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1 Indian American Weekly : Since 2006

VOL 19 ISSUE 01 • NEW YORK / DALLAS • JAN 03 - JAN 09, 2025

ENQUIRIES: 646-247-9458 • info@theindianpanorama.news



Biden Plans to Block Takeover Bid of U.S. Steel by Japan's Nippon

THE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FATE OF THE ICONIC PENNSYLVANIA-BASED COMPANY, WHICH BECAME A CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL ISSUE IN AN ELECTION YEAR, IS EXPECTED AS SOON AS FRIDAY



US Steel, once a symbol of America's economic might, is now for sale in the bargain bin

JANUARY 3, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):

President Biden has decided to block the \$14 billion takeover of U.S. Steel by Nippon Steel of Japan in an announcement expected as soon as Friday based on grounds that the sale poses a threat to national security, according to people familiar with the matter, a New York Times report says.

The decision would be an extraordinary use of executive power, particularly for a president who is just weeks from leaving office. It is also a departure from America's long-established culture of open investment, one that could have wide-ranging implications for the U.S. economy.

Mr. Biden's move to stop the transaction could cause foreign investors to rethink the wisdom of acquiring American firms in sensitive industries that are based in politically important states. It could also roil relations with Japan, a close ally of the

CONTD ON PAGE 50

-: NOTICE :-

The INDIAN PANORAMA

Will bring out a profusely illustrated edition to mark the 76th Republic Day of India.

Articles and advertisements are invited which may please be submitted to salujaindra@gmail.com by January 18, 2025.

For any questions, please email or call 646-247-9458.

-: INSIDE :-

Guru Gobind Singh: The Timeless Torchbearer of Courage and Compassion Page 02

The man who made the middle class affluent Page 08

Trump's threats portend turbulence Page 09

Close ranks to fortify the republic Page 10

Guru Gobind Singh: The Warrior Saint and Spiritual Luminary Page 18

No direction to break Dallewal's fast, only concerned about his health, says Supreme Court of India



Jagjit Singh Dallewal who has been on fast-unto-death since November 26, 2024, refused to receive medical help

JANUARY 3, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): As farmers' leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who has been on fast-unto-death since November 26, 2024, refused to receive medical help, the Supreme Court on Thursday,

January 2, took strong exception to a "deliberate attempt" to create an impression that it wanted him to break his fast.

Shifting (him) to the hospital does not mean he will not continue his fast. There are medical facilities which will ensure that no harm is caused to his life. That is our only concern. His life is precious as a farm leader. Justice Surya Kant

"There is a deliberate attempt in the media by your state government officers to give the impression that the court is pressuring him to break the fast. Our direction was not to break his fast. We only said let his health be taken care of and he can continue his peaceful protest even when he is hospitalized.

CONTD ON PAGE 50

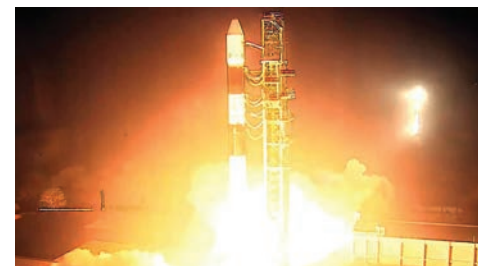
ISRO launches SpaDeX mission for space docking

With the mission, ISRO aims to exhibit technologies needed for spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking using two small satellites which have been mastered by only an elite group of spacefaring nations

DECEMBER 31, 2024

SRIHARIKOTA (TIP): The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission on Monday, December 30, 2024.

The PSLV C60 rocket carrying two small satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target), along with 24 payloads, lifted off from the first launchpad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota at 10 p.m. About 15 minutes after liftoff, the two small spacecraft weighing about 220 kg each were launched into a 475-km circular orbit as intended. "The rocket has placed the satellites in the right orbit which is into



ISRO successfully launches Polar Satellite Launch vehicle (PSLV-C60) with two Space Docking Experiment (SpaDEX) satellites SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target) and 24 other innovative payloads from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), in Sriharikota on December 30, 2024. -Photo Credit: ANI/ISRO

a 475-km circular orbit.

CONTD ON PAGE 50



Dr. Manmohan Singh died on December 26, at the age of 92.

2 sites shortlisted for Dr. Manmohan Singh Memorial

JANUARY 3, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government has shortlisted two locations for allotment of land to build a memorial to late Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Union Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Thursday said the two sites, near the Rajghat memorial complex area, were...

CONTD ON PAGE 50



Andy Singh

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Guru Gobind Singh: The Timeless Torchbearer of Courage and Compassion

By Indrajit Saluja



As the world commemorates the 358th birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh on January 6, 2025, it is an opportune moment to delve into the life, philosophy, and enduring legacy of this extraordinary figure. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh Guru, not only shaped the course of Sikhism but also left an indelible mark on humanity with his principles of courage, equality, and compassion. His teachings resonate profoundly even in modern times, inspiring millions worldwide to lead lives of purpose and selflessness.

Guru Gobind Singh was born as Gobind Rai on December 22, 1666, in Patna, Bihar, to Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, and Mata Gujri. From an early age, he exhibited an exceptional blend of spiritual depth, intellectual sharpness, and martial valor. These qualities became even more pronounced after the martyrdom of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, who sacrificed his life to protect the religious freedoms of the Hindus against the oppressive policies of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

Ascending to the Guruship at the tender age of nine, Guru Gobind Singh's leadership was defined by his unwavering commitment to justice and human dignity. Recognizing the need for unity and resilience among the oppressed, he founded the Khalsa in 1699—a brotherhood dedicated to upholding righteousness and protecting the downtrodden. This transformative event marked a watershed moment in Sikh history, reinforcing the community's collective identity and purpose.

Guru Gobind Singh's teachings epitomize a harmonious blend of spirituality and practical action. He emphasized devotion to God, ethical living, and selfless service. His philosophy was deeply rooted in the principles of equality and universal brotherhood, transcending barriers of caste, creed, and gender. This inclusive outlook was revolutionary in a society fractured by rigid hierarchies and discrimination.

The Guru's declaration that "Khalsa Akal Purakh Ki Fauji" ("The Khalsa is the army of the Divine") underscored the spiritual foundation of his mission. He envisioned the Khalsa as a collective committed to justice, courage, and altruism. In his writings, particularly in the Dasam Granth, Guru Gobind Singh extolled the virtues of bravery and righteousness, asserting that true strength lies in protecting the weak and standing up against tyranny.

Guru Gobind Singh's life is a testament to unparalleled sacrifice. He dedicated not just his personal comforts but also

of religion, race, and class, Guru Gobind Singh's vision of universal brotherhood serves as a powerful antidote. His advocacy for equality reminds us of the shared humanity that binds us all.

Selfless Service and Charity: Guru Gobind Singh's declaration that true bravery lies in helping others continues to inspire acts of selflessness and philanthropy. His followers, known for their generosity and community service, embody this principle, contributing to social welfare across the globe.

Resilience and Adaptability: Guru Gobind Singh's establishment of the Khalsa demonstrated the importance of resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity. His teachings encourage individuals to embrace change with courage and determination.

The influence of Guru Gobind Singh extends far beyond the Sikh community. With a global following of approximately 30 million, Sikhs are recognized for their industriousness, integrity, and commitment to social justice. From providing humanitarian aid in disaster-stricken regions to contributing significantly to fields such as medicine, technology, and education, Sikhs continue to exemplify the Guru's teachings in their daily lives.

The concept of "Langar"—a free community kitchen—is a shining example of Guru Gobind Singh's ethos of service and equality. Today, gurdwaras worldwide serve millions of meals to people of all backgrounds, reinforcing the values of generosity and inclusion. Similarly, the Sikh tradition of "Seva" (selfless service) manifests in myriad forms, from providing healthcare and education to supporting marginalized communities.

Guru Gobind Singh's life and philosophy are a timeless source of inspiration. His courage, compassion, and commitment to justice resonate as profoundly today as they did centuries ago. As we celebrate his 358th birth anniversary, it is imperative to reflect on his teachings and strive to embody his principles in our lives.

In a world yearning for compassion and courage, Guru Gobind Singh's legacy serves as a guiding light, urging us to rise above narrow self-interest and work toward the collective good. His vision of a just, equitable, and harmonious society remains a beacon of hope, inspiring generations to uphold the values of bravery, selflessness, and universal brotherhood.

Happy 358th birth anniversary of the Timeless Torchbearer of Courage and Compassion Guru Gobind Singh, the Founder of the Khalsa!

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Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji, Creator of Khalsa*

Happy Guru Gobind Singh Ji's 358th Birth Anniversary

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Tabe Gobind Singh Naam khaun



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Ranju Batra
CHAIR



WORLD RINGS IN 2025



Fireworks explode over the London Eye Ferris wheel as Britons across the country welcome the New Year, in London.

REUTERS



People gather at Copacabana beach to celebrate the New Year, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

REUTERS



People hold balloons during New Year celebrations outside a church in Ahmedabad, India.

REUTERS



People toast with champagne next to the famous water fountain "Le Jet d'Eau" while swimming in the cold water during the New Year's traditional swimming in the Lake of Geneva at the Bains des Paquis, in Geneva, Switzerland.

AP



A light show is projected on the Arc de Triomphe as fireworks explode during New Year celebrations on the Champs Elysees in Paris, France.

AP/PTI



A light show and fireworks illuminate the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, during New Year's Eve celebrations in Dubai.

AFP



This photograph shows fireworks over the Victoria Harbor to celebrate the New Year in Hong.

AFP



An electronic board displays 'Happy New Year' as confetti falls after the ball drop at Times Square during New Year's celebrations in New York City, U.S., January 1, 2025.

REUTERS



This aerial view shows the Christ The Redeemer statue as fireworks explode all over the city during New Year celebrations in Rio de Janeiro.

AFP



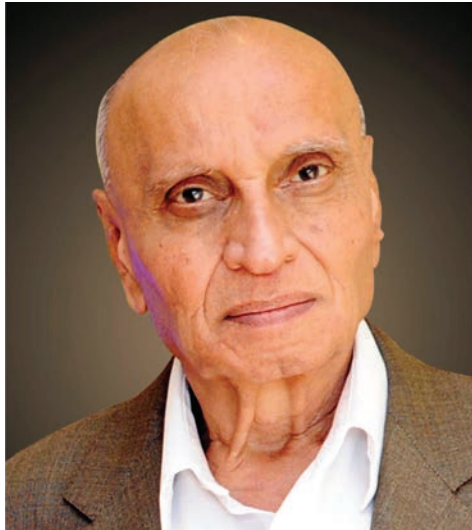
Fireworks light up the midnight sky over Sydney Harbor Bridge and Sydney Opera House during 2025 New Year's Day celebrations in Sydney.

AFP



A performer attends the London's New Year's Day Parade event, in London, Britain.

REUTERS



BRUHUD New York Seniors Founder Late Shashikant Patel

Devika Patel to Organize and Sponsor Artificial Limb Fitment Camp in Gujarat in Memory of BRUHUD Founder Shashikant Patel

HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA TO BE A SPECIAL GUEST

JANUARY 1, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): BRUHUD New York Seniors, founded in 2009 by the late Shashikant Patel, has become one of the largest organizations for seniors in the tri-state area. The organization hosts annual events such as health fairs, Independence Day celebrations, Garba, and the Diwali Gala, among other functions, with these events typically attracting 500 to 800 participants.

After the passing of its founder, Shashikant Patel, his son Ajay Patel has taken charge, continuing his father's legacy and ensuring the smooth execution of all BRUHUD initiatives. Ajay Patel, who serves as the President of BRUHUD, is also an office bearer of Jaipur Foot USA, the U.S.-based arm of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayta Samiti (BMVSS), India. BMVSS is globally recognized as one of the largest organizations for differently-abled individuals (Divyang), renowned for its prosthetic limb, the "Jaipur Foot."

Inspired by the humanitarian efforts of Jaipur Foot, Shashikant Patel's 21-year-old granddaughter, Devika Patel, proposed organizing and sponsoring a free artificial limb fitment camp in



Good Samaritans. L to R: Ajay Patel (President (BRUHUD), Prem Bhandari (President RANA), and Devika Patel (Organizer and Sponsor of Artificial Limb Fitment Camp in Gujarat in Memory of her grandfather Shashikant Patel)



A View of the Gathering at the well-attended event. L to R: Ravi Jargarh (Secretary RANA), Ashok Sancheti (Advisor, Jaipur Foot USA), Prem Bhandari (President RANA), Pragma Singh, Consul, Indian Consulate, New York, and Mohan Nannapaneni (Founder Team Aid)

Gujarat in memory of her grandfather. The five-day camp, scheduled to take place from January 27 to 31, 2025, at the Mahudi Jain Temple in Mahudi town, Mansa Taluka, Gandhinagar district, Gujarat, will provide prosthetic limbs (Jaipur Foot), calipers, crutches, and wheelchairs to those in need.

In a press release, Jaipur Foot USA announced that the Ahmedabad center of

Secretary, G-20 Chief Coordinator, and a steadfast supporter of Jaipur Foot, will attend the Gujarat camp as a special guest. Additionally, the founder and Chief Patron of BMVSS, Dr. D.R. Mehta, will also be present.

Ajay Patel, his wife Kinnari Patel, and their daughter Devika Patel will travel from New York to participate in the camp. Prem Bhandari, who will also

May Guru Gobind Singh Ji be your guiding star through your life and may he shower blessings on you this GURPURAB.

Heartiest Greetings on Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Prakash Divas (Birthday)

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Another view of the gathering

BMVSS, led by Vice Chairman Lalit Jain, would provide full support for the camp, including sending a mobile van to assist on-site. Registrations for beneficiaries have already begun through the Ahmedabad center.

Jaipur Foot USA's parent organization, BMVSS, was founded in 1975 by Padma Bhushan Dr. D.R. Mehta in Jaipur, India. Since its inception, BMVSS has benefited over 2.2 million differently-abled individuals across 42 countries through 114 international camps. Notably, 31 of these camps were conducted under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India's India for Humanity initiative, launched to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. These camps have supported individuals in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Prem Bhandari, Chairman of Jaipur Foot USA, announced that Harsh Vardhan Shringla, former Foreign

attend the camp from New York, expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for inaugurating the first Jaipur Foot USA-BMVSS mega camp in April 2016. This camp, held in Mhow, Indore, marked the 125th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar at his birthplace. Later that year, another mega camp was organized at Diksha Bhoomi in Nagpur, the historic site of Dr. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism.

Bhandari further credited Prime Minister Modi's unwavering support and blessings for enabling BMVSS to partner in the India for Humanity initiative, resulting in 31 fully sponsored international camps, with 11 more planned. He also highlighted the upcoming inauguration of BMVSS's first international Jaipur Foot center in Malawi, announced during the recent visit of the President of India to Malawi.

North Brunswick Train Station Reaches New Design Milestone

JANUARY 2, 2025

MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ (TIP): The North Brunswick Train Station is advancing under the management of Middlesex County Improvement Authority (MCIA) with a recent announcement of 30% design approval and funding agreement with NJ TRANSIT for the final design phase of the project. The project now is moving towards 60% design completion with the construction drawings covering items such as passenger platforms, the overhead pedestrian bridges, foundation elements, steel connections, methods of structural support and DEP approval process.

"These milestones are important as the design phase now moves from the conceptual stage to actual construction drawings," said Executive Director H. James Polos. "We are eagerly completing the necessary foundational work to move full steam ahead with construction of the new train station in the very near future."

Under a unique partnership established in 2020 with NJ TRANSIT, the MCIA is managing the North Brunswick Train Station project. The agreement permits the MCIA to serve as the project manager overseeing the design and construction of the project. Under the



Led by Middlesex County Improvement Authority, 60% of Construction Drawings Underway

agreement, the MCIA coordinates input from NJ TRANSIT, AMTRAK, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), the township of North Brunswick, and Middlesex County.

"The MCIA has streamlined what is normally a cumbersome process," said Middlesex County Commissioner Director Ronald G. Rios. "Collaboration amongst all agencies through regular design team meetings has been a major benefit in moving this project forward expeditiously."

"The North Brunswick Train Station is a vital component of Middlesex County's Destination 2040 strategic economic plan which will make Middlesex County a thriving, attractive destination to live, work, and play for generations to come," said Chairman of the MCIA James Nolan. "Additionally, we expect the station to help manage traffic congestion along the Route 1 corridor and provide a

more sustainable way to travel and commute."

"We remain grateful to our partners at the MCIA for managing this effort and celebrate the steady progress for the train station we have sought, and which is now approaching 60% design completion," said North Brunswick Mayor Francis M. Womack.

"Progressing to this design phase of the North Brunswick Train Station is a key milestone in our efforts to enhance mobility along the Northeast Corridor and support economic development in the region," said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett. "Our funding agreement and strong partnership with the MCIA underscore our shared commitment to delivering a modern, accessible, and efficient train station that will benefit North Brunswick and the surrounding communities for decades to come."

Funding for the project has been provided by the New Jersey Transportation Trust Fund (NJTTF) in the amount of \$50 million. WSP USA is the contracted design and engineering firm managed by MCIA. The MCIA will also manage the design and construction of the New Brunswick Train Station renovations performed by AECOM.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ

Middlesex County is bettering the lives of residents and providing economic growth opportunities to business and industry. It is home to numerous Fortune 500 companies, three universities, 19 County parks, and world-class healthcare and research facilities, making it one of the nation's most dynamic regions and a leader in life sciences, transportation, the arts, and food innovation. As one of the most diverse populations in the country, Middlesex County is home to over 860,000 residents living throughout 25 municipalities. The County's award-winning Middlesex County Magnet Schools system and two-year Middlesex College uphold its position as #1 in the state for education and workforce development. Conveniently located between New York and Philadelphia, Middlesex County is a leading destination for businesses and residents alike to live, work, and play - and has been since the 17th century.

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The man who made the middle class affluent

THE AVERAGE INCOME OF THE MIDDLE CLASS MORE THAN TRIPLED IN THE 10 YEARS THAT MANMOHAN SINGH WAS PM. THIS WAS THE GOLDEN PERIOD FOR THE PROFESSIONAL & MANAGERIAL CLASS IN INDIA.



---> By Aunindyo
Chakravarty

“The Rao-Manmohan market reforms completely changed the ideological terrain. Now, the middle class became a facilitator of corporate profits. Its job was to maximize profits by increasing productivity in businesses. And, for that, it got a share of the returns to capital - much higher salaries than its previous 'babu' avatar could have got them. The post-liberalization middle class, therefore, imbibed the values of capitalism - pro-market and consumerist.”

Soon after Manmohan Singh became Finance Minister, the term multinational corporation, or MNC, entered our daily lexicon. I heard it first when a distant relative left a public sector job to join an MNC for a salary of Rs 30,000 per month. This was unheard of back then in middle-class families like ours.

But this was just the beginning. Soon, every young person around me was looking for a private sector job. MNCs had radically altered the white-collar job market by offering fabulous pay packages. Domestic companies had to follow suit. The middle class could now aspire to a lifestyle that it wouldn't even have dared to dream of earlier.

Manmohan Singh, along with the then Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, made it possible. They unleashed policies that gave rise to a new affluent middle class.

First, let me explain what I mean by the term middle class. It is nowhere in the middle when it comes to India's population. In fact, it sits right at the top - between the 96th and 99th percentile in terms of income. Its 'middle-ness' comes from where it stands in the economic system - as an intermediary between owners of capital and blue-collar workers.

Before liberalization gave the private sector control over the 'commanding heights' of the economy and set market forces to decide how resources would be allocated, it was largely controlled by the state and run by a bureaucratic-managerial-intellectual class. That was the old middle class, even smaller than it is now.

The old pre-liberalization middle class was ideologically oriented towards state intervention - what we have come to



Manmohan Singh, along with the then Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao unleashed policies that gave rise to a new affluent middle class.

-File photo

know as 'Nehruvian socialism'. This was because its job was to implement policy decisions that were taken by the government and other arms of the state. Salaries were low, but jobs were secure. The middle class in its own self-image was constructed as a group of 'nation builders'.

The Rao-Manmohan market reforms completely changed the ideological terrain. Now, the middle class became a facilitator of corporate profits. Its job was to maximize profits by increasing productivity in businesses. And, for that, it got a share of the returns to capital - much higher salaries than its previous 'babu' avatar could have got them. The post-liberalization middle class, therefore, imbibed the values of capitalism - pro-market and consumerist.

By the time Manmohan Singh's first tryst with government ended in 1996, white-collar salaries in the private sector compared favorably with corporate jobs in the developed West, especially when purchasing power parity was taken into account. Sons and daughters of government servants began earning more in a month than their parents did in an entire year.

They bought cars, microwave ovens, washing machines and spring mattresses, retiled their bathrooms and took vacations to Phuket. They bought computers, invested in the stock markets and bought health insurance plans. Their kids now enrolled in schools with better infrastructure. When they fell sick, they went to new hospitals with private rooms that could put PSU-run hotels to shame.

And, the rise of the corporate executive in the 1990s and its changed spending habits had a multiplier effect

on the entire middle class. Bankers, stock brokers, tax advisers, doctors, architects, interior decorators, chefs, fashion designers, all flourished in the new economic environment.

When Manmohan Singh became Prime Minister in 2004, the average income of those in the 96th-99th percentile had risen from roughly Rs 3,500 per month in 1991 to Rs Rs 16,000 per month.

Even in real, inflation-adjusted terms, it had nearly doubled in 13 years. To understand what that means, compare it to the 13 years before liberalization, when the average real incomes of the 'middle class' had increased by just 17 per cent.

This immense rise in middle class affluence was still nothing compared to what was to come in the UPA years. The average income of those in the 96th-to-99th percentile more than tripled in the 10 years that Manmohan Singh was PM. This was the golden period for the professional-managerial class in India and its standard of living rose manifold. Middle-class families bought premium cars and flatscreen TV sets, ate at five-star hotels, holidayed in Europe and gated themselves into the toniest parts of India's metros.

Manmohan Singh was only partly responsible for this. The first thrust of white-collar prosperity came from the credit-driven financial boom of the 2000s, which would ultimately end in the global financial crisis of 2008. Where the Manmohan-led UPA made a difference was in providing a massive fiscal stimulus to keep India out of a recession.

Much of it came in the form of the Sixth Pay Commission, which was implemented in August 2008, with retrospective effect from July 2006.

Government servants got a lumpsum of arrears at one go, which they spent on buying cars, renovating their homes and sustaining the overall consumption in the economy when the corporate sector had taken a beating.

But corporate profits didn't recover. The CMIE's database shows that in the last five years of the Manmohan kaal, corporate earnings grew just six per cent annually, while inflation was 10 per cent. On the other hand, the corporate wage bill rose at 19 per cent per year.

The result was that from the second half of the 2010s, the corporate sector began cutting white-collar jobs and asking people to take pay cuts, to expand its profit margins. The net result is a rise in corporate profits, while 'middle-class' incomes have stagnated. Between 2018-19 and 2022-23, corporate profits increased at a real, inflation-adjusted rate of 53 per cent while the real income of the professional-managerial class has increased at just three per cent per year.

This is the inevitable result of the very market-friendly policies that created the affluent Indian middle class. It dramatically increased income and wealth inequality and, ultimately, created a shortage of demand for goods and services. That, in turn, caused corporate profits to fall, which made companies cut back on their wage bills, including what they paid their white-collar managerial staff.

What would Dr Singh have done today to deal with the decimation of the middle class he helped create? We will no longer know.

*The author is Ex Senior
Managing Editor, NDTV*

Trump's threats portend turbulence

US PRESIDENT-ELECT'S STAND ON TARIFFS HAS CAUSED CONSTERNATION AMONG FRIENDS AND FOES



--> By Manoj Joshi

"THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT BE A PROBLEM FOR INDIA NEEDS TO BE TAKEN WITH A PINCH OF SALT, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO TRADE, TARIFFS AND IMMIGRATION. DURING TRUMP'S FIRST TERM, TOUGH IMMIGRATION POLICIES AFFECTED INDIAN TECH PROFESSIONALS ADVERSELY AND INDIA LOST ITS GSP STATUS. HAVING SOME OF THE HIGHEST TARIFFS IN THE WORLD AND A TRADE SURPLUS WITH THE US, INDIA COULD BE A TARGET FOR US ACTION. DIFFERENCES OVER IRAN AND RUSSIA COULD STILL CLOUD THE INDIA-US PICTURE."

The year 2025 is going to be eventful. On January 20, Donald Trump will be sworn in as the President of the richest and militarily most powerful country in the world. In itself, it would not mean much; after all, more than a dozen men have held that office since the US achieved premier status in the wake of World War II. But Trump's policies aim to end the liberal international order that the US established, based on the solidarity of democracies, a US-led global military alliance system, concern for human rights, free trade and the setting up of the UN system.

Taken together with separate but parallel revisionist efforts by Russia and China, the world could witness a wild rollercoaster ride in the coming year. As it is, with US backing, Israel has made a huge hole in the rules-based international order by its use of massive and disproportionate military force in Gaza.

Till now, Russia and China were countries that the US defined as revisionists, wanting radical changes in the global order. These countries have seen the liberal international order with its solidarity of democratic states as a major threat and have had no hesitation in challenging its fundamental tenet - territorial sovereignty - in Ukraine, Taiwan, India and the South China Sea.

Now, Trump is also keen on territorial revision and wants the Panama Canal back. He also wants to buy Greenland



US President-elect Donald Trump has made clear his territorial ambitions, causing consternation across the world

and pull the US out of the World Health Organisation and several other UN organizations and blow up the global trading system and climate change agreements.

Trump's threats on tariffs have caused consternation among friends and foes. America's neighbors like Mexico and Canada are reeling from the prospect of facing 25 per cent tariffs. Others are bracing for a tariff war. Trump wants to withdraw the US from its NATO commitments if the allies do not "pay their bills", but this time he seems fine with regard to South Korea and Japan, no doubt because of Russia, North Korea and China.

A world where three of its principal powers are revisionist is bound to be a turbulent one because there is nothing common in the issues on which they want a change. Russia, much reduced as a military and economic power, is really in a defensive mode. But as the case of Ukraine shows, it is willing to inflict great damage and destruction in an effort to recreate its erstwhile dominance of eastern Europe till the 1990s. The Europeans understand this and are rightly apprehensive. It was not for nothing that long-standing neutrals like Sweden and Finland hastily joined NATO in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

As for China, after its 'Century of Humiliation', it sees itself as a global power again and wants the world to acknowledge it. So, it wants to revise the law of the sea as per its needs, demands an international system that is not based on ideology (i.e. democracy), sees

economic development as more important than political freedom and wants changes in the governance structures of international bodies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The Chinese military posture, too, is defensive in relation to the US. But in the process of countering America, China has built a formidable military machine. The recent displays of two advanced fighters and the launch of what is the world's largest and most modern amphibious assault ships are manifestations of this approach.

China may be undergoing a serious economic slowdown, but that is unlikely to affect its military buildup that involves significant investments in boosting technological self-sufficiency and advanced manufacturing. Alarmingly, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has continued with its rapid nuclear buildup. The US estimates that China now has more than 600 operational warheads and is heading for a total of 1,000 by 2030.

For India, this situation offers both an opportunity and a threat. The broad contours of the Indian response to Russia and China have been visible for a while. India continues to deal with Russia and seek opportunities, whether in buying oil at a discount or promoting trade that the Russians are trying to shift in a southerly direction through economic realignment and infrastructure development.

As for China, India is seeking a mini-détente based on resolving border tensions that arose in 2020 and restoring

normal trade and investment links.

The assumption that the Trump administration will not be a problem for India needs to be taken with a pinch of salt, especially when it comes to trade, tariffs and immigration. During Trump's first term, tough immigration policies affected Indian tech professionals adversely and India lost its GSP status. Having some of the highest tariffs in the world and a trade surplus with the US, India could be a target for US action. Differences over Iran and Russia could still cloud the India-US picture.

Even so, there can be gains from a potential easing of tensions between Russia and the US. Aggressive US policies against China could accelerate the China+1 strategy of Western companies and lead to increased FDI in India, assuming Delhi makes itself more attractive to foreign investment.

But when it comes to Trump, nothing is simple. The assumption that the US would look favorably towards India on account of China could be undermined by Trump's instinct to avoid external conflict. Further, his advisers such as Musk are keen for even ties with China because of business reasons. Don't forget that in January 2020, Trump signed a major trade deal with China. Never mind that it didn't work then, but it could be the template for a new arrangement that might undermine the rationale of the India-US connection.

(Manoj Joshi is Senior Journalist & Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation)

Close ranks to fortify the republic

THE COLLECTIVE WILL OF PEOPLE IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD INDIA'S INTERESTS



---> By Vivek Katju

"A DEVIATION FROM THIS BASIC CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSITION WILL DAMAGE INDIA'S CAPABILITY TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATE THE ENORMOUS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES THAT ARE GROWING BECAUSE OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES UNDERWAY IN A TURBULENT GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT. THE REGIONAL SITUATION, TOO, PRESENTS DIFFICULTIES THAT CAN BE IGNORED ONLY AT THE PERIL OF HURTING NATIONAL INTERESTS. AND, FOR INDIA, THE KEY COUNTRY CONNECTING ITS REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES IS CHINA."

With the onset of the year in which the Indian republic will celebrate 75 years of its establishment, the fervent hope of the majority of its citizens is for social peace and harmony. This can only be achieved if there is a realization that the path to right the 'wrongs of history' lies through cementing a common nationhood that is respectful of the traditions and faiths of all Indians. That acceptance and respect are also the premise and promise of the republic's foundational principle, so eloquently expressed in the Constitution.

A deviation from this basic constitutional proposition will damage India's capability to successfully navigate the enormous strategic challenges that are growing because of the technological changes underway in a turbulent global environment. The regional situation, too, presents difficulties that can be ignored only at the peril of hurting national interests. And, for India, the key country connecting its regional and global



The path to right the 'wrongs of history' lies through cementing a common nationhood that is respectful of the traditions and faiths of all Indians.

-Credit: PTI

challenges is China.

China's threat goes far beyond the border issue. A process of 'normalizing' the relationship, which was acutely impaired by China's actions in eastern Ladakh in the summer of 2020, may now have begun. The Ministry of External Affairs' readout of the Narendra Modi-Xi Jinping meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in October last year noted, "The two leaders affirmed that stable, predictable and amicable bilateral relations between India and China, as two neighbors and the two largest nations on earth, will have a positive impact on regional and global peace and prosperity. It will also contribute to a multipolar Asia and a multipolar world". However, whatever China may agree to during formal summit-level meetings, it is working for, at least, a bipolar world order and is assiduously seeking a unipolar Asia in which its power and influence prevail. And, the backbone of both these quests lies not only in its economic success and growing military power but also its undoubted and deep advances in the areas of science and high technology.

