreme Court explicitly recognized secularism as a part of the basic structure. The Court ruled that: Secularism means that the state must maintain neutrality in matters of religion and ensure equal treatment of all religions. Any law or amendment that undermines secularism would be unconstitutional.

Like secularism, pluralism is also a part of the basic structure. Pluralism refers to the coexistence of diverse cultural, linguistic, religious, and social groups in harmony. It is intrinsic to India's identity as a multicultural society.

Judicial Recognition of Pluralism has come through various landmark judgments. In Indra Sawhney v Union of India (1992), the Supreme Court emphasized the importance of inclusivity and social justice as foundational principles of the Constitution. The Kesavananda Bharati case also underscored that democracy, equality, and dignity of individuals—all of which are rooted in pluralism—are part of the basic structure. Pluralism ensures the representation of all groups in governance and upholds the principle of unity in diversity, a cornerstone of Indian democracy.

The Indian Constitution thus is a unique model where flexibility and rigidity are intertwined. While 105 amendments have been made since 1951 to keep pace with the changing times, the basic character has remained protected. This is what has kept the largest nation in the world united.

(The author is an Indian civil servant who served as 17th Chief Election Commissioner of India)

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Five Democratic U.S. lawmakers receive bomb threats at home

U.S. Representatives Jim Himes, Jahana Hayes, John Larson and Joe Courtney, all from Connecticut, reported the threats in statements on Thanksgiving Day



Rep Jim Himes -File photo

NOVEMBER 28, 2024

STAMFORD, CT (TIP): Five Democratic U.S. lawmakers from Connecticut on Thursday, November 28, 2024 said they were targeted with bomb threats at their homes, but no explosive devices had been found, according to social media and local media.

U.S. Representatives Jim Himes, Jahana Hayes, John Larson and Joe Courtney, all from Connecticut, reported the threats in statements on Thanksgiving Day.

"There is no place for political violence in this country, and I hope that we may all continue through the holiday season with peace and civility," said Mr. Himes.

Ms. Hayes said that on Thanksgiving morning, police told him they received an email "stating a pipe bomb had been placed in the mailbox at my home," but that no bombs or explosives had been found and that the investigation was ongoing.

Local media in Connecticut reported that U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, a Democrat, had also been targeted. The U.S. Capitol Police did not immediately respond to a request for comment.



The FBI said in a statement that it is "aware of numerous bomb threats and swatting incidents targeting incoming administration nominees and appointees."

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Days after she lost the presidential election to Republican opponent Donald Trump, Vice President Kamala Harris has said she will continue to fight for democracy, rule of law, equal justice and freedom.

There is so much to fight for to ensure a future where everyone can pursue their dreams and the fight did not end on November 5, Harris said while addressing her major supporters and fundraisers from across the nation who were part of her presidential campaign and had gathered over a call on Tuesday.

The presidential election was held on November 5. While Trump will succeed President Joe Biden, Harris will be succeeded by J D Vance.

"We are going to stay in the fight. We have so much to fight for a future where everyone can pursue their dreams and their ambitions and their aspirations. We're going to continue fighting for the right of women to make decisions about their own body," Harris said.

"We're going to continue fighting for our democracy, for rule of law, for equal justice. We're going to fight for the idea



Vice President Kamala Harris has said she will continue to fight for democracy, rule of law, equal justice and freedom. -File photo

that it is so fundamental to who we are and our strength that we focus not on who we beat down but who we lift up," she said.

This is an "uncertain time", the vice president said.

"I am looking at this moment with clear eyes as we all are clear about this. I am clear at the moment that we are in

with uncertainty and everything else that gives us concern, if not fear about," she said.

"We are not powerless and so it's going to take, as we always say, hard work. You all heard me say this many times before we like hard work. Hard work is good work. Hard work can be joyful work and we must remain intentional," she said.

Harris said the light of America's promise will burn bright as long as they never give up and as long as they keep fighting.

"That fight that fueled our campaigns, that fight for freedom and opportunity for dignity, that fight did not end on November 5. It did not end, and it is an enduring point for the ideals that are at the heart of our nation.

"As I often talk about, it is the ideals that reflect the promise of America... We believe in the promise of America. We cannot give up on the promise of America. We cannot give up on our belief in what that means. Because after all the promise of America will only be achieved if we stay in the fight," Harris said.

(Source: PTI)

President-elect Donald Trump's transition says several of his Cabinet picks and appointees have been targeted by bomb threats and "swatting attacks."

NOVEMBER 28, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Several of President-elect Donald Trump's Cabinet picks and appointees have been targeted by bomb threats and "swatting attacks," Trump's transition said on Wednesday, November 27, 2024, an AP Report said.

"Last night and this morning, several of President Trump's Cabinet nominees and Administration appointees were targeted in violent, un-American threats to their lives and those who live with them," Trump transition spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said in a statement.

She said the attacks "ranged from bomb threats to 'swatting.'"

In response, law enforcement and other authorities acted quickly to ensure the safety of those who were targeted. President Trump and the entire Transition team are grateful for their swift action.

Swatting entails generating an emergency law enforcement response against a target victim under false pretenses.

The FBI said in a statement that it is "aware of numerous bomb threats and swatting incidents targeting incoming administration nominees and appointees, and we are working with our law enforcement partners. We take all potential threats seriously, and as always, encourage members of the public to immediately report anything they consider suspicious to law enforcement."

Among those targeted was New York Rep. Elise Stefanik, Mr. Trump's pick to serve as the next ambassador to the United Nations.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Hindu-Sikh unity event held in Sacramento

NOVEMBER 26, 2024

SACRAMENTO (TIP): Days after a Hindu temple in Canada was attacked by alleged Khalistani activists, Indian-Americans in Silicon Valley held a 'Hindu Sikh Unity Interfaith' event honoring the sacrifice of Sikh guru Tegh Bahadur.

Hosted by Gurudwara Sant Nagar in Sacramento over the weekend, the event was attended by more than 200 members of Hindu, Sikh and other communities.

Prominent among those who attended the event were Elk Grove City Mayor Bobby Singh-Allen, Commissioner of City of Elk Grove Bhavin Parikh, Council member of City of Rocklin Jill Gayaldo, Vice Mayor of Elk Grove Rod Brewer, and member of Interfaith Council of Sacramento Akram Keval.

"Religious intolerance is plaguing our society. A few are dividing us and we must reject it. We gathered here to celebrate oneness. It is just the beginning; we have to show a better way. An attack on one is an attack on all of us," said Singh-Allen.

In his keynote address, Narinderpal Singh Hundal of Sant Sagar Gurdwara said, "We should all uphold the message of unity that Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib gave by sacrificing himself to protect religion, and by obeying his command, maintain mutual brotherhood and love, and try to further propagate this mission." Parikh said the guru's sacrifice has a message that hate doesn't have any place in this world. He said Sikhism teaches equality, humility and respect. "We all need to learn to appreciate and embrace other cultures and learn from them," he added.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



In his keynote address, Narinderpal Singh Hundal of Sant Sagar Gurdwara said, "We should all uphold the message of unity that Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib gave by sacrificing himself to protect religion, and by obeying his command, maintain mutual brotherhood and love, and try to further propagate this mission."

Donald Trump to impose tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico, China

NOVEMBER 26, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President-elect Donald Trump has said he will impose a 25 per cent tariff on all products coming from Canada and Mexico, and 10 per cent on Chinese goods to check the flow of illegal immigrants and drugs into the United States.

In a series of posts on his Truth Social platform on Monday, he said he would sign executive orders imposing tariffs on the three countries as one of his first actions after assuming office on January 20.

"As everyone is aware, thousands of people are pouring through Mexico and Canada, bringing Crime and Drugs at levels never seen before. Right now, a Caravan coming from Mexico, composed of thousands of people, seems to be unstoppable in its quest to come through our currently Open Border," Trump said.

"On January 20th, as one of my many first Executive Orders, I will sign all necessary documents to charge Mexico and Canada a 25% Tariff on ALL products coming into the United States, and its ridiculous Open Borders.



US President-elect Donald Trump has said he will impose a 25 per cent tariff on all products coming from Canada and Mexico, and 10 per cent on Chinese goods to check the flow of illegal immigrants and drugs into the United States. -File photo

"This Tariff will remain in effect until such time as Drugs, in particular Fentanyl, and all Illegal Aliens stop this Invasion of our Country! Both Mexico and Canada have the absolute right and power to easily solve this long simmering problem," he said.

"We hereby demand that they use this power, and until such time that they do, it is time for them to pay a very big price," Trump said. Further, the president-elect accused China of failing to stop the flow of drugs into the US.

"I have had many talks with China about the massive amounts of drugs, in particular Fentanyl, being sent into the United States - But to no avail," Trump said.

"Representatives of China told me that they would institute their maximum penalty, that of death, for any drug dealers caught doing this but, unfortunately, they never followed through, and drugs are pouring into our Country, mostly through Mexico, at levels never seen before," he alleged.

"Until such time as they stop, we will be charging China an additional 10% Tariff, above any additional Tariffs, on all of their many products coming into the United States of America," he added.

Trump said the executive order to this effect would be signed on the first day of his presidency on January 20, 2025.

MEXICO TO STOP FLOW OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS INTO US, SAYS TRUMP



Mexican president Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo denies country is closing border despite Trump claims

NOVEMBER 28, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President-elect Donald Trump on Thursday, November 28, said Mexico has agreed to immediately stop illegal immigrants from going to its border with the United States.

This comes days after Trump threatened to impose a 25 per cent tariff on all imports from Mexico and Canada for their inability to stop the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States.

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said he spoke to Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo on the phone and the two had a productive conversation.

"Mexico will stop people from going to our Southern Border, effective immediately. THIS WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD STOPPING THE ILLEGAL INVASION OF THE USA. Thank you," Trump said in his post.

"Just had a wonderful conversation with the new President of Mexico, Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo. She has agreed to stop Migration through Mexico, and into the United States, effectively closing our Southern Border," he said.

Trump said the two also talked about what could be done to stop the drug inflow into the United States and the consumption of these drugs.

"It was a very productive conversation," he added.

In a series of posts on his Truth Social platform on Monday, Trump said he would sign executive orders imposing a 25 tariff on imports from Canada and Mexico as one of his first actions after assuming office on January 20.

"As everyone is aware, thousands of people are pouring through Mexico and Canada, bringing Crime and Drugs at levels never seen before. Right now, a Caravan coming from Mexico, composed of thousands of people, seems to be unstoppable in its quest to come through our currently Open Border," Trump said.

"This Tariff will remain in effect until such time as Drugs, in particular Fentanyl, and all Illegal Aliens stop this Invasion of our Country! Both Mexico and Canada have the absolute right and power to easily solve this long simmering problem," he said.

US, India stronger when working together: Blinken



US Secretary of State Tony Blinken with India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar (left). - X Photo

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The United States and India are stronger when they work together, US Secretary of State Tony Blinken has said.

Blinken made the remarks in a post on X after meeting India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on the sidelines of the G7 meeting in Fiuggi, Italy on Tuesday.

"The US and India are stronger when we are working together. Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar and I met today in Italy to discuss the importance of our continued close cooperation to promote global security and prosperity," Blinken said.

He also shared a picture from the meeting.

Jaishankar also posted about the meeting on X and said he discussed the state of the world and the India-US partnership, which continues to move forward, with Blinken.

After the meeting, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said, "The United States desires to continue coordinating closely with India to address global security challenges."

During the meeting, Blinken and Jaishankar affirmed the US and India's enduring commitment to deepening bilateral ties, Miller said in a readout of the meeting. (Source: PTI)

Trump nominates retired Gen Keith Kellogg as special envoy to Ukraine and Russia



General Keith Kellogg will serve as Assistant to the President and Special Envoy for Ukraine and Russia

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President-elect Donald Trump on Wednesday announced the nomination of retired American general Keith Kellogg as special envoy to Russia and Ukraine.

"I am very pleased to nominate General Keith Kellogg to serve as Assistant to the President and Special Envoy for Ukraine and Russia," Trump said.

"Keith has led a distinguished Military and Business career, including serving in highly sensitive National Security roles in my first Administration. He was with me right from the beginning! Together, we will secure PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH, and Make America, and the World, SAFE AGAIN!" said the president-elect.

A former retired lieutenant general in the United States Army, Kellogg served as the National Security Advisor to the former Vice President Mike Pence, and as the Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff of the United States National Security Council in the first Trump administration.

He served as National Security Advisor on an acting basis following the resignation of Michael T. Flynn. (Source: PTI)

Indian consular officials in Canada told they were under audio, video surveillance: MEA

Consular officials at the Indian consulate in Vancouver were recently informed by the Canadian authorities that they have been and continue to be under "audio and video surveillance" and that their "private communications" have also been "intercepted", the Centre informed Parliament on Thursday (November 28, 2024.)

Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh in a written response in Rajya Sabha also said "respect for each other's concerns, territorial integrity and sovereignty are essential for a stable bilateral relationship".

Singh was asked whether there are any instances of cyber surveillance or other forms of surveillance targeting Indian diplomats in Canada.

"Yes. Recently, consular officials at the Indian Consulate in Vancouver were informed by the Canadian authorities that they have been, and continue to be under audio and video surveillance and that their private communications have also been intercepted."

"Government of India lodged a strong protest with the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi on this issue vide its note verbale dated November 2, 2024 as these actions were a flagrant violation of all diplomatic provisions," Mr. Singh said in his response.

The Minister in his response also quoted a response of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson in his weekly briefing to the media recently in New Delhi.

"By citing technicalities, the Canadian Government cannot justify the fact that it is indulging in harassment and intimidation. Our diplomatic and consular personnel are already functioning in an environment of extremism and violence. This action of the Canadian Government aggravates the situation and is incompatible with established diplomatic norms and practices," the spokesperson had said.

Singh was also asked the details and the steps taken to ensure the safety of Indian diplomats. "On the question of safety and security of Indian diplomats in Canada, the Government of India remains continuously engaged with the Canadian side to ensure that adequate protection is offered at all times to our diplomatic personnel and properties," he said.

The Minister also said the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, in its biennial National Cyber Threat Assessment (NCTA) report for 2025-2026 released on October 30, "placed India under 'Section 1 - Cyber threat from state adversaries'".

Lok Sabha extends tenure of Parliamentary panel on Waqf bill

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Acceding to the Opposition's demand, the Lok Sabha on Thursday passed a motion extending the time for the joint parliamentary committee (JPC) on Waqf Amendment Bill to submit its report on the controversial legislation till the last day of the Budget session next year.

The development was seen as an attempt to end the logjam in Parliament, which witnessed noisy scenes and subsequent washout of proceedings for the third consecutive day after its opening for the winter session.

The motion was passed even as the Congress-led Opposition protested in the Lower House demanding a debate on the Adani issue and the violence in Manipur and Sambhal.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the conduct of the Congress was "condemnable as the motion for extending the joint panel's report submission deadline was brought on its request". The Lok Sabha could not function beyond 12 minutes and was adjourned for the day, seconds after the motion was adopted.

Incidentally, the motion to extend the joint panel's tenure was moved a day after the government had accepted the Opposition's other demand of



having a discussion on the Constitution in Parliament. Sources said the discussion in the Rajya Sabha was to begin on December 2 (Monday), which, the BJP-led treasury benches were hoping, would lead to a thaw in the logjam.

With the Trinamool Congress having indicated to the Congress that it was more keen on raising public-centric issues like the Sambhal and Manipur violence along with price rise rather than focusing too much on the Adani issue, sources in the INDIA bloc said it remained to be seen what kind of floor management was in place next week in the Lok Sabha as the Rajya Sabha would be busy with

the discussion on the Constitution.

On Thursday, Nov 28, the Rajya Sabha too did not see any business as the proceedings were washed out within 15 minutes after an initial adjournment in the morning.

During the brief period when the Rajya Sabha met, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar "pleaded" with the Opposition to let the House run. He said that the MPs had missed a historic opportunity to be productive as the occasion marked the start of the final quarter century before the Constitution turned 100. He said parliamentary disruption was not a remedy, but a malady. "It weakens our foundation," he said.

After poll debacle, UBT leader fires 'suit and tie' barb at Cong

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Success has many fathers, failure has none. Now that the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance has bitten dust in Maharashtra elections, knives are out among partners to apportion the blame.

On Thursday, November 28, Ambadas Danve, a senior leader of the Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray camp, openly attributed the MVA debacle to Congress party's overconfidence.

Danve did not stop at that. He said Congress leaders were ready with "suit and tie" even before the results were out.

"The Congress became overconfident after Lok Sabha elections where it won 13 seats in Maharashtra, the highest among MVA partners. It became overconfident just like it did in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir," Danve said adding that results would have been different had the MVA projected Uddhav Thackeray as chief ministerial candidate. Danve also said that Congress Party's "unreasonable bargaining approach during seat sharing cost the alliance heavily."

The Congress contested 103 seats and won 16, Shiv Sena UBT contested 89 and won 20 and NCP (SP) fought on 87 and won 10. Danve, who is leader of opposition in the Maharashtra legislative council, said Sena UBT will prepare on all 288 seats alone for the future.

Many Sena UBT leaders are privately learnt to have urged Uddhav to contest the upcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections alone and not as part of MVA.

The Tribune has also learnt that MVA partners were working to negotiate with independents ahead of the



Maharashtra election results on November 23 and were upbeat about the results.

The Congress for its part said Uddhav Thackeray was made CM of Maharashtra with full concurrence and blessings of top party leadership including Sonia Gandhi whom he came a met in 2019 before switching camps and ending his alliance with the BJP.

"At that time what was the Congress? Overconfident or generous?" a senior Maharashtra Congressman said as MVA already appeared to be imploding.

Cracks in MVA?

Ambadas Danve, a senior leader of the Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray camp, said: "Congress became overconfident after Lok Sabha elections. It became overconfident just like it did in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir".

Source: TNS

Court notice on Ajmer dargah plea sparks sharp reactions in political, religious circles

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A day after a civil court in Ajmer issued notices on a suit claiming that a Lord Shiva temple existed at the site of the 13th Century dargah of Sufi mystic Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, political and religious leaders across the country reacted sharply on the issue on Thursday, Nov 28. There were conflicting views on the attempts to redefine the religious character of the historic shrine which attracts devotees of all faiths.

