

The INDIAN PANORAMA

EVER TRUTHFUL

VOL 6 ISSUE 3 • DALLAS • JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 01, 2018 • ENQUIRIES: 646-247-9458

www.theindianpanorama.news



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Indian American IIT grad marries gay partner in Maharashtra



Indian American Yavatmal native Hrishi Mohankumar Sathawane (40) married Vinh, said to be from Vietnam

YAVATMAL (TIP): As they say, love always finds a way. A US-based Indian engineer married his gay lover in a traditional ceremony at Yavatmal on December 30, days before the Supreme Court agreed to review the criminalization of homosexuality. Police and the hotel where the wedding took place looked the other way, considering the legal ambiguity regarding gay marriage in India.

Yavatmal native Hrishi Mohankumar Sathawane (40) married Vinh, said to be from Vietnam, with the blessings of his family and friends at a hotel a stone's throw from the office of the superintendent of police.

Hrishi, who holds a BTech from IIT-Bombay, currently lives in California and has a US green card. According to his social media profile, his parents were against his homosexual affiliation, but he succeeded in convincing them to bless him and Vinh.

Photos on Hrishi's social media account show the two got engaged in mid-2017, followed by an American wedding in October. Though the owners of the hotel claimed it was a simple get-together, the FB posts of the couple's friends make it apparent that the marriage was solemnized in Yavatmal. The photos have since gone viral, with hundreds of likes. When asked, additional SP Amarsingh Jadhav first said he did not want to comment, but later added he had ordered an investigation.

Indian American NUMC surgeon tried to strangle nurse with elastic cord -Court documents

EAST MEADOW, NY (TIP): A Nassau University Medical Center surgeon was charged with felony strangulation and assault Tuesday, January 23 after allegedly threatening the life of a nurse.

According to a criminal complaint, Venkatesh Sasthakonar - a weight loss surgeon and the head of the bariatric surgery department at NUMC - was upset at a 51-year-old nurse for administering an injection into one of his patients at the wrong time.

According to court documents, Sasthakonar then came up behind the nurse, took out an elastic cord from his sweatshirt and wrapped it around her neck. The complaint said this caused the nurse to gasp for air and caused substantial pain. It goes on to say that Sasthakonar said, "I could kill you for this." Sasthakonar's attorney Melvyn Roth says the whole situation was blown out of proportion and that the two had been friends for 10 years.

"This shouldn't be a criminal case. There was no intent to harm this nurse," Roth told News 12.



Venkatesh Sasthakonar was upset at a 51-year-old nurse for administering an injection into one of his patients at the wrong time.

Indian American Lawyer Sworn in to Key Position in US State Department

WASHINGTON (TIP): Noted Indian American lawyer Manisha Singh was sworn in to a key administration position in the State Department on January 20th, becoming the in-charge of the US economic diplomacy.

Ms. Singh, 45, born in Uttar Pradesh, is the first woman appointed as the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

She was sworn in by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

She is currently the highest-ranking Indian American official in the State Department.

"My honor and privilege to be sworn in by Secretary Tillerson," Ms Singh said in a tweet

"We will promote American growth and secure our future!" she said.

Confirmed by the US Senate on November 2, Ms Singh formally joined her duties at the State Department on November 28.

"She comes to the department with a wealth of experience that will benefit our economic and business efforts abroad," said State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert.

She previously served as chief counsel and



Manisha Singh, 45, born in Uttar Pradesh, is the first woman appointed as the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs in the US State Department

senior advisor to US Senator from Alaska Dan Sullivan. He was himself a former assistant

secretary in the Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs.

Ms Singh, who is fluent in Hindi, also previously served as the deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs.

"We're pleased to have her back again at the State Department as she will now lead our efforts to promote prosperity for Americans at home and abroad," Ms Nauert said.

Ms Singh's private sector experience includes practicing law at multinational law firms and working in-house at an investment bank.

She earned an LL.M degree in International Legal Studies from the American University Washington College of Law, a JD. from the University of Florida College of Law and a BA from the University of Miami at the age of 19.