In 2018, Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, had said, "The popular conception is that companies come to China because of low labor costs. I'm not sure what part of China they go to, but the truth is that China stopped being the low-labor-cost country years ago. And that is not the reason to come to China from a supply point of view. The reason is because of the skill, and the quantity of skill in one location and the type of skill..." He went on to say that the products that were Apple's requirement needed advanced tooling capable of working with state-of-the-art material. He added, "That tooling skill is very deep here. In the US, you

could have a meeting of tooling engineers and I'm not sure we could fill the room. In China, you could fill multiple football fields..."

That was over six years ago. China's drive to develop human capital in the areas of frontier manufacturing continues relentlessly. It is, however, not satisfied with becoming the factory of the world. It is now seeking to reach US and Western European levels in design and innovation in large frontier technology sectors, including artificial intelligence (AI).

Till recently, it was commonly and correctly believed that in AI, the US excelled in 'technical innovation' while Chinese companies were competent at 'application innovation'. There was generally a gap of one or two years before the application occurred. However, the Chinese are now realizing that there is a fundamental difference between 'technical innovation' and thereafter applying it. Hence, Chinese companies like DeepSeek have come up; they are going rapidly ahead in 'technical innovation'. They do not wish to be followers anymore. This will pose a challenge to US supremacy in AI, which is destined to change the world. The US will pose impediments in China's path, but will it succeed? It is difficult to predict how deep and extensive will be the transformation of individual lives and international power equations, but it is certain that this will happen, and that too early.

Where does India stand in all this and other frontier and emerging areas of science and technology (S&T)? The truth is that while India's economic growth has led it to become the fifth largest global economy, there is a wide and perhaps growing gap in S&T not only

with the West but also with China. Jawaharlal Nehru was acutely aware that European domination of the world, beginning with the 18th and 19th centuries that led to all the horrors of colonialism in Asia, Africa and South America, had occurred because of its Industrial Revolution. Hence, his determination that India should catch up in S&T, both in terms of human capital and industrialization. In this context, it is good to become aware of the advances Indians had made in S&T in ancient times and convey that to the world, but is that really the path to becoming a strong and powerful country - a genuine pole in a multipolar world?

The answer is obvious. All the digging out of glories from our ancient past, which was ravaged by invaders, will not help us meet the challenges of today. They may satisfy emotional urges of certain sections of the people, and their long-standing feelings of hurt and anguish may be addressed too, but they will not address the strategic threat that the country faces from China. In the current year and beyond, China's involvement in India's immediate neighborhood will only increase. Its intrusion in India's western neighborhood, substantial for decades, will continue. The situation in Bangladesh is ripe for its pernicious intervention and it will increase its presence in the Indian Ocean Region.

In such circumstances, it is the collective will of cohesive people - shedding prejudices, not dwelling on the past but taking India forward to become a leader in S&T innovation and applications and strong in defense - that is needed to safeguard India's interests.

(The author is a former Ambassador)



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INDIAN AMERICAN OPENAI WHISTLEBLOWER, SUCHIR BALAJI, AUTOPSY REVEALS 'MURDER' NOT SUICIDE



Suchir Balaji's parents claim that the second autopsy report indicates "signs of struggle," including a head injury and trauma, which contradict the suicide verdict by the medical examiner's office.

JANUARY 1, 2025

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP) : The parents of Indian American techie Suchir Balaji, who was found dead in his San Francisco apartment on December 14, 2024, have rejected the official suicide ruling, alleging that their son was murdered.

Suchir, a former OpenAI employee, had made headlines for his whistleblowing revelations about the ethical concerns surrounding generative AI. In an interview with NDTV, his parents claim that the second autopsy report indicates "signs of struggle," including a head injury and trauma, which contradict the suicide verdict by the medical examiner's office.

Suchir's mother, Poornima Ramarao, expressed disbelief at the suicide ruling, citing the absence of a suicide note and the findings of the second autopsy. "We have facts with the second autopsy -- head trauma and signs of struggle. This is not suicide; it's a murder," she stated.

His father, Balaji Ramamurthi, recounted their last conversation on December 22, when Suchir returned from a trip to Los Angeles in good spirits. "He seemed happy," he said.

When asked if Suchir picked up another job, his mother said, "No, he didn't. They (OpenAI) probably threatened him. They didn't allow him to work somewhere else. He also consulted a copyright attorney and figured out that he was not doing anything wrong and they were just suppressing him. That made him give the New York Times interview and resulted in his death."

"He was working in the core group of the ChatGPT; he was kind of an architect of the whole thing. He knows a lot of information about ChatGPT. There were some restrictions on him to not work in other AI companies," the father added. His mother mentioned that Suchir was working on personal research which he wanted to get published, in which he explains that "modulated answer is not exactly as the information pegged to ChatGPT, giving an example of a black and white cat coming out as a colored cat."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American executive Ishpreet Singh named Black Duck Software CIO

DECEMBER 30, 2024

BURLINGTON, MA (TIP) : Black Duck Software, Burlington, Massachusetts-based leader in application security, has named Indian American tech executive Ishpreet Singh as chief information officer (CIO) to lead the organization's technology strategy.

As the global CIO at Black Duck, Ishpreet Singh is responsible for aligning technological initiatives with business objectives, driving the company's digital transformation, and implementing innovative solutions. This includes a robust AI strategy to enhance growth and scalability.

A key part of Singh's role is overseeing enterprise security, ensuring the development and maintenance of a resilient cybersecurity framework to protect the company's assets and data while maintaining compliance with industry standards, according to a company release.

Under his leadership, Black Duck is focused on optimizing business processes, improving operational efficiency, and building secure, future-ready infrastructures that support long-term profitability and innovation.

Ishpreet Singh brings a 20-year track record of developing a strategic vision



Ishpreet Singh has been named as chief information officer (CIO) by Black Duck Software, Burlington, Massachusetts-based leader in application security

aligned with business objectives and implementing cutting-edge solutions to enhance operational efficiency to foster innovation.

A seasoned leader with deep roots in enterprise tech industry leadership, he most recently served as global CIO at Qualys, and on the Evanta CIO Governing Body, in addition to being a member of CNBC's Executive Technology Council.

"Black Duck is in a unique position as a newly independent organization with an impressive track record, the broadest portfolio in the market, and rapid growth

potential," said Ishpreet Singh.

"I'm thrilled to join a team in which such exciting potential stands ahead to craft a strong vision through robust IT solutions. Software truly enables innovation, and it is my mission to ensure we take our business and the needs of our customers to new heights when it comes to building trust in software at the speed businesses demand."

"As a proven leader in the software security industry, it's imperative that we at Black Duck deliver solutions that further accelerate our mission to support our customers in protecting their bottom line by building trust in their software," said Jason Schmitt, CEO of Black Duck.

"Appointing proven leaders to continually heighten Black Duck's information technology and information security strategies is essential for us to bolster our organization's innovation and stability."

Black Duck, formerly known as the Synopsys Software Integrity Group, helps organizations around the world secure their software quickly, integrate security efficiently in their development environments, and safely innovate with new technologies.

Purdue names Indian American Ananth Grama Distinguished Professor of Computer Science



Purdue University Board of Trustees has appointed Ananth Grama as Distinguished Professor of Computer Science.

JANUARY 2, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP) : Recognizing Indian American professor Ananth Grama's distinguished career as a researcher and educator, Purdue University Board of Trustees has appointed him as Distinguished Professor of Computer Science.

Throughout his tenure at Purdue Computer Science, Grama has made impactful contributions to the development of software systems and methodologies for resource management and the execution of complex scientific applications across a range of platforms-from small, embedded controllers to large-scale cloud-powered data centers, according to a media release.

Grama is also known for authoring widely used textbooks and materials that have become foundational references within the computing community.

Grama's extensive accolades include serving on editorial boards for prominent journals such as Parallel Computing and IEEE Transactions on Parallel and Distributed Computing. He has been an active member of program committees for leading conferences and has chaired study sections for the National Institutes of Health, as well as review and advisory boards for the National Science Foundation and Department of Energy.

A fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Grama's honors include a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, Purdue's Faculty Scholar Award, College of Science Outstanding Teacher Award, and College of Science Distinguished Research Award.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin 'unsung heroes' on King Charles' 2025 New Year Honors List



Community leaders, campaigners, academics and medics are among over 30 Indian-origin professionals recognized in King Charles' 2025 New Year Honors List released in London in time for New Year's Eve.

DECEMBER 31, 2024

LONDON (TIP) : Community leaders, campaigners, academics and medics are among over 30 Indian-origin professionals to be recognized in King Charles' 2025 New Year Honors List released in London in time for New Year's Eve.

Ranil Malcolm Jayawardena, a Conservative member of Parliament of Sri Lanka and Indian heritage, has been conferred a Knighthood for political and public service along with recently resigned England men's football team manager Gareth Southgate, for services to the game.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan and former West Midlands Mayor Andy Street are also among those receiving Knighthoods among more than 1,200 recipients on the 2025 honors list released on Monday night across all sectors, with commendation to role models in sport, healthcare, academia and voluntary service.

"Every day, ordinary people go out and do extraordinary things for their communities," UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said. "They represent the very best of the UK and that core value of service which I put at the center of everything this government does. The New Year Honors List celebrates more of these unsung heroes, and I thank them for their incredible contribution," he said.

The list, released annually by the Cabinet Office in the name of the British monarch, includes Commanders of the Order of the British Empire (CBEs) for Satwant Kaur Deol for services to further education.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

NRI's Winter clothes drive to benefit low-income household high school students and their families in California

PARMINDER AUJLA
DECEMBER 31, 2024

SACRAMENTO (TIP): In a remarkable act of community service at Sacramento - the capital of California State - USA, Suvidha International Foundation (<https://suvidhainternational.org/>), in collaboration with the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness and the Rotary Club of Rancho Cordova, successfully collected and distributed over 500 jackets and sweaters, along with winter essentials such as socks, jeans, and scarves. These items were provided to the students and families experiencing economic hardship from Kinney High School in Rancho Cordova, California, on Wednesday, December 11, 2024. This heartwarming initiative ensured that more than 200 beneficiaries, including Kinney High School students and their families, were well-prepared to face the cold winter months. The winter clothing drive provided significant benefits to the students and families of Kinney High School, ensuring they were well-prepared to face the colder months. Many students and families at Kinney High come from underprivileged backgrounds, and access to essential winter clothing-jackets, sweaters, socks, scarves, and jeans-offered much-needed relief.

The drive alleviated financial stress on families of Kinney High School who might otherwise struggle to afford adequate winter attire. With proper clothing, students could attend school comfortably and confidently, improving their focus and participation in educational activities. For families, donations helped reduce health risks associated with cold weather, such as seasonal illnesses.

The campaign, originally initiated by the Rotary Club of Rancho Cordova, gained momentum when Suvidha International Foundation, at the request of City Mayor Siri Pulipati, took the lead with support from the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness. The drive was powered by the unwavering dedication of 22 youth volunteers and their parents from Rotary Clubs and Granite Bay High School.

Under the exemplary leadership of youth volunteers Pranil Raichura and Naman Raichura, participants from the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness-including Devika Eby, Atharv Singh, Kavya Singh, Charandeep Killamsetti, Yahaan Killamsetti, Anya Siri Edara, Vaibhav Sanu, Vihaan Sanu, Vibha Sanu, Neha Vegesna, Nithya Vegesna, Vedanshi Charan, Esha Charan, Deshna Samal, Arya Taneja, Aariv Sharma, and Reyaan Sharma-played a vital role in the success of the winter clothing drive. Additionally, dedicated volunteers from Granite Bay High School, including Arjun Dhulipala, Sriram Vempati, Rahul Veluru, and Rishab Kharait, contributed significantly.

The campaign also received crucial support from City of Rancho Cordova Rotary Club members, including Mike Passof and Lorianne Carl, as well as other adult and youth participants. Together, this collective effort demonstrated the power of community collaboration in making a meaningful impact.

The adult volunteers of the service initiative included Bhaskar Vempati, President of Suvidha International Foundation; Prachi Raichura, member of the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness; Vandna Sharma, CFO of Suvidha International Foundation; and the parents of youth volunteers. These dedicated individuals worked tirelessly to organize, collect, sort, and distribute winter clothing to those in need. Their collective efforts were instrumental in the campaign's success, showcasing the power of community collaboration and the vital role of youth engagement in meaningful service projects.

This initiative exemplified the spirit of giving and the impact of teamwork in addressing critical community needs. Beyond its practical benefits, the initiative fostered a sense of community and support, showing students and families that they are cared for and valued. It met immediate needs while also contributing to resilience and well-being within the Kinney High School community.



Suvidha International Foundation, in collaboration with the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness and the Rotary Club of Rancho Cordova distributed over 500 jackets and sweaters, along with winter essentials such as socks, jeans, and scarves

On behalf of Kinney High School, Emma Falcon - Community Schools Facilitator expressed her deepest gratitude to Suvidha International Foundation, the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness, and the Rotary Club of Rancho Cordova. She highlighted the organizations' incredible generosity, emphasizing that

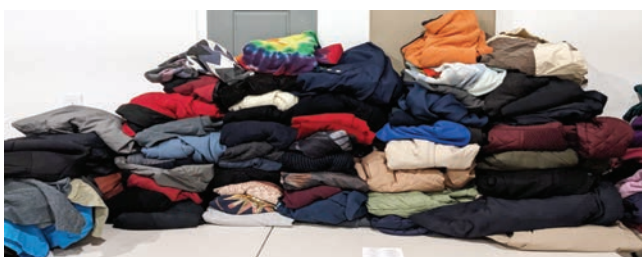


the donations had a profound impact on the students by addressing their winter needs and beyond. Falcon noted that the support not only fulfilled immediate necessities but also fostered a sense of community and care, uplifting the students. She concluded by acknowledging the immense value of the donors' kindness and the far-reaching effects of their contributions.



As a proud member of the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness, Prachi Raichura is thrilled to highlight the outstanding efforts of their nineteen youth members, led by Pranil Raichura and Naman Raichura, along with the support of their dedicated parents, in making the recent winter drive a tremendous success. Together, they collected, organized, and distributed jackets and sweaters, along with other essential items such as socks, scarves, and jeans, to those in need. Deep gratitude goes to Suvidha International Foundation and its President, Bhaskar Vempati, for including the Rotary E-Club in this noble cause. The club eagerly looks forward to collaborating with Suvidha International Foundation on future community initiatives to continue making a positive impact.

Suvidha International Foundation President Bhaskar Vempati shared that the original target for the winter



drive was to raise 100 jackets to support the cause. However, with the involvement of the Rotary E-Club, the initiative surpassed all expectations, collecting and distributing 500 jackets and sweaters along with additional winter essentials. Bhaskar expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley Health & Wellness for their incredible support, to Granite Bay High School students and their parents for their efforts, to the City Mayor for initiating the request for this cause, and to the City of Rancho Cordova Rotary Club for their valuable contributions.

He also acknowledged the unwavering dedication of 22 volunteers who worked together to assist 200 families of Kinney High School students and their loved ones. This initiative truly exemplified the power of community and compassion, bringing much-needed warmth and comfort during the winter season. Bhaskar extended his deepest appreciation to everyone who contributed to making this drive a meaningful and impactful effort, emphasizing that together, they have made a real difference in the lives of many families.

For more information or to get involved in upcoming initiatives, contact Suvidha International Foundation at contact@suvidhainternational.org. Together, we can continue to bring warmth and hope to those who need it most.

ABOUT SUVIDHA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION:

Suvidha International Foundation (<https://suvidhainternational.org/>) is a dedicated nonprofit organization committed to empowering underprivileged students by providing comprehensive educational support. With a strong focus on fostering opportunities for female students, the foundation ensures they can pursue higher education and professional degrees. Currently, more than 80 students benefit from its initiatives, with many enrolled in professional courses such as Engineering, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Nursing, while others are in higher secondary or school-level education.

The financial assistance provided by Suvidha International Foundation ranges from \$40,000 to \$1,00,000 per student, tailored to cover essential needs like tuition fees, college expenses, and hostel accommodations. This support alleviates financial barriers, enabling students to concentrate on their studies and achieve academic success in their chosen fields.

Beyond financial aid, the foundation distributes educational resources such as stationery and sports equipment to over 1,000 students, ensuring they have the tools needed for a well-rounded education. Additionally, specialized educational training is offered to more than 100 students, enriching their learning experiences and fostering both academic and personal growth.

Suvidha International Foundation also provides career guidance, combining mentorship with financial support to help students successfully navigate their educational and professional journeys. By addressing these multifaceted needs, the foundation plays a transformative role in shaping the lives of young individuals, particularly girls, and empowering them for a brighter future.

In the United States, the foundation extends its mission through educational programs like speech and debate training, robotics and AI camps, summer camps, and coding classes. It also actively engages youth volunteers in community service initiatives, including winter clothing drives, park cleanups, and supporting local community events. Through these activities, Suvidha International Foundation not only promotes learning but also instills a sense of social responsibility in the next generation.

Suvidha International Foundation is a certified PVSA (Presidential Volunteer Service Award) nominator and recommends eligible volunteers for this prestigious recognition, honoring their outstanding commitment to community service.

(Based on a Press Release)

UP mosque survey report given to court

Court Commissioner Ramesh Singh Raghav on Thursday, January 2, submitted a 40-page survey report in a sealed envelope to the Chandausi District Court on the Jama Masjid-Harihar Temple dispute in Sambhal. However, further actions will depend on instructions from the Supreme Court or the High Court.

The Court Commissioner said that the delay in filing the survey report in court was due to his ill health.

On November 19, eight litigants, including Mahant Rishiraj Giri of Kaila Devi Temple and Harishankar Jain, filed a suit in the court of Senior Division Civil Judge in Chandausi, Sambhal district, claiming that the Shahi Jama Masjid was originally the Harihar Temple.

The court appointed advocate Ramesh Singh Raghav as the Court Commissioner on the same day and ordered him to conduct a survey.

The Court Commissioner carried out the survey on the same day under tight security and in the presence of top officials of the district.

On November 24, when the Court Commissioner went to conduct the survey again under the protection of the DM and SP, there was a huge protest leading to violence in which five people lost their lives and many police personnel sustained injuries.

The survey report was initially scheduled to be presented in the court on November 29 but the court granted the Court Commissioner an additional 10 days to submit the report. The survey report was to be filed in a sealed envelope on December 9. The Court Commissioner had requested more time, citing ill health and stating that the survey report was not yet ready. The advocate from the Jama Masjid side, Shakeel Ahmed Warsi, had filed an objection to granting additional time.

Around 4.30 pm on Thursday, Court Commissioner Ramesh Singh Raghav reached the courtroom of Senior Division Civil Judge, Chandausi, Aditya Kumar Singh, and filed the survey report in a yellow sealed envelope. Court Commissioner Ramesh Singh Raghav submitted an application along with the survey report in a sealed envelope in the court in which he cited the dates of the survey and ill health as the reasons for not filing the report on time. The Court Commissioner said that he has presented a 43-page survey report in the court regarding the evidence found in the Shahi Jama Masjid during his survey. Besides, about 60 photographs have also been submitted to the court along with the survey report in support of the facts discovered.

Advocate Shakeel Ahmed Warsi, who is representing the case on behalf of the Shahi Jama Masjid, said that they had received information about the filing of the survey report in the court.

India unlikely to respond to Hasina extradition call

PATNA (TIP)

India is unlikely to respond to Bangladesh's request to extradite former premier Shiekh Hasina, people familiar with the matter said, pointing out that Dhaka has not completed key formalities needed to take forward such an issue.

The extradition request was made in the form of a note verbale, or unsigned diplomatic correspondence, sent by the Bangladesh high commission in New Delhi to the external affairs ministry on December 23. The move came amid unprecedented strain in bilateral ties since the formation of Bangladesh's interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

A note verbale is among the lowest levels of diplomatic exchanges, and not typically used for matters as sensitive as extradition requests, the people said on condition of anonymity.

Hasina, 77, has been in India since she stepped down in the face of nationwide protests led by student groups and fled Dhaka. Yunus and other leaders of the caretaker administration have pointed to Hasina's presence in India and her comments while in exile, describing them as a source of tension.

The extradition demand is being seen in some quarters in New Delhi as "public posturing" by Bangladesh's interim government to satisfy domestic constituencies, especially student groups that have gained in influence and are clamouring for the former premier to be brought back to the country, the people cited above said.

"Extradition is not some simple process and both parties making and receiving such a request have certain obligations. The person who is the subject of an extradition request also



has options. Those options are yet to be exercised," one of the people said.

The people noted that the person whose extradition has been sought has the right to mount a legal challenge and this option has not been taken up.

Besides, the India-Bangladesh extradition treaty of 2013 includes provisions under which an extradition request can be turned down. Article 6 of the treaty, or the "Political Offence Exception", states extradition "may be refused if the offence of which it is requested is an offence of a political character".

Article 8, which lists grounds for refusing extradition, states a person may not be extradited if an accusation is not "made in good faith in the interests of justice".

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had on December 23 confirmed that the Indian side received a note verbale from the Bangladeshi side in connection with the extradition request, but declined to comment further.

The people also pointed out that the Indian side had highlighted the way forward in bilateral relations during foreign secretary Vikram Misri's visit to Dhaka last month.

An official statement issued at the end

of Misri's day-long visit on December 9 said that he highlighted India's "willingness to build a positive and constructive relationship" with Bangladesh based on mutual trust and mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns. While extending India's support for a democratic, stable and inclusive Bangladesh, Misri told his interlocutors that bilateral engagements in areas such as connectivity, trade and energy were "geared towards the benefit of the people of Bangladesh".

While India continues to have concerns about the targeting of Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh, there have been signs that the power centres in Dhaka could be softening their approach towards India. Hasina's presence in India and Bangladesh's extradition request didn't figure in an extensive interview of Bangladesh Army chief Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman published by a leading Bengali newspaper on Wednesday.

Zaman said Bangladesh is dependent in many ways on India, an "important neighbour", and will not do anything that goes against New Delhi's strategic interests. India has an interest in Bangladesh's stability and the two sides share a give-and-take relationship that "must be based on fairness", he said. Bangladesh's de facto foreign minister Touhid Hossain also spoke on Wednesday about the need to balance the extradition request and other issues. "This [extradition] is one of the issues and the two countries have many bilateral issues... We will advance with all these issues side by side," he told reporters in response to a question on the possible impact of India turning down the extradition request.

Source: HT

Diljit Dosanjh slammed by farmers for meeting PM Modi: 'Why not Sambhu border?'

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh's meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on New Year's Day has faced sharp criticism from protesting farmer leaders, The Times of India reported.

Expressing disappointment over Diljit Dosanjh's meeting, who earlier extended support to the farmers' movement, the farmers questioned the singer's commitment to the cause. Diljit Dosanjh described his meeting with Modi as a "fantastic start" to the New Year, while the prime minister praised his rise from "humble beginnings to international stardom". "If Diljit truly cared about farmers, he would have come and joined us in solidarity with Dallewal Ji at Sambhu Border, listened



to our concerns, and stood by his earlier statements. Instead, meeting PM Modi

raises doubts about his intentions," ToI quoted as a farmer leader at the border as saying. In 2020, Diljit Dosanjh expressed his support for the farmers' protest, urging the Centre to meet their demands and advocating for their cause.

The same year, Diljit Dosanjh posted in support of the farmers on Instagram: "25 September. We all will stand with the farmer community. Every single person of all age groups from Punjab is standing with the farmers. Everyone who is defending the bill, at least try to talk to the farmers. Punjabi language has been eradicated from Government languages in Jammu and Kashmir. What is happening?"

The farmers have reiterated that their struggle will continue until their demands are addressed.

Jill Biden gets \$20,000 diamond from PM Modi, priciest gift from any foreign leader

WASHINGTON (TIP)

President Joe Biden and his family were given tens of thousands of dollars in gifts from foreign leaders in 2023, with Jill Biden receiving the single most expensive present: a USD 20,000 diamond from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The 7.5-carat diamond from Modi was easily the most costly gift presented to any member of the first family in 2023, although she also received a brooch valued at USD 14,063 from the Ukrainian ambassador to the United States and a bracelet, brooch and photograph album worth USD 4,510 from the president and first lady of Egypt, according to an annual accounting published by the State Department on Thursday, January 2.

The USD 20,000 diamond was retained for official use in the White House East Wing, according to a State Department document, while the other gifts to the president and first lady were sent to the archives. The first lady's office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment about the diamond's use.

The US president himself received a number of expensive presents, including a commemorative photo album valued at USD 7,100 from South Korea's recently impeached President Suk Yeol Yoon, a USD 3,495 statue of Mongolian warriors from the Mongolian prime minister, a USD 3,300 silver bowl from the sultan of Brunei, a USD 3,160 sterling silver tray from the president of Israel, and a collage worth USD 2,400 from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Federal law requires executive branch officials to declare gifts they receive from foreign leaders and counterparts that have an estimated value of more than USD 480. Many of the gifts that meet that threshold are relatively modest, and the more expensive ones are typically – but not always – transferred to the National Archives or put on official displays.

Recipients also have the option to purchase the gift from the US government at its market value, although that is rare, particularly with high-end items.

According to the State Department's Office of Protocol, which compiles the list that will be published in Friday's edition of the Federal Register, several employees of the CIA reported receiving lavish gifts of watches, perfume and jewellery, nearly all of which were destroyed. Of the gifts



In 2023, President Joe Biden and his family were gifted expensive items from foreign leaders, including a USD 20,000 diamond from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. (File)

destroyed, they were worth more than USD 132,000 combined.

CIA Director William Burns received a USD 18,000 astrograph, which is a telescope and astrological camera, from a foreign source whose identity is classified. That is being transferred to the General Services Administration. But Burns reported receiving and destroying an USD 11,000 Omega watch, while numerous others did the same with luxury timepieces.

Below the rank of director, the CIA employees who reported gifts are not identified, but one of them logged an Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra watch, a ladies Omega Constellation watch, a diamond necklace, earring bracelet, and a ring that were valued together at USD 65,100.

All of those were destroyed, according to the report, as was a USD 30,000 women's jewellery set from the Libyan jeweller Al Grew consisting of a necklace, bracelet, ring and earrings received by another CIA employee.

Another CIA employee reported receiving a men's Yacht Master II Rolex Oyster Perpetual watch worth USD 18,700, another reported getting a lady's Rolex Oyster Datejust watch valued at USD 12,500, and one other got a USD 7,450 Rolex Air King watch. All three of the watches were destroyed, according to the list. *Source: AP*



BSF allowing infiltration to destabilise Bengal: Mamata

Firing a salvo at Union Home Minister Amit Shah, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday, January 2, accused the BSF of allowing infiltration from Bangladesh to destabilise the state, calling it the Centre's "nefarious blueprint".

The CM said during an administrative meeting that the Border Security Force (BSF), which guards West Bengal's border with Bangladesh, was allowing infiltration into the state. Banerjee's remarks follow Union Home Minister Amit Shah's charge made earlier saying "infiltration from Bangladesh" was disrupting peace in Bengal.

Mamata Banerjee said, "The BSF is allowing infiltration from different areas into Bengal. The TMC is not guarding the borders. The border is not in our hands, so if someone accuses the TMC of permitting infiltration, it must be pointed out that it was the BSF's responsibility".

Banerjee said she would write a strong letter to the Centre regarding the BSF allowing infiltration from Bangladesh. Stating that it is important to maintain peace in West Bengal and also have good relations with Bangladesh, Mamata Banerjee said, "We have no enmity, but goons are being allowed here. They commit crimes and return across the border. BSF is enabling this, and the Centre has a role in it."

Slamming Banerjee for the remarks, BJP leader Sukanta Majumdar said she "has reached the ultimate level of delusion". The Union Minister and BJP West Bengal chief said in a post on X (formerly Twitter), "Despite not providing land to set up outposts for border surveillance, she used to blame the Border Security Force for illegal infiltration. But now, crossing all limits of accusations, she has started blaming her own administration's officials! According to her, the incompetent DMs and SPs under her administration are allowing foreign criminals to infiltrate the border to murder the elected representatives of her party."

Arvind Kejriwal also questioned the BJP on the issue. Kejriwal asked, "Is the Centre deliberately allowing infiltration from the Bangladesh border or is the BJP government failing to protect the border?"

NIA court convicts 28 for murder during 2018 Kasganj Tiranga Yatra

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A special NIA court here has convicted 28 persons in connection with the murder of Chandan Gupta, who was shot dead in a communal clash that broke out during a 2018 Tiranga Yatra in Kasganj.

Special judge Vivekanand Sharan Tripathi said that the sentence will be announced on Friday. The accused were convicted on charges of murder, attempted murder, rioting and insulting the national flag on Thursday, January 2. The case has drawn significant attention after Chandan Gupta's death sparked riots in the region.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) court also acquitted Nasiruddin and Asim Qureshi, citing a lack of



sufficient evidence to convict them.

On the morning of January 26, 2018, Chandan Gupta and his brother Vivek Gupta took part in a Tiranga Yatra. When the procession reached near the Government Girls Inter College gate on the Tehsil Road, a group, including Salim, Wasim and Naseem, allegedly blocked the road and stopped the procession, a government counsel said.

When Chandan objected, the situation escalated and stone-pelting began from

the side of the accused, the lawyer said.

Salim, one of the main accused, shot Chandan, seriously injuring him, he said. Despite the grave injury, Vivek and their companions managed to rush Chandan to the Kasganj police station, from where he was immediately transferred to the district hospital where he was declared dead shortly after arrival.

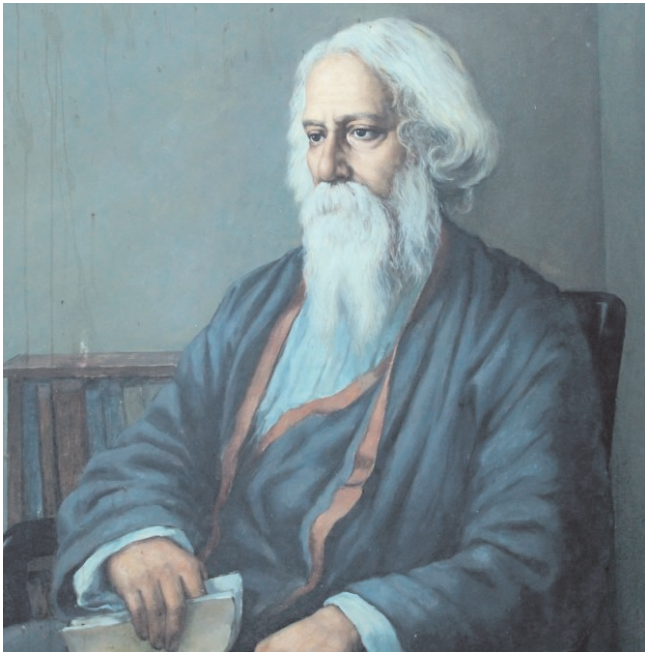
The murder of Chandan led to widespread riots in Kasganj for three days, fuelling communal tensions in the region. Chandan's father Sushil Gupta lodged a murder complaint.