Civil Judge Manmohan Chandel had on Wednesday issued notices to the Dargah Committee, the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on the plea seeking to declare the dargah a temple. Plaintiff Vishnu Gupta has sought a survey through the ASI and the grant of right to Hindus to worship at the shrine.

While there was no official reaction from the Dargah Committee – a statutory body established under the Dargah Khwaja Saheb Act, 1955 – the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party leaders said a controversy was being created over a judicial process with the intention to promote the “politics of appeasement”. The court’s decision should be acceptable to everyone, said the BJP leaders.

The civil suit seeking directions to



Devotees at the Ajmer Sharif Dargah, Shrine of Moinuddin Chishti, in Ajmer, on November 28, 2024. A court in Ajmer has issued notices in a civil suit claiming that there is a Shiva temple in the dargah of Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti. | Photo Credit: PTI

start Hindu rituals at the dargah was filed in September and the next hearing was scheduled on December 20. The notices have come in the aftermath of a similar controversy in Uttar Pradesh’s Sambhal, where four persons were killed in the violence following a court-ordered survey of Shahi Jama Masjid. The plaintiffs in Sambhal have also claimed that the mosque was built after destroying an old temple.

BJP State president Madan Rathore said here that the decisions in such matters should be taken on the basis of

history in order to maintain goodwill in the society. “Several such buildings were damaged and captured by Mughals [in the past], but the courts gave judgements after a probe. We have full faith in judiciary... whatever the decision is, we will welcome it,” he said.

Rathore said the Congress had treated Muslims as a vote bank and indulged in appeasement. “If special opportunities and benefits are given to a particular class of people, it is bound to create resentment and hatred among others. We must stay united... If Mughals were

expert in constructing monuments, such buildings would have been found in Middle East as well, but the architecture like India is not visible there,” he said.

While Union Minister Giriraj Singh asked what was the problem in taking such matters to the courts, as these controversies were not resolved in 1947, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi said every Prime Minister of the country had been sending chadar (sheet of cloth draped on a grave as a mark of respect) to the Ajmer dargah during Urs (observance of the death anniversary of the Sufi saint). “Where will all this stop? What will happen to the Place of Worship Act, 1991? This is being done to destabilise the country,” Owaisi said.

In Ajmer, the Anjuman Khuddam Syedzadgan, a representative body of khadims (caretakers) at the dargah, has sought to be impleaded as a defendant in the court case. Anjuman’s secretary Syed Sarwar Chishti said the suit was a deliberate attempt to fracture the society along communal lines. He said the ASI had nothing to do with the shrine, which was a “symbol of secularism and communal harmony”, as the people from all communities visited it. *Source: The Hindu*

ED raids properties of Raj Kundra, others in porn racket case

Businessman Raj Kundra’s house and offices were raided on November 29 by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) as part of a money laundering probe related to the production and distribution of pornographic content through mobile apps.

Kundra, the husband of Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty, has been under the ED’s lens for months, following allegations that he was a key player in a scheme that monetised explicit content streamed via the now-defunct ‘Hotshots’ application. The app, previously available on platforms like Apple and Google Play, was removed after public and legal scrutiny.

The probe agency also raided other individuals allegedly involved in the case. The operation is believed to have unearthed financial links pointing to the laundering of proceeds generated from the explicit content streamed through mobile platforms.

Kundra’s legal battles are not new. In 2021, he was arrested by Mumbai police in a related case involving obscene material and was later released on bail.

The ED is also probing his alleged involvement in a crypto-ponzi scheme spearheaded by Amit Bhardwaj, the mastermind behind the Gain Bitcoin scam. Earlier this year, the ED attached assets worth Rs 98 crore belonging to Kundra and Shetty, claiming they were acquired using proceeds from illicit activities, including the Gain Bitcoin scam.

Priyanka Gandhi takes oath as Lok Sabha MP; all Gandhis in Parliament now

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra’s electoral debut set in motion from Thursday, November 28, with her taking oath as a member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha along with party leader Ravindra Vasantrya Chavan, who was sworn in as MP from Nanded.

With Priyanka Gandhi’s victory, for the first time in decades, all three members of the Nehru-Gandhi family—Sonia, Rahul, and Priyanka—are now in Parliament.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra reached Parliament with her mother, while her MP brother Rahul Gandhi and husband Robert Vadra were also Parliament for her oath-taking.

Priyanka Gandhi won the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat with a margin of 4,10,931 votes in the recently concluded round of bypolls, which took place alongside Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly elections 2024.

The Wayanad Lok Sabha seat was vacated by Priyanka Gandhi’s brother, Rahul Gandhi, who had won from there in the Lok Sabha elections this year but had also secured the family bastion Rae Bareilly constituency. Rahul Gandhi’s decision to resign from the Wayanad seat and retain the Rae Bareilly constituency after winning the two seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in April necessitated the Wayanad bypoll.

Wayanad, a Congress stronghold, witnessed a triangular contest among Priyanka Gandhi, BJP’s Navya Haridas, and Communist Party of India (CPI) leader Sathyan Mokeri.



Priyanka Gandhi contested the Wayanad seat as a candidate of the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Congress leader Ravindra Vasantrya Chavan won with 5,86,788 votes the bypoll in Nanded Lok Sabha seat, which fell vacant following the death of the sitting party MP, Vasantrya Balwantrao Chavan.

The Wayanad win marks the electoral debut of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who will now be sitting in Lok Sabha along with her brother Rahul Gandhi, who is also the Leader of Opposition in the House. Their mother, Sonia Gandhi, is a Rajya Sabha member from Rajasthan.

Due to a low voter turnout, Priyanka Gandhi received 6,22,338 votes, less than Rahul Gandhi’s tally of 647,445 votes during the April Lok Sabha election in the constituency. However, her margin of 410,931 votes surpassed his lead of 364,422 votes, making her maiden victory extra special. *Source: HT*

India in history this Week

NOVEMBER 29 TO DECEMBER 5

29 NOVEMBER

1993 Industrialist Jahangir Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata died.



1759 Assassination of Emperor Alamgir II of Delhi.
1961 Yuri Gagarin, the world's first astronaut, came to India.

1970 Haryana became the first Indian state to achieve hundred percent rural electrification.

1989 The then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi resigned.

1869 The famous Indian social worker Thakkar Bappa was born.

1913 Famous poet Ali Sardar Jafri was honored with the Jnanpith Award.

30 NOVEMBER



2000 Priyanka Chopra became Miss World.

2010 Indian scientist and Swadeshi movement pioneer Rajiv Dixit died

2012 Former Prime Minister Indra Kumar Gujral died.

1759 Emperor Alamgir II of Delhi was killed by his minister.

1965 Gudiya Museum Delhi was founded by the famous cartoonist 'K.K. Shankar Pillai'.

1831 Indian historian Romila Thapar was born.

1944 Famous Hindi writer Maitreyi Pushpa was born.

2010 Indian scientist and Swadeshi movement pioneer Rajiv Dixit died.

1909 Ramesh Chandra Dutt, the famous writer of English and Bengali language, died.

01 DECEMBER

1962 Major Shaitan Singh, who was awarded the Param Vir Chakra, for playing an important role in the India-China war, was born.

1963 Nagaland became the 16th state of India.

1965 The Border Security Force was established.

1933 Air service started between Calcutta and Dhaka.

2006 Nepal approved the new national anthem, which does not even have the name of the king.

1990 The sister of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the female freedom fighter Vijayalakshmi Pandit died.

1974 Sucheta Kripalani, the Indian freedom fighter and the first woman Chief Minister of India (Uttar Pradesh), passed away.



02 DECEMBER

1911 Gateway of India was built in memory of his arrival at Bombay (now Mumbai), the first king of Britain to visit India, George V and Queen Mary.

1918 Gurudas Banerjee, the leading educationist and the first Indian Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, died.

1942 Sri Aurobindo Ashram School was established in Pondicherry (now Puducherry), which was later known as Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education.

1999 Private sector investment was approved in the insurance sector in India.

1937 Renowned politician, former Lok Sabha Speaker Manohar Joshi was born.

1918 India's leading educationist Gurudas Banerjee passed away

1989 Vishwanath Pratap Singh became the seventh Prime Minister of the country.

03 DECEMBER

1844 The first President of the country Dr. Rajendra Prasad was born.

1796 Baji Rao II was made the Peshwa of the Maratha Empire. He was the last Peshwa of the Maratha Empire.

1889 Revolutionary Khudiram Bose was born in the independence movement.

1915 A magnitude 6.5 earthquake in Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh killed 170 people and destroyed many homes.

1971 The Emergency came into force in the country after the war between India and Pakistan started.

1979 Hockey magician Major Dhyanchand Singh died.

2004 India and Pakistan agreed to restore rail connectivity between Munabav and Khokhrapar after 40 years.

2011 Film actor Dev Anand died.

1984 Leaking toxic gas from the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal killed at least 3000 people and caused several thousands of physical deformities.

1959 India and Nepal signed the agreement of

Gandak Irrigation and Power Project.

1967 India's first rocket (Rohini RH 75) was launched from Thumba.

2008 Chief Minister of Maharashtra Vilasrao Deshmukh resigned from his post on the day after the terrorist incident of 23 November in Mumbai.

04 DECEMBER

2008 Renowned historian Romila Thapar was chosen for the Cluj honor.

1888 Birth of historian Ramesh Chandra Majumdar.

1860 Agustino Lawrenceo of Margao, Goa, received a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Paris. He became the first Indian to pursue a doctorate from a foreign university.

1899 For the first time, the vaccine of typhoid was used to protect humans from this disease.

1919 The twelfth Prime Minister of India, Indra Kumar Gujral was born.

1910 Ramaswamy Venkataraman, the eighth president of India, was born.

1971 The Indian Navy attacked the Pakistani Navy and Karachi.

05 DECEMBER

1955 The STD service that provides long distance telephone calls to every home came into existence on this day in 1955.

1971 India recognized Bangladesh as a country.

1895 The birth of Josh Malihabadi, the famous Urdu poet of India and Pakistan.

1941 Famous Indian female painter Amrita Shergill died in Lahore. Many of his artworks were appreciated worldwide.

1969 The birth of Anjali Bhagwat, the famous shooter who has illuminated the name of India in the world in shooting.

1998 Russia agrees to give 'Krivak class' multi-purpose warship to Indian Navy.

1999 Yukta Mukhi took the title of Miss World to her name.



1657 Shah Jahan's younger son Murad proclaimed himself king.

1943 Japanese airplane bombed Kolkata.

1950 Freedom fighter, poet, yogi and philosopher Arvind Ghosh died in Puducherry.

1950 Sikkim became a protected state of India.

MUSICA VIVA NY PERFORMS FUSION OF HINDUSTANI-WESTERN MUSIC

BY MABEL PAIS

"Musica Viva NY: sounds of the city...with a commitment to new music and diverse composers, New York City choir Musica Viva NY is paving the way for daring collaborations" - Choir & Organ

"When Esmail sang, the inmates spontaneously joined the orchestra, clapping along, and they shot up out of their seats to cheer her encore." - Los Angeles Times



Reena Esmail

Credit: reenaesmail.com

New York City's leading chamber choir, MUSICA VIVA NY rings in the holiday season with 'THIS LOVE BETWEEN US', a one-night only concert capturing the awe and magnificence of our humanity on Sunday, December 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., at Manhattan's All Souls NYC.

Led by the choir's intrepid Artistic Director/Conductor ALEJANDRO HERNANDEZ-VALDEZ, Musica Viva NY will be joined by a baroque orchestra, sitar and tabla players, and guest vocalists. REENA ESMAIL's beautiful 'This Love Between Us: Prayers for Unity' and BACH's brilliant 'Magnificat' written for Christmas Day make an interesting pairing, juxtaposing the familiar and the unfamiliar, the past and the present, and a young Indian-American composer and a venerated German master.

Celebrating a decade at the helm, Alejandro curates a program of works that are personally meaningful to him while showcasing the diversity that has been a hallmark of Musica Viva NY for the past 10 years. "Pairing Bach with a modern-day female composer of color is Musica Viva NY's way of making classical music as relevant as possible," explains Alejandro. "We hope to create a space in which audience members can find themselves reflected in the music they hear."

PROGRAM

Sunday, December 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. (pre-concert talk at 4:00 p.m.)

All Souls NYC, 1157 Lexington Avenue, New York City, Subways: 6 to 77th St or 4/5/6 to 86th St

This Love Between Us: Prayers for Unity (2016) by Reena Esmail

Magnificat BWV 243 (1723) by J.S. Bach

Performers:

Musica Viva NY choir

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez, artistic director and conductor

Guest vocalists - To Be Announced

Sitar and Tabla - To Be Announced

Baroque orchestra

TICKETS

For updates and more information, visit MusicaViva.org

Tickets are available from MusicaViva.org. Students with valid ID get discounts.

REENA ESMAIL - Composer + Vocalist

Indian-American composer Reena Esmail (b. 1983) is known for fusing elements of both Hindustani and classical Western music into sweeping, passionate compositions. Drawing on her South Asian roots, Esmail - who has worked with the Kronos Quartet, Albany Symphony, and Chicago Sinfonietta, among others - creates choral and symphonic pieces that have been hailed as compelling, exhilarating, memorable,

and altogether original.

Esmail expounds in her program notes: "Even more than uniting musical practices, this piece unites people from two different musical traditions: a sitar and tabla join the choir and baroque orchestra. Each of the musicians is asked to keep one hand firmly rooted in their own tradition and training, while reaching the other hand outward to greet another musical culture." Learn more at reenaesmail.com.

J.S. BACH

Through the course of almost half a century, J.S. Bach wrote sacred music for virtually every kind of occasion his faith called for. And among the hundreds of cantatas, the Passions, the masses, and the oratorios, 'Magnificat' was Bach's most elaborate sacred work to date. The 'Magnificat' is the first large choral work that Bach composed after his appointment in Leipzig in the spring of 1723. The text comes from the "Song of Mary," a rich statement of purpose and faith from the Gospel of Luke, and is about the visit made by Mary to her cousin Elisabeth, who was also pregnant. It was first performed on Christmas Day 1723. Musica Viva NY performs Bach's revised version from 1733 featuring transverse flutes and two oboes.

Musica Viva NY

Learn more at musicaviva.org

NEW YORK'S BREAKDANCER AND HIP HOP PIONEER KURTIS BLOW HOSTS NJPAC'S HIP HOP NUTCRACKER

BY MABEL PAIS

'The Hip Hop Nutcracker', Tchaikovsky's 130-year-old ballet reimagined as a holiday dance spectacle, will take place on Sunday, December 8 for two spectacular performances at 2PM and 7:00PM celebrating the show's 12th season. Adding to the excitement - inspired by the live stage show, the Original Special 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' from Disney Branded Television will stream this holiday season, only on Disney+.

Breakdancing made its official debut at the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics and that's how New York's KURTIS BLOW started his career.

Watch Kurtis Blow speak on breakdancing and the Olympics - youtu.be/eoN_acSWeLA

'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' features breakdancer and hip hop pioneer KURTIS BLOW, the first rapper to be signed by a major label in 1979. Blow is considered one of hip hop's founding fathers and will perform as the MC of 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker'. The tour includes a cast of a dozen all-star dancers, an on-stage DJ and an electric violinist who turns the beloved 'Nutcracker' score on its head.

Watch a preview of the production here - youtu.be/toBO5yHV1hg.

HISTORY

Created in 2013 by director/choreographer Jennifer Weber and writer Mike Fitelson, 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' pays homage to the original (George)



Hip Hop Nutcracker performers -Credit: NJPAC.org

Balanchine ballet, retold through the modern, self-expressive gaze of hip-hop culture. The production has evolved into a masterpiece due to the creators' never-ending commitment to enhancing the production, and dancers who continue to raise the bar each year. To date, 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' has been performed more than 200 times in 70 cities. "I love performing at NJPAC each year and creating lifelong memories for our audiences," says Kurtis Walker, known professionally as Kurtis Blow.

It's a big accomplishment for Blow as well; who on December 6, 2020, had a heart transplant that has given him a new life. He paved the way for generations of hip hop artists and fans after scoring the first certified gold record rap song in 1980, 'The Breaks'. Blow is also responsible for 'Christmas Rappin', acclaimed for being the first rap holiday song.

STORY

Just like the classic Nutcracker story, in 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' Maria-Clara and the Nutcracker Prince go on a dream adventure battling a gang of mice, visiting the land of sweets and learning the lessons of the holiday season. Innovative digital graffiti and visuals transform the landscape of E.T.A. Hoffmann's beloved story from traditional 19th century Germany to the vibrant, diverse sights and sounds of contemporary New York City. Through the modern, self-expressive gaze of hip hop culture, the dynamic performers of 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' celebrate the magic of the entire holiday season on the most inclusive holiday of them all - New Year's Eve, a time for new beginnings.

Learn more at hiphopnutcracker.com

TICKETS

For tickets to see Hip Hop Nutcracker visit NJPAC.org or the NJPAC Box Office at 1 Center Street in Newark, N.J or call 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

THE HIP HOP NUTCRACKER

For the latest news and updates follow The Hip Hop Nutcracker on Facebook, Instagram (@hiphopnutcracker), and YouTube; #HipHopNutcracker.

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)
Learn more at NJPAC.org

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

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY PRESENTS A MUPPET FILM CONCERT FOR CHRISTMAS

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Symphony will present Disney's 'The Muppet Christmas Carol' in Concert featuring a screening of the complete film while the musical score is performed live by the orchestra. The film concert takes place at several locations, December 5-8, 2024.

STORY

The Muppets perform Charles Dickens' classic holiday tale, with Kermit the Frog playing Bob Cratchit, the put-upon clerk of stingy Ebenezer Scrooge (Michael Caine). Gonzo, as Dickens, narrates the story with the help of Rizzo the Rat. The film also features Miss Piggy as Emily Cratchit, Fozzie Bear as Fozziewig and Robin the Frog as Tiny Tim.

When the grumpy Scrooge receives Christmas Eve visits from the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future, they show him the error of his self-serving ways. Though the miserable old man seems beyond any hope of redemption and happiness, the kind and humble Bob Cratchit, his family and the Spirits open Scrooge's eyes-and his heart-to the true meaning of Christmas.