Ms Singh, who also studied at the University of Leiden Law School in the Netherlands, is licensed to practice law in Florida, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia.

Indian American Cornell Student Receives Threats on Campus for Being a Conservative



Neetu Chandak's views on a college course attracted threats and harassment

ITHACA, NY (TIP): A senior undergraduate student at Cornell University has been getting threats after sharing her conservative views on TV last year.

In an essay posted on The College Fix, Neetu Chandak said that her comments on "Fox and Friends" criticizing the description of a college course called "America Confronts the World" for its anti-Trump and pro-Obama rhetoric attracted threats on her life. She claimed that she was constantly harassed to the point that she feared leaving her apartment and finally sought therapy.

Chandak appeared on the Fox TV show in May 2017. She argued that the terms "xenophobic nationalism" and "pragmatic cosmopolitanism" in the course description, attached respectively to Trump and Obama, easily established negative and positive connotations and promoted what has been termed a "liberal bias".

"If I were to walk into the classroom I don't think I would feel comfortable expressing my views. I am somebody who likes to take a fair stance. I think it's important that we are critical of the president, but we also recognize the good that he's done. I don't think that would be encouraged in this class."

When you have a professor telling you what is right and what is incorrect rather than having the students decide for themselves, to research beyond the headline and analyze the situation, I think they just take whatever the professor tells them, and they are not able to see the indoctrination."

While Chandak expected some disagreement from other Cornell students, she said that she was unprepared for the mental and emotional backlash.

She was particularly alarmed after receiving threats on Messenger, when someone expressed the intent to hurt her. The fact that the university's College Republicans president was physically assaulted after Trump's victory only worried her further.

Chandak explained in her essay that she did the interview not to take one of the two clashing sides, but only "to show the ridiculousness in comparing eight years of Obama's presidency to the first 100 days of Trump's term."

In an earlier interview with The Cornell Daily Sun, Chandak said that she appeared on the show to shed light on the experiences of conservative and moderate students at the university, where "sometimes they feel like they can't speak up in class with their points of views without getting shut down, without getting ostracized or without having the fear that their grade could be negatively affected."

Chandak said that she is much better now. She argued that threats to safety must be reported, while hate speech must be dealt in "more respectful conversations."

(Source: Nextshark.com)

Indian American Jazz pianist Vijay Iyer to collaborate with writer Teju Cole for 'Blind Spot'



Iyer is a self-taught pianist. Picture Courtesy Walker Art Center

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian American jazz pianist Vijay Iyer will collaborate with writer and photographer Teju Cole for a spoken prose with a live score event, titled Blind Spot, on February 9 at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston.

The 45-year old Iyer, who was named as "one of his generation's brightest jazz luminaries," by the Time Out New York magazine, is a Grammy-nominated musician who has fans across the world.

Blind Spot is the title of Teju Cole's book, which is a synthesis of words and images that delves deep into the intricacies of humanity's blindness to tragedy and injustice throughout history.

His other books include Every Day is for the Thief (2007); a novel, Open City (2012); a collection of more than 40 essays, Known and Strange Things (2016); and a volume of photographs, Puncto d'Ombra (2016).

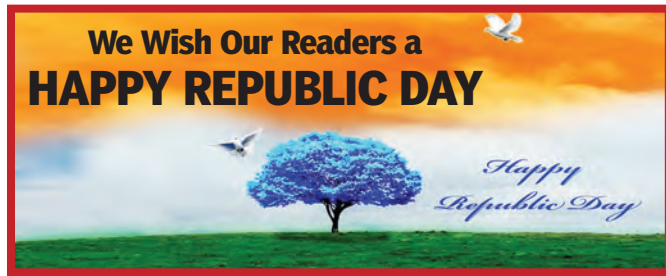
The new collaboration of Cole's photography and spoken prose with a live score composed by Iyer is expected to garner newer audiences. Iyer's live score will also feature Patricia Brennan on mallet percussion, Okkyung Lee on cello, and Stephan Crump on bass.