In September 2019, the Kasganj Sessions Court framed charges against 23 individuals. Later, in November 2019, charges were framed against an additional seven persons.

India in history this Week

JANUARY 3 TO JANUARY 9

03 JANUARY



1894 Ravindra Nath Tagore inaugurated the 'Pausha Mela' at Shanti Niketan.

2009 Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot won the trust vote in the Vidhan Sabha.

2005 USA announces Rs 6.2 crore assistance to provide clean drinking water to tsunami victims in Tamil Nadu.

2000 Calcutta was officially named Kolkata.

1995 360 people died in a fierce fire in a school in Dabwali, Haryana.

1968 Launch of 'Maneka', the country's first meteorological rocket.

1943 For the first time, information about missing people was broadcast on television.

1929 Mahatma Gandhi met Lord Irwin.

1901 Brahmacharya Ashram opened in Shanti Niketan.

1998 Bangladesh refused to hand over India to ULFA general secretary Anoop Chetia.

04 JANUARY



1994 Rahul Dev Burman (RD Burman) famous music composer of Hindi films passed away.

1972 Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science inaugurated in New Delhi.

1966 India-Pakistan Conference between Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri and General Ayub Khan of Pakistan begins.

1966 Indo-Pak talks between Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri and President of Pakistan

General Ayub Khan in Tashkent.

05 JANUARY



2014 Indian communication satellite GSAT-14 was successfully placed into orbit.

2009 Omar Abdullah, President of National Conference, sworn in as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.



2006 India and Nepal extend the duration of the transit treaty by 3 months.

1957 Central Sales Tax Act comes into effect.

1955 Birth of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Calcutta (now Kolkata).



1941 Birth of cricketer Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi in Bhopal.



1934 Birth of Bharatiya Janata Party leader Murlidhar Manohar Joshi.

1890 Advocate Gyanendra Mohan Tagore died.

1671 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj captured the Salhar region from the Mughals.

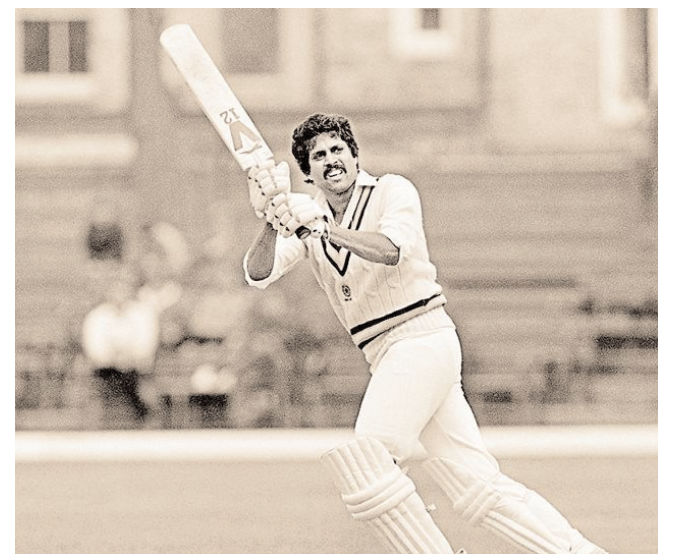
1659 Aurangzeb defeated Shah Shuja in the Battle of Khajwah.

06 JANUARY



1966 Oscar-winning Indian composer AR Rahman was born.

1959 One of the all-rounders of the country, Kapil Dev was born on this day.



1932 Famous Hindi writer Kamleshwar was born.

1928 Indian playwright and theatergoer Vijay Tendulkar was born.

1885 Bharatendu Harishchandra, one of the leading Hindi poets and writers of modern India, died.

1918 Bharata Vyas, the famous lyricist of Bollywood, was born.

07 JANUARY

1967 Irrfan Khan, who rejuvenated the characters of Hindi cinema world, stepped into the world.

1980 After less than three years of the overthrow of power due to emergency, the people of India once again handed over the reins of the country to Indira Gandhi.

08 JANUARY

1965 The first Indian cinema film to win internationally acclaimed filmmaker Bimal Roy. On this day, he said goodbye to the world.

1984 The first Indian woman pilot Sushma Mukhopadhyay died.

09 JANUARY

1982 The first Indian scientific expedition reaches Antarctica.

1915 Mahatma Gandhi arrives in Mumbai after returning from South Africa.

1934 Mahendra Kapoor, the famous playback singer of Hindi cinema, was born.



Heartiest Greetings on Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Prakash Divas (Birthday)



Simarjeet Singh Gilzian
718-501-0004



Baldev Singh Gilzian
516-805-3870
Former President, Gurdwara Baba
Makhan Shah Lobana, Sikh Center



Jaspreet Singh Gilzian
718-496-7545



Dashmesh Petroleum Inc.
Michigan, Indiana

ROYAL INDIA PALACE
RESTAURANT & BANQUET
118-06 Atlantic avenue,
Richmond Hill, NY 11419
Phone: 718-846-7600



Guru Gobind Singh: The Warrior Saint and Spiritual Luminary

GURU GOBIND SINGH, THE TENTH GURU OF SIKHS, STANDS AS A BEACON OF RESILIENCE, SPIRITUAL WISDOM, AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP. BORN IN A TIME OF POLITICAL UPHEAVAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE, HE NOT ONLY GUIDED THE SIKH COMMUNITY THROUGH TURBULENT TIMES BUT ALSO LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE KHALSA, A SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL ORDER THAT CONTINUES TO DEFINE SIKH IDENTITY. THIS ARTICLE DELVES DEEPLY INTO HIS LIFE, PHILOSOPHY, AND TEACHINGS, EXPLORING HOW HIS LEGACY CONTINUES TO INSPIRE MILLIONS WORLDWIDE.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru, was born as Gobind Rai on 22 December 1666 in Patna, Bihar. His early life is a blend of extraordinary spiritual growth, intellectual development, and moments of deep tragedy that profoundly shaped his later contributions as a spiritual leader and warrior. This section explores his family background, formative years, education, and the events that set the stage for his lifelong mission to protect dharma and human rights.

Birth and Family Background

Gobind Rai was born to Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, and Mata Gujri Ji, a devout and wise woman who played an essential role in shaping his character. His birthplace, Patna Sahib, is now revered as one of the five Takhts (seats of authority) in Sikhism. The political and social climate during his birth was fraught with tension, as Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb was actively enforcing Islamic conversion policies, leading to oppression of Hindus and Sikhs alike.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was a spiritual leader and warrior who traveled extensively to spread the teachings of Sikhism and protect religious freedom. His wife, Mata Gujri, was a pillar of support, ensuring Gobind Rai grew up in an environment imbued with spirituality, discipline, and resilience. Gobind Rai was their only child, making him the center of their attention and guidance.

The Significance of Patna in His Early Years

While Guru Tegh Bahadur was away on his missionary journeys, Mata Gujri and Gobind Rai stayed in Patna. The town became a hub for the Sikh community during their stay. Gobind Rai's early interactions with the local people of diverse faiths and backgrounds allowed him to develop a deep respect for cultural and religious diversity.

Even as a child, Gobind Rai exhibited signs of spiritual wisdom and bravery. It is said that his aura was so radiant that visitors often remarked on his extraordinary presence. Despite being born during a period of religious persecution, his childhood was marked by an innate curiosity about the world and an unwavering connection to the divine.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Influence



on Gobind Rai

One of the most significant influences in Gobind Rai's life was his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur. Known as the "Protector of Humanity" (Hind Di Chadar), Guru Tegh Bahadur embodied the principles of selflessness and courage.

- **Missionary Work:** Guru Tegh Bahadur's travels to Punjab, Assam, and Bengal brought him into contact with various communities, teaching Gobind Rai the importance of inclusivity.
- **Sacrifices:** The Guru's willingness to stand against injustice, even at great personal cost, left a lasting impression on his son.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's teachings laid the groundwork for Gobind Rai's future role as a defender of human rights and a leader who would unify his community under the banner of equality and justice.

Formative Years and Education

Gobind Rai was not only raised as a spiritual seeker but also as a warrior and intellectual. His upbringing emphasized a holistic approach to leadership, balancing spiritual enlightenment with physical strength.

- **Training in Martial Arts:** Gobind Rai was trained in horse riding, archery, swordsmanship, and other forms of combat. This training prepared him to lead his people during tumultuous times.
- **Study of Scriptures:** He studied Sikh scriptures and other religious texts, including Hindu epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana,

gaining insights into dharma (righteousness) and leadership.

- **Language Proficiency:** Gobind Rai was proficient in multiple languages, including Punjabi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Braj, enabling him to connect with diverse communities and articulate his vision effectively.

His education was not limited to religious studies; it also included lessons in statecraft and diplomacy, which proved invaluable in his later dealings with hill chieftains and Mughal authorities.

Early Signs of Leadership

Even as a child, Gobind Rai demonstrated remarkable leadership qualities. He was known for his courage, intelligence, and ability to inspire others. Anecdotes from his childhood highlight his innate sense of justice and fairness.

- **Incident of the Broken Toy Bow:** A popular story recounts how young Gobind Rai refused to cry when his toy bow broke, stating that a true warrior does not mourn over minor losses. This incident symbolized his resilience and readiness to face challenges.
- **Interactions with Saints and Scholars:** Gobind Rai often engaged in discussions with visiting saints, absorbing their wisdom and demonstrating his deep understanding of spiritual concepts.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur

A defining moment in Gobind Rai's early life was the martyrdom of his father. In 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed by Aurangzeb for refusing to convert to Islam and defending the religious freedom of Kashmiri Pandits.

- **The Turning Point:** At the age of nine, Gobind Rai witnessed the brutal consequences of tyranny. This event solidified his resolve to fight oppression and protect the rights of the marginalized.
- **Acceptance of Guruship:** Following his father's death, Gobind Rai was formally installed as the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. Despite his young age, he took on the immense responsibility of leading his community through a period of crisis.

The sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur became a rallying cry for Sikhs, and Gobind Rai's leadership ensured that his father's legacy of resistance and justice would endure.

Anandpur Sahib: A Hub of Spiritual and Martial Training

After becoming the Guru, Gobind Rai established Anandpur Sahib, which became the epicenter of Sikhism under his guidance. It was here that he began to organize the Sikh community into a cohesive force, blending spirituality with martial discipline.

- **Community Building:** Anandpur Sahib attracted Sikhs from all over India, creating a sense of unity and purpose.
- **Preparation for Future Battles:** Gobind Rai encouraged the Sikhs to train in martial arts and self-defense, anticipating the need to resist future aggression.

Legacy of His Early Life

Gobind Rai's early life was marked by a unique combination of spiritual wisdom, intellectual growth, and exposure to the harsh realities of life under an oppressive regime. These formative years laid the foundation for his later contributions as Guru Gobind Singh, the warrior-saint who would transform Sikhism and inspire generations to come.

- **Spiritual Resilience:** His connection to the divine and commitment to justice were evident from a young age.
- **Leadership Qualities:** His ability to inspire and lead others became apparent during his childhood.

Guru Gobind Singh: The Founder of Khalsa Panth

The establishment of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh Ji on 13 April 1699 (Baisakhi) marked a transformative moment in Sikh history. It was a revolutionary initiative aimed at empowering the Sikh community, uniting them under a common identity, and preparing them to confront religious persecution and social injustices. This section explores the events leading to the formation of the Khalsa, its rituals and significance, and its impact on Sikhism and society.

Context Leading to the Creation of the Khalsa

The political and religious environment in India during Guru Gobind Singh's time was rife with oppression. The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb pursued aggressive policies to enforce Islamic supremacy, resulting in widespread persecution of non-Muslims.

- **Religious Oppression:** The Mughal administration imposed *jizya* (religious tax) on Hindus and sought to convert them forcibly. Temples were destroyed, and religious practices were restricted.
- **Guru Tegh Bahadur's Sacrifice:** The execution of Guru Gobind Singh's father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, for defending the rights of Hindus and Sikhs, was a pivotal moment. It underscored the need for a community prepared to resist tyranny.
- **Internal Challenges:** The Sikh community faced fragmentation and lacked a unified identity. Guru Gobind Singh recognized the need to strengthen their spiritual and martial resolve.

Preparations for the Khalsa

Guru Gobind Singh spent years preparing the Sikh community for the creation of the Khalsa. Anandpur Sahib became a center for spiritual and martial training, attracting followers from various regions.

- **Building Unity:** Through teachings, hymns, and discourses, the Guru instilled a sense of equality, courage, and devotion among his followers.
- **Martial Training:** Sikhs were encouraged to learn combat skills, ensuring they were prepared to defend themselves and others.
- **Symbolism of Equality:** The Guru emphasized the oneness of humanity, rejecting caste-based discrimination and promoting social justice.

The First Baisakhi of the Khalsa

The historic event took place on 13 April 1699 at Anandpur Sahib. Guru Gobind Singh organized a grand



congregation, inviting Sikhs from across India.

- **The Sword and the Call for Sacrifice:** The Guru stood before the assembled crowd, holding a sword, and asked, "Who is willing to give their head for the faith?"
- **After an initial moment of hesitation,** Daya Ram (later Bhai Daya Singh) stepped forward, offering his life. The Guru took him into a tent and later emerged with a blood-stained sword. This process was repeated with four more volunteers: Dharam Das, Himmat Rai, Mohkam Chand, and Sahib Chand.
- **The Five Beloved Ones (Panj Pyare):** These five men, from diverse backgrounds and castes, were the first initiates of the Khalsa. They became known as the Panj Pyare, symbolizing the elimination of caste and social distinctions.

The Initiation Ceremony: Amrit Sanchar

Guru Gobind Singh introduced the Amrit Sanchar (baptism) ceremony, where the Panj Pyare were initiated into the Khalsa.

- **Preparation of Amrit:** The Guru stirred water and sugar crystals in an iron bowl using a double-edged sword (Khanda) while reciting five sacred hymns from Sikh scripture.
- **Initiation Process:** The initiates drank the Amrit, symbolizing their commitment to the Khalsa ideals, and were sprinkled with it five times on their hair and eyes.
- **Code of Conduct:** The Guru instructed the Khalsa to adhere to a strict moral and spiritual code, including daily prayers, ethical conduct, and readiness for self-

defense.

The Five Ks (Panj Kakkars)

Guru Gobind Singh mandated that every Khalsa Sikh adopt five articles of faith, known as the Five Ks. These symbols served as a constant reminder of their commitment to the Guru's teachings.

- **Kesh (uncut hair):** Symbolizing spirituality and acceptance of God's will.
- **Kangha (wooden comb):** Representing cleanliness and discipline.
- **Kara (iron bracelet):** Signifying unity with God and restraint in actions.
- **Kirpan (sword):** Denoting courage and the responsibility to protect the weak.
- **Kachera (cotton undergarments):** Symbolizing modesty and self-control.

The New Identity: Singh and Kaur

Guru Gobind Singh bestowed a new identity upon his followers, erasing distinctions of caste, class, and gender.

- **Singh and Kaur:** Men were given the surname Singh (lion), and women were given Kaur (princess). This affirmed their equality and regal dignity.
- **Transformation of the Individual:** The Khalsa was envisioned as a saint-soldier, combining spiritual wisdom with martial prowess.

Guru Gobind Singh's Own Initiation

In a remarkable act of humility, Guru Gobind Singh asked the Panj Pyare to initiate him into the Khalsa. This act emphasized the equality of all members of the Khalsa and demonstrated his

commitment to the principles he had established.

Objectives of the Khalsa

The creation of the Khalsa was not merely a religious initiative but a socio-political revolution aimed at empowering the oppressed.

- **Defense of Dharma:** The Khalsa was tasked with protecting the rights and freedoms of all people, regardless of religion or caste.
- **Promotion of Equality:** By erasing social distinctions, the Khalsa fostered unity and brotherhood.
- **Spiritual Discipline:** Members were encouraged to live righteous lives, adhering to the principles of Sikhism.

Impact of the Khalsa on Sikhism

The establishment of the Khalsa had a profound and lasting impact on Sikhism.

- **Unity and Strength:** The Khalsa provided a unified identity and a sense of purpose to the Sikh community.
- **Resistance to Oppression:** The Khalsa became a formidable force, challenging Mughal tyranny and inspiring other oppressed communities.
- **Legacy of Leadership:** The principles and institutions established by the Khalsa continue to guide Sikhs worldwide.

Challenges and Sacrifices

The formation of the Khalsa brought with it significant challenges. Members faced persecution and had to endure immense sacrifices to uphold their principles. However, their resilience and dedication became a source of inspiration for generations to come.

The establishment of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh was a defining moment in Sikh history, symbolizing the union of spirituality and courage. By creating the Khalsa, the Guru empowered his followers to stand against injustice and to live with dignity and purpose. The Khalsa remains a cornerstone of Sikh identity, embodying the values of equality, justice, and selfless service.

Guru Gobind Singh: Literary Contributions and Philosophy

Guru Gobind Singh was not only a spiritual leader and warrior but also a prolific scholar and poet. His literary works, composed in multiple languages including Punjabi, Braj, Persian, and Sanskrit, reflect his philosophical depth, spiritual wisdom, and vision for a just society. This section delves into the Guru's literary contributions, their themes, and their enduring significance.

Literary Contributions of Guru Gobind Singh

Guru Gobind Singh's writings form a significant part of Sikh literature and philosophy. Although most of his works are compiled in the Dasam Granth, his compositions extend beyond the text, offering profound insights into spirituality, ethics, and leadership.

Jaap Sahib

- A hymn of praise, Jaap Sahib glorifies the infinite attributes of God.
- Written in Braj and Sanskrit, it emphasizes the omnipresence, omnipotence, and formlessness of the divine.
- The rhythmic and poetic structure inspires devotion and courage, making it integral to Sikh daily prayers.

Akal Ustat

- Translated as "Praise of the Eternal," this composition celebrates the unity and universality of God.
- Guru Gobind Singh denounces caste discrimination and religious fanaticism, promoting equality and harmony.

Bachittar Natak

- Often regarded as Guru Gobind Singh's autobiographical account, it narrates his divine mission and struggles.
- It provides a historical perspective on the socio-political challenges of his time.

Chandi di Var

- A poetic retelling of the Hindu mythological tale of Goddess Durga's battles with demons.
- This work symbolizes the fight against evil and oppression, resonating with the Guru's mission to empower the oppressed.

Zafarnama

- A Persian epistle written to Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, Zafarnama is a masterpiece of diplomacy and moral admonishment.
- In it, Guru Gobind Singh condemns Aurangzeb's deceitful practices and upholds the ideals of truth and justice.

Sarab Loh Granth

- This text focuses on the concept of Sarab Loh (All-Steel), symbolizing strength and resilience.
- It emphasizes the virtues of the Khalsa and the eternal battle between good and evil.

Shabad Hazare

- A collection of hymns that reflect Guru Gobind Singh's spiritual depth.



- These compositions encourage self-discipline and devotion to God.

Philosophical Themes in Guru Gobind Singh's Writings

The Guru's literary works encapsulate his vision for a society rooted in justice, equality, and spirituality. Key philosophical themes include:

Oneness of God:

- Guru Gobind Singh reinforced the Sikh belief in the singular, formless, and eternal nature of God. His writings often describe God as beyond human comprehension yet accessible through devotion and righteous actions.

Equality and Justice

- He rejected casteism, gender inequality, and religious exclusivism. In works like Akal Ustat, he highlighted the equality of all human beings, urging them to rise above divisions.

Empowerment and Courage

- Through compositions like Chandi di Var, the Guru inspired his followers to embrace courage and fight against tyranny. The symbolism of divine battles in his writings resonated with the Sikh struggle for justice.

Devotion and Discipline

- The Guru emphasized the importance of a disciplined life rooted in devotion, humility, and service. His poetic expressions of love for God inspire Sikhs to remain steadfast in their faith.

Moral Integrity

- Works like Zafarnama underscore

the importance of truth and moral integrity, even in the face of adversity. Guru Gobind Singh's unwavering principles became a moral compass for his followers.

Languages and Styles

Guru Gobind Singh's mastery of multiple languages allowed him to address diverse audiences and articulate complex ideas effectively.

Multilingual Proficiency:

- His compositions include a blend of Punjabi, Braj, Sanskrit, and Persian, reflecting his cosmopolitan outlook.
- This linguistic versatility made his works accessible to people of different backgrounds.

Poetic and Rhythmic Style

- The Guru used metaphors, similes, and allegories to convey profound spiritual truths.
- The rhythmic quality of his hymns, particularly in Jaap Sahib, enhances their recitation and memorability.

Symbolism

- His use of mythological references, such as Durga in Chandi di Var, served as metaphors for the eternal struggle between good and evil.

Significance of the Dasam Granth

The Dasam Granth, a compilation of Guru Gobind Singh's writings, holds a central place in Sikh literature.

Structure of the Granth:

- Divided into various sections, including Jaap Sahib, Bachittar Natak, and Chandi di Var.
- Each section addresses different aspects of spirituality, ethics, and

governance.

Controversies and Debates

- The Dasam Granth has been subject to scholarly debates regarding its authorship and authenticity.
- However, its spiritual and philosophical contributions remain undisputed among Sikhs.

Practical Applications:

- The teachings of the Dasam Granth continue to inspire Sikhs in their daily lives, encouraging devotion, courage, and self-discipline.

Guru Gobind Singh as a Visionary Poet

Guru Gobind Singh's literary contributions extend beyond religious texts. His works reflect a profound understanding of human psychology, social dynamics, and the principles of governance.

Empowering the Oppressed

- His writings instilled a sense of dignity and self-worth among the oppressed, inspiring them to challenge societal injustices.

Guidance for Leadership

- The Guru's teachings on leadership emphasize humility, moral integrity, and a commitment to the welfare of others.

Relevance in Modern Times

- The themes of equality, justice, and resilience in his works remain relevant in addressing contemporary social and political challenges.

Legacy of Guru Gobind Singh's Literary Works

The Guru's writings have left an indelible mark on Sikhism and world literature.

Inspiration for Sikh Practices

- His compositions form the basis of Sikh prayers and rituals, fostering a sense of unity and devotion among followers.
- Scholars and spiritual leaders worldwide acknowledge the literary and philosophical depth of Guru Gobind Singh's works.
- Efforts to preserve and translate his writings have made them accessible to diverse audiences, ensuring their continued relevance.

Guru Gobind Singh's literary contributions reflect his multifaceted personality as a spiritual leader, warrior, and poet. His works, rich in philosophy and poetic brilliance, continue to inspire millions, guiding them toward a life of righteousness, courage, and devotion. By blending spirituality with social and political ideals, the Guru redefined the role of literature as a powerful tool for transformation.

ਦੇਹ ਸਿਵਾ ਬਰੁ ਮੋਹਿ ਇਹੈ ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਟਰੋਂ ॥
ਨ ਡਰੋਂ ਅਰਿ ਸੇ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋਂ ਨਿਸਚੈ ਕਰਿ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋਂ ॥
ਅਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਹੋਂ ਆਪਨੇ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਕੋਂ ਇਹ ਲਾਲਚ ਹਉ ਗੁਨ ਤਉ ਉਚਰੋਂ ॥
ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਦਾਨ ਬਨੈ ਅਤਿ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੁਝ ਮਰੋਂ ॥



Dear God, grant my request so that I may never deviate from doing good deeds. That, I shall have no fear of the enemy when I go into battle and with determination I will be victorious. That, I may teach my mind to only sing your praises. And when the time comes, I should die fighting heroically on the field of battle

A HAPPY GURU GOBIND SINGH JI'S PRAKASH DIWAS



BEDI FAMILY, New York

First row (L to R): Kirpa Kaur, Ryanbir Singh Bedi, Paramjit Singh Bedi, Kuldip Kaur Bedi, Satbir Singh Bedi

Second row (L to R): Simarjit Kaur, Saachi Kaur, Japna Kaur, Asees Singh, Daya Singh

Third row (L to R): Jaswinder Singh, Bisman Singh, Tejvir Singh Raminder Singh, Ribli Kaur, Tresa Kaur, Gurpreet Singh, Supreet Kaur, Chazbir Singh Bedi

Transformation of Sikhism into a Warrior Faith

Guru Gobind Singh's leadership marked the transformation of Sikhism from a primarily spiritual movement into a martial and political force. This transition was not merely about militarization but represented a comprehensive restructuring of the Sikh faith to respond to the socio-political realities of the time. This section explores the evolution of Sikhism under Guru Gobind Singh, the principles of saint-soldierhood, key battles, and the enduring legacy of the warrior ethos in Sikhism.

Context of Transformation: Historical Challenges

Religious Persecution in India:

- The late 17th century saw widespread persecution under Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, who sought to impose Islamic orthodoxy.
- Sikhs, Hindus, and other non-Muslim communities faced forced conversions, destruction of places of worship, and suppression of cultural practices.

Legacy of Guru Hargobind:

- Guru Gobind Singh inherited the ideology of Miri-Piri established by Guru Hargobind, blending spiritual enlightenment with temporal strength.
- Guru Hargobind had already begun the militarization of Sikhism by creating the Akal Sena (army) to protect the oppressed.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur:

- The execution of Guru Gobind Singh's father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, for defending religious freedom served as a turning point.
- It reinforced the need for Sikhs to adopt a defensive and proactive stance against oppression.

Rise of Banditry and Local Tyranny:

- Beyond Mughal persecution, local chieftains and landlords often exploited peasants and lower-caste groups.
- Guru Gobind Singh envisioned Sikhism as a force to liberate society from these injustices.

Philosophy of Saint-Soldierhood

Guru Gobind Singh introduced the concept of the Sant-Sipahi, or saint-soldier, emphasizing a balance between spiritual devotion and martial readiness.

Spiritual Foundation:

- Sikhs were encouraged to meditate on Naam (God's Name) and uphold the principles of humility, compassion, and selflessness.
- The warrior ethos was rooted in the defense of righteousness and justice, not in aggression or conquest.



Martial Responsibility:

- Every Sikh was taught to see themselves as a protector of the weak and a defender of the faith.
- Martial training, including the use of swords, bows, and horses, became integral to Sikh life.

Equality and Justice:

- The saint-soldier was also a social reformer, challenging caste-based discrimination and advocating for human rights.

Inspiration from Mythology and History:

- Guru Gobind Singh drew inspiration from Hindu epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, and Islamic traditions of chivalry, blending these influences into a unique Sikh warrior philosophy.

Formation of the Khalsa

The founding of the Khalsa in 1699 was central to the transformation of Sikhism into a warrior faith.

Institutionalizing Martial Training:

- The Khalsa order emphasized discipline, bravery, and self-sacrifice.
- Initiates were trained in the art of war and imbued with spiritual teachings.

Democratic Leadership:

- The concept of the Panj Pyare (Five Beloved Ones) reflected Guru Gobind Singh's commitment to collective decision-making.
- The Khalsa was a brotherhood bound by shared principles, transcending caste and class divisions.

Code of Conduct (Rehat Maryada):

- Khalsa Sikhs were required to wear the Five Ks, embodying spiritual and martial values.
- They pledged to fight against tyranny and protect the oppressed,

regardless of religion or background.

Military Campaigns of Guru Gobind Singh

Guru Gobind Singh personally led numerous military campaigns to defend Sikhism and resist Mughal oppression.

Battle of Bhangani (1688):

- The first major battle fought by Guru Gobind Singh against local hill chieftains who resented his growing influence.
- It established his reputation as a capable military leader.

Battle of Nadaun (1691):

- Guru Gobind Singh allied with Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur to defeat Mughal forces.

Defensive Strategies at Anandpur Sahib:

- Anandpur Sahib became a fortress of resistance, symbolizing Sikh resilience.
- Guru Gobind Singh repelled multiple attacks by combined Mughal and hill chieftain forces.

Battle of Chamkaur (1704):

- A pivotal moment in Sikh history, where Guru Gobind Singh and his forces valiantly defended against overwhelming Mughal forces.
- The Guru's two elder sons, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, were martyred in this battle, epitomizing the spirit of sacrifice.

Battle of Muktsar (1705):

- The Guru's forces, though outnumbered, achieved a symbolic victory, demonstrating their unyielding spirit.
- The battle is commemorated as a testament to Sikh valor and unity.

Transformation of Sikh Institutions

Guru Gobind Singh restructured Sikh institutions to reflect the warrior ethos

and ensure the community's self-sufficiency.

Fortification of Sikh Centers:

- Anandpur Sahib and other towns were developed into centers of spiritual learning and martial training.

Economic Self-Reliance:

- Sikhs were encouraged to contribute to the community treasury, enabling the establishment of langars (community kitchens) and the maintenance of armed forces.

Appointment of Successors:

- Before his death, Guru Gobind Singh declared the Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru of the Sikhs, ensuring spiritual continuity.
- Leadership was decentralized, with the Khalsa assuming collective responsibility.

Enduring Legacy of the Warrior Faith

Guru Gobind Singh's transformation of Sikhism into a warrior faith has left a lasting legacy.

- The martial ethos inspired later Sikh leaders, including Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in their struggles against tyranny.
- Sikh soldiers played crucial roles in global conflicts, earning respect for their bravery and discipline.

Modern Relevance:

- The principles of saint-soldierhood guide Sikhs in addressing contemporary challenges, from social injustice to humanitarian crises.

Cultural Identity:

- The warrior spirit is celebrated through Sikh festivals, martial arts like Gatka, and the continued reverence for the Five Ks.

Guru Gobind Singh's Military Strategy

Guerrilla Warfare:

- The Guru employed hit-and-run tactics, using the terrain to his advantage.
- He avoided direct confrontations with larger forces, striking strategically to weaken the enemy.

Use of Fortresses:

- Fortresses like Anandpur Sahib and Lohgarh were strategically located and well-fortified to withstand prolonged sieges.

Unity and Morale:

- Guru Gobind Singh fostered a sense of brotherhood and shared purpose among his warriors.
- His personal involvement in battles inspired loyalty and courage.