The original score was composed by Miles Goodman ('Dirty Rotten Scoundrels,' 'Little Shop of Horrors') with songs by Oscar®, Emmy and GRAMMY-winning songwriter Paul Williams ('Rainbow Connection,' 'Evergreen').

PROGRAM

Disney's *The Muppet Christmas Carol in Concert* is presented by the New Jersey Symphony, conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos.

The Muppet Christmas Carol in Concert

New Jersey Symphony at the Movies
Constantine Kitsopoulos conductor
New Jersey Symphony

Morristown - Thursday, December 5, 2024, 7:30 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center (MPAC)

Red Bank - Friday, December 6, 2024, 7:30 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark - Saturday, December 7, 2024, 3 pm & 7:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)

New Brunswick - Sunday, December 8, 2024, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

December 8 performance presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.

TICKETS

For tickets and further information visit njsymphony.org/muppets. To purchase tickets call 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or visit the Orchestra's website @ njsymphony.org/muppets



Muppets with Scrooge (Michael Caine)



Scene from Muppets-Photos / Courtesy Disney Concerts

DISNEY CONCERTS

Disney Concerts is the concert production and licensing division of Disney Music Group, the music arm of The Walt Disney Company. Disney Concerts produces concerts and tours, and licenses Disney music and visual content to symphony orchestras, choruses, choirs and presenters on a worldwide basis. Disney Concerts' licensed concert packages include a variety of formats, such as "live to film" concerts and themed instrumental and vocal compilation concerts that range from instrumental-only symphonic performances to multimedia productions featuring live vocalists and choir. Featuring concerts from the largest movie franchises in the world - from Walt Disney Pictures, Walt Disney Animation Studios, Marvel Studios, Lucasfilm, Pixar and 20th Century Studios - current titles include the 'Star Wars' Film Concert Series, 'Toy Story', 'Aladdin', 'Disney Princess - The Concert', 'Coco', 'The Lion King', 'Up', Tim Burton's 'The Nightmare Before Christmas' and 'The Muppet Christmas Carol'.

CONSTANTINE KITSOPOULOS

Constantine Kitsopoulos has established himself as a dynamic conductor known for his ability to work in many different genres and settings. He is equally at home with opera, symphonic repertoire, film with live orchestra, music theatre and composition. His work has taken him all over the world where he has conducted the major orchestras of North America, the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Tokyo Philharmonic.

In addition to Kitsopoulos' engagements as guest conductor, he is music director of the Festival of the Arts Boca and general director of Chatham Opera. He is general director of the New York Grand Opera and is working with the company to bring opera, free and open to the public, back to New York's Central Park. Learn more at maestro.com.

THE NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

The Emmy and GRAMMY Award-winning New Jersey Symphony is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in

the 21st century. The Symphony is renewing its deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be a new experience; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of its organization - all to better reflect and serve its vibrant communities.

Internationally renowned Chinese American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current music director in 2016. Since her arrival, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts. Since 2021, Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's Resident Artistic Catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey. In 2024, Allison Loggins-Hull succeeded DBR as the orchestra's next Resident Artistic Partner.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit njsymphony.org or email information@njsymphony.org

THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

NJPAC, located in downtown Newark, N.J., is America's most diverse performing arts center, and the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey - where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the state's and the world's best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city. Through its extensive Arts Education programs, which have reached almost 2 million children, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted more than 10 million visitors since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents.

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YouTube: NJPACtv

FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org/takeastand
Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand
Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

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

REFLECTION WITH FATHER MIKE SCHMITZ CAN TRANSFORM YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON

BY MABEL PAIS



Fr. Mike Schmitz

Credit: njpac.org

As the festive Christmas season approaches, the renowned Catholic priest and popular podcaster, Father Mike Schmitz, graces NJPAC for an inspiring evening on Monday, December 9th, at 7 PM.

Embrace the spirit of Advent and experience a night of reflection that could transform your holiday season!

In this meaningful discussion centered around the theme of Advent, Father Mike reflects on the significance of this season, offering insights that aim to deepen and strengthen one's faith during the most wonderful time of the year. Father Mike Schmitz, cherished by Catholics around the globe for his engaging podcasts, "The Bible in a Year" and "The

Catechism in a Year,' has a unique ability to connect with audiences of all ages. His uplifting message resonates with many, making him a beloved figure in the community.

This evening promises more than just a talk; it is an opportunity to support Father Mike's vital fundraising efforts, aimed at establishing a new ministry center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, where he serves as campus chaplain. With a rich history of preaching to thousands, both locally and nationally, Father Mike's influence extends beyond the pulpit. He also shares weekly homilies available on platforms like iTunes, Hallow, and bulldogCatholic.org, and engages young people through programs facilitated by Ascension Press as well as through his popular video messages on Ascension Presents.

The event, titled 'Face to Face: A Night of Advent Reflection with Father Mike Schmitz,' is a collaborative effort brought to you by Bulldog Catholic, Ascension, and Corporate Travel Service.

TICKETS

Tickets for this enlightening talk with Father Mike Schmitz are available at NJPAC.org or the NJPAC Box Office, or by calling 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722)

FATHER MIKE SCHMITZ

Learn more at bulldogcatholic.org/about-contact-us/about-fr-mike-schmitz/

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Website: njpac.org/takeastand
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Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES RETURN OF NEW CHAPTER: INVESTITURE OF PRIEST-PRESIDENT

BY MABEL PAIS

The Seton Hall University community, together with community and government officials and representatives from colleges and universities across the nation, gathered on November 4, 2024, for a mass and ceremony to mark the investiture of Monsignor Joseph R. Reilly, S.T.L., Ph.D., as the University's twenty-second president. Monsignor Reilly's appointment marks the return of a priest-president to Seton Hall, which has been a hallmark of the University for 146 years of its 168-year history.

"To say Monsignor Reilly understands our mission is an understatement. It is inseparable from who he is," said Hank D'Alessandro, '85, chair of the Board of Regents, who presided over the investiture ceremony. "He continues the tradition of the priest-president, a role he will use to instill hope and advance success for our entire community."

In his investiture address, Monsignor Reilly said, "Half of my life has been spent here. [Seton Hall] is a place of encounter, of education, of enrichment, of empathy, edification and equity. It was here, in this place, where I discovered the passion and purpose for my life as a priest. But it is not simply a place of three campuses. Seton Hall is a community of people, with fundamental beliefs about God, the human person, the world and the values that underlie all of those things that are founded in faith. This is what sustains each one of us in our lives here at Seton Hall."

"My deep desire as I begin my service as a priest-president here at Seton Hall is that I would like to be able, like Jesus Christ, to make a gift of myself in service to the community," added Monsignor Reilly.

His Eminence, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., chair of Seton Hall's Board of Trustees, president of the Board of Regents and Archbishop of Newark, served as



(left to right): Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin; Monsignor Joseph R. Reilly; Hank D'Alessandro

Credit: shu.edu

Celebrant and Homilist at the investiture mass and addressed the investiture ceremony. "Monsignor Reilly's selection as Seton Hall's leader follows decades of devoted service to the University and its students, and through them, to the world. I am confident his presidency will produce even more remarkable achievements." Watch this short video youtu.be/-yhWxiRwc5Y.

The ceremony culminated a week-long celebration of investiture-related events, including an academic symposium, "The Story of Catholic Education:

Renewing Our Universities," a Student Leaders Luncheon and a gathering with alumni and families during Homecoming and Family Weekend. Watch the entire investiture ceremony at youtube.com/watch?v=3VJ9sD-BOB0.

THE PRESIDENT

Monsignor Joseph R. Reilly, S.T.L., Ph.D., began his tenure as the University's 22nd president on July 1, 2024. He brings to the presidency a deep understanding of Seton Hall's identity as a leading Catholic university and a robust vision to elevate its standing among the leading institutions in American higher education.

A Mountainside, N.J., native, Monsignor Reilly attended Seton Hall Prep and graduated from the University in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark in 1991 and then served as a parochial vicar at St. Paul in Ramsey and St. Andrew in Bayonne.

In 1995, he joined the staff of Seton Hall Prep, where he served as a faculty member and chaplain. Seven years later, he returned to the University as rector of the College Seminary at St. Andrew's Hall.

Monsignor Reilly was selected to serve in multiple pontificates. St. John Paul II named him a chaplain to His Holiness in 2005 with the title of Reverend Monsignor, and Pope Francis appointed him a Missionary of Mercy in 2015. Learn more at shu.edu.

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY (shu.edu)

For more information, visit shu.edu.

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



Shahid Kapoor's Deva to arrive early in January 2025

The treat for action-lovers is far from getting over. As audiences welcome 2025, they would have the option to enjoy yet another actioner in the theatres. We are talking about Shahid Kapoor-starrer Deva, which the audiences will now be able to watch earlier than expected.

Zee Studios and Roy Kapur Films gear up to unleash their highly-anticipated action thriller, Deva on January 31. The film was earlier scheduled to release during Dusshera 2024, and was then moved to Valentine's Day, February 14. It has now been preponed.

Helmed by the renowned Malayalam filmmaker Rosshan Andrews, Deva promises a nail-biting storyline combined with stellar performances. The makers shared the announcement with the caption, "Sit tight, 'cause the wait just got shorter! Deva is coming your way sooner than you think—January 31st, 2025! The hype is real, the energy is through the roof, and we're beyond excited to bring you this action-packed thriller earlier than expected! Mark your calendars and get ready for a heart-pumping experience that you won't forget (sic)!"

Aishwarya Rai drops 'Bachchan' surname at Dubai event amid divorce rumors

Aishwarya Rai recently attended the Dubai for the Global Women's Forum event in the UAE. While her compassionate speech about women's empowerment made headlines worldwide, what caught the attention of many fans was that she was introduced simply as Aishwarya Rai at the event. There was no Bachchan, even in the graphic on stage, to denote her as the speaker. Given the rumours about her separation from Abhishek Bachchan, this has led to a lot of gossip on social media forums.

A screengrab of Aishwarya's speech at the Dubai event was shared on Reddit on Thursday, November 28. It showed her standing before a giant graphic denoting her as 'Aishwarya Rai - International Star'. The post's caption read, "Aishwarya Has Removed Bachchan from her official name?"

Many were convinced that it was indeed the case, and it confirmed the separation rumours. "She kind of looks happy here and it's almost like so much weight has been removed from her heart and own self," read one comment. Others supported her for the step. One wrote, "She was always THE Aishwarya Rai to me. Bachchan who? She looked absolutely stunning at the event BTW - perfect hair and makeup. This is what happens when you get rid of a disrespectful daddy boy."

However, many debated against jumping to conclusions, arguing that it could be just a goof-up on the part of the event organisers. "Meanwhile the intern who skipped her surname cause there wasn't enough space is shi**ing bricks right now," quipped one Redditor. Another added, "It's still there on her IG (Instagram)? I think it would really set things straight once she removes it from IG." Aishwarya still goes by Aishwarya Rai Bachchan on



her Instagram.

Rumors of a fallout or separation between Aishwarya and Abhishek began when she and daughter Aaradhya arrived separately at Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's wedding earlier this year. The rest of the Bachchan family arrived later, even though everyone was seated together. When the Bachchans did not wish Aishwarya on her birthday - November 1 - on social media, it added more fuel to the rumours. The entire Bachchan clan, including Aishwarya, has maintained a stoic silence on the rumours.

Aishwarya was seen in Mani Ratnam's Ponnin Selvan films, released in 2022 and 2023. Abhishek's most recent film - I Want To Talk - was released last Friday in theatres.

Talks about street harassment

Aishwarya Rai has spoken up about street harassment and how to tackle it. Taking to Instagram, Aishwarya posted a video as part of L'Oreal Paris' new campaign. She is the brand

ambassador of the beauty product.

In the video, Aishwarya said, "Street harassment. How do you deal with it? Avoid eye contact? No. Look the problem directly in the eyes. Hold your head high. Feminine and feminist. My body, my worth. Never compromise your worth. Do not doubt yourself. Stand up for your worth. Don't blame your dress or your lipstick. Street harassment is never your fault."

She captioned the post, "On this International Day for the elimination of violence against women, join @lorealparis's Stand Up against street harassment training program. We're all worth it. @lorealparis." She also added the hashtag-We Stand Up.

Reacting to the post, a fan said, "Wow, Aishwarya, you are the most inspirational and powerful woman." A comment read, "The icon of Beauty with Brain." An Instagram user said, "Thank you, queen, we needed this." A person said, "Well said. Proud of you fighting for a cause which has been of grave concern for women and the society."

Jimmy Shergill consciously ditched chocolate boy image



For someone who began as the quintessential chocolate boy next door, Jimmy Shergill has come a long way. He has transformed his on-screen image to that of a tough guy. In his next film, Sikandar Ka Muqaddar, he plays a tough-as-nails, no-nonsense cop. Ahead of the film's release, the actor sits down with HT to talk about the film, his intuition in selecting projects, and changing his image.

Sikandar Ka Muqaddar sees Jimmy as Inspector Jasvinder Singh, a cop obsessed with a crime he couldn't solve years ago. The actor says the character is quite different from him. "I have learnt in life to let go. But when things are positive, when things are good and you feel you can be obsessed with them, I do that," he says.

The film also stars Avinash Tiwary and Tamannaah Bhatia and has been directed by Neeraj Pandey. The trailer, which is out, has been praised for this fresh team-up. One particular line of dialogue from Jimmy - where his

character talks about people's moolvriti (intuition) - has gone viral. Talking about his own intuition, Jimmy says that there have been times when he chose the wrong film. "I have done over 150 films and this has happened so many times that I cannot even count," he says.

The actor says in a bid to support new directors, there were times when he bit more than he could chew. "I had always tried to support new people. If the script is interesting and it is a bound work, I try to give newer directors a chance. If you see they are new people with limited budget and means, you try and accommodate your dates. You can't do everything for money, so some you just do to have fun," says Jimmy, adding, "But several times it happens that once you begin filming, they compromise on everything. The story is based in UP but you are shooting amid coconut trees in Naigaon, and stuff like that. But then you decide that you can't let the whole film and crew suffer because of one or two idiots." *Source: HT*



Halle Berry calls out ex Olivier Martinez for conspiring against her with nanny

Hollywood actor Halle Berry has levelled new accusations against her former husband Olivier Martinez. She has claimed that he conspired along with her longtime nanny to generate false reports against her.

As per a report by In Touch, she has accused him of engaging in “smoke in mirrors to distract from his conduct”. At the moment, she is involved in a custody war with him. She got married to him in 2013.

According to court documents obtained by In Touch, Halle, 58, has objected to Olivier’s request that she produce text messages she exchanged with her former employee Miryam Haziza since January and any non-disclosure agreements executed by Miryam.

In the filing, Halle said Olivier, 58, also asked her to turn over any non-disclosure agreements executed by Erica Simamora, another one of her former employees “with whom (Olivier) conspired along with Ms. Haziza, (Halle) has come to learn — to make false reports against” her.

Brad Pitt claims Angelina ‘withheld hundreds of emails’ to suppress truth \$500 million winery sale

The legal battle between exes Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt is getting murkier. A new report sources court documents to show that Brad has now accused Angelina of lying and withholding critical information about the controversial sale of their \$500 million French winery.

Documents accessed by In Touch Weekly show that Brad’s legal team has accused Angelina of withholding ‘hundreds of emails’ to suppress the truth. “In a last-ditch attempt to suppress the truth about her wrongful sale to the Stoli Parties, [Angelina] has withheld hundreds of emails she exchanged with her inner circle in the period leading up to the sale on claims of attorney-client privilege. But 126 of those emails are entirely between non-lawyers. These 126 communications should be ordered produced,” reads the submission from Brad in the case.

The couple purchased the French winery in question - Chateau Miraval - jointly. However, Brad claims that it was sold to a third party without his knowledge and consent right after their divorce in 2016. The couple has been battling this in court for years now.

In the documents, Brad’s legal team claims that Angelina did produce some documents after ‘stonewalling for more than a year’ but calls it ‘illusory’, as she has ‘produced only one internal communication discussing or reflecting the sale’.

The legal team says, “[Angelina] claims that all of her team’s other internal communications on this subject are protected by the attorney/client privilege. This includes hundreds of emails to or from non-



attorneys, such as her business manager Terry Bird, her image consultants Chloe Dalton and Arminka Helic, her wine consultant Christophe Salin, her finance consultants Marjorie Brabet-Friel and James Friel, and her personal assistants Michael Vieira and Mindy Nyby. 126 of these communications do not even involve any attorney participant. [Angelina’s] wildly overbroad assertion of privilege over these 126 communications is unsupported by the law, and it cannot

justify her near-complete cover-up of this critically important discovery.”

After Brad and Angelina split in 2016, she emailed him that she wanted to get out of the winery business. Brad said his team negotiated a deal to buy her stake, offering to pay her \$54.4 million over six years. However, he claims she dropped out of negotiations with him and sold her stake to Russian billionaire Yuri Shefler, pocketing \$64 million from the deal. Brad has urged the court to nullify the deal. *Source: HT*

Julia Robert felt Notting Hill sequel was ‘a very poor idea’



Days after Hugh Grant called his memorable Notting Hill character “despicable,” we’ve learnt that his co-star Julia Roberts dismissed the writer’s pitch for a sequel. In an interview with IndieWire, Notting Hill writer Richard Curtis revealed how Julia reacted when he approached her for a sequel to their 1999 cult romantic comedy.

“I tried doing one with ‘Notting Hill’ where they were going to get divorced and Julia [Roberts] thought that was a very poor idea,” revealed Richard. The story of Notting Hill, written by Richard and directed by Roger Michell, revolved around ace American actor Anna Scott (Julia), who falls for bookstore owner William Thacker (Hugh) during her visit to Notting Hill, London. Initially overwhelmed by the paparazzi’s obsession with their budding romance, William aka Will eventually confesses his love to a disappointed Anna at a press conference before she leaves for the US. Notting Hill is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

A couple of weeks ago, in an interview with

Vanity Fair, Hugh Grant also cringed at his character of Will from Notting Hill. “Whenever I’m flicking the channels at home after a few drinks and this comes up, I just think, ‘Why doesn’t my character have any balls?’” He said. “There’s a scene in this film where she’s in my house and the paps (paparazzi) come to the front door and ring the bell and I think I just let her go past me and open the door. That’s awful,” Hugh added.