Guru Gobind Singh's Spiritual Teachings and Philosophy

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and final Guru of Sikhism, was not only a great warrior and leader but also a profound spiritual guide. His teachings and philosophy shaped the core beliefs of Sikhism, making him one of the most influential spiritual figures in history. This section explores his spiritual insights, the development of Sikh practices, and the theological underpinnings of his teachings.

Guru's Vision of Sikhism

The Guru's Role in Sikhism:

- Guru Gobind Singh's vision for Sikhism was rooted in the idea of unity, equality, and devotion to one God.
- He emphasized the importance of the Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru, and after his death, Sikhs were instructed to look to the sacred scripture for spiritual guidance.
- Guru Gobind Singh's teachings were meant to transcend ritualistic practices, encouraging followers to focus on inner spirituality, self-discipline, and service to humanity.

Spiritual Equality:

- A hallmark of Guru Gobind Singh's philosophy was his commitment to equality. He worked tirelessly to break the social barriers of caste, gender, and creed, teaching that all individuals are equal in the eyes of God.
- His creation of the Khalsa, a brotherhood of spiritually committed warriors, symbolized this equality. The Khalsa was open to individuals from all walks of life, reinforcing the idea that one's spiritual standing is not determined by birth or social status but by devotion to God and righteous living.

Teachings

Oneness of God (Ik Onkar):

- Guru Gobind Singh reiterated the Sikh belief in the oneness of God, a central tenet of Sikhism.
- He taught that God is formless, eternal, and transcendent, and is present in all aspects of creation. This teaching is encapsulated in the Sikh phrase Ik Onkar, which means "There is only One God."
- His spiritual teachings emphasized the importance of devotion to this One God, without the need for intermediaries or rituals.

Equality and Brotherhood:

- The creation of the Khalsa in 1699 was a revolutionary act that consolidated the principles of equality and brotherhood.
- Guru Gobind Singh preached that



all Sikhs, regardless of their background, should see each other as equals, bound by a shared commitment to the divine and to justice.

- He rejected the caste system, asserting that all Sikhs, whether high or low, rich or poor, were spiritually equal.

Selflessness and Service (Seva):

- Guru Gobind Singh emphasized the importance of Seva, or selfless service, as a means of attaining spiritual enlightenment.
- He believed that the ultimate goal of life was not personal gain but service to others, particularly to the downtrodden and oppressed.
- His teachings on selflessness extended beyond mere charity; he encouraged Sikhs to serve society and fight for justice, even if it meant making personal sacrifices.

Rejection of Superstition:

- Guru Gobind Singh was a staunch opponent of superstitions, rituals, and idol worship.
- He emphasized that true spirituality comes from devotion to the One God and through the practice of honesty, humility, and service.
- In his teachings, he denounced the rituals of priesthood and the worship of idols, which he saw as distractions from the true path of devotion.

The Guru Granth Sahib as the Eternal Guru:

- One of the most significant aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's legacy was his decision to declare the Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru after his passing.
- He stated that no human Guru would succeed him, ensuring that Sikhs would have a constant source of divine wisdom in the form of the scripture.
- This marked the culmination of the

Guru lineage, with the Guru Granth Sahib becoming the ultimate spiritual guide for all Sikhs.

The Rejection of Ritualism in Favor of Inner Spirituality:

- Guru Gobind Singh's teachings stressed that spiritual truth was to be found through meditation on the divine name (Naam) and through selfless action.
- He rejected the idea of asceticism, stating that one could attain spiritual liberation by living an active life in the world, while maintaining a strong connection to the divine.

Living a Righteous Life:

- Guru Gobind Singh's spiritual philosophy stressed the importance of personal morality.
- He taught that living a righteous life required cultivating virtues such as honesty, humility, compassion, and self-control.

The Battle Against Intolerance:

- Guru Gobind Singh fought not only physical battles but also intellectual and spiritual battles against religious intolerance.
- He rejected sectarianism, bigotry, and injustice, emphasizing the need for a world where all individuals could practice their faith freely and live in harmony.

Legacy of Guru Gobind Singh's Spiritual Teachings

Influence on Sikh Identity:

- Guru Gobind Singh's spiritual teachings became the bedrock of Sikh identity.
- His insistence on equality, justice, and personal devotion shaped the Sikh community into a force for good, which continues to be active in social, political, and spiritual matters today.

The Universal Appeal of His Philosophy:

- Guru Gobind Singh's teachings transcended the boundaries of religion and culture, offering a universal message of peace, justice, and the importance of standing up for righteousness.
- Sikhs worldwide continue to draw inspiration from his spiritual philosophy, applying his teachings to everyday life.

Moral and Ethical Teachings

Equality and Justice:

- One of Guru Gobind Singh's core teachings was the principle of equality. He vehemently opposed any form of social discrimination based on caste, gender, or social status.
- Guru Gobind Singh stressed the importance of justice and fairness. His commitment to equality was demonstrated in the formation of the Khalsa, where all initiates were given the same rights and responsibilities, regardless of their background.
- In his teachings, Guru Gobind Singh explicitly rejected the caste system, emphasizing that all Sikhs, whether rich or poor, high or low, were equal in the eyes of God.
- Guru Gobind Singh also taught that one's actions, rather than birth or social status, determine a person's worth.

Selflessness and Service:

- Guru Gobind Singh taught the value of selflessness and seva (service). His life was an embodiment of these principles, as he dedicated his entire existence to the welfare of others.
- He encouraged his followers to engage in seva not only for spiritual growth but also to contribute to the greater good of society.
- Through selfless service, Sikhs were to cultivate humility, compassion, and a sense of responsibility toward others.

Bravery and the Warrior Spirit:

- Guru Gobind Singh was known for his warrior spirit. However, his teachings regarding bravery were not about glorifying violence but about defending truth, justice, and righteousness.
- He encouraged Sikhs to be brave and fearless in the face of tyranny and injustice, to protect the weak, and to stand up for what is right.
- The creation of the Khalsa was a way to empower Sikhs to be spiritually and physically strong, ready to face any challenges that might arise in their quest for justice.

Guru Gobind Singh's Contributions to Global Humanism

Guru Gobind Singh's philosophy was grounded in a commitment to humanism and the well-being of all. His teachings transcended geographical, cultural, and religious boundaries, presenting a universal message of peace, equality, and justice. In a world often divided by religious conflict and social hierarchies, Guru Gobind Singh's vision was a call to transcend these divisions and live a life based on moral integrity and the universal principles of righteousness.

His advocacy for justice, equality, and religious freedom provided a moral framework that resonates not only with Sikhs but also with people of all faiths and ideologies. Guru Gobind Singh's egalitarian principles laid the foundation for modern concepts of human rights, emphasizing that every individual, regardless of race, caste, gender, or religion, has inherent dignity and worth. His rejection of social hierarchies and focus on community service and the collective good offers a model for social justice that remains relevant in contemporary discussions on equality and rights.

The Relevance of Guru Gobind Singh's Teachings in Modern Times

In the contemporary world, where global issues such as inequality, injustice, and religious intolerance are prevalent, the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh continue to resonate deeply. His emphasis on spiritual freedom, righteousness, and selfless service provides a timely reminder that spiritual growth is intrinsically linked to one's commitment to social justice. Guru Gobind Singh's vision for a just society, where everyone has the right to live in dignity, echoes in the modern world's fight for civil rights, gender equality, and social reform.

The Khalsa, with its focus on bravery, equality, and community service, continues to be a guiding light for individuals who seek to stand against oppression and stand up for truth. In a world that often seems divided by conflicts of identity, belief, and social divisions, Guru Gobind Singh's message of unity, tolerance, and the universal oneness of humanity remains more relevant than ever.

Guru Gobind Singh's Enduring Legacy in Sikh Community and Beyond

Guru Gobind Singh's legacy is not just confined to the history books but is lived every day by millions of Sikhs across the world. His teachings have shaped the Sikh community's response to challenges and continue to guide their spiritual and social lives. The Gurdwaras, Sikh organizations, and Khalsa camps remain active



centers of education, spiritual growth, and social service, embodying the ideals that Guru Gobind Singh set forth for his followers.

The impact of Guru Gobind Singh extends beyond the Sikh community, as his message of equality, justice, and selfless service resonates with people of all cultures and backgrounds. His courage, leadership, and unwavering commitment to truth have inspired leaders, activists, and thinkers throughout history. From the struggles for independence in India to the global fight for human rights, Guru Gobind Singh's influence is woven into the fabric of global history.

The Eternal Guru

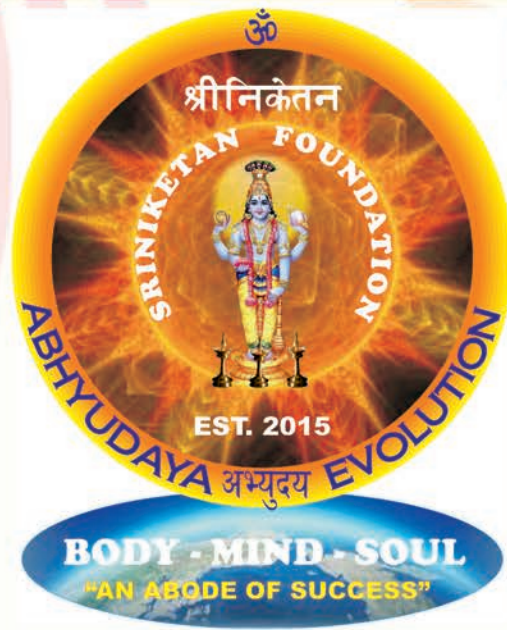
The life of Guru Gobind Singh is a testament to the power of vision, courage, and unshakable faith. His teachings continue to light the way for those seeking justice, equality, and spiritual enlightenment. Guru Gobind Singh did not merely live for his time; his vision for humanity transcends time and space,

inspiring future generations to stand tall in the face of adversity, uphold truth, and serve humanity with selflessness.

Guru Gobind Singh's life was not just about the political and military struggles he faced, but about his commitment to the eternal truths of life—equality, justice, service, and devotion to the Divine. His legacy remains not only in the Khalsa but in the hearts and minds of people worldwide who continue to draw strength and inspiration from his profound teachings.

As Sikhs continue to follow the path that Guru Gobind Singh set forth, they are reminded that the battle for justice, equality, and truth is eternal, and each individual's role in this struggle is sacred. Guru Gobind Singh's message will continue to resonate, providing guidance, strength, and inspiration for generations to come, long after his physical presence left this world. His legacy is indeed one that transcends time, echoing through history as a beacon of hope, justice, and universal love.





Extend

**Heartiest Greetings on
Shri Guru Gobind Singh's
Prakash Divas (Birthday)**



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Purnima Desai

Guru Gobind Singh: Epitome of Sacrifice

Guru Gobind Singh's life is a remarkable tapestry of sacrifice, courage, and devotion to the principles of justice and righteousness. Among the numerous sacrifices he made, the most heart-wrenching was the loss of all four of his sons—known as the “Sahibzade”—in the struggle to uphold the values of Sikhism and protect the oppressed. This narrative encapsulates the essence of his ultimate sacrifice and the legacy it left behind.

The Four Sahibzade

The four sons of Guru Gobind Singh—Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, Zorawar Singh, and Fateh Singh—are collectively known as the Sahibzade. They were raised in an environment imbued with Sikh values of bravery, compassion, and unwavering faith in the divine. Despite their young ages, each Sahibzada exhibited remarkable courage and dedication to the ideals of Sikhism, becoming immortalized as symbols of sacrifice and resilience.

Ajit Singh (1687-1704)

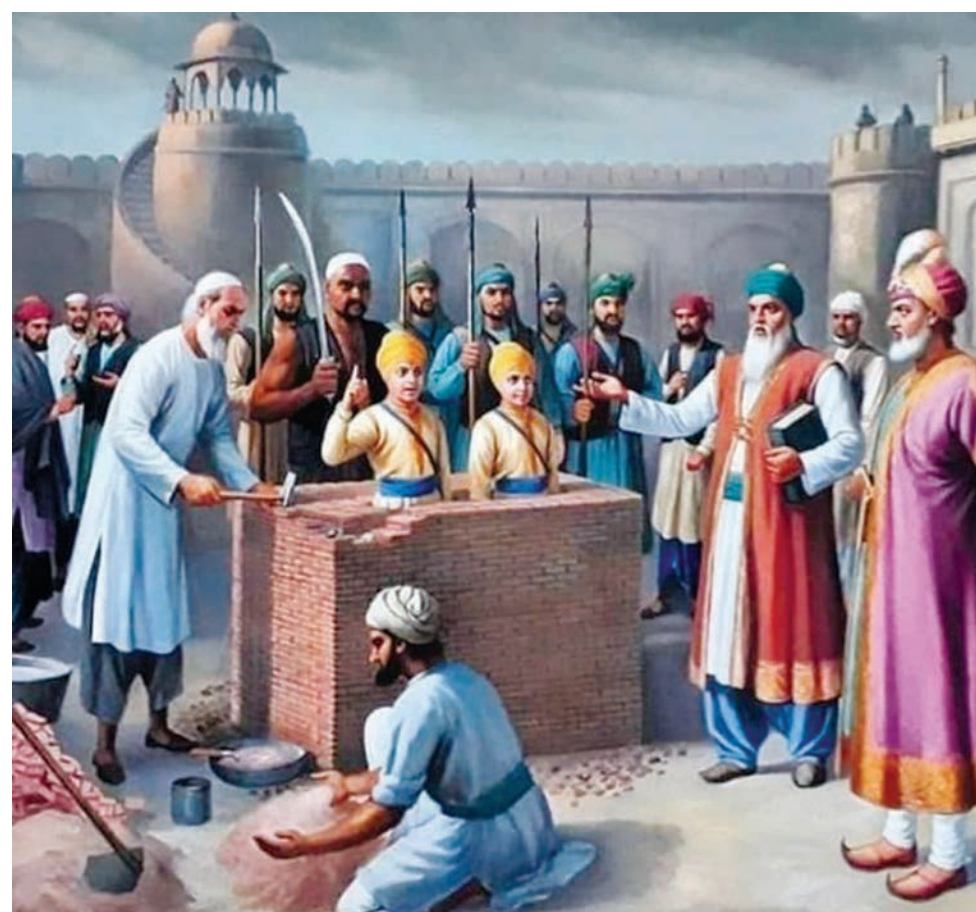
Ajit Singh, the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh, was born on January 26, 1687, in Paonta Sahib. As a young boy, he displayed extraordinary intelligence, physical prowess, and a keen sense of responsibility. His upbringing in the Guru's household prepared him to be a fearless warrior and a compassionate leader.

Ajit Singh's first significant contribution to the Sikh cause came during the Battle of Nirmohgarh in 1702, where he led a group of warriors against the Mughal forces. His bravery earned him admiration and respect among his peers. However, his ultimate sacrifice came during the Battle of Chamkaur in December 1704. At just 17 years old, Ajit Singh led a small group of Sikh warriors against the vast Mughal army, fighting valiantly until his last breath. His fearless sacrifice inspired his younger brother, Jujhar Singh, to follow in his footsteps.

Jujhar Singh (1691-1704)

Jujhar Singh, the second son of Guru Gobind Singh, was born on March 14, 1691, in Anandpur Sahib. Like his elder brother, Jujhar Singh was trained in martial arts, weaponry, and the teachings of Sikhism. His unwavering faith and courage made him a natural leader among his peers.

During the Battle of Chamkaur, Jujhar Singh, then only 14 years old, witnessed his elder brother's martyrdom. Undeterred, he sought his father's permission to join the fight. Guru Gobind Singh, though heartbroken, blessed his son and encouraged him to uphold the principles of righteousness. Jujhar Singh led a charge against the Mughal forces, fighting with unmatched bravery until he



too attained martyrdom. His sacrifice is remembered as a shining example of youthful valor and devotion to a higher cause.

Zorawar Singh (1696-1705) and Fateh Singh (1699-1705)

The younger Sahibzade, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, were born in Anandpur Sahib. Zorawar Singh, born on November 17, 1696, and Fateh Singh, born on February 25, 1699, were brought up with the same values as their elder brothers. Despite their tender ages, they exhibited wisdom and courage beyond their years.

In 1705, when the Guru's family was forced to evacuate Anandpur Sahib under the Mughal siege, the younger Sahibzade were separated from Guru Gobind Singh. Accompanied by their grandmother, Mata Gujri, they were betrayed by a trusted servant and handed over to Wazir Khan, the governor of Sirhind.

Wazir Khan attempted to break their spirit by offering them wealth, titles, and safety in exchange for converting to Islam. However, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh remained steadfast in their faith, refusing to bow to tyranny. Their unwavering resolve enraged Wazir Khan, who ordered them to be bricked alive. The boys faced their execution with unshakable courage, reciting Sikh hymns and reaffirming their commitment to their beliefs. Mata Gujri, imprisoned in a freezing tower, passed away upon hearing of her grandsons' martyrdom.

The Legacy of the Sahibzade's Sacrifice

The sacrifice of the four Sahibzade is unparalleled in history. Their martyrdom exemplifies the highest ideals of faith, courage, and selflessness. The Sahibzade chose death over compromise, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike.

Their sacrifices are commemorated annually during the "Shaheedi Jor Mela", held in Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab. The event draws thousands of devotees who come to pay homage to the Sahibzade and reflect on their enduring legacy. Their story is also a cornerstone of Sikh education, ensuring that future generations understand the values of sacrifice and resistance against oppression.

The story of the Sahibzade is a testament to the power of faith and the strength of the human spirit. Despite their youth, they displayed remarkable courage and an unwavering commitment to righteousness. Guru Gobind Singh's sons gave their lives to uphold the principles of Sikhism, becoming eternal symbols of sacrifice and resilience. Their legacy serves as a source of inspiration, reminding humanity of the importance of standing firm in the face of injustice and oppression.

CELEBRATING INDIA'S 76th REPUBLIC DAY



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

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AIR INDIA BEGINS FLAGSHIP A350-900 FLIGHTS BETWEEN NEWARK AND DELHI

All Air India flights between New York region and Delhi now operated by A350-900



JANUARY 2, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP) : Air India, India's leading global airline, today began operating its flagship A350-900 aircraft on non-stop flights between Newark's Liberty International Airport (EWR) and Delhi. This follows Air India's A350 service from New York (JFK) to Delhi inaugurated on November 1, 2024.

With this, Air India now serves all non-stop flights between the New York region and India's capital city with its A350 aircraft, offering its all-new cabin interiors, award-winning new Inflight Entertainment (IFE) system, complimentary Wi-Fi internet connectivity on board, enhanced catering, and new service ware.

Air India is the only non-stop carrier between the U.S. and India to offer private suites in Business Class. The airline's A350 aircraft also features a dedicated, upscale Premium Economy cabin.

Air India's A350 aircraft offer travelers brand-new cabin interiors, an award-winning new Inflight Entertainment (IFE) system, complimentary on-board WiFi internet connectivity, enhanced catering, and new service ware.

The aircraft features a Business Class cabin with 28 private suites in a 1-2-1 configuration, each accommodating a fully flat bed. Each suite offers direct aisle access, sliding privacy doors, and a personal wardrobe.

Air India is the only non-stop carrier between the United States and India to offer private suites in Business Class.

The A350 deployment brings Air India's Premium Economy experience on all flights between Delhi and the New York region, offering 24 extra-legroom seats in a 2-4-2 configuration in a dedicated, upscale cabin.

Passengers on Air India's A350 flights can enjoy WiFi internet connectivity on board and stay connected. The service is currently complimentary for all passengers.

The full suite of the new IFE content on Air India's A350 flights features over 3000 hours of entertainment content across formats and genres, including 1400 hours of movies, 850 hours of TV, and 1000 hours of audio.

ABOUT AIR INDIA GROUP

The Air India group - comprising of full-service global airline Air India and low-cost regional carrier Air India Express - is spearheading a new era of Indian aviation. The Air India story began in 1932 when JRD Tata piloted the

airline's inaugural flight and opened the skies for aviation in India. Today, Air India group employs more than 30,000 people, operates over 300 aircraft and carries customers to 55 domestic and 48 international destinations across five continents.

Returning to the Tata Sons in 2022 following 70 years under Government ownership, Air India group is in the midst of a five-year transformation program, Vihaan.AI. As part of the



transformation, Air India placed the then largest-ever order for 470 new aircraft in 2023. In 2024, sister airlines Air Asia India and Vistara were successfully merged into Air India Express and Air India respectively, and the Airline opened South Asia's largest aviation training academy. A new flying school is scheduled to open in 2025, and construction of a greenfield maintenance base, to be operational in 2026, is underway. In addition to receiving new aircraft, all existing aircraft are progressively undergoing a full interior refit.

With transformation underway across all facets of the business and India's rich legacy of hospitality, Air India is committed to being a world class global airline with an Indian heart.

In celebration of the launch, Air India's cabin crew went on a cinematic journey in New York City to recreate iconic moments and in search of some of the city's landmarks featured in Hollywood movies. Donning their new Manish Malhotra-designed uniforms,

here is how they strolled through the city, expressing their excitement and pride for the 'new Air India experience' arriving in New York.

Reliving a piece of history, Air India cabin crew members recreated one of the most influential photographs of all time, the iconic 'Lunch Atop a Skyscraper' photograph from 1932. The photograph showed ironworkers taking a casual lunch break on a towering skyscraper beam during the construction of 30



Rockefeller Plaza. Air India's crew took a moment to capture the spirit of innovation and adventure embodied in the striking photograph, atop Rockefeller Plaza.

The serene beauty and lush greenery around the picturesque Gapstow Bridge in Central Park has made the bridge a popular choice among filmmakers across generations. This is where Kevin McCallister first encounters the pigeon lady in Home Alone 2: Lost in New York, and it is also where the 'Runway Jungle' photo shoot takes place in The Devil Wears Prada.

The grand staircase of The Met that leads up to the museum's entrance is a striking architectural feature, and where numerous TV shows and films have been shot. The Met steps were a regular backdrop for popular drama series, Gossip Girl, as well as for much of the popular heist movie, Ocean's 8. And in When Harry Met Sally, the funny "pecan pie" sequence, in which Harry and Sally are in a museum and they talk about 'too much pepper on paprikash', was filmed here.

The Air India crew strolled the busy sidewalks under bright neon lights of Times Square, as the highly popular tourist attraction has featured in numerous Bollywood and Hollywood movies. Whether it is the subliminal imagery in Tom Cruise's Vanilla Sky that shows him running alone through Times Square, the flashmob scene in Friends with Benefits, or Preity Zinta's happy dance in the Bollywood movie Kal Ho Naa Ho, Times Square dazzles anywhere



In pictures: Air India's cabin crew recreated iconic New York City moments and visited popular movie locations to celebrate new Air India's arrival in New York

one sees it, on the silver screen and in real life.

The iconic yellow taxis in New York have become a staple in countless movies set in the city. They often serve as more than just transportation, symbolizing the hustle and bustle of urban life and even playing active roles in plots. Whether it's a quick cameo or a central element, the New York taxis are a cinematic icon.

The iconic scene from Scent of a Woman, in which Frank (Al Pacino) and Donna (Gabrielle Anwar) tangoed was filmed at The Pierre, providing the perfect backdrop for the passionate dance and making it one of the most memorable moments in the film. Air India crew stopped by in the stunning Rotunda Room at The Pierre hotel in Manhattan to remember the iconic film.

The 1979 Woody Allen classic, Manhattan, known for being a glorious celebration of New York, was another inspiration for the cabin crew members. The Air India crew found the exact spot and recreated the profound scene in which Isaac Davis (Woody Allen) and Mary Wilkie (Diane Keaton) sit underneath Queensboro Bridge, admiring it and talking until dawn. An image of the scene also became the film's iconic poster.



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NJ SYMPHONY RINGS IN NEW YEAR WITH HD HOLST'S 'THE PLANETS'

By Mabel Pais

"What the New Jersey Symphony has established, bringing music to the Garden State in schools and in six different cities, is a sincere accomplishment. And it's never been better." - nj.com



Xian Zhang

Credit : njsymphony.org

The New Jersey Symphony presents Holst's 'The Planets' - An HD Odyssey with Music Director Xian Zhang conducting four performances at three locations in New Jersey.

PROGRAM

FIRST HALF

Opening the program is Caroline Shaw's 'The Observatory' originally premiered by Xian Zhang with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In 2013, Shaw became the youngest composer to receive the Pulitzer Prize in music. Also in the first half is Ralph Vaughan Williams' 'The Lark Ascending,' which draws inspiration from George Meredith's 1881 poem of the same name. The piece was originally composed for violin and piano in 1914 and was later reworked for violin and orchestra.

SECOND HALF

The second half of the program is devoted to Gustav Holst's 'The Planets' - An HD Odyssey, a spectacular presentation of Holst's cosmic masterpiece accompanied by breathtaking images of modern space exploration that showcase our solar system in a film by Duncan Copp, in cooperation with NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratories.

Nancy Zhou is set to appear in Vaughan Williams'



Nancy Zhou

Credit : njsymphony.org

'The Lark Ascending.' Holst's 'Planets' will also feature Montclair State University Prima Voce, under the leadership of director Heather J. Buchanan.

PRE-PERFORMANCE EVENTS

On Friday, January 31, at 6:30 pm, the Symphony will host a Next Gen cocktail hour at Newark Local Beer prior to the performance. The Next Gen program is a free membership program for young music enthusiasts between the ages of 21 and 40. More information on the Next Gen program: njsymphony.org/nextgen.

A Classical Conversation will take place on Saturday, February 1, at 7 pm at NJPAC and Sunday, February 2, at 2 pm at Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown, prior to each performance. Concertgoers will be able to learn more about the music performed by Symphony musicians, guest artists and other engaging insiders.

HOLST'S THE PLANETS-AN HD ODYSSEY

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY CLASSICAL

Xian Zhang conductor
Nancy Zhou violin
Montclair State University Prima Voce | Heather J. Buchanan, director

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

New Brunswick - Thursday, January 30, 7:30 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Newark - Friday, January 31, 8 pm, NJPAC

Newark - Saturday, February 1, 8 pm, NJPAC

Morristown - Sunday, February 2, 3 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

CAROLINE SHAW 'THE OBSERVATORY'

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS 'THE LARK ASCENDING'

GUSTAV HOLST 'THE PLANETS' - AN HD ODYSSEY

For more information on concerts and tickets, visit njsymphony.org/events.

TICKETS

For Tickets to the performance, call 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or visit njsymphony.org/events/detail/holsts-the-planetsan-hd-odyssey

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XIAN ZHANG

Zhang has an exceptional ear for balance, as well as the ability to draw the softest, most transparent tones imaginable from the orchestra...With such skills and obvious audience appeal, Zhang should prove a valuable addition to the Met's conduction staff." - New York Classical Review

2024-25 marks the GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning conductor Xian Zhang's ninth season as music director of the New Jersey Symphony. Starting in 2025-26, Zhang will also hold the role of music director at Seattle Symphony. Zhang holds the position of conductor emeritus of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, having previously held the position of music director between 2009-2016.

The 2024-25 season sees Zhang return to the Metropolitan Opera in New York to conduct David McVicar's acclaimed production of Puccini's Tosca.

Zhang is in high demand as a guest conductor, appearing regularly with Philadelphia Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic, returning to both in 2024-25. Her recording with Philadelphia Orchestra and Time for Three, Letters for The Future (released 2022 on Deutsche Grammophon), won multiple GRAMMY Awards in the Best Contemporary Classical Composition (Kevin Puts' Contact) and Best Classical Instrumental Solo categories.

Zhang previously served as principal guest conductor of the BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales, the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra and principal guest conductor of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. In 2002, she won first prize in the Maazel-Vilar Conductor's Competition. She was appointed New York Philharmonic's assistant conductor in 2002, subsequently becoming their associate conductor and the first holder of the Arturo Toscanini Chair. Learn more at xianzhangconductor.com.

NANCY ZHOU

Lauded as one of today's probing musical voices, Nancy Zhou harbors a robust presence that seeks to

invigorate appreciation for the art and science of the violin. Her thoughtful musicianship resonates with a global audience in such a way that brings her on stage with leading orchestras and performing artists around the world.

Zhou has collaborated with several Philharmonics and Symphonies around Europe and America. Alongside projects as a soloist, she harbors keen interest in chamber music and music education. She has performed for Music Festivals, she devotes time to a studio as well, teaching students across the globe and presenting masterclasses on fundamental training and cultivating mindful awareness critical to performance.

In recent seasons, Zhou has often championed works outside the traditional oeuvre. In collaboration with the New Jersey Symphony and conductor Xian Zhang, she presented Zhao Jiping's first violin concerto at Alice Tully Hall. Zhou has toured the US and China performing concertos exploring the intersection of various art forms and, indeed, music and culture.

Zhou recorded her debut album for Orchid Classics featuring solo violin repertoire including Bartók's Sonata for Solo Violin. The record will be released in June 2025.

American-born, Zhou commenced violin studies with her father, later studying with Miriam Fried at the New England Conservatory while simultaneously pursuing her interest in literature at Harvard University. She is additionally an Associated Artist at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. Learn more at nancyzhouviolin.com

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY PRIMA VOCE | HEATHER J. BUCHANAN, DIRECTOR

Under the direction of Australian-born conductor Heather J. Buchanan since September 2003, the Montclair State University (MSU) choral program has been recognized for successful collaborations with world-renowned artists and celebrated professional musicians in national and international venues.

Prima Voce is an extra-curricular, SSAA (soprano, soprano, alto) project choir at Montclair State University's John J. Cali School of Music with membership drawn from University Singers, Chorale and alumnae. The choir is directed by Dr. Heather J. Buchanan, a professor at the school. Pianist Steven W. Ryan is the Montclair choral accompanist.

THE NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

New Jersey Symphony is a GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning orchestra. Under the direction of the Music Director Xian Zhang, the Symphony performs more than 60 concerts at mainstage venues across the state, including Newark, Princeton, New Brunswick, Red Bank and Morristown as well as schools and public spaces statewide.

Programming at the Symphony reflects an unwavering commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion while providing students across the state unparalleled opportunities to achieve musical excellence through its Youth Orchestra and other outreach programs.

In 2024, the Symphony announced it would continue to deliver its statewide activities from a new, permanent office, rehearsal and concert space in Jersey City, set to open in 2026. For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit its website at njsymphony.org.

CONNECT WITH NJ SYMPHONY

Follow NJ Symphony on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X and YouTube

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

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF WORSHIP & JAZZ

By Mabel Pais

The Bethany Baptist Church of Newark celebrates 25 years of monthly Jazz Vespers!