Even Richard has flagged his dissatisfaction with Notting Hill and other popular romantic comedies like Love Actually (2003) and Bridget Jones’s Diary (2001) that he wrote for the lack of diversity in them. “I came from a very un-diverse school and a bunch of university friends. With Notting Hill, I think that I hung on to the diversity issue, to the feeling that I wouldn’t know how to write those parts. And I think I was just sort of stupid and wrong about that. I feel as though me, my casting director, my producers just didn’t think about it. Just didn’t look outwards enough,” he said at the Times and Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival last year, as reported by Today.

Fragile Ceasefire: Israel and Lebanon trade accusations the day after ceasefire went into effect

ISRAEL'S NETANYAHU THREATENS 'INTENSE WAR' IF HEZBOLLAH VIOLATES TRUCE

NOVEMBER 29, 2024

JERUSALEM (TIP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday, November 28, during an interview with Israeli Channel 14 that he had ordered the military to be prepared for an intense war in Lebanon if the ceasefire's framework is violated.

The Israeli military said its air force struck a facility used by Hezbollah to store mid-range rockets in southern Lebanon on Thursday, after both sides accused each other of breaching a ceasefire that aims to halt over a year of fighting.

Israel said it also opened fire on Thursday towards what it called "suspects" with vehicles arriving at several areas in the southern zone, saying it was a breach of the truce with Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah, which came into effect on Wednesday.

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah in turn accused Israel of violating the deal.

"The Israeli enemy is attacking those returning to the border villages," Fadlallah told reporters, adding "there are violations today by Israel, even in this form".

The Lebanese army later accused Israel of violating the ceasefire several times on Wednesday and Thursday.

The exchange of accusations highlighted the fragility of the ceasefire, which was brokered by the United States and France to end the conflict, fought in parallel with the Gaza war. The truce lasts for 60 days in the hope of reaching a permanent cessation of hostilities.

Israel's airstrike on Thursday was the first since the truce took effect on Wednesday morning. Lebanese security

sources and the Al Jadeed broadcaster said it took place near Baysariyah, north of the Litani River.

The ceasefire deal stipulates that unauthorized military facilities south of the Litani River should be dismantled, but does not mention military facilities north of the river.

Earlier, Israeli tank fire hit five towns and some agricultural fields in southern Lebanon, state media and Lebanese security sources said, saying at least two people were wounded.

All the areas lie within 2 km (1.2 miles) of the Blue Line demarcating the border between Lebanon and Israel, in an area the Israeli military has announced as a no-go zone along the border, even after the deal was agreed.

The Israeli military said in a statement it had identified several suspicious activities that posed a threat and breached conditions of the ceasefire agreement.

"Any deviation from this agreement will be enforced with fire," said Chief of the General Staff Herzi Halevi.

Later on Thursday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he had directed the military to be prepared for intense fighting if the ceasefire is violated.

"We are enforcing powerfully," Netanyahu said in an interview with Israel's Channel 14. "But if needed I gave a directive to the IDF - be prepared in case there is a violation of the framework of the ceasefire, for an intense war." Lebanese families displaced from their homes near the southern border have tried to return to check on their properties. But Israeli troops remain stationed within Lebanese

territory in towns along the border and Reuters reporters heard surveillance drones flying over parts of southern Lebanon.

The Israeli military on Thursday renewed a curfew restricting the movement of residents of southern Lebanon south of the Litani river between 5 pm. (1500 GMT) and 7 am.

The agreement, a rare diplomatic feat in a region racked by conflict, ended the deadliest confrontation between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group in years. But Israel is still fighting its other arch foe, the Palestinian militant group Hamas, in the Gaza Strip, in response to the deadly Hamas-led raid on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

Israeli strikes on Lebanon have killed at least 3,961 people and injured 16,520 others since October 2023, the Lebanese health ministry said on Thursday. The figures do not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

Hezbollah strikes have killed 45 civilians in northern Israel and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. At least 73 Israeli soldiers have been killed in northern Israel, the Golan Heights, and in combat in southern Lebanon, according to Israeli authorities.

Under the ceasefire terms, Israeli forces can take up to 60 days to withdraw from southern Lebanon but neither side can launch offensive operations.

Netanyahu waged the offensive against Hezbollah, saying Israelis in the north of the country should be able to return after being evacuated because of rocket fire from Lebanon.

Some 60,000 people evacuated from homes in the north have still not been directed to return.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
File photo

Hezbollah has said its fighters "remain fully equipped to deal with the aspirations and assaults of the Israeli enemy" and that its forces will monitor Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon "with their hands on the trigger".

The group has been weakened by casualties and the killing of its leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and other commanders by Israel.

Announcing the Lebanon accord on Tuesday, US President Joe Biden said he would now renew his push for a ceasefire agreement in Gaza and urged Israel and Hamas to seize the moment. Months of efforts to negotiate a ceasefire have yielded scant progress.

Israeli military strikes killed at least 21 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, medics said, as forces stepped up their bombardment of central areas and tanks pushed deeper into the north and south of the enclave. (Agencies)

Russian strikes cut power to 1 million people in Ukraine

NOV 29, 2024

KYIV (TIP): Russia unleashed its second big attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure this month on November 28, triggering deep power cuts across the country.

President Vladimir Putin said Moscow had struck in response to Ukraine's strikes on Russian territory with US medium-range ATACMS missiles. He said Russia's future targets could include "decision-making centres" in Kyiv.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of a "despicable escalation", saying it had used cruise missiles with cluster munitions.

Over 1 million people lost power in the immediate aftermath of the strikes, and millions more had their existing



schedule of rolling power cuts intensified. Ukraine's air force said Russia used 91 missiles and 97 drones in Thursday's attack. It said 12 of those had hit their targets, most of which were

energy and fuel facilities.

"The enemy is using a large number of missiles and drones. Their massive use in certain areas often exceeds the number of means of (air defence) cover,"

the air force said in a statement.

Putin says he does not believe Trump is safe after assassination attempts'

Infrastructure facilities were damaged in nine regions, Ukraine's Interior Ministry said.

The attack reinforced fears of long power cuts during the winter months as temperatures hover around zero.

Officials said it was the 11th major strike on the energy system since March. Russia has knocked out about half Ukraine's available generating capacity during the war, damaged the distribution system and forced authorities to impose long blackouts.

The air force said it had shot down 79 missiles and downed 35 drones, while 62 drones were "lost", meaning it was likely they had been disrupted by electronic warfare. (Reuters)

Nations unite to address global plastic pollution crisis in Busan

NOV 27, 2024

VIETNAM (TIP): While the outcome on the climate finance deal at COP29 in Baku was derided by the developing nations, days later, 175 countries assembled in Busan, South Korea, for the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop a Global Treaty on ending plastic pollution.

At the ongoing discussion that will end on December 1, participating countries would argue that plastic pollution must be addressed through reduction in plastic production and a legally binding international agreement.

Experts state that India could play a pivotal role in leading the world towards the development of a global criteria for single-use plastic ban.

In 2022, India had already issued Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) guidelines under which manufacturers should register on a centralised portal. With these guidelines, India fixed the responsibility on manufacturers to ensure processing of their plastic packaging waste through recycling, re-use or end of life disposal.

Amit Tandon, Founder and CEO, PolyCycl Pvt Ltd said, "The Global Plastics Treaty is a rare, once-in-a-generation chance to build global collaboration to tackle plastic pollution



head-on. India already boasts one of the world's largest and most comprehensive EPR frameworks for plastic life-cycle management. With only a third of treaty member states having implemented any form of EPR, India also stands to offer a regulatory model for other nations for developing an effective and sustainable system for managing plastics."

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, single-use plastics represent 36 per cent of the plastic production in the world.

In 2022, India banned 19 single use

plastic items like plastic bags, cutlery, straws, food packaging, disposable water bottles and plastic cups.

Atin Biswas, programme director, Solid Waste Management and Circular Economy, Centre for Science and Environment, said, "India introduced a resolution in United Nations Environment Assembly 4, aimed at ending single-use plastic product pollution. The country is positioning itself as a leader in efforts to eliminate single-use plastics at both regional and national levels." (TNS)

Will fight back: Philippine prez on VP's murder threat

NOV 26, 2024

MANILA (TIP): Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos vowed on November 25 to fight back against what he called reckless threats against him, speaking out after his estranged vice-president said he would be assassinated if she herself were killed.

In a strongly-worded video message addressing the nation, Marcos did not name Vice-President Sara Duterte, his presidential running mate, but said "such criminal plans should not be overlooked".

In a dramatic twist in the fierce spat between Marcos and the powerful Duterte family, the daughter of firebrand former President Rodrigo Duterte said on Saturday she had instructed an assassin to kill Marcos, his wife and the lower house speaker, in the event that she were killed.

She was responding to a question during an online press conference about whether she feared for her safety. She did not cite any specific threat against her.



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos vowed on Monday to fight back against what he called reckless threats against him, speaking out after his estranged vice-president said he would be assassinated if she herself were killed. In a strongly-worded video message addressing...

AUSTRALIA BECOMES 1ST COUNTRY TO BAN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UNDER-16S

NOV 29, 2024

SYDNEY (TIP) : Australia on November 28 approved a social media ban for children aged under 16 after an emotive debate that gripped the nation, setting a benchmark for jurisdictions around the world with one of the toughest regulations targeting Big Tech.

The law forces tech giants from Instagram and Facebook owner Meta to TikTok to stop minors logging in or face fines of up to A\$49.5 million (\$32 million). A trial of methods to enforce it will start in January with the ban to take effect in a year.

A number of countries have already vowed to curb social media use by children through legislation, but Australia's policy is the most stringent.

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM-OWNER META SPOKESPERSON: "Naturally, we respect the laws decided by the Australian Parliament. However, we are concerned about the process which rushed the legislation through while failing to properly consider the evidence, what industry already does to ensure age-appropriate experiences, and the voices of young people.

"The task now turns to ensuring there is productive consultation on all rules associated with the Bill to ensure a technically feasible outcome that does not place an onerous burden on parents and teens and a commitment that rules will be consistently applied across all social apps used by teens."

SUNITA BOSE, MANAGING DIRECTOR, AUSTRALIAN DIGITAL INDUSTRY GROUP, DIGI

"It's cart before horse... We have the bill but we don't have guidance from the Australian government around what are the right methods that a whole host of services subject to this law will need to employ."

SARAH HANSON-YOUNG, GREENS PARTY SENATOR: "This is a rubbish Bill, it has no substance and it doesn't even take place for another 12 months. It's also obvious that the people who have drafted and fought for the particular elements of this Bill actually have no idea how young people engage with the internet. This is boomers trying to tell young people how the internet should work."

"Given the potential for these laws to significantly interfere with the rights of children and young people, the Commission has serious reservations about the proposed social media ban."

"There are arguments for and against the introduction of a social media ban for under-16s. While a ban may help to protect children and young people from online harms, it will also limit important human rights." (Reuters)

ARMY CHIEF'S NEPAL VISIT OVER, BUT NO CLARITY ON FRESH RECRUITMENT OF GORKHA SOLDIERS

NOV 25, 2024

KATHMANDU (TIP): Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on November 24 concluded his five-day official visit to Nepal to strengthen bilateral ties. However, there is no clarity on the way ahead for the fresh recruitment of soldiers from Nepal into the Indian Armed Forces that has been on hold for the past four years.

"The visit, which exceeded all stated objectives, further solidified the robust defence cooperation, cultural ties and mutual respect between the two nations. It underscored the shared commitment of the Indian and Nepali Armies to fostering peace, security and partnership in the region," an official statement issued on Sunday read.

During his tour, described as "resoundingly successful", Gen Dwivedi held discussions with President of Nepal Ramchandra Paudel, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, Defence Minister Manbir Rai and his Nepali counterpart, General Ashok Raj Sigdel, but there is no reference to the resumption of recruitment of Gorkha soldiers from Nepal in official statements or media reports.

Reports from Nepal also said Prime Minister Oli emphasised the need to further strengthen bilateral cooperation and expand ties. The Indian Army Chief's visit came in the backdrop of strains in bilateral relations and growing Chinese interest in Nepal. This visit was preceded by the Director-General of Shashtra Seema Bal that guards the Indo-Nepal border holding talks with his counterpart in Nepal.

The recruitment of soldiers from Nepal has been suspended since 2020 following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and thereafter the introduction of the Agniveer scheme in 2021 that entails a four-year term for new recruits into the rank and file of the three services. Only 25 per cent would be absorbed into permanent service.

Nepal did not agree to the terms of the Agniveer scheme for its citizens, saying that it violated the terms of the tripartite India-Nepal-Britain Agreement in 1947. It also voiced concern over the re-employability of Gorkha soldiers after their four-year term expires.

The India-Nepal relations are steeped in history over shared economic, social and cultural affinity and military-to-military cooperation is an important element of this bond. The Nepal-India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (NIBCGSI) that meets regularly is the forum for this exchange. (TNS)

Imran supporters suspend protest; 4 die in crackdown

NOV 28, 2024

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party on November 27 formally suspended its protest here blaming the midnight crackdown by the authorities that left at least four dead and over 50 injured even as the PTI earlier claimed "hundreds" were killed in the violent clashes with security personnel.

Amid concerns about the whereabouts of Khan's wife Bushra Bibi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, – who were leading the march to Islamabad – the party said they were at Mansehra town, near Abbottabad, of the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Authorities began reopening roads and cleaning all major thoroughfares vandalised during the three-day protest by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

The midnight crackdown forced Khan's supporters to evacuate the D-Chowk and its adjacent main business district of the capital, ending their



protest, which his party described as a "massacre" under the "fascist military regime" even as police sources said about 450 protesters were arrested in the crackdown.

"In view of the government's brutality

and the government's plan to turn the capital into a slaughterhouse for unarmed citizens, (we) announce the suspension of the peaceful protest for the time being," Khan's PTI said in a press release. (PTI)

Promote 'peaceful coexistence' for Hindus, ISKCON urges Bangla govt



NOV 28, 2024

DHAKA (TIP): The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) has urged the Bangladesh authorities to promote "peaceful coexistence" for Hindus in the country as it "strongly" denounced the recent arrest of the prominent community leader Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari.

Das was arrested from Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Monday as he was about to fly to

Chattogram to join a rally. He was denied bail and sent to jail by the Chattogram's Sixth Metropolitan Magistrate court in a sedition case on November 27.

In a statement on Tuesday, ISKCON Bangladesh General Secretary Charu Chandra Das Brahmachari said, "We express our serious concern and strongly denounce the recent arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das... We also condemn the subsequent violence and attacks against Sanatanis in various regions of

Bangladesh. We urge the government authorities to promote peaceful coexistence for the Sanatani community," he said.

Underlining that Bangladesh is "our birthplace and ancestral home", the statement urged the interim government of Bangladesh led by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus "to ensure justice for all and to allow every citizen to practice their religion freely in accordance with their beliefs." (PTI)

Sikh History This Week

NOVEMBER 29 TO DECEMBER 5

29th November



1631 Sant Sipahi Baba Budha Ji passed away in Ramdas at the age 125. Guru Hargobind personally conducted the last rights. Subsequently, his son Bhai Bhana Ji was made the head Granthi of Sri Harmandir Sahib.

1737 Bhai Mani Singh, a great scholar among the Sikhs, was martyred. He started a school of exposition of holy Guru Granth Sahib. He was second famous head priest of Sri Harmandir Sahib, after Baba Buddha Ji.

1885 Baba Ram Singh Namdhari passed away after 13 years of solitary confinement while in exile at Rangun, Burma.

1955 Sardar Pratap Singh's accepted shahadat in Loon (Salt) Mandi, in connection with Punjabi Suba morcha.

1961 Master Tara Singh, along with Sant Fateh Singh and 8 members of Akali Dal Working Committee were tried for breaking the solemn vow taken before the Akal Takhat. Both Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh separately had taken vow before the Akal Takhat for fasting unto death for achieving Punjabi Speaking State but had broken the fast without achieving the objective on sheer assurances.

30th November

1710 Mahabat Khan captured Lohgarh fort after Sikh forces withdrew from Sadhaura. Amir Khan occupied Sirhind.

1st December



1764 Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked Sri Harimandir Sahib. Jathedar Gurbakash Singh and 30 GurSikhs sacrificed their lives defending the sanctity of Sri Harimandir Sahib.

1924 Babbar Amar Singh of Pindori Nijjaran,

Jalandhar, died during the trail of Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was involved in the second abortive attempt to murder Labh Singh of Dhadda Fateh Singh.

2nd December



1848 Sikhs fought the British at Sadulpur, Gujranwala. The Sikh Army under Sher Singh fought against the Right Column of the Army of the Punjab under Command of Major General Joseph Thackwell.

1990 International Conference on Sikh Studies was held at University of British Columbia, Vancouver. The Canadian Sikh Study and Teaching Society was instrumental in organizing and hosting the conference. Some of the topics covered included: "Fundamentalism; Enlightenment of Mind; Sikhism as a Tortume Quid; Sikh Culture; From Ritual to Counter Ritual in a Critical Analysis; Role of Reason in Sikhism; Guru Granth Sahib and Modern Science; Creation of the Khalsa – a non-Sikh Indian Perspective; Need for World Institute of Sikhism, and Sikh Identity a Continuing Feature. More than 700 people attended this Sikh Academic Conference, a befitting tribute to the Vancouver Sikh community.

3rd December



1849 Maharaja Dalip Singh meets Lord Dalhousie.

4th December

1705 Seige of Anandpur ended. The seige of Anadpur initiated on May 3, 1705 ended. In response to beseiger's continuous pleas to vacate the fort of Anandpur in return for safe passage, Guru Sahib sent rubbish covered brocades, loaded over bullocks. In violation of the solemn oaths on the Quran, the goods were looted. Ashamed at their sordid behavior, the Mughal commanders now sent a message in the Emperor's name, expressing regret at the behavior of

the imperial troops and reiterated the agreement on safe conduct if Guru agreed to quit Anadpur.

1926 SGPC initiated activities to seek control of 750 Sikh Shrines.

5th December



1705 Guru Gobind Singh Ji bid farewell to Anandpur. Accompanied by members of his family and 1500 other singhs/singhnees, Guru Sahib was leaving Anandpur with the promises of the Hindu Hill Rajas and the Muslim Mughal forces that they shall not attack this entourage. However, these promises soon evaoprated and the Sikhs were not only attacked but pursued.