Join the community at Bethany Baptist for this free concert combining jazz music and worship. This takes place on Saturday, January 4, 2025 at 6 PM at the Bethany Baptist Church at 275 W Market St, Newark, NJ 07103 (Phone - 973 623 8161).

January's featured artists are the "musical power couple" (New York Times) Adegoke Steve Colson and Iqua



: Adegoke Steve Colson and Iqua Colson

Credit : njpac.org

Colson. Despite their international acclaim, the composer-pianist and

vocalist-composer are deeply rooted in New Jersey, and have played an integral role in advancing jazz education across the state. This is a particularly meaningful return to the Bethany Baptist stage for Adegoke, who led the first Jazz Vespers ensemble at the inaugural concert 25 years ago. JazzTimes says the Colsons' music "...draws you in with gaiety and swing and then hits you with more substance that you'd bargained for...Sharp ears, spot-on improvisational acumen and impeccable musical intelligence are the order of the day."

IS MASS INCARCERATION A PERVERSIVE SOCIAL ISSUE?

By Mabel Pais

While New Jersey has reduced its prison population by more than 50 percent since 2011, mass incarceration remains a pervasive social issue that disproportionately impacts people of color.

This month's 'Standing in Solidarity' conversation, curated by the ACLU of New Jersey, discusses the need for a reimagined legal system. What are proven strategies for ensuring public safety? How can measures such as the elimination of extreme sentences and implementation of clemency create a more equitable criminal justice system?

The film to watch is 'The Prison Within,' an award-winning documentary about how a restorative justice program



(extreme left) Amol Sinha with panelists

Credit : njpac.org

at the San Quentin State Prison, California transforms the lives of prisoners and survivors of violence.

REGISTRATION & PARTICIPATION

It is free to participate. Registration is required to participate.

Register at njpac.org/event/reforming-our-prison-

systems/#register.

Watch 'The Prison Within' for free at home (a link will be emailed in advance)

Join the team for a virtual panel discussion on Monday, Jan 13, at 7PM

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

MODERATOR

The panel will be moderated by Amol

Sinha, Executive Director of the ACLU of New Jersey.

PANELISTS

LUIS ANGEL TORRES RODRIGUEZ, Founder and Executive Director of the non-profit Societal Bridge, Inc., a recruitment service company that provides comprehensive employment opportunities for Returning Citizens

JENNIFER SELLITTI, a Public Defender who began her legal career working on the Prison Brutality Project at Massachusetts Correctional Legal Services.

REBECCA UWAKWE, Director of the Clemency Project and Senior Staff Attorney at the ACLU of New Jersey.

EXPLORE TECHNIQUES OF PREPPING FOR A SELF-TAPED AUDITION

By Mabel Pais

Get noticed for all the right reasons!

The 'Creator's Room' exploration of audition techniques continues with the dos and don'ts of a self-taped audition. What do I wear? What's the best background and recording device? Do I need a ring light? The NJPAC Center for Arts Education's panel of theater professionals will answer your most pressing questions and will explain the value of a self-tape versus an in-person audition. They will also demystify the process and share helpful tips. Attendees will be able to film self-tape examples on site and put these pro tips into action.

MODERATOR

JOSEF WOODSON : Josef Woodson is the Creative Lead for Onsite Programs at NJPAC, specializing in Musical Theater, Acting, and Hip Hop. He holds a degree in Dance from the University of Michigan and has trained in ballet, jazz, modern, and hip hop at prestigious institutions such as the Joffrey School, The Ailey School, and Steps on Broadway.

His performance career includes work with Ailey II, Donald Byrd/The Group, Tokyo Disney, Walt Disney World, Royal Caribbean, Sokolow Now! Contemporary Dance Company, and SKIN Dance Company. Josef has taught modern, jazz, tap, ballet, and hip hop in both the U.S. and internationally, with notable roles at AileyCamp and as an Alvin Ailey Performing Artist for the New York Board of Education.

Currently a senior Teaching Artist at Disney Theatrical Group on Broadway, Josef has also been the



Self-taped Audition Candidate

Credit : njpac.org

Artistic Director of NJPAC's summer programs for two years. His passion for movement extends to group fitness and Zumba. He is the Managing Director of SKIN Dance Company and the Creative Director for the musical 'Josephine's Cotton.'

PANELISTS

MALCOLM MINOR : A Newark, NJ, native, Minor is an actor, singer, poet and public speaking coach who has performed on stages from NJPAC and Madison Square Garden to 54 Below and Radio City Music Hall. He holds a bachelor's in theater from Ramapo College of New Jersey and a master's in acting from the Actors Studio Drama School at Pace University. He has been featured at the National Black Theater Festival, JagFest 4.0 and the Williamstown Theater Festival. His voice is audible on Amazon Prime and other award-winning short films and web series. Currently, Minor is a finalist in the renowned Actors Studio.

KRISTEN PALADINO : Kristen Paladino is an industry-celebrated Casting Director and founder of Paladino Casting. With over 20 years in business, Paladino is renowned for a notable portfolio of projects that encompass the most compelling storytellers and

exceptional actors from New York City, Los Angeles and beyond. Sought after for her expertise, she elevates projects by discovering and developing exceptional and diverse talent. Her films have been screened at the world's top festivals including Sundance, AFI, Tribeca, Cannes, SXSW, Venice Biennial, LA Film Fest, NYFF, Slamdance, Palais De Tokyo and many more. TV series include Team Umizoomi for Nickelodeon, El Deafo for Apple TV, as well as shows for Disney+ and commercial campaigns for brands such as Haribo, Apple, Maybelline, Jeep, Nike, Huggies, Valentino, Adidas, PepsiCo, LEGO and Sony, to name a few. Paladino and her gifted team at Paladino Casting are at the forefront of the casting and entertainment world.

INGRID JENSEN : Ingrid Jensen has been hailed as one of the most gifted trumpeters of her generation. Following a 1989 graduation from the Berklee College of Music, Jensen recorded three highly acclaimed CDs for the ENJA record label. She has performed with a multigenerational cast of jazz legends ranging from Herbie Hancock to Clark Terry and Esperanza Spalding. Jensen also performed alongside British R&B artist Corrine Bailey Rae on 'Saturday Night Live' and recorded with Canadian pop icon Sarah McLachlan. Jensen is prominently featured on the GRAMMY® Award-winning 'The Mosaic Project,' led by drummer Terri-Lyne Carrington. A dedicated jazz educator, Jensen has resided on the jazz trumpet faculties at the University of Michigan, Peabody Conservatory, Manhattan School of Music, Purchase College and the School of Jazz and Contemporary Music at The New School in New York City. She is currently the Dean and Director of Jazz Arts at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music.

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

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



Baby John Pushpa 2, Mufasa outshine Varun Dhawan film

Varun Dhawan's action-thriller *Baby John* failed to draw audiences to cinemas even on the New Year holiday. The film, released on Christmas, opened with Rs 11.25 crore but has seen a steady decline in box office collections. On January 1, it managed to earn only Rs 2.75 crore.

Industry tracker Sacnilk reported that *Baby John* had a total Hindi occupancy of just 22.38 per cent, with the highest footfall during afternoon shows. After eight days, the total box office collection of *Baby John* in India stands at Rs 35.40 crore.

In contrast, *Pushpa 2*, starring Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna, outperformed *Baby John* despite being in theatres for 28 days. On Wednesday alone, *Pushpa 2* earned Rs 13.15 crore, with Rs 9.5 crore coming from its Hindi version. The Sukumar-directed mass actioner has a staggering total nett collection of Rs 1184.65 crore in India.

Similarly, Disney's family entertainer *Mufasa: The Lion King* attracted more viewers than *Baby John*. The film collected Rs 9.4 crore on Wednesday, with Rs 3.5 crore from the Hindi-speaking market. After 13 days of release, its total nett collection in India stands at Rs 122.1 crore.

Baby John, produced by Atlee, is already fading out of theatres and is expected to conclude its theatrical run soon. It is likely to become the lowest-grossing film in Varun Dhawan's filmography.

Ileana D'Cruz drops hint of 2nd pregnancy in NY post

Ileana D'Cruz posted a video to wish her fans a happy New Year while hinting that she might be pregnant again. The actor showed fans how her 2024 went and held up a positive pregnancy stick for October. Congratulatory messages have been pouring in for the actor.

"Love. Peace. Kindness. Here's hoping 2025 is all that and so much more," wrote Ileana giving a glimpse of her domestic bliss with husband Michael Dolan and their child Koa Phoenix Dolan. The video shows her and Michael bringing up their son lovingly as she counts the months. In October, an emotional Ileana holds a positive pregnancy stick up to the camera briefly before the video moves on to the next months.

But eagle-eyed fans were quick to spot the pregnancy stick she held up, with one fan commenting, "Second Baby is coming in 2025? or we misunderstands." Another fan wrote, "Wait...October...congratulations again!!" Many left congratulatory messages like, "Congratulations again!!!! Happy New Year," and "October. Congratulations." Numerous fans also commented with heart emojis, congratulating her on the news.

In April 2023, Ileana posted a picture of a onesie while announcing the news of her first pregnancy on Instagram. She wrote, "Coming soon. Can't wait to meet you my little darling." She posted a picture of her bump in May and announced the birth of her son in August, writing, "No words could explain how happy we are to welcome our darling boy to the world. Heart's beyond full." In March 2024, she penned a long note about being a 'sleep-deprived' mother getting candid about how difficult motherhood was. Ileana and Michael married in a hush-hush ceremony in 2023.

Ileana was last seen in *Tera Kya Hoga Lovely* and *Do Aur Do Pyaar* in 2024. She is yet to announce her upcoming projects.



Sikandar teaser: Salman Khan gears up for high-octane action on Eid 2025

After keeping their fans on their toes for long, the teaser of Salman Khan's *Sikandar* is finally out. Directed by AR Murugadoss, the film also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Kajal Aggarwal in key roles. *Sikandar* will release in theatres on Eid 2025.

Salman is all set to surprise fans on the big screen, with the teaser promising an action-packed extravaganza filled with thrilling stunts and sequences. The actor's character makes a dramatic entrance in a hyper-stylised sequence.

In the teaser, Salman is seen battling what appear to be machine-like humans as he walks past a cabinet filled with high-tech guns. His voice is heard saying, "Bahut log mere peeche pade hain, bas mere mudne ki der hai (Many people are after me, it's just a matter

of me turning around). The video is elevated by an electrifying background score composed by Santosh Narayanan, whose music perfectly complements the intensity of the video.

With jaw-dropping scenes and high-octane action, *Sikandar* promises to be a visual spectacle.

The makers released the first poster of Salman's upcoming film, *Sikandar* on December 26. In the poster, which is nothing short of a tease, a suited Salman is seen carrying a spear, standing tall in an area shrouded in mystery.

The teaser was earlier scheduled to release on Salman's 59th birthday, December 27. However, with the death of former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the makers postponed it to December 28.

Angelina Jolie shares heartbreaking update after Brad Pitt divorce settlement

Angelina Jolie took to Instagram Stories on Wednesday to share a deeply emotional message following the end of her eight-year-long divorce battle with Brad Pitt. The Oscar-winning actress, known for her humanitarian work, used the platform to highlight the plight of millions of Syrians in need of aid, shifting the attention away from her personal life.

In a heartfelt Instagram Story post, the Maria actress shared an image from nrc_norway featuring a war-ravaged country along with a poignant message aimed at raising awareness for Syria's ongoing crisis.

"Syria: over 17 million people in need of aid. Syria has been decimated by almost 14 years of conflict, displacement, and economic deterioration," she wrote. "While the recent change in government brings about a chance of a fresh start, millions still need help, and critical needs continue to be unmet."

Jolie has long been recognised for her tireless humanitarian work, with a focus on "conservation, education, and women's rights." As a Special Envoy for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, she has dedicated much of her time to advocating for refugees around the world.

In a recent post, Jolie captured the efforts of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an organisation she strongly supports, which works to champion the rights of displaced people globally. She previously collaborated with the NRC in regions like Jordan and Yemen as a leading global advocate for refugees.

The actress broke her social media silence days after her 'ugly' legal feud with her ex-husband Brad Pitt came to an end. Her lawyer James Simone told PEOPLE, "More than eight years ago, Angelina filed for divorce from Mr. Pitt. She and the children left all of the properties they had shared with Mr. Pitt, and since that time she has focused on finding peace and healing for their family."



Jennifer Aniston offers to help Selena Gomez in wedding planning: Report

As Selena Gomez prepares to get married to Benny Blanco, a new report claims that the singer-actor has been seeking guidance from her close friend, Jennifer Aniston.

It is believed that Jennifer is reportedly offering Selena a valuable set of advice on how to navigate the challenges of married life.

According to In Touch, Jennifer will be at the front at the wedding celebrations along with other best friends including Taylor Swift, Meryl Streep, Cara Delevingne, and Ariana Grande.

"Jennifer treats Selena like a younger sister. She's very excited for her and has already sent flowers and a card offering to help out however she can. She's planned a couple of weddings herself, so she knows a whole lot about the process and has a lot of advice to share," said a source.

The source added, "No doubt Selena will be happy to have her guidance. It's hard enough planning a wedding, but a celebrity one is on a different level so any help she can get will be appreciated."

Jennifer, 55, and Selena, share the same manager. They have been close friends since the two met in a bathroom at a Vanity Fair event.

Jennifer Garner reacts to 'getting back' with ex Ben Affleck amid JLO's 'real villain' claims

Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck may have shared a few holiday moments recently, but don't expect a romantic reunion anytime soon. Despite rumours of rekindled love following Ben's split from Jennifer Lopez, insiders confirm that the former couple is focused solely on their co-parenting dynamic.

"Jen laughs off those rumors," a source reveals, noting that while it might be the Hollywood ending fans dream of, real life tells a different story.

Garner has quietly been dating businessman John Miller for a few years now, though the duo share an on-and-off relationship. The idea of marriage was definitely on the table, as reported earlier. However, as the Batman actor reentered

the picture and was spotted frequently spending time with his ex-wife and kids, including during the holiday season amid his divorce from Jennifer Lopez, rumors circulated about whether the exes would get back together. 'They're not getting back together,' an insider told InTouch.

Speaking about Jen and Ben's current relationship status, the insider added, "Jen is still dating John and Ben is very supportive of that," the source continues. "Ben's single and just taking life one day at a time. They're far from perfect, but Jen and Ben are a great example of how co-parenting should work."

The exes who were married for over a decade share three kids together Violet, Fin, and Samuel.



MONTENEGRO GUNMAN WHO KILLED AT LEAST 12 PEOPLE DIES BY SUICIDE

PODGORICA (TIP): Gunman who fatally shot at least 12 people, including two children, in Montenegro has killed himself while surrounded by police, officials said January 2.

At least four others were wounded in the shooting rampage in the western town of Cetinje on January 1 that followed a bar brawl, officials said.

The shooter, identified as 45-year-old Aco Martinovic, killed the owner of the bar, the bar owner's children and his own family members, Interior Minister Danilo Šaranovic said.

The attacker, who was fled after the rampage, was later located and surrounded by police. He died after shooting himself in the head, Šaranovic said.

Police had dispatched a special unit to search for the attacker in the town, which is located about 30 kilometres (18 miles) northwest of the capital, Podgorica. All the roads in and out of the city have been blocked as police swarmed the streets.

Šaranovic said that Martinovic had died while being taken to a hospital in the capital and succumbed from the "severity of his injuries."

The government has declared three days of national mourning starting on Thursday, with Prime Minister Milojko Spajic describing the shooting as a "terrible tragedy." "The level of rage and brutality shows that sometimes such people ... are even more dangerous than members of organized criminal gangs," Šaranovic said. Martinovic was at the bar throughout the day with other guests when the brawl erupted, Police Commissioner Lazar Šćepanovic said. He said that Martinovic then went home, brought back a weapon and opened fire at around 5:30 p.m.

"He killed four people" at the bar before heading out, and then continued shooting at three more locations, Šćepanovic said.

He said that the suspect received a suspended sentence in 2005 for violent behaviour and had appealed his latest conviction for illegal weapons possession. Montenegrin media have reported that he was known for erratic and violent behaviour.

The small country of Montenegro, which has a population of around 620,000 people, is known for its gun culture and many people traditionally have weapons.

Wednesday's shooting was the second shooting rampage over the past three years in Cetinje, Montenegro's historic capital. An attacker killed 10 people, including two children, in August 2022 before he was shot and killed by a passerby in Cetinje. President Jakov Milatovic said that he was "shocked and stunned" by the tragedy.

"Instead of holiday joy ... we have been gripped by sadness over the loss of innocent lives," Milatovic said in a post on X. (AP)

South Korea's impeached president defies warrant after hourslong standoff

03 JAN 2025

SEOUL (TIP): South Korean investigators left the president's official residence after a nearly six-hour standoff during which he defied their attempt to detain him in the latest confrontation of a political crisis that has paralyzed South Korean politics and seen two heads of state impeached in under a month.

The country's anti-corruption agency said it withdrew its investigators after the presidential security service blocked them from entering President Yoon Suk Yeol's residence for hours due to concerns about their safety.

The agency expressed "serious regret about the attitude of the suspect, who did not respond to a process by law."

Yoon, a former prosecutor, has defied investigators' attempts to question him for weeks. The last time he is known to have left the residence was on Dec. 12, when he went to the nearby presidential office to make a televised statement to the nation, making a defiant statement that he will fight efforts to oust him.

Investigators from the country's anti-corruption agency are weighing charges of rebellion after Yoon, apparently frustrated that his policies were blocked by an opposition-dominated parliament, declared martial law on Dec. 3 and dispatched troops to surround the National Assembly.

Parliament overturned the declaration within hours in an unanimous vote and impeached Yoon on Dec. 14, accusing him of rebellion, while South Korean anti-



corruption authorities and public prosecutors opened separate investigations into the events.

A Seoul court issued a warrant for Yoon's detention on Tuesday, but enforcing it is complicated as long as he remains in his official residence.

Yoon's lawyers, who filed a challenge to the warrant on Thursday, say it cannot be enforced at his residence due to a law that protects locations potentially linked to military secrets from search without the consent of the person in charge.

The office said it will discuss further actions, but did not immediately say whether it would make another attempt to detain Yoon. The warrant for his

detention is valid for one week.

Yoon's lawyers have also argued that the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials, which is leading a joint investigation with police and military investigators, lacks the authority to investigate rebellion charges. They said that police officers don't have the legal authority to assist in detaining Yoon, and could face arrest by either the "presidential security service or any citizens." They didn't elaborate further on the claim.

If investigators manage to detain Yoon, they will likely ask a court for permission to make a formal arrest. Otherwise, he will be released after 48 hours. (AP)

UK PM Keir Starmer condemns 'horrific' New Orleans attack

02 JAN 2025

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has condemned the 'horrific' attack in New Orleans, which killed 15 people and injured at least 35 others in the American city.

Starmer took to social media on January 1 night to express his support for the people of the United States referring to the attack in New Orleans' Bourbon Street where a US army veteran with suspected links to the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group sped into a crowd.

The shockingly violent attack in New Orleans is horrific," said Starmer.

My thoughts are with the victims, their families, the emergency responders and the people of the United States at this tragic time," he said.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy also took to X to express his solidarity with the attack victims and flagged that consular support was being extended to any British nationals impacted.

Our hearts go out to the people of New Orleans and to all those affected by this horrific attack. Our consular team in the United States is on hand to assist any British nationals affected," said Lammy.



The FBI are now investigating this as a terrorist incident "this is a fast-moving situation, and we continue to wait on further information," he said.

The suspect named Shamsud-Din Jabbar, a 42-year-old US citizen from Texas, is believed to have driven a Ford pick-up truck into a crowd of revellers celebrating the New Year.

He was killed in an ensuing firefight with police and an ISIS flag was discovered in his rented vehicle.

The FBI has reported to me that the killer was an American citizen, born in

The FBI are now investigating this as a terrorist incident this is a fast-moving situation, and we continue to wait on further information, said UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

Texas. He served in the United States Army in active duty for many years ? The FBI also reported to me that mere hours before the attack he posted videos on social media indicating he was inspired by ISIS," US President Joe Biden stated in an address. (PTI)

Israeli airstrike kills 10 in Gaza, including three children, officials say

02 JAN 2025

DEIR AL-BALAH (TIP): Palestinian officials say an Israeli airstrike has killed 10 people in the Gaza Strip, including three children and two high-ranking officers in the Hamas-run police force.

The strike early on January 2 hit a tent in an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone known as Muwasi, where hundreds of thousands of displaced people are sheltering in tents during the cold and rainy winter.

It killed three children, three women and four men, according to the Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies.

Among the dead were Major General Mahmoud Salah, general director of the Gaza police, and his deputy, Brig Gen Hossam Shahwan, according to hospital records.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

The Hamas-run government in Gaza included tens of thousands of police who maintained a high level of public order before the outbreak of the war.

The police have largely vanished from the streets in many areas after being targeted by Israel, contributing to the



breakdown of law and order that has hindered the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid.

But residents say plainclothes Hamas security men still patrol much of the territory, and the group has faced no significant internal challenge nearly 15 months into the devastating war sparked by its October 7, 2023 attack into Israel.

Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 that day.

Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive has killed over 45,000 Palestinians in Gaza, according to local health officials, who say women and children make up more than half the fatalities.

The officials do not distinguish between civilians and combatants in their tally. (AP)

TAIWAN POLITICAL CARTOONIST AND DEMOCRACY 'FIGHTER' DIES

FOREIGN MINISTER LIN CHIA-LUNG SAID CARTOONIST LIN'S "SIMPLE AND CLEAR LOGIC AND SHARP POLITICAL VIEWS" HELPED MANY TAIWANESE "BREAK THROUGH THE CONFINEMENT OF AUTHORITARIANISM".

TAIWAN (TIP): Taiwanese political cartoonist Lin Kuei-yu, whose satire was hailed for helping the island transition from one-party dictatorship to democracy, has died, his wife told AFP on January 2. He was 65.

Lin, whose pen name was Yufu, or Fisherman, succumbed to liver cancer on Monday, his wife Chen Wen-shu said when contacted by AFP.

"He had countless fans who admired, cared for, and loved him deeply," Chen said.

"We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported him over the years."

Regarded as a "pioneer of political commentary", Lin began publishing cartoons in the early 1980s when Taiwan was still under authoritarian rule, the semi-official Central News Agency (CNA) said.

After Chiang Ching-kuo lifted martial law in 1987, Lin created the first cartoon of the then president, depicting him as "Moses who parted the sea", CNA said.

Chiang was the son of former president Chiang Kai-shek, whose nationalist forces fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communist forces.

China and Taiwan have been governed separately ever since.

Foreign Minister Lin Chia-lung said cartoonist Lin's "simple and clear logic and sharp political views" helped many Taiwanese "break through the confinement of authoritarianism".

"(He) gave society the courage to challenge the system, and also accompanied Taiwan's process of democratisation," Lin wrote on Facebook.

Huang Wei-che, mayor of the southern city of Tainan where Lin lived, told reporters the cartoonist "was a fighter for democracy".

Lin, who wore several professional hats including writer and television host, once said he wanted his epitaph to be "cartoonist".

"Cartoonist is eternal, something can be passed on to future generations," Lin was quoted by Taiwan Comic Base, an incubator for comic artists, as saying.

"The others are temporary. Cartoonist is the one I want to engrave on my epitaph."

Migrants crossing Channel to UK in 2024 jump by 25 percent

01 JAN 2025

ENGLAND (TIP): The number of irregular migrants crossing the Channel to Britain in small boats in 2024 soared by a quarter compared with the previous year, government data showed January 1.

The steep rise highlights the challenge facing Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who swept to power in July and has pledged to crack down on the dangerous journeys.

Some 36,816 people were detected in the Channel last year, a 25 percent jump from the 29,437 who arrived in 2023, provisional figures from the interior ministry showed.

The total, however, was still well below the record 45,774 undocumented migrants who arrived on the UK's shores in 2022.

Migration to Britain, irregular and regular, was a major issue at last summer's general election, when Labour returned to government after 14 years in opposition.

Upon entering office, Starmer scrapped the previous Conservative government's controversial scheme to send the irregular migrants to Rwanda.

He branded it a "gimmick" and called it "dead and buried" during his first press conference as prime minister.

Starmer has pledged to "smash the gangs" of people traffickers running the crossings and has signed a number of



agreements with foreign countries to cooperate on law enforcement.

In December, Britain and Germany signed a joint action plan aimed at tackling the smuggling gangs, while the interior ministers of Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Britain held talks to boost cooperation.

In November, Starmer described smuggling networks as a "global security threat similar to terrorism".

In the first nine months of last year, Afghan migrants accounted for the single largest group of arrivals, making up 17 percent of the total. People from Vietnam, Iran and Syria were the next largest groups.

Vietnamese migrants appeared to fuel the surge in crossings in 2024. They made up just five percent of arrivals in 2023, well below the January-September 2024 figure of 13 percent.

The figures mean last year had the second highest number of annual arrivals since data on the crossings began to be collected in 2018.

Starmer is also under pressure to reduce legal migration as he tries to fend off growing support for arch-Eurosceptic Nigel Farage's hard-right Reform UK party.

Reform campaigned almost exclusively on slashing migration during the July 4 poll and won roughly four million votes -- an unprecedented haul for a far-right party.

Net legal migration is running at historically high levels, and was estimated at 728,000 for the year to June 2024. The surge has come despite Britons being told during the 2016 Brexit referendum that leaving the European Union would allow the country to "take back control" of its borders. (AFP)



BANGLADESH COURT REJECTS BAIL PLEA OF FORMER ISKCON LEADER LEADER CHINMOY KRISHNA DAS

CHATTOGRAM (TIP): A court in Chattogram has refused to grant bail to Chinmoy Krishna Das, the former ISKCON leader, following a hearing held with heightened security on January 3, The Daily Star reported.

The bail request was turned down by Chattogram Metropolitan Sessions Judge Md Saiful Islam after about 30 minutes of hearing both parties' arguments, according to Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Advocate Mofizur Haque Bhuiyan.

Earlier today, 11 Supreme Court lawyers were set to participate in the bail hearing of Chinmoy Krishna Das.

While speaking to The Daily Star, lawyer Apurba Kumar Bhattacharjee had said, "We have come to Chattogram under the banner of Ainjibi Oikya Parishad, and we will move for Chinmoy in the court for his bail. I already got the Vakalatnama from Chinmoy. I'm a member of both the Supreme Court and Chattogram Bar associations, so I don't need authorisation from any local lawyer to move the case."

Earlier on December 3, 2024, Chittagong court had fixed January 2 for bail hearing as the prosecution submitted a time petition and there was no lawyer to represent Chinmoy.

The unrest in Bangladesh stems from the sedition charges filed against Chinmoy Krishna Das for allegedly raising a saffron flag above Bangladesh's national flag in Chittagong on October 25. His arrest on November 25 sparked protests, culminating in violent clashes between his followers and law enforcement outside the Chattogram Court Building on November 27, which resulted in the death of a lawyer.

The situation worsened following additional arrests. According to ISKCON Kolkata, two monks, Adipurush Shyam Das and Ranganath Das Brahmachari, were detained on November 29 after visiting Chinmoy Krishna Das in custody. The organisation's Vice President, Radha Raman, also claimed that rioters vandalised an ISKCON centre in Bangladesh during the unrest.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had also voiced concern over escalating violence and extremist rhetoric in Bangladesh, emphasising that it has consistently raised the issue of targeted attacks on minorities with Dhaka. (ANI)

JAN 01, 2025

LAHORE (TIP): The government in Pakistan's Punjab has opened the Bhagat Singh Gallery at the historical Poonch House here, where the freedom fighter's trial was conducted around 93 years ago.

The gallery houses historical documents, including pictures, letters, newspapers, details of the trial and other memorial articles related to his life and contributions to the freedom struggle.

Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman inaugurated the gallery on January 1. "Tourists will have access to the gallery under an agreement between the departments of industry, commerce and tourism of the Punjab government," Zaman said. He further said that the historical building of Poonch House had been restored to its original form.

Singh, 23, was hanged by British rulers on March 23, 1931, in Lahore, after being tried under charges for hatching a conspiracy against the colonial government. Pakistan's Punjab Archives Department displayed records of the legendary freedom fighter's case file, including his execution certificate, letters, photographs and newspaper clippings and other material, for the first



time in 2018.

The record, which was put on display, included Singh's request for providing the court order dated August 27, 1930, and his petition dated May 31, 1929, for the interview of his father.

It also contained a petition of his father, Sardar Kishan Singh, against the death sentence of his son and the certificate of the execution of his death

in Lahore district jail by the superintendent of jail, dated March 23, 1931.

The records further include Bhagat Singh's petition for allowing him daily newspapers and books, and some other records related to the manifesto of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha Lahore by BC Vohra and several clippings of the daily VIRBHARAT. (PTI)

Pakistan soldier killed, 11 hurt in firing by Afghan forces

ISLAMABAD (TIP): A Pakistan paramilitary soldier has been killed and 11 others injured in firing by the Afghan Taliban forces at the border posts of Pakistan troops, days after strikes by Pakistan targeted the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) militants.

According to defence sources, the Afghan troops resorted to "unprovoked fire on multiple Pakistani border posts" in the Upper Kurram district on December 28 morning.

They fired at posts in Ghozgarhi, Matha Sangar, Kot Raha and Tari Mengal areas using both light and heavy weaponry, sources said. Pakistani forces retaliated, inflicting significant losses on the other side as seven to eight personnel of the Afghan forces were killed in the exchange of fire, sources added.

However, in the fire exchange, a "Frontier Constabulary (FC) soldier was killed and 11 others were injured".

The incident of firing occurred days after Pakistan targeted terrorist positions in Paktika province of Afghanistan to punish the banned TTP militants, allegedly using Afghan soil to train and attack Pakistan. (PTI)

Pak reduces pension benefits of civil, armed forces personnel



ISLAMABAD (TIP): The Pakistan government has drastically reduced pension benefits of retired civil and armed forces personnel to reduce a growing pension bill which has already swelled over Rs 1 trillion. The Ministry of Finance on January 1 issued three separate notifications to discontinue multiple pensions, reducing both the first home take pension and also lowering the base for determining future increases in pensions. After debt servicing, defence and development, the pension is the fourth largest expenditure in the budget, the paper said.

According to the Ministry of Finance's notification, on the recommendations of the Pay and Pension Commission of 2020, "it has been decided that henceforth, in an event where a person becomes entitled to more than one pension, such person shall only be authorised to opt to draw one of the pensions". (PTI)

Not allowed to visit Rohingyas: Lanka rights panel to President

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission has written a letter to President Anura Kumara Dissanayake alleging that they have been denied permission to meet Rohingya refugees staying at a military camp since last week.