1710 Sikh forces, under the leadership of Baba Gurbakash Singh (Banda Bahadur), fought Mughal forces in Sadora.

1872 Bhai Vir Singh, a great Sikh scholar, was born. Bhai VIR SINGH (1872-1957) born on Dec. 5, 1872, was a great poet, scholar, and a spiritual leader. He edited and published for the first Prachin Panth Prakash, the work of Rattan Singh Bhangu. As K.N. Subramanyam commented "He was essentially a product of the best aspects of Sikhism." He was conferred the degree of Doctor of Oriental Learning Honoris Causa, in 1949, in absentia by the Punjab University. He was awarded the Padame Bhusham in 1956. He died on June 10, 1957.

1966 Fateh Singh announced that he would immolate himself on Dec. 27, 1966, if Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab. However, neither Chandigarh was transferred nor Fateh Singh kept his promise.

Blackheads are small bumps that appear due to pores becoming clogged with oil and dead skin but cinnamon and honey can help in combating this because of anti-bacterial qualities, says an expert.

- **Baking soda:** Baking soda isn't just for baking or keeping your refrigerator smelling fresh. The antiseptic quality of it makes it a wonderful product for your skin. It works as an exfoliant to scrub away dead skin cells leaving skin soft and smooth. Baking soda also helps to neutralize the skin's pH, it encourages the skin to produce less oil which means that after regular use, you may be able to say goodbye to those blackheads for good.
- **Cinnamon:** Cinnamon is an anti-bacterial spice that can be used to make an aromatic face mask that offers all sorts of benefits to the skin, including the removal of blackheads. It also helps to eliminate flaky skin as well as acne, and it can be used as a body scrub for a smoother, more glowing complexion.
- **Honey:** Honey is both antibacterial and antiseptic, properties that help remove blackheads by destroying germs or impurities that clog pores, making it another great choice for those with acne related blackheads. Honey also acts as a natural antibiotic, helping to pull dirt from the pores of the skin to clear



blackheads as well as tightening and hydrating the pores for a clearer complexion.

- **Epsom salts:** Epsom salts are not only great for easing sore muscles, they can also help to remove blackheads. While most of the treatments on this list dissolve the

dead skin and oil, the Epsom salt mixture actually pulls the plug out of each clogged pore so they simply wash away.

- **Egg whites:** Egg whites offer numerous benefits to the skin. They're rich in protein which offers skin toning properties and helps to

promote wrinkle free skin. Due to their ability to tighten skin and minimize pores, using egg whites is especially good for oily skin and reduces the chances of future blackheads while removing current blackheads at the same time. This method draws out sebum and pulls out any deep within the pores.

- **Green tea:** Instead of spending endless hours attempting to pop, rub or concentrate clogged pores from your face, have a go at utilising an all common cure, green tea, which is high on antioxidants. It not only diminishes oil and irritation on the skin, but serves to secure it from future harm. So next time you discover small dark obstructed pores covering your face, just brew up green tea to help ostracize the zits for good. If you want to apply this solution you will need some items like one saucepan, drinking glass, soft towel, gentle face wash, cotton ball and two bags of green tea.

Stop hair loss: Sleep well, reduce stress, eat right to make a difference

Work pressures, financial worries, and personal responsibilities can lead to chronic stress, which disrupts your body's hormonal balance. This triggers a condition known as telogen effluvium, where hair follicles prematurely enter the resting phase, causing noticeable thinning.

Hair follicles require nutrients like protein, biotin, zinc, and iron to stay healthy and grow. A diet high in processed foods and low in essential vitamins and minerals can weaken hair roots, leading to excessive shedding.

Strategies to manage hairfall:

- **Healthy food, healthy hair:** Your hair thrives on nutrients. Add foods like eggs, nuts, fatty fish, and leafy greens to your diet for protein, omega-3s, and essential vitamins like biotin and vitamin D. Avoid sugar and junk food, which can disrupt hormonal balances and increase hair loss.
- **Keep stress at bay:** Chronic stress can push hair follicles into dormancy, leading to thinning. Follow practices like meditation, deep breathing exercises, and yoga to reduce stress. Regular physical activity like walking or gym workouts can also release endorphins, improving well-being and hair health.
- **Mind your scalp health:** Healthy hair starts with a healthy scalp. Wash your scalp regularly with mild, sulfate-free shampoos to remove buildup and dandruff, which can block hair follicles. Massage your scalp with nourishing oils such as coconut or argan oil to stimulate blood circulation and strengthen roots.
- **Sleep smart:** Your body, including your hair, undergoes repair during deep sleep. Aim for 7-8 hours of consistent rest every night to support cell regeneration and keep hair follicles healthy.



FOOD CORNER

Chilli Paneer

INGREDIENTS

- 250 gm cubed paneer
- 2 chopped, de seeded Capsicum (Green Pepper)
- 4 cloves chopped garlic
- 1 tablespoon tomato ketchup
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1 cup Veg stock
- 2 chopped into cubes Onion
- 8 chopped Green Chilli
- 2 tablespoon light soya sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cup Refined oil
- 3 tablespoon Corn starch



Method

- Cut paneer into 1 inch cubes and sprinkle 2 tablespoon cornstarch over it. Toss the paneer lightly to coat the corn starch. Take care not to break the paneer.
- Heat sufficient oil in a kadai, when oil is medium hot, add the paneer pieces and deep fry on medium heat until the edges start to turn brown. Take care to fry in batches. Drain on absorbent paper and set aside.
- Cut the onion into 8 pieces and remove the smaller inner pieces from it. Then cut each capsicum into 8 pieces and deseed them. And cut the green chillies into slices. Set them all aside.
- Blend remaining corn starch (nearly a tablespoon) along with tomato ketchup and white vinegar in the vegetable stock. Let it rest and keep aside.
- Heat two tablespoons of oil in a sauce pan, add crushed garlic to fairly hot oil and saute for about 10 seconds or till light golden in colour. Stir-fry for a minute.
- Add sliced green chillies, onions and green capsicum to the wok and fry on high flame for 30 seconds. Add the remaining capsicum and toss well for another minute. The vegetables should be cooked but crisp. Saute for a couple of minutes.
- Add the corn slurry over high heat, stirring till the sauce is thick enough to coat the paneer and the vegetables. Serve it hot immediately.

Combating heart attack: The 5 'S' battle plan to keep the heart healthy

Diseases of the heart have become the leading cause of death worldwide. Roughly around 17.9 million people lose their lives globally from cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), including coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, rheumatic heart disease and other conditions.

Of late, there has been a rising trend of heart attacks among young people in India and most experts have blamed lifestyle choices as being the culprits.

Dr Ravi Prakash, Consultant Cardiologist at PSRI Hospital, New Delhi, shed light on a worrying trend and talked about how young individuals are prone to disorders that eventually increase the risk of heart disease.

While genetics play a role in some cases, Dr Prakash pointed out that lifestyle changes are major contributors to the increasing incidence of heart attacks in younger populations. To combat this silent epidemic, he emphasised the importance of avoiding the 5 'S'—salt, sugar, sitting, sleep, and stress.

SALT

Salt is essential for bodily functions, but moderation is key. The World Health Organization (WHO) has sounded the alarm on sodium intake, stating that excessive consumption is a leading cause of death and disease worldwide. High salt intake is linked to elevated blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. It's crucial to monitor and reduce sodium in our diets to safeguard our cardiovascular health.

SUGAR

The dangers of added sugar go beyond just tooth decay. Excessive sugar consumption is a significant risk factor for heart disease, as it can lead to obesity and diabetes, both of which have profound cardiovascular effects. It's vital to be mindful of our sugar intake and opt for healthier alternatives to keep our hearts beating strong.

SITTING

Our sedentary lifestyles are taking a toll on our hearts. Studies indicate that prolonged sitting can



disrupt metabolic health, leading to increased risks of heart disease. Incorporating regular physical activity into our daily routine is not just a choice; it's a necessity for maintaining a healthy heart.

SLEEP

A good night's sleep is more than just a luxury, it's a cornerstone of heart health. Disrupted or insufficient sleep has been associated with a higher risk of heart disease. Ensuring quality sleep is critical to keeping our hearts in optimal condition.

STRESS

Stress is an inevitable part of life, but unmanaged stress can wreak havoc on our cardiovascular system. While stress is a normal part of life, if left unmanaged, it can harm you. The hormone cortisol is released when a person experiences stress.

Studies suggest that high levels of cortisol from long-term stress can increase blood cholesterol, triglycerides, blood sugar, and blood pressure, which are common risk factors for heart disease.

Stress also increases the build-up of plaque deposits in the arteries, which raises the incidence of stroke.

Whether through meditation, exercise, or seeking professional help, managing stress is a non-negotiable aspect of heart health.



Longest remote surgery: Patient in Morocco gets operated by doctor sitting in China

A French surgeon used a Chinese-made robot to perform prostate cancer surgery on a patient in Morocco, 12,000 kilometres away.

This intercontinental procedure has set a record as the longest remote surgery ever performed, with a round-trip transmission distance exceeding 30,000 kilometres, according to Xinhua News Agency.

The surgery, conducted on November 16, utilised the Toumai Robot, a cutting-edge surgical system capable of real-time, high-definition imaging and precise control.

Dr. Youness Ahallal successfully removed the prostate tumor and sutured the area in under two hours.

Even with the huge distance, the delay in communication was just over 100 milliseconds, allowing smooth coordination between the robotic arm in Morocco and the surgeon in Shanghai.

The Toumai Robot is renowned for its precision, flexibility, and stability, qualities crucial for intricate operations. After the successful surgery, Dr. Ahallal in statement said that the clear and smooth real-time video feed, achieved using a standard broadband connection instead of the more advanced 5G technology showed the the system's efficiency.

Previously in October, the Toumai Robot assisted in a minimally invasive kidney surgery between Shanghai and Benin, West Africa, a round-trip transmission of 27,000 kilometres.

China has emerged as a leader in surgical robotics, with the sector projected to grow to \$38.4 billion by 2026, fueled by rapid 5G network expansion.

At the end of August, the country had over 4 million 5G base stations, making high-speed, low-latency medical applications like remote surgery increasingly feasible.

The Toumai Robot, which received EU CE certification in May, is now approved for multiple procedures, including urology, thoracic surgery, and gynecological endoscopy.

Dry fruits to help reduce uric acid levels

Walnuts

Walnuts are known for their high content of omega-3 fatty acids, which have anti-inflammatory properties that can help reduce swelling and discomfort associated with high uric acid levels. Inflammation in joints, especially, is a common symptom of gout, a condition linked to elevated uric acid. Walnuts are also low in purines, making them an excellent snack option for those looking to manage uric acid levels without triggering further accumulation in the body.

Cashews

Cashews contain monounsaturated fats, which promote heart health and may help regulate the body's overall fat



metabolism. A well-regulated metabolism can assist in keeping uric acid levels under control. Cashews are also a good source of magnesium, which plays a role in improving overall kidney function, helping the body to efficiently

eliminate excess uric acid. However, since cashews are slightly higher in purines compared to other dry fruits, it is essential to consume them in moderation for optimal benefits.

Pistachios

Pistachios are packed with antioxidants like polyphenols and flavonoids, which help reduce oxidative stress in the body. High levels of oxidative stress can contribute to inflammation and increased uric acid levels. The antioxidants in pistachios work to neutralize free radicals, helping reduce the inflammation linked to high uric acid levels. pistachios are low in purines, making them a safe and healthy choice for those managing uric acid.

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Hot water on Mars: 4.45 billion-yr-old zircon grain points to early habitability

Australian researchers have discovered the oldest direct evidence of hot water activity on Mars, revealing that the planet may have once been habitable.

In a study, a team led by researchers from Curtin University in Western Australia analysed a 4.45 billion-year-old zircon grain from the famous Martian meteorite NWA7034, also known as Black Beauty, that was found in the Sahara Desert in 2011.

The researchers found that the grain of zircon, a type of mineral, contained geochemical fingerprints of water-rich fluids, suggesting that water was present during early Martian magmatic activity.

Aaron Cavosie, a co-author of the study from Curtin's School of Earth and Planetary Sciences, said that the discovery would open up new avenues for understanding ancient Martian hydrothermal systems, as well as the planet's past capacity to support life.

"We used nano-scale geochemistry to detect elemental evidence of hot water on Mars 4.45 billion years ago," he said, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Hydrothermal systems were essential for the development of life on Earth and our findings suggest Mars also had water, a key ingredient for habitable environments, during the earliest history of crust formation."

He said that even though Mars' crust endured major meteorite impacts that caused surface upheaval, the research shows that water was present on the planet during the early Pre-Noachian period prior to about 4.1 billion years ago.

Source: IANS

Google Maps will soon delete your location history, but it's not too late to save it

Last year, Google announced that it would be making changes to how your location history is saved in Maps. In a blog post, the tech giant said that users will have the option to save their Timeline on the phone itself or back up an encrypted copy on the cloud.

While the change hasn't rolled out to everyone, Google is now sending emails to users warning that they will have to take action before their location history is deleted. One thing to note here is that the email concerning the deletion of Google Maps location history is still being sent, so your deadline may differ from others.

The ability to save your location history offline is undoubtedly good for users who don't want to share their location data with Google, the downside is that the company will be deleting the last 3 months of Timeline data. If you don't take any action, Google says it will first try to delete your last three month's Timeline data and store new location history locally on the device.

How to back up your Google Maps Timeline location history?

As can be seen in the image above, the email sent by Google contains a link that lets you choose if you want to keep your Timeline data unless you manually delete it or automatically delete it after three months.

However, a recent report by Android Authority suggests that some people who chose the 'Keep until you delete' option have reported that their Timeline data has been deleted, so we recommend that you first export your location history using Google Takeout before choosing the option.

To do so, simply head over to takeout.google.com, untick everything except for Location History (Timeline),



click on the button named 'Next step' and proceed to tap on 'Create export.'

As it turns out, Google also seems to be working on a new feature that lets you export your Timeline data from individual devices. To find it, open the Settings app on your phone and head over to Location > Location services > Timeline. Here, you will have the option to export your location history. But this option only seems to be backing up the device-specific location history, meaning you might have to do this for each of your devices.

Another thing to note is that once the change rolls out, users won't be able to access their Timeline on the web. Also, your Timeline will be unique to each device.

Google Maps now does a better job of highlighting stairs

A nice quality-of-life improvement for Google Maps on Android and iOS are new stair "callouts" when getting

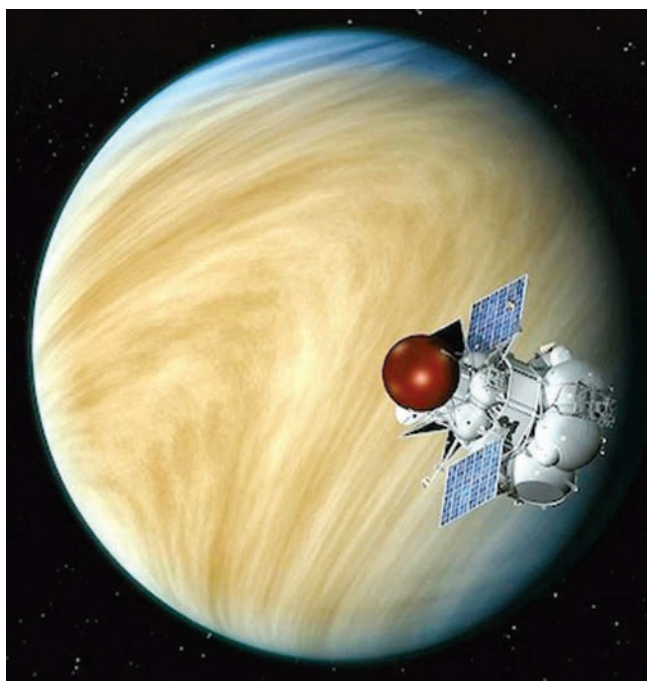
walking directions.

In walking directions, Google will now show stair "callouts" in the form of a blue icon/pin that's directly integrated with the dots. The previous stairs indicator appeared on the map layer and was not part of the directions overlay.

This will help users avoid a particular route or at least give them a heads-up on what to expect.

The new callout builds upon how Google Maps last year introduced the ability to get wheelchair-accessible walking routes by tapping the settings icon in directions for "Trip options" > "Wheelchair accessible." This lets you "Avoid stairs and prefer elevators," with Google noting how this is also useful for "people traveling with things like luggage or strollers." Google Maps also notes the presence of stairs in bicycling directions.

Google Maps rolled out these new stair callouts earlier this month.



Isro to launch Shukrayaan to Venus: Why Earth's twin is an engineers' nightmare

The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) is gearing up for one of its most challenging missions yet - Shukrayaan-1, a planned orbiter to Venus. This ambitious project aims to unravel the mysteries of Earth's enigmatic neighbour, but the harsh Venusian environment poses extreme challenges that make it a potential suicide mission for spacecraft.

Venus, often called Earth's "evil twin," is a world of extremes. Venus's surface temperature soars to a scorching 475°C, hot enough to melt lead. The planet's atmosphere is a toxic cocktail of carbon dioxide and sulphuric acid, with crushing pressures 92 times that of Earth at the surface.

These conditions make Venus an engineering nightmare. Spacecraft designed for Venus must withstand temperatures that can destroy standard

electronics and materials. The intense atmospheric pressure can flatten landing craft, requiring reinforced designs akin to deep-sea submersibles.

The corrosive nature of Venus's atmosphere presents another significant hurdle.

Sulphuric acid clouds eat away at standard materials, necessitating special protective coatings for any equipment sent to the planet. This corrosive environment severely limits the lifespan of missions, with past landers surviving for mere hours on the surface.

Shukrayaan will focus on orbital observations, avoiding the extreme surface conditions.

The mission plans to investigate Venus's surface processes, subsurface stratigraphy, and atmospheric composition.

Boeing strike, production slowdown delaying aircraft deliveries to Air India group

The slowdown in production at Boeing and the recent strike at the plane makers' manufacturing facilities in the US are causing delays in aircraft deliveries to the Air India group, with some deliveries of already-manufactured jets that were earlier scheduled by December now stretching up to June of 2025. As for line-fit aircraft — planes to be built specifically for Air India — the airline is not yet sure about the likely delays and its impact.