"On December 26, a team of officials from the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL), including a director, attempted to monitor the detention conditions of these asylum seekers at the Sri Lanka Air Force Camp in Mullaitivu in the Northern Province. However, they were refused access to the asylum seekers," the letter said.

The Sri Lanka Navy on December 20 said they had rescued over 100 Rohingyas from Myanmar in a distressed condition in the seas off the island's northeastern coast.

They were spotted by local fishermen in the Mullaithivu district's Vellamullivaikkal area. The government later said their arrival could be due to a human trafficking racket.

"Investigations revealed that they had deliberately landed here and we consider them as illegal immigrants," Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Arun Hemachandra was quoted as saying by The Sunday Times here.

The HRCSL letter stated that the powers and functions of the commission extend not only to Sri Lankan citizens but to "any person" detained within Sri Lanka. (PTI)



Heartiest Greetings on Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Prakash Divas (Birthday)

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Anti-ageing myths we need to stop believing

Green juices are blood cleansers that can help your face glow and having a certain quantity of water will help you attain clean skin are some of the anti-aging myths that people are following blindly.

- A daily green juice is essential to get glowing skin: Green juices are blood cleansers which help in giving glowing and radiant skin. It is one of the best things to follow in a beauty regime to help your skin look youthful, but it is not necessarily the only thing one has to do to get glowing skin. CTM (Cleansing, toning, moisturising) routine, using a sunscreen, exercising, having a balanced diet are essential too. It is about the complete lifestyle and not one particular habit.
- Water is the fountain of youth and three litres is essential for everyone: Water helps keep your body and skin hydrated and helps release toxins in your body. Having three litres of water is good for us but then again it's more than just consuming water that our body needs.
- A moisturiser will help eliminate all wrinkles: A moisturiser helps hydrate your skin from the outside. A nourished skin works longer to keep skin youthful, but to reduce appearance of wrinkles one needs the correct day or night creams, serums, oils in terms of cosmetics and a healthy lifestyle.
- You should start using anti-ageing products as a teen: One should start anti-ageing products as you see the signs. First signs being dull and dehydrated skin which results in loss of elasticity or wrinkles. Ideally, the age when one sees the need to use anti-ageing products is 30+, but then it may vary by skin type and lifestyles of people.
- You don't need sunscreen when it's cloudy: One needs to wear sunscreen when there is light, i.e. day time, because UV rays are present when there's day light/sun light even if it's cloudy.



- Ageing is linked to our genes: Not necessarily, if your parents/grand parents lead a healthy lifestyle and you do not, your skin age will be different than theirs. Climate, pollution, stress, skin care, lifestyle are the factors governing your skin age.
- The more expensive a product, the better the results: Not necessarily, stress more on the ingredients and quality than the price range. Sometimes expensive products have rich ingredients which might be the reason for its higher price, but not always.
- Frowning or smiling gives you wrinkles: Frowning and Smiling are just facial exercises, in no way can they give someone wrinkles. Being stressed, smoking, dry skin, dehydration can be some of the reasons that can give you wrinkles.
- Your diet is the cause of how much you age: Your overall lifestyle, including your diet of course, but also exercising, stress, etc., are responsible.

For weight loss, diet more important

For those planning to hit the gym to lose weight, take note. A new study suggests that diet is far more important than physical activity including walking, fidgeting and formal exercise. The reason is because exercising increases appetite especially with prolonged endurance exercise or with weight lifting that can ultimately sabotage the best of intentions.

People who lose weight gradually (about 1 to 2 pounds or upto 1 kg per week) are more successful at keeping weight off, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About 10% of our calories are burned digesting the food we eat and roughly 10% to 30% are lost through physical activity, the study said.

"It could not be more true. What you omit from your diet is so much more important than how much you exercise," nutritionist Lisa Drayer was quoted as saying to CNN. All of your "calories in" come from the food you eat and the beverages you drink, but only a portion of your "calories out" are lost through exercise, according to Drayer.

The average person — excluding professional athletes — burns 5% to 15% of their daily calories through exercise, said Alexxai Kravitz, Investigator at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases in the US. It is not nearly equal to food intake, which accounts for 100% of the energy intake of the body, said Kravitz.

All this is not to say that exercise does not have its



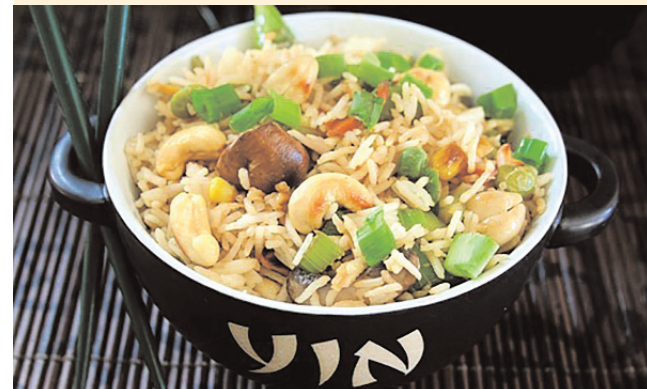
place. It is certainly important for building strength and muscle mass and flexibility and can help manage diseases, including heart disease and diabetes. But although exercise can help with weight loss, diet is a much more important lifestyle factor, Drayer noted.

Foods to Eat for Weight Loss

Avocados are rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, dietary fiber, potassium and phytochemicals. People who eat avocados tend to have lower BMI, body weight and waist circumference than people who skip this green superfood, per a study in Nutrition Journal. While avocados are higher in calories than other fruits and vegetables, their satisfying fat and fiber combo may help you slim down. Add some to your salad, sandwich or taco night for a burst of creaminess and flavor.

Cashew chicken fried rice

Ingredients



1 lb. chicken breasts, cut into cubes 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided 2 eggs, beaten with a dash of soy sauce 1 1/2 cups cubed fresh or canned pineapple 1 large red bell pepper, diced 1/2 cup frozen peas, defrosted 3 green onions, green and white parts, thinly sliced 2 cloves garlic, finely minced 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh ginger 1/2 cup chopped raw, unsalted cashews 2 cups cooked and chilled rice, white or brown 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons reduced-sodium tamari or soy sauce 1 to 2 teaspoons chili garlic sauce 1 small lime, juiced 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves, finely chopped

Method

- Marinate chicken in 2 teaspoons of soy sauce and freshly ground black pepper and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
- Heat one tablespoon of oil in a large skillet or wok over medium high heat. Add the chicken to the pan and cook until the chicken is no longer pink, about 7 to 8 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.
- In the same pan, add a teaspoon of oil and gently scramble the eggs. Scoop the eggs into a bowl and set aside.
- Add one tablespoon of oil to the pan and add the pineapple and red pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, until the pineapple is caramelized on the edges and the red pepper has softened, about 3 to 5 minutes. Then add the green onion, peas, ginger and garlic. Cook, while stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds or longer. Transfer the contents of the pan to your bowl of eggs.
- Add the remaining two teaspoons of oil to the pan. Pour in the cashews and toast them, stirring constantly, until the cashews smell fragrant and have turned golden brown, about 30 seconds. Add the rice to the pan and stir to combine. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice is hot, about 3 minutes.
- Pour the cooked vegetables and eggs back into the pan with the rice and stir to combine. Season with soy sauce, chili garlic sauce, and lime juice. Taste and adjust seasoning as necessary. Garnish with fresh cilantro.

Light white dosa

INGREDIENTS

1 cup soaked rice (soaked for at least 3 hrs), 1/2 cup grated coconut, 1/2 tsp salt, 5 cups water, 1 tbsp oil

METHOD

- Grind rice and coconut to a very fine paste then add 5 cups water and salt, Heat a non-stick pan and pour a small amount of batter in the pan, Lower the heat and cover pan for 1/2 a minute or so, Then dribble a few drops of oil around the dosa and serve.

Vitamin B12 deficiency causes tingling in hands and feet, low HB levels

A new study has shed light on the effects of vitamin B12 deficiency, highlighting its impact on both physical and neurological health. The research, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Cureus*, found that men were slightly more affected, making up 58.3% of the study's participants in India.

The two-year study was carried out at K. J. Somaiya Medical College and Hospital, Mumbai and included 180 patients aged 18 to 70 years. These patients had low haemoglobin levels (below 13 g/dL for men and 12 g/dL for women) and vitamin B12 levels below 250 pg/mL.

Doctors collected detailed information about the patients, including their health history and blood test results. Each patient was given six vitamin B12 injections every week for six weeks. The researchers monitored blood health improvements by regularly checking key markers like haemoglobin levels and red blood cell size.

The results were analysed to understand how well patients responded to the treatment and whether there was a clear link between the severity of anaemia and vitamin B12 levels.

Common health issues among the participants included high blood pressure (33.3%) and diabetes (25%). However, the most frequently reported symptom was persistent fatigue, affecting 66.7% of the patients.

Neurological problems, such as tingling and numbness in the hands and feet, were also common, reported by over half of the participants.

Blood tests revealed a condition called macrocytic anaemia, where red blood cells are larger than normal. On average, participants had low haemoglobin levels of 9.7 g/dL and an elevated mean corpuscular volume (MCV) of 104.7 fL, both indicators of poor blood health.

After six weeks of vitamin B12 supplementation,



significant improvements were observed. Haemoglobin levels increased to 12.6 g/dL, MCV dropped to 91.3 fL, and reticulocyte count—a marker of new red blood cell production—rose to 2.1%.

The study also found a strong link between higher haemoglobin levels and improved vitamin B12 levels in the blood.

Vitamin B12 deficiency is known to cause a range of health problems, from tiredness and weakness to more severe nerve damage. This study confirms that proper vitamin B12 supplementation can effectively reverse these issues, improving both blood health and neurological symptoms.

Researchers recommend routine screening for vitamin B12 deficiency, especially among older adults and vegetarians, who are at higher risk due to dietary restrictions. Early detection and supplementation can prevent long-term complications.



Study links coffee, tea consumption to lower risk of head, neck cancer

Recent research has suggested that drinking coffee and tea may lower the risk of developing head and neck cancer, a group of cancers that includes cancers of the mouth, throat, and larynx.

The findings, published in the peer-reviewed journal *CANCER* by the American Cancer Society, offer new insights into the potential protective effects of these popular beverages.

A new pooled analysis combining data from 14 studies has revealed promising results for coffee and tea drinkers.

The research, conducted by the International Head and Neck Cancer Epidemiology Consortium, examined over 9,500 patients with head and neck cancer and more than 15,700 cancer-free controls.

The findings suggest that individuals who consume coffee and tea regularly may experience a reduced risk of developing head and neck cancers.

The study found that individuals who drank more than four cups of caffeinated coffee daily had 17 per cent lower odds of developing head and neck cancer compared to non-coffee drinkers.

Furthermore, regular coffee drinkers showed a 30 per cent reduced risk of oral cavity cancer and a 22 per cent lower risk of throat cancer.

Specifically, consuming 3-4 cups of caffeinated coffee daily was associated with a significant 41 per cent reduction in the risk of hypopharyngeal cancer, a type of cancer located at the bottom of the throat.

Even decaffeinated coffee appeared to have a protective effect. Drinking decaf coffee was associated with a 25 per cent lower risk of developing oral cavity cancer.

In addition, tea consumption was linked with a 29 per cent lower risk of hypopharyngeal cancer.

The study also found that drinking one cup or fewer of tea daily was associated with a 9 per cent reduced risk of head and neck cancer overall, and a 27 per cent lower risk of hypopharyngeal cancer. *Source: ANI*

Surging oestrogen levels could drive women to 'binge-drink'

Drinking alcohol when oestrogen levels are surging could compel women to hit the bottle harder, thereby possibly driving them to 'binge-drink', researchers said after they found that female mice drank much more on days when the sex hormone's levels were high.

The study, published in the journal *Nature Communications*, is the first to find that a higher oestrogen level in the body promotes 'binge-drinking' behaviour in women by contributing to sex-specific differences, researchers said.

Binge-drinking is said to intensify alcohol's harmful effects, with women being more vulnerable to the negative health effects, compared to men.

Researchers, led by those at Weill Cornell Medicine, US, previously showed that neurons in a brain region called 'bed nucleus of the



stria terminalis', or BNST, were more excitable in female mice, compared to male ones.

Sometimes referred to as 'extended amygdala', the BNST is a central hub for regulating stress-related brain activity, including mood, anxiety and depression.

The enhanced activity in BNST correlated with the female mice's binge drinking behaviour, the researchers said.

"Oestrogen has such powerful effects on so many behaviours, particularly in females. So, it makes sense that it would also modulate drinking," senior author Kristen Pleil, associate professor of pharmacology at Weill Cornell Medicine, said.

In the latest study, the researchers monitored 'oestrogen' hormone levels throughout the oestrous cycle of female mice — the equivalent of menstrual cycle in women — following which, the mice were served alcohol.

The team found that on days when a female mouse had high levels of oestrogen circulating in the body, it drank more, compared to days with low levels.

"We found that female mice displayed greater binge alcohol drinking and reduced avoidance when oestrogen was high during the oestrous cycle than when it was low," the authors said. *Source: PTI*

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NASA probe safely completes closest-ever approach to the Sun

NASA's Parker Solar Probe successfully made the closest-ever approach to the Sun, as per news agency Reuters, coming within 3.8 million miles (6.1 million kilometers) of its surface.

The probe endured scorching temperatures of up to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit (982 degrees Celsius) as it ventured into the Sun's outer atmosphere, called the corona. It reached speeds of up to 430,000 mph (692,000 kph), making it the fastest human-made object.

After receiving an all-clear message, NASA confirmed on Friday that the probe is safe and functioning normally. The signal, known as a beacon tone, was received by the operations team at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland late Thursday, indicating the spacecraft's status.

The spacecraft, which was launched in 2018, is on a mission to study the Sun, with scientists hoping that the data collected by the probe will help them better understand why the sun's outer atmosphere is hundreds of times hotter than its surface.

"This mission allows us to get closer to the Sun than ever before, helping scientists understand how the solar wind forms, why the Sun's outer layer heats up to millions of degrees, and how energetic particles accelerate near light speed," NASA explained.

The data might also contribute to answering what drives the solar wind — the supersonic stream of charged particles which constantly blast away from the sun.

How can you protect your privacy while using AI tools?

The adoption of AI tools and products is growing at a steady pace. Today, companies are rolling out AI chatbots to serve almost every need of users. There are AI chatbots that can write an essay, role-play as your partner, remind you to brush your teeth, take down notes during meetings, and more. These AI tools are mostly in the form of large language models (LLMs) such as OpenAI's ChatGPT.

However, the LLMs that are being developed and deployed everywhere could threaten users' privacy as they are trained on large amounts of data gathered by indiscriminately scraping the information that is available online. Yet, many users remain unaware of the privacy and data protection risks that come with LLMs as well as other generative AI tools.

Over 70 per cent of users interact with AI tools without fully understanding the dangers of sharing personal information, according to a recent survey. It also found that at least 38 per cent of users unknowingly revealed sensitive details to AI tools, putting themselves at risk of identity theft and fraud.

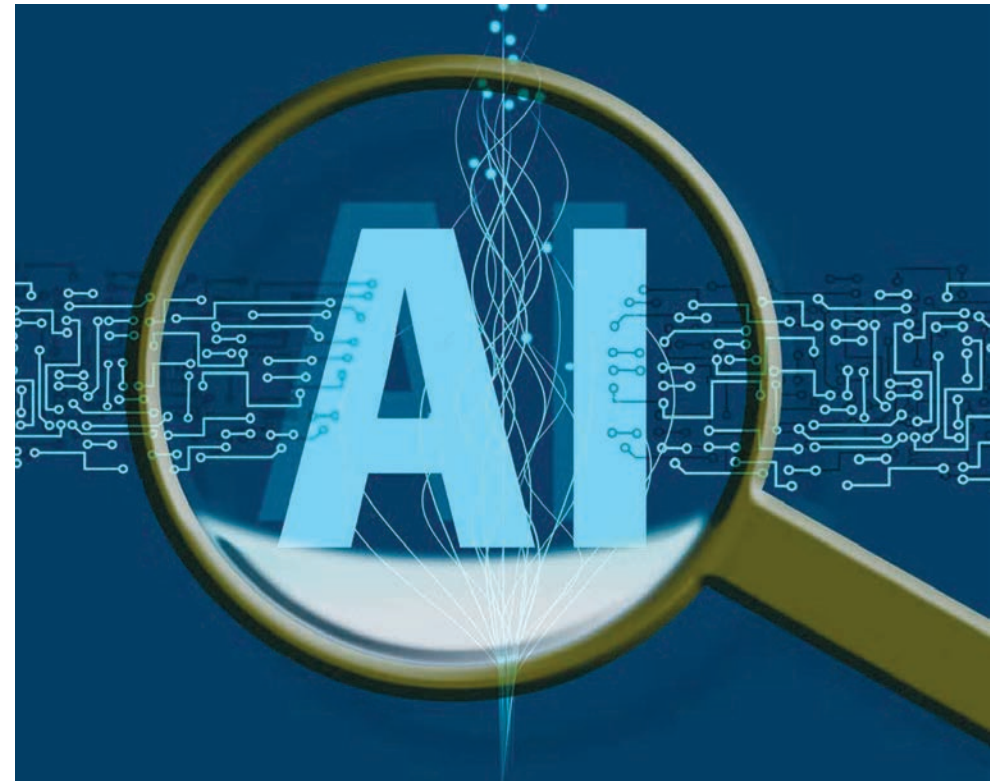
Feeding in the right prompts could also cause LLMs to "regurgitate" personal user data as they are likely trained on data pulled from every nook and corner of the internet.

Beware of social media trends

Recently, a trend that went viral on social media urged users to ask an AI chatbot to "Describe my personality based on what you know about me". Users were further encouraged to share sensitive data like their birth date, hobbies, or workplace. However, this information can be pieced together, leading to identity theft or account recovery scams.

Risky Prompt: "I was born on December 15th and love cycling—what does that say about me?"

Safer Prompt: "What might a December birthday suggest about someone's



personality?"

Do not share identifiable personal data
According to experts from TRG Datacenters, users should frame their queries or prompts to AI chatbots more broadly to protect their privacy.

Risky Prompt: "I was born on November 15th—what does that say about me?"

Safer Prompt: "What are traits of someone born in late autumn?"

Avoid disclosing sensitive information about your children

Parents can unintentionally share sensitive details such as their child's name, school, or routine while interacting with an AI chatbot. This information can be exploited to target children.

Risky Prompt: "What can I plan for my 8-year-old at XYZ School this weekend?"

Safer Prompt: "What are fun activities

for young children on weekends?"

Never share financial details

Over 32 per cent of identity theft cases stem from online data sharing, including financial information, according to a report by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Risky Prompt: "I save \$500 per month. How much should I allocate to a trip?"

Safer Prompt: "What are the best strategies for saving for a vacation?"

Refrain from sharing personal health information

Since health data is frequently exploited in data breaches, avoid sharing personal medical histories or genetic risks with AI chatbots:

Risky Prompt: "My family has a history of [condition]; am I at risk?"

Safer Prompt: "What are common symptoms of [condition]?"



WhatsApp Web to soon help users detect misleading info with 'Reverse Image Search' feature

How the Reverse Image Search Works

The reverse image search can be accessed directly through WhatsApp without requiring users to download the image. By simply selecting an option to search the image on the web, WhatsApp will upload it to Google's reverse image search, with the user's permission. The search will then be conducted through the user's default web browser. WhatsApp ensures that it does not have access to the content of the image during this process, with all actions managed by Google.

This new feature comes amid WhatsApp's ongoing efforts to enhance privacy and security for its users. The company recently launched several updates for iOS users, including new augmented reality (AR) effects and filters for video calls and photos. The latest

update, version 24.25.93, introduces AR effects such as confetti, star windows, and underwater scenes, which can be accessed through the camera's image wand icon. Users can also enjoy new document scanning tools, which include colour, grayscale, and black-and-white filters, along with an auto-shutter feature for improved scanning. WhatsApp has also shared a significant update regarding its safety efforts in India. The platform banned 73.6 million accounts throughout the year, with 13.7 million of those accounts being removed proactively between January and October. WhatsApp has long prioritised privacy and security, with major features like end-to-end encryption (2016), Face ID and Touch ID unlock (2019), disappearing messages (2020), and the Private Audience Selector (2023).

WhatsApp is taking significant steps to curb misinformation by launching a reverse image search feature, now available for users on WhatsApp Web Beta. This new tool, developed in collaboration with Google, aims to help users verify the authenticity of images they receive within the app. The feature is designed to help detect whether an image has been manipulated or taken out of context, making it easier for users to identify fake content.

Wall Street rattled by rough start to New Year

Major US benchmarks extended a selloff for a fifth day, shaving more than a trillion dollars from share prices. A pair of deadly attacks compounded market angst, starting the first trading day of the year on a dour note.

An early rally collapsed driving the Nasdaq 100 down more than 1%. The tech-heavy gauge and the S&P 500 clawed back losses to end Thursday down 0.2%. Tesla Inc.'s post-Christmas slump swelled to nearly 20% after its annual vehicle sales dropped, dragging on the indexes.

Treasury yields steadied following a choppy session. The rate on the benchmark 10-year was nearly 20 basis points above the level prior to Jerome Powell's hawkish turn at a Dec. 18 Federal Reserve meeting. Big moves have proliferated across asset classes after Powell's board expressed waning enthusiasm for interest-rate cuts. The Cboe Volatility Index climbed for the fourth time in five days.

Tesla sagged after the electronic vehicle-maker's fourth-quarter deliveries missed estimates and annual sales dropped for the first time in over a decade. The stock registered its worst five-day drop in more than two years.

For corporate earnings, 2025 will be a "show-me year," according to Lisa Shalett at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, who warned that the dominance of the Magnificent Seven — the big technology stocks responsible for the bulk of last year's gains — was teetering. "This idea that they as a group can trade together and lead the market may falter in 2025," she said. It's a call echoed by others on Wall Street, including Bank of America Corp.'s Savita Subramanian. As for the grim slide in the final days of 2024, it's "too soon to call it a bad omen," Shalett told Bloomberg Television. While the notable absence of a Santa Rally has previously led to a rebound in stocks for the month of January, the year's first trading day doesn't offer a great signal for the whole 12-month period. Over the past four years, for example, it has actually been a contrarian indicator, Deutsche Bank notes. The S&P 500 ended the year inversely of how it started.

Extending that analysis back to 1928, the year's first trading



day and the SPX's annual performance have a poor correlation and have only moved in tandem 50% of the time.

Treasuries erased gains after a reading of weekly jobless claims fell to an eight-month low. A Bloomberg gauge of the dollar's strength traded at a more than two-year peak.

Goldman Sachs economists led by Jan Hatzius noted that "seasonal adjustment challenges can make jobless claims readings particularly volatile around the holiday season."

US stocks had been straining to snap a losing streak that took some shine off the S&P 500's best two-year run dating back to the late 1990s. The index has surged more than 50% since the start of 2023, driven by gains in the tech megacaps amid enthusiasm about the boost to profits from artificial intelligence.

An attack on revelers celebrating New Year's in New Orleans thrust US domestic security back into the spotlight less than a month before Donald Trump is sworn in as president. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is probing that incident as well as the deadly explosion of a Tesla Cybertruck outside of Trump's hotel in Las Vegas.

A shooting overnight at a nightclub in New York City only added to the anxiety, while authorities said it wasn't related to terrorism.

Source: Bloomberg

Bitcoin slips from December peak as investors cash in on record run

Bitcoin's record rally fizzled out towards the end of 2024, dropping for the first time since August of that year, Bloomberg reported.

The cryptocurrency's price dropped 0.55% or by \$513.65, reaching \$93,200.38, according to Bloomberg data.

Over the December month, it fell 3.2% after US investors started cashing their profits after Republican candidate Donald Trump's victory in the US elections pushed it to its all-time high of \$108,315 by mid-December.

This is because Trump is a huge supporter of cryptocurrencies.

However, the rally has now cooled after expectations of an interest-rate cut from the Federal Reserve waned, which reduced investor appetite for riskier assets like cryptocurrency.

After December 19, a group of Bitcoin exchange-traded funds in the US saw a net outflow of around \$1.8 billion, according to the report.

Open interest or outstanding contracts for Bitcoin futures hosted by Chicago-based CME Group Inc, also fell nearly 20% from its December peak.

Despite this current setback, Bitcoin did gain a total of 120% in 2024, completely outperforming gold and global equities.

Tesla annual deliveries fall for first time as incentives fail to drum up demand

Tesla reported its first fall in yearly deliveries on Thursday as lucrative year-end incentives for the Elon Musk-led EV maker's aging line up and the new Cybertruck pickup failed to lure customers wary of high borrowing costs.

Shares of the company fell about 6%. Musk had earlier predicted "slight growth" in 2024 deliveries and offered a range of promotions including interest-free financing and free fast-charging to boost sales.

But reduced European subsidies, a shift in the United States toward lower-priced hybrid vehicles and tougher competition especially from China's BYD hurt Tesla.

Analysts at Morgan Stanley said Tesla's aging models and higher availability of cheaper alternatives overshadowed the company's increased promotional activities.

Amid the slowdown in demand for EVs, Musk has pivoted his focus on building a self-driving taxi business that is expected to boost Tesla's value.

He also backed President-elect Donald Trump with millions of dollars in campaign donations and analysts expect easier regulations from the new administration to help Tesla in the long run.

But with self-driving technology still under development and years away from commercialization, analysts have said Tesla would have to rely on its promised cheaper versions of current cars and the success of Cybertruck to achieve Musk's target of 20% to 30% sales growth in 2025.

The truck, known for its futuristic design, has been



showing signs of weakness in demand.

Tesla is yet to disclose the delivery numbers for its Cybertruck. The company said on Thursday it handed over 471,930 Model 3 and Model Y vehicles and 23,640 units of other models, including the Model S sedan, Cybertruck and Model X premium SUV.

Overall, Tesla handed over 495,570 vehicles in the three months to Dec. 31, missing estimates of 503,269 units, according to 15 analysts polled by LSEG. It produced 459,445 vehicles in the period, down about 7% from a year ago.

Deliveries for 2024 totaled 1.79 million, 1.1% lower than a year ago and below estimates of 1.806 million units, according to 19 analysts polled by LSEG.

Tesla's 2024 deliveries were ahead of rival BYD, which reported a 12.1% rise in sales of battery-electric vehicles to 1.76 million in 2023, thanks to competitive

prices and a stronger push into Asian and European markets.

TRUMP BET

Tesla shares are coming off a strong 2024, in which they rose more than 60% after the election of Trump with strong support from Musk.

Musk has said he plans to leverage his promised role as a government-efficiency czar under the Trump administration to advocate for a federal approval process for autonomous vehicles to replace the current state-specific laws, which he described as "incredibly painful" to navigate.

Tesla's Autopilot and "Full Self-Driving" technologies, which are not yet fully autonomous, have been under scrutiny due to lawsuits, US traffic safety regulator probe and a Department of Justice criminal investigation.

The key concern is whether Tesla may have overstated the self-driving abilities of its vehicles.

Tesla is also under pressure from legacy automakers. Its October registrations in Europe fell 24%, due to a tight race from Volkswagen Group, whose Skoda Enyaq SUV dethroned Tesla's Model Y as the best-selling EV in the region, according to data research firm JATO Dynamics.

Trump's team is considering ending the \$7,500 tax credit for consumer EV purchases, a move that could worsen the slowing shift to EVs in the US, Reuters reported in November.

Sikh History This Week

JANUARY 3 TO JANUARY 9

3rd January



1961 Master Tara Singh was released from jail, where he was confined in connection with Punjabi Suba agitation. Master Tara Singh was born on 24 June, 1885, in Haryal in Rawalpindi district of North Western Province of undivided India. His mother, Moolan Devi, was a pious lady and his father, Bakshi Gopi Chand, was a patwari of the village and was a well known and respected person. Tara Singh's original name was Nanak Chand. In 1902 Nanak Chand embraced Sikhism and came to be called Tara Singh.

4th January

1909 Baba Ratta Singh Ji Nirankari passed away. Barsi celebrations are observed every year.

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

5th January



1666 Prakash Utsav Tenth Patshah, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. GURU GOBIND SINGH JI (1666-1708), tenth Patshah of the Sikh faith, was born on Saturday, Dec. 22, 1666 at Patna Sahib to father Guru Tegh Bahadur Patshah and Matta Gujri. On, Nov. 11, 1675, he assumed

Guruship at Anandpur Sahib.

Since early childhood, Guru Sahib was keen on weapons and their use. It is for this reason, that Guru Sahib became a scholar on weapons and mastered their usage, at a very early age. Guru Sahib continually emphasized scholarly works throughout his life. As a result, scholars around the world traveled long distances to participate and receive honors in his courts. He was always surrounded by renowned scholars. One of Guru Sahib's objective was to translate all scholarly works in Gurmukhi and commissioned several such translations. His vision of Sikh Kaum included a communion of scholars. In an attempt to turn Anandpur Sahib as the center of knowledge, Guru Sahib actively encouraged and sent Sikhs to study at various renowned institutions in the world.

To uplift the suppressed people, Guru Sahib instituted the tradition of Amrit during Vaisakhi diwan of sunmat 1756 at KeshGadh Sahib. Further he established a communion of Amritdharis (who received Amrit) and called it Khalsa. Guru Sahib, himself was the sixth member of the Khalsa order. Witnessing the false practices and prevalent injustices, Guru Sahib propagated the message of Guru Nanak so vigorously that the neighboring hill rulers felt threatened. Without understanding either his message or appreciating his objectives, these rulers suddenly turned enemies and attacked on several occasions. Each time Guru Sahib had to fight for his defense.

In sunmat 1761, the Turk forces sought Guru Sahib to leave Anandpur Sahib under promises that were proven false through subsequent events. Once Guru Sahib was out of Anandpur Sahib, he was attacked and suffered heavy losses. The hard work of 52 poets, accumulated over the years, along with several commissioned translations was burned by the enemies of knowledge. However, Guru Sahib patiently but bravely faced the enemy and escaped into the neighboring forest. Here with his influence, Guru Sahib turned this ghost land into Saint land and the forest into civilized Malwa. With his message of patience and valor, Guru Sahib preached the importance of sacrifice and true knowledge.

He had four sons from Mata Jeeto and Sundari, namely, Baba Ajit Singh, Baba Zujar Singh, Baba Zorawar Singh, and Baba Fateh Singh Ji. All four sacrificed their lives to protect and further the growth of the institutional plant sown by Guru Sahib.