"There were 50 (Boeing 737 MAX) white-tails and all of them were supposed to have come by December. As it stands now, they will stretch out until June of next year. That in itself has a little bit of an impact. As for the line-fit (aircraft), there are two contributing factors here. One is the slowdown in production that they (Boeing) had, and then there was the strike. So, it is not clear to us, and I think even to Boeing yet, quite how long the impact is going to be," Air India Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Campbell Wilson said. As part of its mega order for 470 aircraft placed last year with Airbus and Boeing, the Air India group had ordered 220 Boeing planes — 190 narrow-body 737 MAX planes, 20 wide-body 787 planes, and 10 wide-body 777X aircraft. Of the 190 737 MAX planes, 50 were white-tails — aircraft made for other airlines but transferred to the Air India group due to cancellation of the original order — and the other 140 were to be line-fit planes. So far, 35 of the 50 white-tails have been delivered to Air India Express, with the remaining planes delayed.

MUMBAI (TIP)

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty surrendered early gains to plunge nearly 1.50 per cent on Thursday, November 28, weighed down by intense selling in market heavyweights Infosys, RIL and HDFC Bank amid a mixed trend in global equities.

Besides, deep losses in IT, auto and consumer durable stocks amid escalating geopolitical tensions also added to the weak investors' sentiment, analysts said.

The BSE benchmark Sensex slumped 1,190.34 points or 1.48 per cent to settle at 79,043.74. During the day, it tanked 1,315.16 points or 1.63 per cent to 78,918.92.

Investors' wealth fell by Rs 1,50,265.63 crore to Rs 4,42,98,083.42 crore (USD 5.24 trillion).

The NSE Nifty tumbled 360.75 points or 1.49 per cent to 23,914.15.

Shares of five of the 11 listed Adani Group firms ended higher on Thursday, with Adani Total Gas soaring nearly 16 per cent.

Global markets mixed as Trump's tariffs unsettle trade partners

ISTANBUL (TIP)

Global markets displayed mixed performance on Wednesday as President-elect Donald Trump's protectionist policies, particularly tariff threats, raised concerns among major US trade partners. Meanwhile, the Biden administration's potential new regulations on Chinese semiconductors dampened investor sentiment.

Market participants are wary that Trump's tariffs could complicate the Federal Reserve's efforts to combat inflation, particularly as US-China tensions remain unresolved.

US economic data showed a 2.8% growth in the third quarter, driven by consumer spending, while October consumption increased by 0.4% month-on-month. Analysts believe these figures could prompt the Fed to maintain a cautious approach, possibly extending its rate-cut cycle beyond December.

S&P Global Ratings forecasted the global economy to grow by 3.3% in 2024 and 3% in 2025, with the US economy projected to expand by 2.7% in 2024 and 2% in 2025.

Meanwhile, gold prices hovered between \$2,630 and \$2,640 per ounce, while Brent crude oil stood at \$72 per barrel. The yield on US 10-year Treasury bonds fell 6 basis points to 4.26%. Bitcoin also rebounded, trading at \$95,300 after dipping to \$91,100 earlier this week.

On Wall Street, the S&P 500 fell 0.38%, the Nasdaq 0.6%, and the Dow Jones 0.31% on Wednesday.

European markets under pressure

European stock markets faced selling pressure as Trump's tariff threats weighed on investor confidence. European Central Bank (ECB) President Christine Lagarde urged EU leaders to negotiate with Washington, warning that a trade war could severely harm global economic growth.

Trump has proposed a 20% general tariff on all non-Chinese imports, prompting Lagarde to call for diplomacy over retaliation.

Adding to regional uncertainties, France's government is on the brink of collapse after failing to agree on its 2025 budget.

Russia also faced economic challenges, with the ruble losing 12% of its value in the last 10 days due to US sanctions on Gazprombank. The Russian central bank announced it would halt foreign currency purchases for the rest of the year to



stabilize the ruble, while Gazprom's shares plummeted to \$1.

On Wednesday, the DAX 40 fell 0.3%, the CAC 40 lost 1.1%, the FTSE MIB 30 dropped 0.7%, and the FTSE 100 ended flat. Futures trading on Thursday started with mixed signals across European indices.

Asia shows resilience

Asian markets showed a positive trend on Wednesday, apart from Hong Kong. South Korea's central bank surprised markets by cutting its policy rate by 25 basis points to 3%, citing uncertainty after Trump's election victory.

Japan's government is set to approve an additional \$92 billion for its stimulus package, while Trump's lower-than-expected tariffs on China boosted semiconductor stocks. Tokyo Electron shares surged nearly 10%, while Kokusai Electric Corporation gained 23%.

S&P Global projected China's economy to grow 4.8% in 2024 and 4.1% in 2025.

Near the close on Wednesday, Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.9%, South Korea's Kospi gained 0.2%, and the Shanghai Composite Index inched up 0.1%. However, Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index dropped 1.2%.

Türkiye remains steady

Türkiye's BIST 100 index remained mostly flat on Wednesday, edging up 0.04% to close at 9,639.77. The US dollar/Turkish lira exchange rate ended Wednesday at 34.6390 and traded slightly higher at 34.6480 on Thursday.

Source: AA.com

Sensex tumbles nearly 1,200 points to slip below 80,000 as heavyweights drag



Stocks of Adani Energy Solutions zoomed 10 per cent, Adani Green Energy soared 10 per cent, and Adani Enterprises climbed 1.63 per cent. Meanwhile, Adani Ports declined 2.73 per cent.

"Domestic markets took a breather after a strong start to the week. The overnight sell-off in the US market, driven by renewed uncertainty about the rate cut trajectory and rising geopolitical tension, led to a correction in heavyweight IT and consumer discretionary stocks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finance, Tech Mahindra, Titan, Tata Consultancy Services, Reliance Industries and Power Grid were among the laggards.

On the other hand, State Bank of India was the only gainer.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.41 per cent while the midcap index dipped

0.06 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, the BSE Focused IT tumbled 2.35 per cent, IT lost 2.26 per cent, teck (2.12 per cent), auto (1.39 per cent), consumer durables (1.20 per cent), bankex (0.81 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.70 per cent).

In contrast, BSE utilities, oil & gas and realty were the gainers.

"Nifty closed sharply lower at 23,914, down 1.49 per cent, weighed by monthly F&O expiry and weak global cues. Escalation in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and uncertainties over the US interest rate trajectory post mixed economic data releases dented sentiment," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Source: PTI



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



ARIES : Ganesha says this week, Aries natives will be filled with new energy. After the challenges you have faced recently, you are now likely to reap the fruits of your hard work. Your ideas will be appreciated at the workplace, which may lead to new responsibilities. Personal relationships will also improve. Spending time with family and friends will make you happy. Your feelings will be respected, and communication will strengthen the relationship. If you are in a relationship, making plans with your partner will be wonderful for you. This week, it is important to focus on health. Include regular exercise and a balanced diet in your routine. Also, do meditation or yoga to maintain mental balance. This is the time to spend some time for yourself and your soul. If you feel the need, you can also plan a short trip, which will give you mental freshness. In short, this week will bring positive energy and opportunities for you. Focus on your goals and maintain a positive attitude.



TAURUS : Ganesha says this week will give mixed results for Taurus natives. There may be an increase in your work and the beginning of new responsibilities. This is the time for you to make some important decisions towards your livelihood. Your financial condition will remain stable, but you may have to face some unexpected expenses. There may be both joy and tension in relationships. Talking openly with your loved ones and listening to them will help you establish a better relationship. In terms of health, focus on keeping yourself active and positive. Yoga or light exercise will improve your mental and physical health. This weekend will feel like a new beginning. You may get an opportunity to work on a special project or plan, which will give you satisfaction and achievement. You will get the fruits of your hard work.



GEMINI : Ganesha says this week is a time of many possibilities and new experiences for Gemini. There will be a stir in your social life, you will get an opportunity to meet friends. Talking to people around you will bring new energy and enthusiasm to you. Your communication abilities will be strong at this time, so express the things you want to say with clarity and confidence. There will be a sense of novelty and freedom in your thoughts, which may inspire you to start new projects or hobbies. This week will bring many opportunities to satisfy

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - DEC 2 TO DEC 8, 2024

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

your curiosity. This is the right time to gain knowledge on new subjects. However, keep in mind that your quick thinking may sometimes complicate things. So, think and make decisions with a cool head as much as possible. If you are with a partner, this week will bring an opportunity to add depth to the relationship. Communicate and share your feelings.



CANCER : Ganesha says this week's prediction for Cancer focuses on your emotions. At this time, you will feel the desire to spend more time with your family and close ones. This is a good time for you to spend high-quality time with your loved ones. In work life, your hard work will start bearing fruits now. The efforts you have made will be appreciated, and you may also get some new responsibilities. Incorporate creativity in your work, as your latest ideas will get recognition. In terms of health, it is important to take care of your mental and physical well-being. With the help of yoga or meditation, you will feel refreshed. Understand the importance of conversation and express your feelings clearly to maintain harmony in the family. This week, maintain a positive attitude to make your dreams come true. Remember that you will reap what you sow, so pay attention to your thoughts and words.



LEO : Ganesha says this week brings the message of new possibilities and opportunities for Leo natives. Your confidence will increase and you will be able to understand your abilities better. This week, you will be looking forward to expanding your social circle and making new friends. Your hard work and dedication are likely to bear fruit in the work field. New information or opportunities related to an old project may come to you, which will help you strengthen your position. Be careful and avoid taking any decision in excitement. Try to maintain mutual understanding and harmony in married life. Have a heart-to-heart talk with your partner and try to understand their feelings. This is the time to spend with each other and enjoy good times. Health-wise, take care of yourself. Try doing yoga or meditation to get some physical activity and mental peace.



VIRGO : Ganesha says many positive opportunities will come your way this week. Your hard work and dedication will be rewarded in your workplace, which may give you a chance for promotion or new responsibilities. You will find clarity in your thinking, which will help you make the right decisions. Social life will also see growth. Meeting old friends or making new

contacts will be beneficial for you. Spending time with family and listening to their problems will further strengthen your relationship. In terms of health, it is advisable to focus on regular exercise and a balanced diet. Give priority to mental health; meditation and yoga will give you peace. The most important thing for you this week will be to enjoy small joys and look at life around you with a positive attitude. Hope this week will witness improvement and progress for you.



LIBRA : Ganesha says this week is the time for a new beginning for you, Libra. The search for balance in life has become more important now than ever. Try to create the right balance between your work and personal life. Some new possibilities may arise in your social life, where meeting old friends or interacting with new people will be very beneficial. This week there will be clarity in your thoughts, so if you are considering any important decision, this is the right time. Trust your inner voice and move forward according to your insights. You will get inspiration this week, so try your hand at creative work. However, you should also take care of your health. Avoid excessive stress and take time to participate in physical activities. Meditation and yoga can help improve your mental health. Your financial matters are also likely to improve, but spend it wisely. Consider every aspect before investing anywhere. Overall, this week will bring you an opportunity for self-realization and harmony.



SCORPIO : Ganesha says many new possibilities are going to open up for you this week. The time has come to showcase your hidden skills and talents. Your hard work and dedication will be recognized at the workplace, which will boost morale. Relationships will deepen, so try to establish communication with people close to you. Your intuition will be very strong this week, using which you will be able to make the right decisions. An old financial issue is likely to be resolved, which will give you relief. You will feel better in terms of health but try to stay away from any kind of stress. Regular exercise and meditation will help maintain your mental balance. This week is the time for self-reflection and planning. Focus on your desires and goals, as it will help you in your future direction. Be optimistic and face every challenge with enthusiasm and strength.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says this week has brought many opportunities and challenges for Sagittarius natives. Your confidence will increase, which will keep you motivated to achieve your goals. In

the field of work, some new projects may come before you, which will require your creativity. Activity will also increase in social life. Conversations with friends and family will lighten your mind. During this time, there will also be possibilities for new friendships. However, keep in mind to stay away from any kind of dispute, as it can hurt your mental health. From a financial point of view, it is time to be a little cautious while investing. Avoid making hasty decisions and think carefully about financial matters. In terms of health, adding yoga or exercise to your daily schedule will give you energy. Practice meditation to maintain mental balance. The overall message of this week is: move forward with enthusiasm and restraint and use your opportunities properly.



CAPRICORN : Ganesha says this week is a positive and progressive time for Capricorn people. Your hard work and dedication are expected to yield results now. Your commitment and diligence at the workplace will attract your superiors towards you. Your ideas and plans will be recognized, which will increase your confidence. Progress will also be seen in personal relationships. Harmony with family members will remain complete, and you will try to spend more time with each other. You can plan a special event, which will create an atmosphere of happiness and gaiety. There is a need to be cautious in terms of health. You can do meditation or yoga to relieve mental stress. Make sure to take time for yourself, so that you can feel fresh. This week marks the beginning of new possibilities for you. Focus and move forward toward your goals.



AQUARIUS : Ganesha says this week, the door to new possibilities will open for Aquarius people. It is time for you to make a new identity in your social and professional life. You have to have the courage to share your ideas, and your unique perspective will be appreciated. Keep in mind that communication plays an important role in your relationships. Talk openly with your partner and share your feelings honestly. This is the time when you can make your long-term relationship stronger. Take special care of your health this week. Take some time out for exercise and meditation; this will not only help improve your physical condition but also bring mental peace. Be cautious in financial matters and try to avoid unnecessary expenses. If you are thinking of investing, it would be better to consult experts. Overall, this week will be full of challenges as well as opportunities for you. Move forward with positive thinking and courage.

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BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : DECEMBER 2 TO DECEMBER 8 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

DECEMBER 2 : Ganesha says major job adjustments are possible thanks to your planetary position. The future holds plenty of promising new prospects for you, along with prizes and recognition. By participating in social activities, you will meet influential people who will do you favors and give you advantages. A boost will be given to those who desire to travel abroad for business or pleasure. You will be bursting with energy, making it simple for you to carry out your plans. Nonetheless, health will require attention.

DECEMBER 3 : Ganesha says you are a natural-born learner with a keen intellect and a thirst for knowledge. Your analytical mind and problem-solving skills make you an excellent candidate for careers in science, research, or technology. You have a curious and adventurous spirit that will take you far in life. This year, the stars align in your favor, and you can expect new opportunities to arise. Your love for learning will lead to exciting discoveries, and you will find yourself embarking on new adventures and taking on new challenges.

DECEMBER 4 : Ganesha says you have

a deep sense of compassion and empathy that makes them excellent caretakers, healers, or social workers. You have a gift for understanding others' emotions and can offer comfort and support when needed. This year, your desire to make a positive impact in the world will be especially strong. You may find yourself drawn to humanitarian causes or volunteering your time and resources to help those in need. Remember to take care of yourself, too, and prioritize self-care and rest.

DECEMBER 5 : Ganesha says you are a fiercely independent individual with a strong desire to carve out your path in life. You have a natural entrepreneurial spirit and can excel in business or creative pursuits. This year, you will have the courage and determination to pursue your dreams and take risks that lead to greater fulfillment. You may find yourself breaking free from the status quo and exploring new horizons. Your willingness to take chances and embrace change will pay off in the long run.

DECEMBER 6 : Ganesha says you have a natural charm and charisma that draws

others to them. You have a gift for communication and can excel in public speaking or sales. Your magnetic personality makes you a natural leader, and people look up to you for guidance and inspiration. This year, your confidence and charm will open doors to new opportunities and connections. You may find yourself embarking on a new romantic relationship or forming a new professional partnership. Remember to stay true to yourself and trust your intuition.

DECEMBER 7 : Ganesha says you have a strong sense of self and a unique perspective on the world. You are a natural-born leader and can excel in any field that allows you to express your creativity and originality. This year, you will find that your innovative ideas and fresh perspective are valued by others and lead to success. Your passion and drive will help you overcome any obstacles that come your way. Remember to stay focused on your goals and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

DECEMBER 8 : Ganesha says you have a gift for diplomacy and bringing people

together. You are a natural pacemaker and can excel in any field that requires teamwork and collaboration. This year, your interpersonal skills will be especially valuable as you navigate new relationships and collaborations. You may find yourself taking on a leadership role in a group project or mediating conflicts between others. Remember to stay patient and compassionate, and trust in your ability to bring people together towards a common goal.

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

CONTD FROM PAGE 30



PISCES : Ganesha says this week will be very positive and progressive for Pisces natives. You will need to strike a balance between your thoughts and emotions. During this week, people around you will inspire you, and you will get a chance to pursue your creativity. This time is suitable for personal and professional growth. On the work front, it is time to start some new projects. If you are part of a team, your colleagues will appreciate your work and encourage you to give better results. Also, it is the right time to present your ideas. This time will be very good in personal relationships as well. There will be better coordination with your partner and your relationship will be strengthened. Spending time with family will give you happiness and satisfaction. In terms of health, take care of yourself and take time to play sports or practice yoga. It is also important to maintain mental balance, so practice meditation. This week, you will feel self-reliant and experience your inner strengths. Let your spark shine and welcome new opportunities!

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

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Life changing spiritual places

India is considered one of the most spiritual places on earth. The birthplace of Yoga, and several major religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, India has been a magnet for spiritual seekers for centuries. Steve Jobs went to India. The Beatles went to India. Mark Twain went to India. India is alive with spiritual traditions representing just about every major religion on earth. There are Indian festivals just about every day, many holy cities, and pilgrimage sites and routes all across the country, far too many to count. From a certain perspective, every place in India is sacred. It's not easy to choose just a few spiritual places in India, so here are some places that are more well-known to foreigners.

Varanasi



One of the oldest cities on earth, Varanasi is the most sacred city in India to Hindus, number one among the seven holy cities of India. Varanasi was formerly called Kashi and associated with a kingdom of the same name of 2,500 years ago, but the city may be more than 5,000 years old. Located along a unique stretch of the Ganga River – one of the only places where the 2,510 kilometre river runs in a northerly direction, rather than its usual south-easterly direction – Varanasi hums with fervour day and night. There are 84 Ghats lining the river on the west side in Varanasi, and here is where the faithful congregate to perform pujas and take dips in the river. It is also where the cremations take place that burn day and night (at Manikarnika Ghat).