After bestowing Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Sahib left this earth on Oct. 7, 1708, near the banks of Godawari river in Nanded, Guru Gobind Singh bravely fulfilled the responsibilities of Guruship and guided the Sikh Panth for 32 years, 10 months, and 26 days. He spent a total of 41 years, 9 months, and 15 days during his visit to this earth.

1923 Karam Singh of Jhingar and Dalip Singh of Gossal were arrested.

1924 Morcha launched for the possession of lands belonging to Gurudwara Pheru, Lahore. BHAJI PHERU was born in Anbmadhi village to khatri father Bhinane. His parents named him Pheru. In sunmat 1713, he became a Sikh of Guru Har Rai Sahib. Apparently, he came to Guru's darbar while traveling on business. After some time Guru Sahib established him as the Masand of Naka. When Guru Gobind Singh warned against the abuses by Masands and ordered that they be brought in his presence dragged by their beards, Bhai Pheru presented himself dragging his own beard. Guru Sahib impressed by this deed, honored him with the title of Sachi Dahdhi (true beard) and Sangat Sahib. Bhai Pheru never started his own discipleship. He did nirol prachaar of the Guru's baani. Yet some people claim to be his disciples and refer to themselves as sangat sahib kae.

6th January



1846 Battle of Budowal between Sikhs and British.

1989 Sirdar Satwant Singh and Kehar Singh hanged for gunning down Indira Gandhi. As Prime Minister of India, she had ordered the June 1984 attack on Harimandir Sahib by the Indian Armed Forces.

Sardar Satwant Singh and Sardar Kehar Singh were hanged till death. They were co-accused with Sardar Beant Singh for gunning down Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984. Sikh Panth holds Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India, responsible for the desecration of Harminder Sahib in 1984's Bluestar operation.

7th January



1924: 62 members of the SGPC were arrested from the precincts of Sri Darbar Sahib under Section 120, 121 (2) Indian Penal Code (Sedition) and Section 17A and 17B of the Act of 1908 by Special order of Punjab Governor.

1974: Through the efforts of Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Yogi, the US Army Dress Code was amended to allow Sikhs to wear beards and turbans and to maintain the five Kakkars.

8th January

1685 Baba Aalla Singh, founder of Patiala State, was born. BABA AALLA SINGH JI was born in village Phull to father Baba Ram Singh "Phulwansi" and mother Saabhi. He was introduced to amrit by Baba Deep Singh Ji, in TheekriWalae village. In sunmat 1810, he laid the foundation stone of a temporary structure for the Patiala fort while the construction of a permanent structure began in sunmat 1820. Simultaneously he founded the Patiala city. Barnala, Longowal, Sunaam, Bathinda, and Patiala were under his control. He passed away on 22nd Aug. 1765 in Patiala.

9th January

1961 Fateh Singh broke his fast after assurances regarding Punjabi Suba from the Indian Government.

1983 Akali Dal organized a convention for GurSikh intellectuals in connection with the Dharam Yudh Morcha.



Shororan so pehmaniye
Jo lade deen ke het
Purza purza kat mare
Kabahon na chhade khet

He alone is a brave person
Who fights for the underprivileged:
He may get cut into pieces,
But he never flees the battlefield.

Heartiest Greetings on Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Prakash Divas (Birthday)



Gurmej Singh
917-513-9830

FORMER PRESIDENT
Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana
Sikh Center, New York



Daler Singh
917-849-9033

FORMER PRESIDENT
Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center, New York
President, Akal Gatka Gurmat Group Inc. New York

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 6, 2025 TO JAN 12, 2025

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



ARIES

Ganesha says this week will be very auspicious and positive for you. Many important changes are likely to come in your life. Whatever wishes and dreams you have in your mind, they can be fulfilled this week. Your health will also be very good and you will feel full of energy. Your performance at the workplace will be excellent and your superiors will praise you. Your relationship with your colleagues will also be cordial, which will lead to more success in work. This week will be very good for students. Your interest in studies will increase and you will work hard to achieve your goal. There is a possibility of good results in the exam. Your activity will also increase in social life. You can participate in a social event and meet new people. Your respect will increase and people will praise you. Happiness will also remain in love life. Understanding and love will increase between you and your partner. Both of you will enjoy spending time with each other and make your relationship stronger. Overall, this week will be very auspicious and successful for you. Complete every task with confidence and positivity and enjoy life.

TAURUS



Ganesha says your day will be average this week. You may get normal results in the workplace, but keep working hard. The financial situation will remain stable, however, avoid any major investment. There may be some disputes in the family, so control your speech and work patiently. You have to be a little cautious in terms of health, especially if you are suffering from any chronic disease. Focus on regular exercise and proper diet. Sweetness will remain in love life, but avoid any kind of misunderstanding. Spend time with your partner, this will strengthen the relationship. This week will be normal for students. Stay focused on your studies and use time properly. Overall, this week will be balanced for you. Work with patience and restraint and take any important decision thoughtfully.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week is going to be very wonderful for you. You will be full of energy and enthusiasm. You may get the fruits of your hard work and dedication this week. Your reputation will increase in the workplace and you will get appreciation from senior officials. If you do business, new opportunities will knock at your door. The financial situation will improve and you will be

able to achieve your financial goals. There will be peace and happiness in the family and you will have a good time with your loved ones. You may meet an old friend who will be a reason for happiness for you. This week will be favorable for you in terms of health. However, pay attention to your diet and exercise regularly. Take the help of meditation and yoga for mental peace. Sweetness will remain in love relationships this week. You will have some memorable moments with your partner. If you are single, you may meet someone special who will add a new color to your life. Overall, this week will be full of happiness and positivity for you. Stay focused on your goals and move forward with confidence.



CANCER

Ganesha says this week will be normal for you. You may face some challenges, but with patience and restraint, you can overcome them. There will be some busyness at the workplace, which may cause fatigue. However, you will get the fruits of hard work soon. In personal life, you will get a chance to spend time with family. This will give you mental peace and satisfaction. You may meet an old friend, which will be a cause of happiness for you. Be cautious in financial matters. Avoid unnecessary expenses and follow the budget. Consider all the options before investing, so that there is no problem in the future. In terms of health, you need to pay a little attention. With regular exercise and a balanced diet, you can maintain your energy. There is a possibility of an old disease emerging, so consult a doctor on time. In love relationships, there may be some differences with your partner. These problems can be resolved through dialogue and understanding. Maintain transparency in the relationship and respect your partner's feelings. This week will bring mixed results for students. There is a need to focus on studies. Students preparing for a competitive exam will have to work extra hard.

LEO



Ganesha says this week's horoscope will be normal for you. You will not get the full fruits of your hard work in the workplace, but this is the time to be patient. You will need to make extra efforts to fully execute your plans. Do not expect cooperation from colleagues, you will have to work on your own. There may be some instability in personal life. Some disputes may arise with family members, but the situation can be handled if you work with patience and wisdom. Express your thoughts clearly and respect the feelings of others. This week will be normal in terms of health. However, you may need to make some changes in your routine. Regular exercise and adopting a balanced diet will make you feel better. Resort to meditation and yoga to avoid mental stress. Some ups and downs may be seen in the financial situation. Control

expenses and avoid unnecessary purchases. Think well before investing. Overall, this week may be full of challenges for you, but with the right approach and patience, you can face them. Stay focused on your goals and maintain a positive attitude.



VIRGO

Ganesha says this week will be a great time for you. You will work at your workplace with new energy and enthusiasm, which will impress your superiors and colleagues. Your efforts will be appreciated and you will get success in your work. There will be happiness in personal life as well. You will get a chance to spend time with family members and mutual relations will be strengthened. You may meet an old friend or relative, which will fill your mind with happiness. Financial conditions will also be strong this week. You may get new investment opportunities, which will prove to be profitable in the future. However, it is necessary to control expenses so that financial balance is maintained. This week will also be good from the health point of view. You can include yoga and meditation in your routine, which will improve your mental and physical health. This time will be especially beneficial for students. Concentration will remain in studies and you will get the fruits of your hard work. Students preparing for competitive examinations can get positive results. Your reputation will increase in society and people will value your advice.

LIBRA



Ganesha says many positive changes are likely to come in your life. You can be successful in work and you can be successful in achieving your goals. Your efforts will be fully rewarded and you will get appreciation in your workplace. There will be happiness in personal life as well. You will get a chance to spend time with family and mutual relations will be strengthened. You may meet an old friend, which will make the mind happy. This week will also be favorable in terms of health. You will feel energetic and fresh. Focus on regular exercise and a balanced diet, which will keep your health intact. This week will also be beneficial from the economic point of view. New investment opportunities can be found and old investments can also give good profits. Control expenses and spend wisely. Overall, this week will be very good for you. Keep up your efforts and stay confident. Success will kiss your feet.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week's horoscope will be normal for you. During this time, you will need to maintain balance in your work. You may face some challenges in the workplace, but with patience and restraint, you will

be able to find a solution to them. There may be some ups and downs in your personal life. Try to spend time with family and friends, this will give you mental peace. If you are thinking of taking any important decision, it would be better to postpone it for a while. Take care of your health, and follow regular exercise and a balanced diet. To avoid mental stress this week, resort to meditation and yoga. The financial situation will be stable but avoid unnecessary expenses. Be cautious in matters of investment and take any financial decision thoughtfully. Overall, this week is a time of introspection and patience for you. Focus your energy in the right direction and move forward with positive thinking.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week's horoscope will be somewhat normal for you. You may get mixed results in the workplace. Some tasks will be successful, while some will require a little hard work and patience. There may be some difficulty in maintaining coordination with colleagues, but with patience and understanding, you will solve all the problems. You may get new opportunities in business, but it will be necessary to consider all aspects before investing. Be a little cautious in money-related matters and avoid unnecessary expenses. The normal situation will remain in family life. Try to spend time with family members and understand their feelings. This is the time to strengthen your relationships. You have to be a little careful in terms of health. Focus on regular exercise and proper diet. Take the help of yoga and meditation to avoid mental stress. Some ups and downs can also be seen in love life this week. Maintain clarity in communication with your partner and ignore small things. This will keep the sweetness in the relationship. This week you should focus on your plans and goals and maintain your confidence. With patience and restraint, you will be able to face every challenge and achieve success. At the end of the week, you will feel a little relieved and you will reap the fruits of your efforts.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says this week will be very good for you. You will get success in important projects at work and your colleagues will appreciate your work. Your confidence will increase and you can touch new heights. Happiness and peace will remain in family life. You will get a chance to spend time with family members and mutual understanding will increase. Relationships with spouses will become even stronger. Love relationships will also deepen and you can spend memorable moments with your beloved. This week will be favorable for you from the health point of view. You will be full of energy and will be free from any kind of health problem. However, do not

CONTD ON PAGE 45

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JANUARY 6 TO JANUARY 12 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

JANUARY 6 : Ganesha says today, open yourself up to the revitalizing power of rejuvenation. When the stars and planets come into proper alignment, it paves the path for novel insights and unexplored possibilities. Be willing to adapt to unanticipated changes and have faith that doing so will lead to personal development and progression. Your intuition is heightened, and as a result, you can handle challenging circumstances with poise and sage advice. Spend some time thinking about the things you want to do and the good things you want to happen in the days to come. Your endeavors are supported by the stars, which in turn inspires confidence and hope in you. As you embark on this new path, don't forget to show kindness to both yourself and the people around you.

JANUARY 7 : Ganesha says the universe inspires you to indulge in your creative side today by encouraging you to do so. You should let your imagination go wild and investigate the hidden parts of your universe. The conditions now are ideal for creative expression, introspection, and the development of new ideas. Your creative endeavors are supported by the forces of the universe, which in turn provide you with knowledge and inspiration. Have faith in your one-of-a-kind perspective, and communicate it to the rest of the

world. The associations you establish today have the potential to develop into more substantial relationships and productive partnerships in the future.

JANUARY 8 : Ganesha says clarity and concentration will come to your mind today as the stars are in perfect alignment. Today is a good day for introspective contemplation and methodical preparation. Spend some time getting your thoughts organized and coming up with some goals for the future that are attainable. Your goals are supported by the cosmos, and it provides you with the willpower and tenacity you need to make them a reality. Don't forget to keep a healthy balance in all elements of your life, making sure that you're taking care of yourself and making progress in other areas of your life in addition to your professional accomplishments.

JANUARY 9 : Ganesha says the forces of the heavens today highlight the significance of maintaining open lines of communication. The ability to have a conversation that is both clear and empathetic is essential to successfully resolving issues and building stronger relationships. Maintain an open mind to the viewpoints of others and work on your ability to actively listen. You are blessed with empathy and understanding, which enables you to negotiate talks with elegance and

respect. The cosmos smiles down upon you. You have the power to heal others and inspire others, so choose your words carefully.

JANUARY 10 : Ganesha says the universe advises people to take care of themselves and rest today. Get away from the commotion for a while so that you can refresh not only your thoughts but also your body and your spirit. Participate in pursuits that will provide you with both pleasure and a sense of calm. You are bathed in the soft light of the stars, which brings forth feelings of calm and composure within you. Embrace the calm vibe that surrounds you and take it with you into the days that lie ahead.

JANUARY 11 : Ganesha says the cosmic forces of today underscore the significance of adaptation and flexibility in one's life. Because of the unpredictability of life, it is possible that unexpected changes will occur, and the universe will prepare you to confront these changes with bravery and optimism. Have faith in the divine design of the universe and be aware that every event serves a purpose in your personal development and progression. Always try to keep a cheerful attitude and be open to new experiences; life is full of exciting opportunities.

JANUARY 12 : Ganesha says at the end of the week, the heavenly bodies

will align in a way that will bring harmony and balance into your life. It is a day for making amends, getting well, and coming together as one. Make amends with loved ones and reconnect with old friends. The success of your attempts to cultivate healthy, loving relationships is supported by the cosmos. Think back on the events of the past week and acknowledge the things you've picked up and how much you've grown as a result. Proceed with a spirit that is filled to the brim with love, appreciation, and excitement for the benefits that are still to come.

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CONTD FROM PAGE 44

forget to include yoga and meditation in your routine, it will give you mental peace. Financial conditions will improve and there are chances of monetary gains. This is a good time for investment, but think well before taking any major decision. This week will be good for students. You will focus on your studies and get good results in the exam. If you are preparing for a competition, you are likely to be successful. Overall, this week will be positive and full of progress for you.

Stay focused on your goals and keep trying continuously. Your efforts will pay off.

AQUARIUS



Aquarius

Ganesha says this week has very auspicious signs for you. You will get the fruits of your hard work and dedication. Your performance at work will be commendable and your superiors will be impressed by your work. This can give you a chance for new responsibilities at the workplace, which will be beneficial for your career. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in your personal life as well. You will get a chance to spend time with family and friends, which will keep the mind happy. If you are in a relationship with someone, then this is the time to strengthen your relationship. Sweetness will also remain in love relationships. This week will be excellent for you in terms of health. With regular exercise and a balanced diet, you will feel fit and energetic. You can get relief from any chronic disease. This week will also be beneficial for you from the financial point of view. This time is favorable for investment and you will be successful in achieving your financial goals. If you want to make a new financial plan, then this is the right time. Overall, this week will be very good for you. With your positive attitude and hard work, you will achieve success in every field.

PISCES



Ganesha says this week the horoscope will be average for Pisces natives. You may have to face normal situations at the workplace. Do

not rush to take any important decision and take steps only after thinking. Maintain restraint and patience in family matters, and try to avoid disputes. The financial situation will be stable, but it is advisable to avoid unnecessary expenses. If you are thinking of investing, then do a thorough investigation first. There is a need to be a little careful in terms of health. Follow regular exercise and a balanced diet. This week will be normal

for students. Try to concentrate on your studies and use time properly. Adopting a new hobby can reduce mental stress. Spend time with friends and family in social life, this will boost morale. If you are planning a trip, then try to postpone it a bit. Overall, this week is of balance and restraint. If you work with patience and wisdom, you can pass this week successfully.

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

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ||



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Pausha Putrada Ekadashi

Pausha Putrada Ekadashi, falling in the Hindu month of Pausha (December-January), is a sacred day dedicated to Lord Vishnu. In 2025, this auspicious occasion will be observed on January 10th. Ekadashi, the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight, is revered for its spiritual significance, and Pausha Putrada Ekadashi is particularly associated with blessings for progeny and family well-being.

Significance of Pausha Putrada Ekadashi

The term "Putrada" translates to "giver of sons," and this Ekadashi holds special importance for married couples desiring children. Observing this day with devotion is believed to bestow the blessings of Lord Vishnu, ensuring the happiness and prosperity of the family lineage. Additionally, it is a day to seek Lord Vishnu's grace for spiritual growth, liberation from past sins, and overall well-being.

According to Hindu scriptures, observing a fast on Pausha Putrada Ekadashi is equivalent to performing numerous yajnas (ritual sacrifices). The fast cleanses the devotee's mind and body, promoting a deeper connection with the divine and fostering spiritual discipline.

Rituals and Observances

Preparation (Dashami)

The observance begins on Dashami, the tenth day of the lunar fortnight. Devotees prepare themselves physically and mentally for the fast by consuming a simple meal before sunset. Foods such as grains, onions, and garlic are avoided to maintain sattvic (pure) energy levels. This preparatory stage signifies the devotee's commitment to the vrata (vow).

Ekadashi Day

- **Fasting:** Fasting is the most important part of Ekadashi. Devotees abstain from grains, cereals, and certain vegetables. Depending on individual capacity, some observe a nirjala fast (without water), while others follow a partial fast, consuming only fruits, milk, and water. The fast symbolizes self-control and detachment from material cravings.
- **Prayer and Worship:** The day begins with a ritual bath, symbolizing purification. Devotees set up an altar with an idol or image of Lord Vishnu, decorated with flowers and tulsi leaves. Offerings such as fruits, sweets, incense, and lamps are presented while chanting Vishnu's mantras and hymns, including the "Vishnu Sahasranama" (a thousand names of Lord Vishnu). Special emphasis is placed on invoking Lord Vishnu's blessings for family well-being.
- **Storytelling:** Families gather to listen to the legend (vrat katha) associated with Pausha Putrada Ekadashi. The tale of King Suketuman and Queen Shaibya, who were blessed with a son after observing this vrat, is narrated. This tradition reinforces faith and highlights the transformative power of devotion.
- **Charity and Acts of Kindness:** Devotees engage in acts of charity, such as donating food, clothes, and money to the underprivileged. Feeding Brahmins and offering assistance to those in need are considered highly meritorious deeds on this day.
- **Bhajans and Kirtans:** Singing devotional songs and participating in community prayers create an atmosphere of spiritual upliftment. Such activities strengthen communal bonds and collective devotion.

Breaking the Fast (Dwadashi)

The fast is concluded on Dwadashi, the twelfth lunar day, after offering prayers to Lord Vishnu. Devotees break their fast by consuming a sattvic meal prepared



Important information

Pausha Putrada Ekadashi 2025

Friday, 10 January 2025

Ekadashi Date Start : 09 January 2025 at 12:22 PM

Ekadashi Date End : 10 January 2025 at 10:19 AM

without grains. The timing of breaking the fast, known as "Parana," is determined based on the specific Ekadashi calendar for the region and must be observed within the prescribed window to maximize the spiritual benefits.

Legend of Pausha Putrada Ekadashi

The Bhavishya Purana narrates the story of King Suketuman and Queen Shaibya. Despite their prosperity and devotion, they were unhappy due to their childlessness. Distressed, King Suketuman wandered into a forest, where he encountered sages performing a yajna. They advised him to observe the Pausha Putrada Ekadashi vrat with faith and devotion. Following their guidance, the king and queen observed the fast and were soon blessed with a son who grew up to be a virtuous and capable ruler. This tale underscores the power of sincere devotion and the rewards of following dharma.

Astrological and Spiritual Relevance

Astrologically, Ekadashi days are considered

potent for spiritual practices. The moon's influence on the mind is believed to be at its peak, making it an ideal time for meditation, self-reflection, and detachment from worldly distractions. Pausha Putrada Ekadashi, in particular, aligns with the energies of Lord Vishnu, symbolizing preservation and harmony.

Cultural Practices Across Regions

While the core rituals remain consistent, the observance of Pausha Putrada Ekadashi varies slightly across different regions of India:

- **North India:** The focus is on prayers for family prosperity and progeny, with grand celebrations in Vishnu temples.
- **South India:** Devotees emphasize chanting Vishnu's names and performing special archanas (ritual offerings).
- **Eastern India**:** Communities organize collective storytelling sessions and distribute prasada (sanctified food) to the poor.

Modern-Day Relevance

In today's fast-paced world, Pausha Putrada Ekadashi serves as a reminder of the importance of family values, self-discipline, and spiritual connection. The practice of fasting not only benefits physical health but also fosters mental clarity and emotional stability. Acts of charity and kindness performed on this day resonate with contemporary ideals of social responsibility and compassion.



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Looking Ahead 2025: Those aspiring to settle down in North America may keep their fingers crossed



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

As everyone steps into the New Year with hopes for bright, cheerful and prosperous 2025, things may not be looking rosy for those who aspire to make North America their new home. There will be a change of guard in the United States on January 20 when Donald Trump returns to the Oval Office in the White House. Canada may not be far behind in putting a new party in the political command of the nation.

Both Canada and the US witnessed record immigration from South Asia in general and India in particular in the tumultuous year 2024, which is coming to an end, leaving behind both sweet and sour memories. Uncertain is the future of those who have no legal documentation in support of their continuation of living in either the US or Canada. It is not only the US President-elect Donald Trump who has made no secret of his intentions of deporting all those who have no legal right to be in the USA. His first axe will fall on those who have either a criminal background or are currently facing criminal charges. The number of such aliens could run into millions and may take a long time for the new US administration to carry out the orders of President Trump during his second term.

Canada, too, has been struggling hard to come out of the mess it created with its frequently changing and pro-immigrant policies of previous years. Finding the situation slipping out of hands, the minority government of Justin Trudeau has been desperate to restore order by promulgating new policies and programs while upsetting the applecart of young hopefuls who landed in Canada legally based on previous policies and programs and have now been told that "permanent residency status is not guaranteed for them because of the new rules.

When Governments changed their policies and programs midway, hundreds of thousands of hopefuls, while believing the policies and programs of the authorities concerned, took the jump without realizing their "drowning would be inevitable." Many of them are on the brink as statements, policies, and plans are being pronounced day in and day out. When they needed "cheap labor" or "manpower" in addition to the billions of dollars prospective immigrants were bringing with them, the Governments welcomed them with open arms. Now, after sailing through the crisis, especially the post-COVID pandemic, they find the "immigrant influx too wieldy to be controlled."

New rules may be in place but those



A glimpse of Christmas in Toronto.

hoping to make them have not lost hopes. Immigration is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. So much so that people transgress international and geographical borders to reach where they want to be.

No laws are without flaws. Those who set their eyes on settling abroad find ways and means to achieve their goals. If in the recent past, "illegitimate immigration and travel agents" were using all illicit means to carry out their operations of human smuggling with a mixed rate of success, now they have also changed their modus operandi.

They have taken the mixed route of blending both legitimate and illegitimate means to send aspirants overseas. They not only exploited the existing systems, including 10-year visas or express entry as introduced by Canada but also used other means, including the use of a "political asylum route" to smuggle the aspirants by charging huge amounts as their fee.

Guiding gullible aspirants to hold protests outside embassies and consulates of the countries of their origin and get some good pictures made to show their involvement, these agents held, would strengthen the case of their candidates for "political asylum". This led to a huge increase in the number of political asylum seekers who in turn get special treatment from the countries they want to make their new homes. Incidentally, a big number of these "political asylum seekers" came from the international students community who would invariably base their claim on fear of being "persecuted" in case they returned to the country of their origin.



Several Indian students stage a sit-in protest in Canada's Brampton.

Photo : Twitter/@ellymangat123

The enterprising manpower and immigration agents have also come out with yet another model of mixing both "legitimate and illegitimate means" to send young able-bodied immigration aspirants abroad.

Their modus operandi was recently tracked down by the Enforcement Directorate back home in India.

The Enforcement Directorate investigated the alleged involvement of some Canadian colleges and a few Indian entities in a money-laundering case linked to the trafficking of youngsters into the US from the Canadian border.

The investigation followed the death of a four-member Indian family, hailing from Dingucha village in Gujarat, who died of extreme cold while trying to cross the

Canada-US border illegally a couple of years ago.

The brains behind this racket worked in connivance with some Canadian Colleges who would admit the aspirants by getting them student visa. Once in Canada, they would walk out of the college to reclaim a full-fee refund and then head for the USA from a porous US border without realizing that it would not be easy there.

Under the new regime of Donald Trump, they would be on the first list to be deported as they do not have any legal documents to enter and stay in the USA.

The legal channels may have either closed or shrunk but there is no dearth of those who want to make it to the US or Canada. They all live in hope. They hope the year 2025 will bring them luck.

The ghost of no-confidence motions continues to haunt Justin Trudeau, the minority Liberal government

For Justin Trudeau and his minority Liberal government, there has been no running away from the ignominy of no-confidence motions. The House of Commons that broke for the holidays from December 18 till January 27 may have its Public Accounts Committee meeting in the first week of the New Year to discuss the possibility of early tabling of the no-confidence motion.

Normally, the Opposition parties have to wait for the Opposition days to table their motions. The Business Advisory Committee of the Commons fixes opposition days. Besides the Conservatives, the NDP also declared that it would bring up a no-confidence motion against the Justin Trudeau government after the House of Commons resumes its sitting in the last week of January.

While Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is holidaying in British Columbia, Conservatives, the main opposition party, have been working overtime on modalities to bring down the Liberal government at the earliest to advance the federal elections. After their earlier three attempts of toppling the government failed, the Conservatives now intend to convene the House of Commons public accounts committee early in the new year to table a non-confidence motion aiming to make optimum use of its popularity wave for replacing Liberals as the ruling party.

According to the latest opinion polls, the Conservatives are 20 points ahead of the Liberals. They do not want this advantage to go to waste.

The chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), John Williamson of the Conservative Party, took to his social media channels a day after Boxing Day to announce that a meeting of the PAC is being recalled on January 7 to discuss a motion of non-confidence. He said the motion is to be tabled in Parliament when the House returns from its holiday break on January 27. A vote on the PAC motion could take place as early as January 30.

In a Press Release, the Tories said the motion would simply read, "the Committee report to the House the following recommendation: That the House has no confidence in the Prime Minister and the Government."

Williamson further said in his letter that all three opposition parties—the Tories, NDP, and Bloc Québécois—agree they do not have confidence in the Liberal government. If any Liberal committee member attempts to filibuster and delay the motion's passage, he will respond by scheduling additional meetings throughout January, Williamson added.

The mandate of the PAC is to oversee government spending. Like other Committees of the House, it can also adopt reports or make recommendations to the House of Commons to take action. In case the committee were to pass a



Conservatives table non-confidence motion on September 24, 2024 in an attempt to topple Trudeau government.
File photo / Screengrab - Global News



NDP leader Jagmeet Singh, a rock-solid supporter of Trudeau government, finally deserted him and declared NDP will vote to oust Trudeau government.

motion with such a recommendation, the House may choose to debate and vote on it, which would make it an official motion of non-confidence.

During the last sitting of Parliament, the Conservatives introduced three non-confidence motions to bring down the Liberal government and trigger an election, all of which were unsuccessful. While the New Democrats voted against all three of the motions, their leader Jagmeet Singh announced on December 20 that his party would bring a no-confidence motion to bring down the government after the House resumes its sitting on January 27.

Events have been overtaken by the developments. The announcement by the NDP leader Jagmeet Singh came at the end of a tumultuous week that saw Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland resign from cabinet hours before she was set to table the Fall Economic Statement.

Her resignation acted as a catalyst in bringing together all Opposition leaders to call the Prime Minister to quit.

Incidentally, the NDP had been supporting the major Liberal government in return for its Supply and Confidence Agreement (SACA), under which it had been supporting the minority ruling party in exchange for legislation like free dental care and pharmaceutical care programs. The NDP, however, tore this SACA on September 4, maintaining that it would decide on a case-to-case basis how to vote on future confidence motions.

After the House adjourned for holidays, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, wanted to grab the opportunity of



Justin Trudeau visited the US President-Elect Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago to plead with him against raising tariffs on Canadian goods coming into America.

exploiting to the fullest the growing revolt within the Liberals after Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland sent a stunning resignation letter to Justin Trudeau. Another Minister, Sean Fraser, had declared his intentions to quit the Cabinet on December 18 to devote more time to his family. After Freeland's resignation letter that shocked not only the Liberal caucus but also all political parties, things have not been going the way Justin Trudeau had imagined or planned.

His plans were further aggravated by US President-elect Donald Trump threatening a 25 per cent tariff on all imports from Canada. Pierre Poilievre chose the developments to send a letter to Governor General Mary Simon to urge her to recall the House as early as possible for a non-confidence vote, given the stated lack of confidence in the government from all opposition parties. Many felt that his letter would be outside the prerogative of the governor-general, who is normally inclined to act on advice from the prime minister and not the leader of the Opposition.

Justin Trudeau was quick to name a replacement for Chrystia Freeland and reshuffled his Cabinet by inducting eight new faces, his problems did not end there. The dissent within the Liberal caucus has been growing since then. At least two MPs, including Chandra Arya, openly came out in support of Chrystia Freeland as a replacement for Trudeau.

Though Trudeau did address a meeting of the caucus and also held discussions with his Cabinet colleagues on the US developments, he has been exercising restraint in addressing issues concerning his leadership.

Meanwhile, one of his existing advisers Gerald Butts was quoted by the media saying Trudeau may soon be stepping down.

Butts, who now works for the think tank Eurasia Group, wrote an article on the political developments since Chrystia Freeland's resignation from cabinet and growing revolt within the Liberal Party, inferring "If, as is now widely expected, Mr Trudeau's resignation is imminent, the only way forward is a real leadership race."

Butts argued against the Liberal caucus anointing Freeland as the new leader after she quit in dramatic fashion hours before she was scheduled to deliver the Fall Economic Statement.

Butts said Freeland's team now believes she will be thanked for Trudeau's job after having done the Liberal Party and the country a "favour by ringing a loud buzzer alarm into the ear of a Prime Minister who was sleepwalking toward electoral oblivion."

"Chrystia Freeland was the first person recruited to Team Trudeau to help shape that agenda and make it real for people," Butts wrote about how the Liberal Party soared back to power in 2015 promising to boost the middle class.

Butts, who served as principal secretary to Trudeau from 2015 to 2019, added he had not expected the political partnership between Freeland and Trudeau would "end in tears."