Haridwar



Just about a four or five hour drive north of Delhi, Haridwar is one of the seven holy cities of India, collectively known as Sapta Puri. It is the most northern of the holy cities, situated at the place when the foothills of the Himalayas (the Shivaliks) ripple to an end. Here, the sacred Ganga River leaves the mountains and enters the plains, beginning a very long journey across the length of India. In Haridwar, the Ganga runs through a well-managed canal, overseen by a 30-metre tall statue of Lord Shiva. This is the official start of Dev Bhoomi, land of the gods, and the abode of Shiva. Har ki Pauri (which means the footsteps of Shiva in Hindi) is the sacred centre of Haridwar. According to mythology, Har ki Pauri is one of four places in India where drops of immortal nectar – known as amrit – were spilled by the celestial bird Garuda. The massive Kumbh Mela festival – the largest spiritual gathering on

earth – takes place in Haridwar, centred around Har ki Pauri, every 12 years. Hindus believe that taking a dip in the Ganga at Har ki Pauri is believed to wash away one's sins. I wrote about my experience attending the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar in 2010.

Amritsar



Amritsar is a big, busy city in the north Indian state of Punjab. It is known for its rich cuisine, its strategic role in Indian history, and for being the home of the Golden Temple. The real name of the Golden Temple is Harmandir Sahib, and this massive gurudwara is the centre of the Sikh religion. The Golden Temple is in the heart of Amritsar, surrounded by a vast complex that includes huge kitchens, and beyond that, the main market area of the city. The kitchens are in full operation every day as the gurudwara makes food to feed up to 100,000 people a day, for free, in a practice called langar. Visitors stream into the Golden Temple night and day to pray, dip in the huge tank, volunteer, eat the langar on offer, and absorb the profoundly peaceful vibes. Though the Golden Temple is a busy place, it manages to retain a deeply serene, spiritual atmosphere that affects people. Many visitors to India report the Golden Temple as the most spiritual destination they experienced.

Pushkar

Pushkar is a very special place. A small, serene town in the Rajasthan desert between Jaipur and Jodhpur, it is famous as the site of the only Brahma Temple in India. The entire town is imbued with sanctity as the town is home to hundreds of temples and 52 ghats that encircle a small, sacred lake. Though small in size, Pushkar is associated with many large myths and legends. It is said that Pushkar Lake was created when Brahma killed a demon with a lotus stalk. As the petals fell, they formed a lake. There are many legends about why there is only one Brahma Temple – but essentially they all come down to a curse.

Tiruvannamalai

Tiruvannamalai, a town in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, is well-known as a spiritual pilgrimage destination. It's renowned primarily for three things: a significant (and grand) Shiva temple, Mount Arunachala, and Sri Ramana Maharshi. Mount Arunachala, on the outskirts of Tiruvannamalai, overlooks the town and the Annamalaiyar Temple – which is one of the largest in India. It covers an area of

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

-- Arish K Sahani

25 acres and houses one of the tallest temple towers in India.

Vrindavan / Mathura



According to myth, the playful Hindu god Krishna, beloved in India, was born in Mathura and grew up in nearby Vrindavan (now in the state of Uttar Pradesh). Many images depict the cherubic god cavorting with gopis (female cow herders) in verdant meadows and thick forests, or by the banks of the fast flowing Yamuna River. If you have these bucolic images in your mind when you travel to Vrindavan / Mathura, you will be sorely disappointed.

Bodh Gaya

The Buddha was born Siddhartha Gautama in approximately 563 B.C. He was a prince, born into wealth and privilege, who renounced his position to wander and meditate. After some time, he decided to sit under a bodhi tree to meditate until he attained enlightenment and understood both the causes of suffering and how to be released from it. It was under the bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya – in the present state of Bihar – that Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha, the "Awakened One." The current bodhi tree, found inside the UNESCO World Heritage Mahabodhi Temple complex, is not the original tree, which sadly died. However, it was grown from a cutting related to the original tree.



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"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

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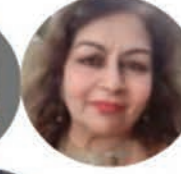
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South Africa joins the 2036 Olympic bidders



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

**CHILE, EGYPT, INDIA, MEXICO, QATAR AND TURKEY
ALSO HAVE EVINCED INTEREST**



on the new venue selection criteria.

This week, when a delegation of the South African Olympic Committee visited the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, it was enthusiastically welcomed. The IOC welcomed South Africa's proposal to begin preliminary discussions on the possibility of hosting the Olympic Games in 2036. The initiative, presented at a meeting at the Olympic House in Lausanne, marks the start of an ambitious project that could see South Africa become the first African country to host the world's biggest sporting event.

The South African delegation was led by Sports Minister Gayton McKenzie, accompanied by South African National

Olympic Committee President Barry Hendricks and CEO Nozipho Jafta. The project is supported by South African IOC member Anant Singh and honorary member Sam Ramsamy. They are both members of the Indian Diaspora.

The IOC President Thomas Bach underlined the importance of this proposal from South Africa. "The IOC welcomes this proposal and the united commitment of SASCOC, the South African government and our representatives in South Africa. This project is not only about hosting an Olympic Games in South Africa but is intended as a project for the whole of Africa," said Bach, underlining the historic impact that the first Olympic Games on the African continent would have. Minister Gayton McKenzie added: "We are at the beginning of an exciting process that could see South Africa host the 2036 Olympic Games. This vision brings us together as a nation and has the potential to show the world the best of Africa."

South Africa is not alone in the race for the 2036 Olympics. Countries that

have already expressed interest include Chile, Egypt, India, Mexico, Qatar and Turkey. Each of these contenders is in preliminary talks with the IOC under the new venue selection model, which seeks to accommodate the needs of host regions and encourage sustainability.

Barry Hendricks, President of SASCOC, emphasized the advantages of this new approach: "The old prescriptions of how a Games should be organized no longer exist. An Olympics in South Africa could showcase all the wonders of our country and inspire a new generation of athletes not only in South Africa but across the continent."

The IOC has introduced a flexible approach to the selection of future Olympic venues, allowing interested countries to work collaboratively to develop projects tailored to their realities. The body is currently in talks with more than a dozen stakeholders from four continents.

The South African bid represents not only a milestone for the country but also a significant step for the Olympic Movement as it seeks to diversify venues and bring the Games to regions that have never hosted them before. It would be a symbol of unity and progress for the entire African continent.

Hockey India League appoints Josh Burt as Technical Delegate and Colin French as Umpire Manager for 2024-2025 edition

NEW DELHI (TIP): Hockey India League, on Thursday, named Josh Burt as Technical Delegate and Colin French as Umpire Manager for the most-anticipated 2024-2025 edition of the tournament which will feature global hockey stars turning up for their respective franchises.

Josh Burt has been officiating at international tournaments since 2011 and has been part of the Technical Delegate for prestigious events such as Men's Junior World Cup in 2013, Youth Olympic Games 2014, Hockey World League Semi-Final in 2015 and 2017, FIH Champions Trophy 2012 and 2018 respectively. He is also a veteran of three Olympic Games having officiated in Rio, Tokyo and Paris 2024.

Speaking about his appointment, Josh said, "It's both an honor and privilege to be appointed the Technical Delegate for the highly anticipated 2024/25 Hockey India League. It fills me with immense pride knowing that Hockey India and the franchises have placed their trust in me to ensure the success of this remarkable event. Their unwavering faith in my leadership abilities is truly humbling and I am committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism, fairness, and integrity throughout the tournament."

"As the leader of the officiating team, my pledge to you all is to ensure that every match is officiated with utmost precision and accuracy. I understand the significance of fair play and the impact it

The celebrated league officials with vast experience will ensure smooth conduct of the most-anticipated Hockey India League.



Joshua Burt and Colin French

has on the overall experience for both the players and fans alike," he added.

Colin French, on the other hand, began his international umpiring career in 2013 with the Oceania Cup. He has since officiated at the Trans-Tasman Trophy, Youth Olympic Games, FIH Hockey Pro League, Commonwealth Games 2018 and 2022. His career spanning over a decade includes officiating at the prestigious Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023.

Speaking about his appointment, Colin said, "I feel very excited and privileged to be appointed as the Umpires Manager for the 2024/2025 Hockey India League. This will be an amazing hockey event hosted in majestic India, involving some of the finest hockey players, coaches, and officials within India and from around the world. The Hockey India League will showcase the very best of our sport with

high class skills, passion, competitiveness, and an entertaining brand of hockey. I look forward to working alongside Hockey India to help deliver this amazing hockey league event. I can't wait!"

Commenting on appointing the officials, Dr Dilip Tirkey, Hockey India League Chairperson, said, "We are delighted to appoint Josh Burt as technical official and Colin French as the umpire manager for the Hockey India League. Both bring immense experience and under their expertise, we look forward to smooth conduct of matches upholding the sportsmanship and spirit of the game. While Josh and Colin will lead the technical delegation for HIL, we will also engage upcoming match officials from India to give them exposure and opportunity during the HIL."

Shri Bhola Nath Singh, Member of Hockey India League Governing Committee said, "Having good match officials and technical officials is absolutely essential in the success of the league and we are happy to appoint Josh and Colin, both of whom are veterans of the game and their experience will be imperative in smooth execution of the league."

The Men's HIL begins on 28th December in Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela while the women's HIL will begin on 12th January in Marang

Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium.

The Men's HIL will have two phases. In Phase 1, starting on 28 December, all eight teams will play against each other once until 18 January. Phase 2 will begin on 19 January, with teams divided into two pools: Pool A (Delhi SG Pipers, Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, Soorma Hockey Club, and Vedanta Kalinga Lancers) and Pool B (Gonasika, Hyderabad Toofans, Tamil Nadu Dragons, and UP Rudras). In Phase 2, teams will play against the other teams in their pool once each.

Each team will also play one match in the alternate venue; the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium in Ranchi. The top four teams with the most points at the end of Phase 2 on 29 January will advance to the Semi Final slated for 31 January.

Meanwhile, the Women's HIL will commence on 12 January at Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium in Ranchi. All four teams will play against each other twice, starting with a match between Delhi SG Pipers and Odisha Warriors. The Women's teams too will play one of their matches in their alternate venue; the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela. The top two teams at the end of the pool stage on 24 January will face off in the Final on 26 January.

(Prabhjot Singh, is a Toronto-based award-winning independent journalist. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

History This Week NOV 29 - DEC 5

NOVEMBER 29



November 29, 1929 - American explorer Richard Byrd and Bernt Balchen completed the first airplane flight to the South Pole.

November 29, 1947 - Palestine was partitioned into Jewish and Arab land by the U.N. General Assembly, resulting in the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel the following year.

November 29, 1989 - Forty-one years of Communist rule came to an end in Czechoslovakia following a twelve day revolution sparked by the beating of protesters. The Czech parliament voted unanimously to repeal constitutional clauses granting the Communist Party sole power. This brought a wave of reform headed by playwright Vaclav Havel, who later became president in the first free elections since World War II.

Birthdays - Hollywood director Busby Berkeley (1895-1976) was born in Los Angeles (as William Berkeley Enos). After serving in World War I as an entertainment officer, he changed his name and began his show business career. Best known for lavish musicals including *Forty-Second Street*, *Gold Diggers of 1933*, *Babes in Arms*, *Strike Up the Band*, and *Girl Crazy*.

Birthdays - British author C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) was born in Belfast, Ireland (as Clive Staples Lewis). He wrote books on Christian teachings including *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *The Problem of Pain*, *Miracles*, and *The Screwtape Letters*.

NOVEMBER 30

November 30, 1939 - Finland was invaded by more than 20 Russian divisions in the Winter War.

November 30, 1995 - Bill Clinton became the first American president to visit Northern Ireland.



Birthdays - 1960's political activist Abbie Hoffman (1936-1989) was born in Worcester, Massachusetts. He leapt to fame as a member of the Chicago Seven, a group of young radicals accused of conspiring to disrupt the 1968

Democratic National Convention.

DECEMBER 1



December 1, 1919 - Lady Nancy Astor became the first woman in the British House of Commons.

December 1, 1925 - The Locarno Treaties were signed by France, Belgium and Germany, as a preventative measure to avoid another war, in the aftermath of World War I. Terms of the Locarno Pact were guaranteed by Britain and Italy.

December 1, 1941 - The American Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a U.S. Air Force auxiliary, was founded as Director of Civilian Defense, former New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, signed the formal order. The CAP currently provides aerospace education, a CAP cadet program, and emergency services such as locating missing aircraft.

December 1, 1942 - The Beveridge Report was published in Britain envisioning the welfare state including insurance for the entire population.

December 1, 1955 - The birth of the modern American civil rights movement occurred as Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back section of a municipal bus. Her arrest resulted in a year-long boycott of the city bus system by African Americans and led to legal actions ending racial segregation on municipal buses throughout the South.

December 1, 1988 - Benazir Bhutto was nominated to become prime minister of Pakistan, the first woman to govern a Muslim nation.

December 1, 1989 - Mikhail Gorbachev became the first Soviet Russian leader to visit the Vatican and meet the Pope, thus ending 72 years of strict atheist policy in Communist Russia.

December 1, 1990 - England was connected to mainland Europe for the first time since the Ice Age as engineers digging a railway tunnel under the English Channel broke through the last rock layer.

December 1, 1994 - The head of the U.N. Commission on Rwanda estimated 500,000 deaths had resulted from genocide.

DECEMBER 2

December 2, 1942 - Physicists led by Enrico Fermi carried out the world's first successful nuclear chain reaction at the University of Chicago.

December 2, 1954 - The U.S. Senate condemned Senator Joseph McCarthy for misconduct following his ruthless

investigations of thousands of alleged Communists.

December 2, 1971 - The United Arab Emirates was formed, consisting of seven Arab kingdoms on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula including the former Trucial states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qaiwain and Fujairah. Ras al-Khaimah became a member in 1972. The area has some of the world's largest reserves of petroleum and natural gas.

December 2, 1979 - Electors in Iran voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new constitution granting absolute power to Ayatollah Khomeini.

December 2, 1982 - The first permanent artificial heart was implanted in 61-year-old Barney C. Clark by Dr. William De Vries at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City. Clark, who was near death at the time of the operation, survived 112 days after the implantation.

Birthdays - French painter Georges Seurat (1859-1891) was born in Paris. He was a leader in the neo-impressionist movement of the late 19th Century.

DECEMBER 3



December 3, 1962 - Edith Sampson was sworn in as the first African American female judge, after she was elected associate judge of the Municipal Court in Chicago.

December 3, 1967 - The first successful heart transplant was performed by Dr. Christiaan Barnard at Cape Town, South Africa, on Louis Washkansky, who lived for 18 days.

December 3, 1984 - A deadly gas leak (of methyl isocyanate) at a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, killed at least 3,000 persons and injured more than 200,000.

December 3, 1993 - Britain's Princess Diana announced she was stepping out of the public spotlight, desiring more privacy amid unyielding attention from the tabloid press and 'paparazzi.'

Birthdays - American portrait painter Charles Stuart (1755-1828) was born near Narragansett, Rhode Island. Best known for his portraits of George Washington, James Madison, James Monroe, and Thomas Jefferson.

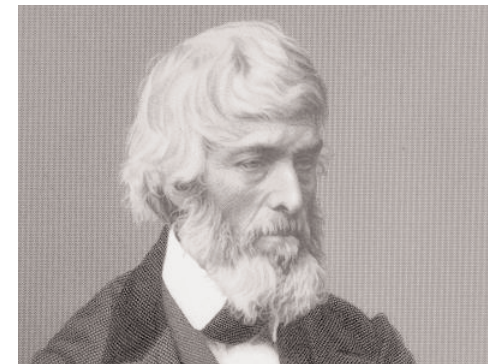
Birthdays - Polish novelist Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) was born in the Ukraine (as Josef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski). Although he could speak no English at age 20, he went on to become an outstanding novelist, best known for his tales of seafaring life including *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*.

DECEMBER 4

December 4, 1918 - The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed.

December 4, 1943 - During World War II, the second Cairo Conference took place, attended by Prime Minister Churchill, President Roosevelt and President Inonu of Turkey.

December 4, 1991 - The last American hostage held in Lebanon was released. Journalist Terry Anderson of the Associated Press had been kidnapped on March 16, 1985 and held for 2,454 days by Islamic Jihad (Holy War) captors. He was one of 15 Americans held hostage for periods ranging from two months to more than six years. Three of the hostages; William Buckley, Peter Kilburn and Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins, were killed during their captivity. The others were released one or two at a time.



Birthdays - Scottish essayist and historian Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was born in the village of Ecclefechan, Scotland. He wrote a three volume history of the French Revolution. Other works included; *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, *Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell* and *Frederick the Great*.

DECEMBER 5

December 5, 1933 - The 18th Amendment (Prohibition Amendment) to the U.S. Constitution was repealed. For nearly 14 years, since January 29, 1920, it had outlawed the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages in the U.S.

December 5, 1955 - In Alabama, the Montgomery bus boycott began in response to the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat on a municipal bus to a white man. Organized by the African American community, the boycott lasted until December 20, 1956, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling integrated the public transportation system.

December 5, 1955 - The AFL-CIO was founded after two separate labor organizations, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, joined together following 20 years of rivalry, thus becoming the leading advocate for trade unions in the U.S.



Birthdays - Martin van Buren (1782-1862) the 8th U.S. President was born in Kinderhook, New York. He was the first President who was born a citizen of the United States. He served from March 4, 1837 to March 3, 1841.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Fadnavis is the Frontrunner ; new...

portfolios - were discussed at the meeting of state NDA leaders at the residence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah here. The meeting lasted two hours and ended around midnight.

Pawar, Shinde, Fadnavis and BJP chief JP Nadda were at the meeting. Ahead of the parleys, NCP sources told this correspondent that Fadnavis' election as the Maharashtra CM was a foregone conclusion because the BJP had the highest mandate in the state and the NCP had backed Fadnavis.

"The BJP has 132 MLAs of its own. It also has the support of five Independents. This takes the BJP numbers to 137 in the 288-member Assembly where 145 is the simple majority. So, the BJP is short of just eight MLAs. It does not even require both the allies to stay in power," said a senior NCP leader, pointing to the NCP's 41 MLAs and the Shiv Sena's 57.

The number game in the BJP's favor is the key factor behind tilting the chief ministership equation in its favor and away from Shiv Sena's Shinde, the outgoing CM.

The NDA sources said when Shinde became the CM in 2022, he had quit the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition and joined hands with the BJP, which was then in the opposition in Maharashtra. Shinde then had an upper hand and was honored. "Today the situation is different. The BJP has a near-full mandate on its own and has every right to have its CM," said Mahayuti sources explaining why Fadnavis was the frontrunner in CM race.

This, the sources said, explained why Shinde publicly announced yesterday he would abide by PM Modi and Shah's decision in the matter. Shrikant Shinde, the caretaker CM's son, today said he was proud of his father who prioritized coalition dharma over personal ambitions.

Further, though NDA leaders said Shah would most likely offer the Mahayuti allies the same power-sharing formula as existed in the outgoing Assembly - one CM and two Deputy CMs (from the NCP and the Shiv Sena each), Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Shirsat on Thursday made a statement saying Shinde was unlikely to be the Deputy CM.

"He will be a part of the state Cabinet. He (Shinde) is unlikely to be the Deputy CM. It does not fit a person who has been the CM to serve as the Deputy CM," Shirsat said even though Fadnavis is a prime example of someone who went from being the Maharashtra CM (2014 to 2019) to the Deputy CM under Shinde.

While the outgoing Cabinet saw the BJP, NCP and the Shiv Sena share 10 berths each (including the CM and two deputies), the new formula could change with the BJP keeping most ministries.

The Maharashtra Cabinet can have 43 ministers, including the CM and his deputies. NCP chief Ajit Pawar is learnt to be batting for the Finance portfolio. If he secures this berth, he will become the Maharashtra Finance Minister for the 11th time, the highest ever. (Source: Tribune News Service / Aditi Tandon)

Canada already examining tariffs on...

and Mexico if the countries don't stop what he called the flow of drugs and migrants across southern and northern borders. He said he would impose a 25 per cent tax on all products entering the US from Canada and Mexico as one of his first executive orders.

But Trump posted Wednesday, November 27, evening on Truth Social that he had a "wonderful conversation" with new Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and she "agreed to stop Migration through Mexico".

"Mexico will stop people from going to our Southern Border, effective immediately. THIS WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD STOPPING THE ILLEGAL INVASION OF THE USA. Thank you!!!!" Trump posted.

It was unclear what impact the conversation will have on Trump's plan to impose tariffs.

However, The Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo denies country is closing border despite Trump

claims.

In Canada, a government official said on Wednesday, November 27 that Canada is preparing for every eventuality and has started thinking about what items to target with tariffs in retaliation. The official stressed that no decision has been made. The person spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak publicly.

When Trump imposed higher tariffs during his first term in office, other countries responded with retaliatory tariffs of their own. Canada, for instance, announced billions of new duties in 2018 against the US in a tit-for-tat response to new taxes on Canadian steel and aluminum.

Many of the US products were chosen for their political rather than economic impact. For example, Canada imports USD 3 million worth of yogurt from the US annually and most comes from one plant in Wisconsin, home state of then-House Speaker Paul Ryan. That product was hit with a 10 per cent duty.

Another product on the list was whiskey, which comes from Tennessee and Kentucky, the latter of which is the home state of then-Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell.

Trump made the threat Monday, November 25, while railing against an influx of illegal migrants, even though the numbers at Canadian border pale in comparison to the southern border.

The US Border Patrol made 56,530 arrests at the Mexican border in October alone - and 23,721 arrests at the Canadian one between October 2023 and September 2024.

Canadian officials say lumping Canada in with Mexico is unfair but say they are ready to make new investments in border security and work with the Trump administration to lower the numbers from Canada. The Canadians are also worried about an influx north of migrants if Trump follows through with his plan for mass deportations.

Trump also railed about fentanyl from Mexico and Canada, even though seizures from the Canadian border pale in comparison to the Mexican border. US customs agents seized 43 pounds of fentanyl at the Canadian border last fiscal year, compared with 21,100 pounds at the Mexican border.

Canadian officials argue their country is not the problem and that tariffs will have severe implications for both countries.

Canada is the top export destination for 36 US states. Nearly USD 3.6 billion Canadian (USD 2.7 billion) worth of goods and services cross the border each day.

About 60 per cent of US crude oil imports are from Canada, and 85 per cent of US electricity imports are from Canada. Canada is also the largest foreign supplier of steel, aluminum and uranium to the US and has 34 critical minerals and metals that the Pentagon is eager for and investing in for national security.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau held an emergency virtual meeting on Wednesday, November 27, with the leaders of Canada's provinces. He stressed they need to present a united front.

"I don't want to minimize for a moment the gravity of the challenge we now face," Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said. "Now is really a moment for us not to squabble amongst ourselves."

The provincial premiers want Trudeau to negotiate a bilateral trade deal with the United States that excludes Mexico.

Sheinbaum, Mexico's president, said earlier Wednesday, November 27, that her administration is already working up a list of possible retaliatory tariffs "if the situation comes to that." She later said she talked to Trump and had "an excellent conversation". (Agencies)

Hemant Soren begins fourth innings ...

leader Arvind Kejriwal and his wife Sunita Kejriwal, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and RJD leader Tejaswi Yadav, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Tamil Nadu Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin, Congress leader Tariq Anwar, Purnea MP Pappu

Yadav, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation, General Secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya and many more leaders.

Hemant Soren said that unity is our biggest weapon. We can neither be divided nor silenced.

Before taking oath, he touched the feet of his father Shibu Soren and mother Rupri Soren who were also present on the stage. He took oath as Chief Minister for the fourth term and with this, Mr. Soren is the only leader to win the term for the second time in succession.

Mr. Soren was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on January 31, 2024, followed by resignation and Champai Soren, now with the BJP, was made the Chief Minister. He later won the legal battle and Jharkhand High Court granted him bail on June 28, 2024 and he came out of jail.

Ahead of oath-taking ceremony, Hemant Soren's plea for exemption from court appearances was rejected

After his release from the jail, he was sworn in as Jharkhand Chief Minister for the third term on July 4, 2024 and INDIA bloc emerged victorious by winning a whopping 56 out of 81 assembly seats in the recently concluded assembly election.

Mr. Soren inherited politics after the death of Shibu Soren's elder son Durga Soren and played a pivotal role in Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). For some time, he was also a Rajya Sabha member and Deputy Chief Minister of Jharkhand during the coalition government of Arjun Munda.

He was a student of BIT Mesra but he left his studies midway and entered politics. Mr. Soren contested the assembly elections for the first time in 2005 from Dumka seat but lost to JMM rebel Stephen Marandi. However, in 2009, he became MLA for the first time.

He took charge as Chief Minister for the first time in 2013 with the help of Congress, RJD and others. He became MLA for the second time from Barhait assembly of Santhal Pargana region. In the 2014 assembly elections, JMM became the second largest party and Mr. Soren was made the leader of the opposition.

After the results of the Assembly elections held in 2019, Mr. Soren on December 29, 2019 took oath as the Chief Minister of the state for the second time.

His wife Kalpana Soren entered politics soon after he went to jail and during his jail time she won bypoll and emerged winner from Gandeby assembly seat. She defeated BJP's candidate Muniya Devi in Gandeby by 17142 votes. Even Mr. Soren retained the Barhait seat by defeating BJP's Gamliyel Hembrom by a margin of 39,791 votes.

National Democratic Alliance won 24 seats in the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly, with the Jharkhand Loktrantrik Krantikari Morcha led by Jairam Tiger Mahto picking up the remaining seat.

Except Mr. Soren no other minister took oath. However, as per the informed sources, the formula has already been discussed in which JMM will get 6 ministerial berths, Congress 4 and RJD 1. CPI(ML)L may not opt to be the part of the cabinet like in the previous government.

After taking oath, Mr. Soren posted a message on a social media platform in Hindi saying, "Today's historic occasion is dedicated to the struggle of the immortal brave martyrs, great revolutionaries and agitators of Jharkhand... Today's emotional moment is dedicated to the crores of people of Jharkhand... Abua Sarkar - Government of every Jharkhandi."

After Fitch, Moody's also switches...

have changed the outlook on all seven issuers to negative from stable." Earlier on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, Fitch Ratings also put Adani group firms on a negative rating watch.

The seven affected issuers are: 1. Adani Green Energy Limited Restricted Group (AGEL RG-1), which comprises Adani Green Energy (UP) Limited; Parampujya Solar Energy Private Limited; Prayatna Developers Private Limited,

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Home to the largest population of the one-horned rhino on earth, Kaziranga National Park is one of India's national treasures in terms of flora and fauna. Located in the state of Assam in North-Eastern India, its total area is shared by the districts of Nagaon, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong placing it roughly at the centre of the state. Approximately around five hours by road from Guwahati, Kaziranga National Park stands tall as the epitome of successful wildlife conservation in India. In 1985, it was awarded the status of a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Lying on the floodplains of the mighty river Brahmaputra, rich vegetation covers almost the entirety of Kaziranga National Park. Receiving massive amounts of rainfall each year, at times even crossing dangerous levels, this national park is characterised by tall elephant grass, marshlands and tall tropical broadleaf forests. Here, a wide variety of fauna thrives including the one-horned rhino, Asiatic elephants, wild water buffalo, leopards and Royal Bengal Tigers. Kaziranga National Park is also listed officially as a Tiger reserve and is home to one of the world's largest population of tigers.

Different types of birds can also be spotted here at the park. A popular migratory location for birds who fly down from the north, one can spot various birds such as the black-nested stork, the lesser white-fronted goose, ferruginous duck and Baer's pochard duck to name a few. Other notable bird families which can be seen here include the great Indian hornbill and wreathed hornbill among many others.

Safaris can be undertaken both during the day and night during the open tourist season. Elephant rides are also very popular among tourists and wildlife journalists and enthusiasts. Hiking is one such activity which is prohibited here to avoid casualties.

In addition to its wildlife and cultural significance, Kaziranga plays a crucial role in conservation efforts, serving as a sanctuary for endangered species and contributing to the preservation of Assam's natural heritage. The park's successful conservation programs and initiatives make it an important landmark in the global fight against biodiversity loss and habitat destruction.

Wildlife Safari at the Kaziranga National Park

The visit to Kaziranga National Park is probably the highlight of almost everyone's trip to Kaziranga and has a lot to do for everyone. Book a safari jeep or a modern SUV and roam around the area. Kaziranga National Park is a protected environment for some of the most endangered species of the world which includes, animals, mammals and birds alike. The impressive list of animals you can spot here includes the Indian Rhinoceros, Indian Elephant, Wild Buffalo, Wild Boar, Sambar, Macaque, Slot Bear, Indian Leopard, Black Bear and a variety of birds. A lot of migratory birds are also found here and makes a great spot for bird-viewing; an absolute treat for bird-watchers and nature enthusiasts. The Kaziranga National

Kaziranga: 'Home to the One Horned Rhino'



Park is also home to a Tiger reserve that houses the very endangered Great Bengal Tiger. You can also take Elephant rides in the Park.

Safari Zones in Kaziranga National Park

Kaziranga is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an Important Bird Area (IBA). For the convenience of management and conservation, the national park is divided into 4 zones: Kaziranga Range, Western Range, Eastern Range and Burapahar Range. One safari of one zone is allowed at a time.

Fauna in Kaziranga National Park

Kaziranga is immensely famous for being a home to the world's largest population of One Horned Rhinoceros (1855), Wild Water Buffalo (1666) and Eastern Swamp Deer (468). There is a total of 35 mammalian species, out of which 15 are threatened. Other species include elephants, gaur, sambar, Indian muntjac, wild boar, Indian grey mongoose, small Indian mongoose, large Indian civet, Bengal fox, golden jackal, sloth bear, The 'big-five' of Kaziranga is the collective name given to the group of one-horned rhino, wild water buffalo, swamp deer, Asian elephant and royal Bengal tiger. Kaziranga was declared a tiger reserve in 2006 and has the highest density of tigers in the world- 1 per 5 sq.km. The total population of wild cats is 118, and it is one of the few breeding grounds for the same, outside Africa. Rivers of Kaziranga are also home to the endangered Ganges Dolphin. The bird kingdom includes names like the lesser white-fronted goose, ferruginous duck, Baer's Pochard duck and lesser adjutant, greater adjutant, black-necked stork, Asian openbill stork, Blyth's Kingfisher,



white-bellied heron, Dalmatian pelican, spot-billed pelican, Nordmann's Greenshank, and black-bellied tern. Three species of the vulture- Indian vulture, slender-billed vulture, Indian white-rumped vulture are also found.

Jeep Safari in Kaziranga

Embarking on a jeep safari in Kaziranga National Park is an exhilarating experience that offers visitors a chance to explore the park's rich biodiversity up close. Led by experienced guides, the safari takes participants through the park's diverse habitats, including grasslands, marshes, and dense forests, providing ample opportunities to spot iconic wildlife such as the one-horned rhinoceros, Bengal tigers, and Asian elephants. With the



wind in your hair and the thrill of adventure in the air, a Kaziranga jeep safari promises unforgettable encounters with nature's wonders amidst the park's pristine wilderness.

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Sri Lanka collapse to their lowest Test score of 42

Sri Lanka were dismissed for their lowest test total of 42 after South Africa's Marco Jansen produced bowling heroics to help the hosts take a firm grip on the first test by opening a 281-run lead by the close of play on the second day. The lanky Jansen took a career best 7-13 as Sri Lanka were all out inside 14 overs as 19 wickets fell on a lively surface at Kingsmead on Thursday, November 28.

South Africa, put in to bat and 80-4 overnight, were bowled out for 191 by lunch in their first innings but were on 132-3 in their second as they chase victory to stay on track for a place in the World Test Championship final at Lord's next June. Jansen, 24, is only the second bowler to take seven wickets inside seven overs of a test innings, emulating former Australia captain Hugh Trumble, whose 7-28 in 6.5 overs, including a hat-trick, bowled them to victory over England in Melbourne in 1904.

Jansen's haul also took only 41 balls after clean bowling three Sri Lankans, having three more caught in the slips and finishing off the innings with a caught and bowled as last man Asitha Fernando struck a delivery high into the sky.

"We saw the ball was moving around earlier in the day and knew that if we put it in the right area, we could make things happen," said Jansen. Sri Lanka's score was the tied-ninth lowest innings in test history and their own worst total by 29 runs after their previous low of 71 against Pakistan in Kandy 30 years ago.

Bumrah regains top spot in ICC Test bowling rankings

DUBAI (TIP)

India pacer Jasprit Bumrah on Wednesday, November 27, toppled Kagiso Rabada and Josh Hazlewood to regain the top spot in ICC Test bowling rankings on the back of his match-winning spell against Australia in the first Test at Perth.

Stand-in skipper Bumrah returned with excellent match figures of 8 for 72 as India crushed Australia by 295 runs to take 1-0 lead in the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Bumrah, who was at No. 3 ahead of the Perth Test, now has career-best 883 ranking points while moving ahead of South African Rabada (872 points) and Aussie Hazlewood (860 points).

Bumrah's teammate Mohammed Siraj also made good ground, moving up three places to 25th following his five scalps against the Aussies.

Yashasvi Jaiswal, who made a scintillating 161, leaped to second spot with career-best 825 points behind England's Joe Root (903 points) in the rankings for batters.

Star batter Virat Kohli continued charting his way up as he improved nine spots to reach 13th following his 30th Test century.

India wicketkeeper batter Rishabh Pant maintained his sixth slot with 736 points.

Indian duo of Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin remained the top players in the Test all-rounders ranking despite not featuring against Australia in the Perth Test.

Uncapped Webster called into Australia squad for India series

SYDNEY: Australia have added uncapped all-rounder Beau Webster



to the squad for the second Test against India as cover for Mitchell Marsh, whose fitness remains a concern.

Marsh had pulled up "sore" following Australia's 295-run hammering in the series opener in Perth earlier this week.

Webster, also a right-hand pace all-rounder like Marsh, has been the stand out performer in the Sheffield Shield over the past two years.

The 30-year-old has collected 1788 runs including five hundreds and nine fifties. He starred in Tasmania's Sheffield Shield match against New South Wales earlier this week, striking a 61 and 49 besides taking five wickets.

"To get a few runs and wickets (for Australia A) was pleasing against a strong Indian side," Webster was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au ahead of the announcement.

"Any time you're playing 'A' cricket, it's the one step below Test level, so it does hold you in good stead. To get the call from 'Bails' (men's selection chair George Bailey) at the end of the NSW game was a really proud moment and I can't wait to get stuck in.

"There's a tight turnaround between the Adelaide and Gabba Test so I think (I'm there) just to have some cover there for that middle-order role, whichever way they go," he added.

India beat Japan 3-2 in men's junior Asia Cup hockey

MUSCAT (TIP)

Defending champions India toiled hard before registering a narrow 3-2 win over Japan, their second win on the trot, in a Pool A match of the men's Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament here on Thursday, November 28. India, who thrashed lowly Thailand 11-0 in their opener on Wednesday, scored through Thokchom Kingson Singh (12th minute), Rohit (36th) and Araijeet Singh Hundal (39th).

Japan's both goals came from penalty corner conversions by Neo Sato (15th, 38th).

India will next play Chinese Taipei on Saturday, November 30. It was a subdued start from the Indians as Japan went on the early offensive, securing two penalty corners in quick time but on both occasions, India goalkeeper Bikramjit Singh came to his side's rescue with fine saves.

The Indians slowly and steadily got into the rhythm with controlled possession.

Even though Japan were the better side on display in most part of the first quarter, it was India who took the lead in the 12th minute through

Thokchom Kingson Singh's rebound attempt from a penalty corner.

Japan were not to be left behind as they equalised three minutes later through Neo Sato's perfect flick into the right corner of the Indian goal.

Soon after the start of the second quarter, India custodian Bikramjit made a fine save.

The Indians too were not to be left behind but Japan goalkeeper Koki Orogasa made two fine double saves.

Japan secured their third penalty corner at the fag end of the second quarter but failed to execute the opportunity once again as both the teams were locked 1-1 at half-time.

The Japanese were on the front foot after the change of ends as they secured three back-to-back penalty corners but Indian goalkeeper Bikramjit was upto the task.

With nine minutes left from the end of third quarter, India secured a penalty corner and Rohit converted the chance with a nice drag-flick to hand his side the lead.

Source: PTI



Defending champions India toiled hard before registering a narrow 3-2 win over Japan, their second win on the trot, in a Pool A match of the men's Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament here on Thursday, November 28.



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