This development makes it more likely Trudeau won't lead the Liberal Party in the next election, Butts said, with the election now likely coming sooner and with greater odds of a Conservative majority.

Freeland, known as a politician of few words, has not spoken to the media after her resignation. She, however, said in her resignation letter that she will run in the next election, unlike the other five ministers who have recently left the cabinet and announced to quit federal politics after the next election.

Pressure has been building up on Trudeau to step down since the Liberal Party lost a couple of its stronghold ridings in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

(Prabhjot Singh, is a Toronto-based award-winning independent journalist, He was celebrated by AIPS, the international body of sports journalists, for covering ten Olympics at its centennial celebrations held at UNESCO Centre in Paris during the 2024 Olympic Games. Besides, he has written extensively about business and the financial markets, the health industry, the public and private sectors, and aviation. He has worked as a political reporter besides covering Sikh and Punjab politics. He is particularly interested in Indian Diaspora and Sikh Diaspora in particular. His work has also appeared in various international and national newspapers, magazines and journals.)

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Biden Plans to Block Takeover Bid...

United States and one of America's largest sources of foreign investment.

The president's decision to block the deal came after a federal committee reviewing the transaction opted to not make a formal recommendation about whether the takeover should be allowed to proceed, according to letters sent to the companies and the White House last month.

The Committee of Foreign Investment in the United States, which is made up of agencies including the departments of Treasury and Justice, expressed reservations about the deal to the companies in a letter last month. CFIUS (pronounced SIFF-ee-yuhs) voiced concerns that the transaction could pose a national security threat to the United States by potentially leading to a decline in American steel production. The officials suggested that Nippon's other global business considerations could in the future outweigh its pledges to invest in U.S. Steel.

The lack of a formal recommendation cleared the way for Mr. Biden, barring an unexpected change of heart, to end a transaction that became ensnared in election-year politics.

But that decision could face challenges in court. Nippon had indicated that it was prepared to take legal action if the deal was blocked.

Nippon sent a letter to CFIUS last month that accused the White House of "impermissible influence" in the process. Nippon said the concerns raised by CFIUS were "littered with factual inaccuracies and omissions, misleading and incomplete statements, conjecture and hypotheticals that have no basis in fact and are plainly illogical."

U.S. Steel has also continued to push for the deal. After CFIUS failed to make a formal recommendation, the company issued a statement saying that the deal "is the best way, by far, to ensure that U.S. Steel, including its employees, communities and customers, will thrive well into the future."

CBS News reported earlier that a decision could come as early as Friday.

The politics of Mr. Biden's decision were clear: U.S. Steel is based in the crucial swing state of Pennsylvania, and its powerful union vehemently opposed the proposed takeover, in part over concerns that Nippon would not honor its commitments to invest in plants and preserve the pensions of workers. The public debate over the acquisition emerged as a key issue ahead of the 2024 presidential election, and Mr. Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and President-elect Donald J. Trump all publicly said that U.S. Steel should remain American-owned.

Before the election, the Biden administration granted the companies an additional three months to try to address concerns about the deal. By December, however, it was clear that the deal was most likely doomed when CFIUS told Nippon that federal agencies were divided over whether it should proceed, and after Mr. Trump declared that he would block it upon taking office.

"As President, I will block this deal from happening," Mr. Trump said on social media. "Buyer Beware!!!"

Despite his opposition to the steel deal, Mr. Trump last month welcomed a \$100 billion investment in the United States pledged by SoftBank, a Japanese technology company, that will focus on technology and artificial intelligence over the next four years.

The bid by Nippon faced political opposition from the moment it was announced in December 2023. Democratic senators including Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, along with Senator JD Vance, the Ohio Republican who is now the vice president-elect, urged Mr. Biden to review the proposed sale to guard against lost steel production and jobs. Both Mr. Brown and Mr. Casey lost their seats to Republican challengers in November.

Shortly before last Christmas, the Biden administration appeared to bend to the concerns being voiced by lawmakers, with Lael Brainard, the director of the National Economic Council, issuing a statement saying that the transaction "appears to deserve serious scrutiny in terms of its potential impact on national

security and supply chain reliability."

While U.S. Steel shareholders approved the deal in April, the likelihood that it would happen dimmed as the presidential election grew closer.

U.S. Steel, which was founded in 1901, has for years faced financial struggles amid the changing dynamics of global metal markets and rapidly evolving technology, which the company was often slow to adopt. The company, whose metal has been used to build some of the nation's most famous bridges and buildings - such as the Willis Tower in Chicago and the United Nations building in New York - employed 340,000 workers at its peak in the 1940s but now has around 20,000 workers overall, with about 4,000 in Pennsylvania.

A post-pandemic boost to the steel market, which stemmed from a combination of shortages and demand spurred by federal infrastructure investments, had been showing signs of cooling amid worries of a global economic slowdown. In 2023, a U.S. Steel rival, the Ohio-based Cleveland-Cliffs, made an unsolicited offer to buy its competitor. That set off a bidding war that Nippon won. (Source: New York Times)

No direction to break Dallewal's fast...

You have to persuade him from this angle," a Bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan told Punjab Advocate General Gurminder Singh.

"Shifting (him) to the hospital does not mean he will not continue his fast. There are medical facilities which will ensure that no harm is caused to his life. That is our only concern. His life is precious as a farm leader. He is not aligned to any political ideologies and he is taking care of only the farmers' cause," Justice Kant said.

"Once Dallewal's health is taken care of, he can continue on fast... Of course, with the support of medical aid. Once we are satisfied that his life is not in danger, the role of the committee (appointed by the court) becomes easier," the top court said while hearing Labh Singh's petition seeking contempt of court action against the Punjab Chief Secretary and Director General of Police for failing to implement its order on shifting Dallewal to a hospital.

"Your attitude is that there should be no conciliation. That is the whole problem," Justice Kant told Singh who sought to clarify that the Punjab Government was all for conciliation.

"We have tried to convince him (Dallewal) to take medical aid as per your Lordships' directions. Our people are on the site. He is of the firm opinion that he will definitely accept medical help subject to some intervention (by the Centre)," the Advocate General submitted. "Mr Advocate General, not even a single time your officers have gone there... Your ministers have gone there... Please don't force us to say many things. Have you ever told them that we have constituted a committee for this purpose?" the Bench asked.

Stating that protesting farmers have been told about the court-constituted panel, Singh told the Bench that the committee has called them for talks on Friday.

"There are people who are making irresponsible statements... What are their bona fides is a matter to be looked into," the Bench said.

It also questioned the Centre for not making a statement that it would consider genuine demands of protesting farmers. "Mr Mehta, you have been there for all these days, why your client (Centre) cannot make a statement that you will consider the genuine (demands) and we are open to consider genuine grievances of farmers... Our doors are open... Why can't the Central Government also make a statement?" Justice Bhuyan asked the Solicitor General.

"Your Lordships are perhaps not aware of several factors which are weighing in. Therefore, right now we are confining (ourselves) to one person's health," Mehta replied. It also asked the Centre to respond to a petition filed by Dallewal's friend Guninder Kaur Gill seeking implementation of the commitments made to farmers by the Centre.

As the Advocate General said officers were on the ground to take all steps required in the matter, the Bench asked it to file a compliance affidavit and posted the matter for further hearing on January 6. (Source:

TNS)

ISRO launches SpaDeX mission for...

The spacecraft's solar panels have been deployed successfully. The two SpaDeX satellites have moved one behind another so over a period of time it will pick up travel further distance, the distance will increase by 20 km over the next few days and then the rendezvous and docking process will start. The docking process can happen in another one week; the nominal time will be approximately January 7," said ISRO Chairman S Somanth.

With the SpaDeX mission, ISRO aims to exhibit technologies needed for spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking using two small satellites which have been mastered by only an elite group of spacefaring nations.

The demonstration of this technology is essential for futuristic missions such as sending an Indian astronaut on the Moon, sample return from the Moon, the building and operation of the Indian Space Station.

ISRO said that the demonstrated precision of the PSLV vehicle will be utilized to give a small relative velocity between the Target and Chaser spacecraft at the time of separation from the launch vehicle.

GSLV mission planned in January would be 100th launch from Sriharikota: ISRO chief

"This incremental velocity will allow the Target spacecraft to build a 10-20 km inter-satellite separation with respect to the Chaser within a day. At this point, the relative velocity between the Target will be compensated using the propulsion system of the Target spacecraft," ISRO said.

ISRO added that at the end of this drift arrest maneuver, Target and Chaser will be in the same orbit with identical velocity but separated by about 20 km, known as Far Rendezvous.

"With a similar strategy of introducing and then compensating for a small relative velocity between the two spacecraft, the Chaser will approach the Target with progressively reduced inter-satellite distances of 5 km, 1.5 km, 500 m, 225 m, 15 m, and 3 m, ultimately leading to the docking of the two spacecraft," it added.

U R Rao Satellite Centre Director M. Sanakaran said the docking is expected between January 7 and 10.

Twenty-four PS4-Orbital Experiment Module (POEM-4) payloads will also onboard the PSLV-C60 SpaDeX mission.

2 sites shortlisted for Dr. Manmohan...

The government has shortlisted two locations for allotment of land to build a memorial to late Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Union Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Thursday said the two sites, near the Rajghat memorial complex area, were located at the same place where other former PMs' memorials had earlier been built. Khattar said the family of Dr Singh was being consulted and their decision would be final on the location of the memorial site.

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Katikithala Srinivas is learnt to have met the family of the former PM in the national capital today to convey the location of the shortlisted sites. The family will now get back to the government about the spot that they finalize. Khattar said once the family takes a call, a trust would be formed and the selected land would be allotted to the trust for Re 1 and the trust would build the memorial.

"In the case of late PM AB Vajpayee, land had been similarly allotted to a trust... That trust had built Sadaiv Atal, the Atal memorial in the Rashtriya Smriti Sthal near the Raj Ghat area," the minister said, adding that the trust that would be allotted the land would not be a government trust and would be an institution of the family's choice.

The Tribune has learnt that the two shortlisted memorial sites are likely located at the Ekta Sthal Samadhi Complex where memorials of former Presidents Giani Zail Singh, Shankar Dayal Sharma, KR Narayanan and R Venkatraman and those of former PM Chandrashekhar, IK Gujral and PV Narasimha Rao are located.

Ekta Sthal is learnt to have space for two more memorials as of today. (Source: TNS)

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- Guru Gobind Singh

Heartiest Greetings on Shri Guru Gobind Singh's Prakash Divas (Birthday)



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Rajasthan - Land of Havelis and Maharajas

The name Rajasthan literally means 'The Land of the Kings'. The land of pink turbans, long mustaches, ghunghats, peppery food, and camels, Rajasthan is regarded as the flamboyant state of India. There is much more to this iconic region. It is a land of deserts and jungles, camel trains and tigers, glittering jewels, vivid art, and vibrant culture. There are enough festivals here to fill a calendar and an artist's palette, and the shopping and cuisine are nothing short of spectacular. It is the must-see state of India, brimming with varied, startling, and incredible attractions.

You will instantly fall in love with Rajasthan the moment you step in.

So start planning your trip to this vibrant state of Rajasthan if you haven't already and let us help you in doing so.

Jaipur

Historical monuments dilly dally with modern cafés. Fort walls are lined with colorful shops. And everything is bathed in a nostalgic shade of pink. The best places to see include the City Palace, Nahargarh Fort, Amer Fort, Jaigarh Fort, Hawa Mahal, Albert Hall Museum, Panna Meena ka Kund, Patrika Gate at Jawahar Circle, Jal Mahal, Jantar Mantar, and Birla Temple.

Jodhpur

Also known as the Blue City for its distinctive blue color painted on houses across the city and is the second-largest city in Rajasthan. Must-visit places include the Mehrangarh Fort, Jaswant Thada, and Umaid Bhawan Palace Museum. You can also visit Mandore Gardens and Kaylana lake.

Jaisalmer

This town is named "the Golden City" because the yellow sand and the yellow sandstone used in every architecture of the city give a yellowish-golden tinge to the city and its surrounding area. Jaisalmer is an Arabian fantasy come true. The city is historically famous for many Havelis, forts, and sand dunes.

Udaipur

Known to many as the City of Lakes or Venice of the East, Udaipur is all about elegance and magnificence. The sightseeing includes the city palace, Jagdish Temple, Saheliyo Ki Bari Garden, Fateh Sagar Lake, Heritage Walks, Monsoon Palace, Ahar Cenotaphs, Ranakpur Jain Temple, Ambrai Ghat, Kumbhalgarh fort, and Wildlife Sanctuary.

Pushkar

One of the ancient cities of the country, located in Ajmer, it has been largely known for its religious significance,



annual cattle fair, the holy lake, and a handful of adventure activities.

This place is usually crowded with foreigners. You can explore the different cuisine cafes.

There are more than 500 temples in Pushkar but you must visit the Bharmaji Temple, explore the different ghats and check out the Sarafa Bazar.

Pushkar is famous for its resort stays such as Ananta Resort and spa, Pratap Palace, Pushkar Bhag, and Dera Masuda.

Bikaner

Activities that one can do are more varied in Jaisalmer as well but for those looking for offbeat adventures, Bikaner would suit you well. And finally, excursions that one can take from Jaisalmer are many as compared to Bikaner, which only has a few places nearby worth exploring.

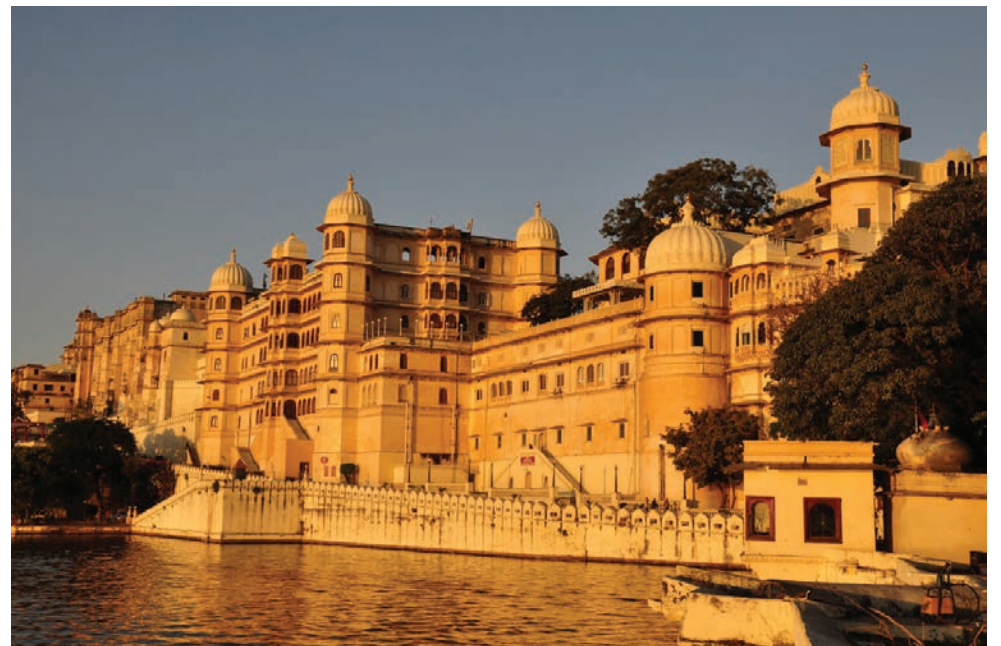
This north Indian state of Rajasthan is to the east of the border adjoining Pakistan. Some of the prominent places to visit in Bikaner are Junagarh Fort, Prachina Museum, Karni Mata Temple (Home to more than 25,000 rats), Gajner Palace, sand dunes safari, Rampuriahaveli, Bhandasar Jain temple, The Royal Cenotaphs, Lalgah Palace, Kote Gate, Shiv Bari Temple, Kodamdeswar temple, Shop at Kote Gate and much more.

The Laxmi Vilas Palace is the most luxurious place to stay in the city.

Bharatpur: One of the most famous bird sanctuaries, Keoladeo National park is at Bharatpur where thousands of species of birds are gathered from different parts of the world.

Chittaurgarh: One of the largest forts is at Chittaurgarh where Rani Padmawati and others committed Jauhar.

Ranthambhore: It is one of the attractive tourist spots in Rajasthan for



its Tiger safari.

Mount Abu: The most famous spot in Mount Abu is the Dilwara Jain Temple.

Sariska National Park: It is a tiger

reserve situated in a protected place in the Alwar district of Rajasthan. The national park is famous for its wildlife.

History This Week JAN 03 - JAN 09

JANUARY 3



January 3, 1924 - British Egyptologist Howard Carter found the sarcophagus of Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings near Luxor after several years of searching.

January 3, 1946 - An Englishman known during World War II as "Lord Haw Haw" (William Joyce) was hanged for treason in London. Joyce had broadcast Nazi propaganda via radio from Germany to Britain during the war.

January 3, 1959 - Alaska was admitted as the 49th U.S. state with a land mass almost one-fifth the size of the lower 48 states together.

January 3, 1961 - President Dwight D. Eisenhower broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba two years after Communist dictator Fidel Castro had seized power and just weeks before John F. Kennedy was inaugurated as the next president.

January 3, 1990 - Manuel Noriega, the deposed leader of Panama, surrendered to American authorities on charges of drug trafficking after spending 10 days hiding in the Vatican embassy following the U.S. invasion of Panama.

January 3, 1993 - President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the Start-II (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) Treaty, eliminating about two-thirds of each country's long range nuclear weapons.

JANUARY 4



January 4, 1974 - President Richard Nixon rejected subpoenas from the Senate Watergate Committee seeking audio tapes and related documents.

Birthday - Louis Braille (1809-1852) was born in France. Blinded as a boy, he later invented a reading system for the blind using punch marks in paper.

JANUARY 5

January 5, 1925 - Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming became the first female governor inaugurated in the U.S.

January 5, 1968 - Alexander Dubcek became first secretary of Czechoslovakia's Communist Party. He introduced liberal reforms known as "Communism with a human face" which

resulted in Soviet Russian troops invading Prague to crack down.

January 5, 1972 - President Richard Nixon signed a bill approving \$5.5 billion over six years to build and test the NASA space shuttle.

January 5, 1976 - In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot announced a new constitution which legalized the Communist government and renamed the country as Kampuchea. During the reign of Pol Pot, over 1 million persons died in "the killing fields" as he forced people out of the cities into the countryside to create an idyllic agrarian society. Educated and professional city people were especially targeted for murder and were almost completely annihilated. In January of 1979, the Pol Pot was overthrown by Cambodian rebels and Vietnamese troops.



Birthday - King Juan Carlos I of Spain was born in Rome on January 5, 1938. He was chosen by Francisco Franco to inherit his right-wing dictatorship and was sworn in as King on November 22, 1975, two days after Franco's death. The new King then announced his intention to mold Spain into a broadly based democratic society.

JANUARY 6



January 6, 1941 - President Franklin Roosevelt delivered his State of the Union address to Congress asking for support for the lend-lease program aiding Allies fighting the Axis powers. Roosevelt also defined four essential freedoms worth defending; freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

January 6, 1990 - Poland's Communist Party disbanded and then reorganized as the Social Democratic Party, an opposition party to Solidarity.

January 6, 2021 - In Washington, D.C., thousands attended a "Save America Rally" near the White House at the Ellipse, a park located south of the White House grounds. There, President Donald Trump and others addressed the crowd to express opposition to the certification of the Electoral College results of the 2020 presidential election which would finalize Joe Biden as the victor. Events escalated when several hundred departed the rally and advanced toward the United States Capitol building. They breached security perimeters and entered the Capitol building, thereby disrupting the joint session of Congress

convened to certify the election results. The incursion led to the evacuation and secure sheltering of Congress members, staff, and Vice President Mike Pence. The ensuing chaos included vandalism, theft of government property and violent confrontations with law enforcement, resulting in numerous injuries to law enforcement and civilians, overall including five fatalities. The unprecedented breach led to a lockdown of the Capitol and the deployment of the National Guard and other law enforcement agencies to restore order. The events were widely condemned by political leaders from both major parties and led to a nationwide discussion about political rhetoric, security, and the state of democracy in the United States. In the aftermath, numerous individuals were arrested and charged for their roles in the events. The House of Representatives impeached President Trump for the second time on January 13, charging him with "Incitement of Insurrection," though he was later acquitted by the Senate.

Birthday - Joan of Arc (1412-1431) was born in France. After a series of mystic visitations by saints, she inspired French troops to break the British siege at Orleans and win several important victories during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between France and Britain. She was eventually captured and sold to the British who tried her for heresy and burned her at the stake. In 1920, Joan of Arc was canonized a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

JANUARY 7



January 7, 1999 - The first presidential impeachment trial in 130 years began as members of the U.S. Senate were sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist to decide whether President Clinton should be removed from office. House prosecutors had delivered two articles of impeachment charging Clinton with perjury and obstruction of justice.

January 7, 2021 - At approximately 3:40 a.m. local time, under heightened security, the U.S. Congress certified the Electoral College results of the 2020 presidential election, officially confirming Joe Biden as the President-elect. This action followed a tumultuous day whereby protesters had breached the Capitol causing to a temporary halt of the electoral count.

Birthday - Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) the 13th U.S. President was born in a log cabin in Cayuga County, New York. He was a Whig who became president upon the sudden death of Zachary Taylor in 1850 from cholera. Best remembered for signing five bills concerning slavery known as the Compromise of 1850 which temporarily prevented civil war in the U.S. He was not re-nominated by his party.

JANUARY 8

January 8, 1959 - Charles de Gaulle took office as the first president of

France's Fifth Republic. De Gaulle had led the Free French government in exile during Nazi occupation. Following the war, he advocated a strong presidency to balance the powerful National Assembly. He was chosen to head the new government following years of political instability in which no French government was able to stay in power for more than a few months. On this day in 1966, he took office for a second term.



January 8, 1964 - President Lyndon Johnson declared War on Poverty during his State of the Union message before Congress.

January 8, 1982 - The American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) Company was broken up as a result of an antitrust suit. AT&T gave up 22 local Bell system companies, opening the U.S. telephone system to competition.

January 8, 1987 - The Dow Jones industrial average first topped the 2,000 mark.

Birthday - Elvis Presley (1935-1977) was born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

JANUARY 9



January 9, 1960 - With the first blast of dynamite, construction work began on the Aswan High Dam across the Nile River in southern Egypt. One third of the project's billion-dollar cost was underwritten by Soviet Russia. The dam created Lake Nasser, one of the world's largest reservoirs, at nearly 2,000 square miles and irrigated over 100,000 acres of surrounding desert. The dam was opened in January of 1971 by President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and President Nikolai Podgorny of the Soviet Union.

Birthday - Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994) the 37th U.S. President, was born in Yorba Linda, California. He served as vice president under Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953-61, then made an unsuccessful run for the presidency, narrowly losing to John F. Kennedy. Nixon ran for governor of California in 1962 and lost. He then told reporters he was leaving politics. However, he re-emerged in 1968 and ran a successful presidential campaign against Hubert Humphrey. He won re-election by a landslide in 1972, but resigned two years later amid impeachment proceedings resulting from the Watergate scandal.

Birthday - Carrie Lane Chapman (1859-1947) was born in Ripon, Wisconsin. She was the women's rights pioneer who founded the National League of Women Voters in 1919.

Manu, Gukesh among 4 picked for Khel Ratna

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Paris Olympics double medallist shooter Manu Bhaker, recently crowned world chess champion D Gukesh, men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh and para athlete Praveen Kumar were picked for the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award in a list announced by the Union sports ministry on Thursday, January 2.

The confirmation of Bhaker being given the country's highest sporting honour comes after the 22-year-old's name did not figure in the initial list by the 12-member awards committee last month. That the only athlete in independent India to win two medals in the same Olympics was overlooked raised eyebrows and evoked criticism. However, Bhaker later admitted her "lapse" in not filing for the nomination.

Once that was "being corrected", as Bhaker said in her social media post last month, it was more or less certain that the sports ministry would add her name to the final list.

Gukesh, who won the World Chess Championship title only on December 12, is also a late addition as the last date for filing the nominations for the award that takes into consideration performances over the last four years closed in November.

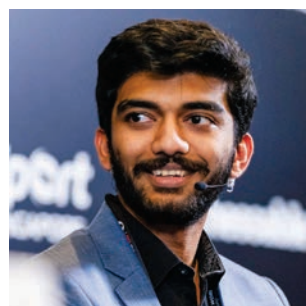
The ministry of youth affairs and sports stated that the four Khel Ratna and 32 Arjuna awardees were finalised "based on the recommendations of the Committee and after due scrutiny". The athletes will be handed their awards by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on January 17.

"I'm extremely humbled and honoured to know that the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports have announced the prestigious award for me, and for recognising my achievements," Gukesh said. "This award will motivate me to work even harder and achieve more laurels for the country in 2025."

For Gukesh, this highest honour only underlines his stunning rise over the last couple of years that led him



Manu Bhaker



D Gukesh



Harmanpreet Singh



Praveen Kumar

to becoming the youngest player to win the Candidates at 17 and eventually the youngest world champion at 18.

"I'm happy that the right decision has been taken and Manu has been handed the award. No deserving athlete should be left out," Jaspal Rana, Bhaker's personal coach, said. "It was very important to set the right example. Not just Manu, any athlete who deserves recognition and does not get it is bound to feel demoralised."

Bhaker was India's standout performer at last year's Paris Olympics, with her twin bronze medals (10m air pistol individual and mixed with Sarabjot Singh who has been chosen for the Arjuna Award) alone pushing India's overall tally to six. Bhaker was granted the Arjuna Award in 2020.

Harmanpreet led the India men's hockey team to a second consecutive Olympic bronze medal in Paris. The star dragflicker was the highest goalscorer at the Games, and fired both the goals in India's bronze medal match where the team rallied to win from a goal down against Spain. Under his leadership, India also grabbed the Asian Games gold medal in Hangzhou in 2023, sealing their ticket to Paris.

"It's a big deal for me. I would thank my team for it — this award may have an individual's name on it but it belongs to the entire team," Harmanpreet said in Rourkela, where he is playing the Hockey India League. "This will motivate me to keep working hard and try to achieve things that we haven't so far."

The fourth recipient, Praveen, became the T64 high jump champion at the Paris Paralympics. Born with a congenital condition affecting the bones connecting his hip to his left leg, the 21-year-old from Uttar Pradesh upgraded his second Paralympic medal from silver in Tokyo in 2021 to gold in Paris last year. He had also grabbed the gold at the 2023 Asian Para Games rewriting a new Games record.

Indian para athletes are not only swelling the medals tally at the Paralympics but also expanding their presence in these awards. As many as 17 among the 32 chosen names for the Arjuna Award are para athletes, after the country won a record 29 medals, including seven gold at the Paris Paralympics.

Former para swimmer Murlikant Petkar, India's first Paralympic gold medallist, will also be handed the lifetime Arjuna Award along with Sucha Singh (athletics). Among other awards, Deepali Deshpande (shooting), Sandeep Sangwan (hockey) and Subhash Rana (para shooting) will be handed the Dronacharya Award, the highest honour for coaches, while S Muralidharan (badminton) and Armando Colaco (football) will get the same award in the lifetime category.

Rohit Sharma 'rests' for final match, is this the end of Captain's Test career?

SYDNEY (TIP)

India captain Rohit Sharma on Friday "opted to rest" himself from the fifth and final Test against Australia here after a string of underwhelming performances, putting a question mark on his future in the longest format.

His deputy Jasprit Bumrah took over the leadership role, something that he had done in the series-opener as well when Rohit took a short paternity break.

"Our captain has shown leadership, he has opted to rest," said Bumrah at the toss that India won and opted to bat.

"It shows the unity we have in the team," he added in front of a packed arena.

Rohit made the call after scoring 31 runs in five innings across three Tests.

The 37-year-old white-ball great looked like a pale shadow of himself in those innings, struggling to execute even his bread and butter shots including the trademark front foot pull.

During the customary pre-match warm-up session, Rohit was seen playing football with Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and Sarfaraz Khan, who is ending the series without getting a game.



After this, Rohit was seen engaged in a discussion with the team's video analyst Hari Prasad. He left the outfield close to the toss time before Bumrah walked out to a loud roar from the capacity crowd.

When the TV cameras panned on him, Rohit was seen sitting outside the dressing room with fielding coach Ryan Ten Doeschate by his side. Head coach Gautam Gambhir sat a distance from the duo. Former India player Sanjay Manjrekar lauded Rohit for his decision.

"So typical of Rohit Sharma. Doing the

right thing, doing what's right for the team. But could not understand the 'cloak & dagger' around the issue. Wasn't even talked about at the toss," he posted on 'X'.

Looking at India's practice session on the eve of the game it was clear that Rohit was going to sit out.

The speculation over his future in the longest format also gained momentum after India lost the fourth Test in Melbourne to trail the five-match series 1-2. The year 2024 turned out to be the least productive year for Rohit in Test cricket as he collected 619 runs in 26 innings across 14 matches averaging 24.76.

Having played his 67th five-day game in Melbourne, Rohit is also being expected to call time on his roller-coaster Test career soon.

Rohit could not replicate his stellar success in white ball cricket over the course of his 11-year Test career.

After not realising his potential in the middle-order following his debut in 2013, Rohit's red ball career got a second wing in 2019 when he started opening.

Source: PTI

Arsenal ease past Brentford to close gap on Liverpool

Arsenal showed they can cope without the injured Bukayo Saka as they began the year in style by recovering from an early sucker-punch to beat Brentford 3-1 away and move back into second place in the Premier League. Forward Saka, arguably Arsenal's most influential player this season, has been ruled out for at least two months after hamstring surgery, dealing a blow to the club's title hopes.

A visit to a Brentford side who have been impressive at home this season felt like a must-win game for Arsenal but things began badly as Bryan Mbeumo gave his side a 13th minute lead with the home side's first attack.

Arsenal did not panic, though, and Gabriel Jesus continued his recent resurgence to equalise before halftime. Mikel Arteta's side came out firing in the second half and Mikel Merino put them ahead five minutes after the restart after Brentford failed to deal with a corner.

Three minutes later Gabriel Martinelli produced a clinical volleyed finish to put Arsenal in complete control.



An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combatting avoidable blindness in children.

"On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautifully facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion. Best wishes, Peter"

Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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In 2018 Prasanth, Sushanth and Nisanth were diagnosed and treated for Prematurity Retinopathy. An illness in premature babies which can cause blindness.

Luckily through GEMROP an initiative funded by EFA to screen premature babies throughout hospitals in India, the triplets were able to receive an expensive surgery free of charge. The boys are now the age of 4 with perfect vision.