According to the ICA, the tickets for the event will be open for all, with fare ranging from \$45 for ICA members and students, and \$50 for non-members.

Iyer was born in Albany, New York, as the son of Indian parents who immigrated to the United States from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Since the age of 3, he received training in violin with focus on Western classical.

Iyer is a self-taught pianist, who had a fascination for pianos which helped him in playing the piano by ear.

(Source: AB Wire)



Former US diplomat Sri Preston Kulkarni tries to become Texas' first Indian American congressman



Sri Preston Kulkarni is one of the five candidates seeking the Democratic Party nomination from Texas 22nd congressional district.

DALLAS (TIP): When Sri Preston Kulkarni returned to the Department of State after a two-year hiatus - during which he worked as a Pearson Fellow on the Capitol Hill and earned a mid-career master's degree in public administration from Harvard's Kennedy School - the veteran diplomat was planning to go to New Delhi. He was preparing to serve as a Hindi language spokesperson at the US embassy in India, the county where his father was born, in the new year.

contd on page 4

Pageantry Marks Celebration of India's 69th Republic Day

ASEAN leaders attend as chief guests

NEW DELHI (TIP): Amid an unprecedented security cover, celebrations for the 69th Republic Day began on the Rajpath here on Friday in the presence of the leaders of 10 ASEAN nations who are attending the event as chief guests.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid his tributes to the martyrs by laying a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti in the presence of Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and the three service chiefs.

Later Modi, wearing a saffron, red and green colored safa, reached the Rajpath and received and greeted President Ram Nath Kovind. Most of the

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ASEAN leaders with President Kovind and PM Modi at Republic Day Parade

TRUMP ARRIVES IN DAVOS TO PROMOTE HIS 'AMERICA FIRST'



Trump arriving at the World Economic Forum

European finance ministers express concern about trade war

DAVOS (TIP): President Donald Trump arrived in Switzerland on Thursday, January 25, to attend the World Economic Forum where he will push his "America First" agenda and seek more fair, reciprocal trade between the United States and its allies, amid concerns of the European

finance ministers about an imminent trade war. Trump, never invited as a businessman, will be the first US president to attend Davos since Bill Clinton in 2000, giving him a chance to mingle with the same elite

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India's PM Modi Urges Canadian PM Trudeau to Curb Khalistanis



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (TIP): In his bilateral meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi raised the issue of Khalistan and pro-Khalistani groups that are known to be active in Canada, a Hindi daily Navbharat Times has

reported. Support for Khalistan has been on the rise with extremists organizing multiple events across Canada to rally support for the movement in the past few years. Numerous pro-Khalistan

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DFW South Asian Film Festival (SAFF) Celebrates Four-Year Milestone with Four Days of Programming



DALLAS, TX (TIP): From February 8th to 11th in Dallas and Addison, the 4th annual DFW SAFF will present ONE WORLD premiere, SIX INTERNATIONAL premieres, TWO U.S. premieres, NINE TEXAS premieres and ONE DALLAS premiere, for a total of 19 shorts, documentaries and feature films over a four-day period. "This is our most ambitious, comprehensive and well-balanced programming to date; it is also the most number of international premieres we have had at our festival," said founder

contd on Page 20

TRUMP READY TO SPEAK TO MUELLER UNDER OATH IN RUSSIA PROBE



WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump on Thursday, January 25, said he was willing to be questioned under oath by special counsel Robert Mueller as part of an investigation into alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election. Trump's opponents allege that the Russian interference helped him win the polls. But he denies any collusion between the Trump campaign and the Russians. Mueller, the former FBI director, has interviewed several

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Special Counsel Robert Mueller has made it known that he will question President Trump in Russia investigation

Former US diplomat Sri Preston Kulkarni tries to become Texas' first Indian American congressman

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However, Kulkarni, whose first posting after the sabbatical was at the US embassy in Jamaica, would soon realize that, with a new administration at the White House, his workplace has changed - even though the job hasn't. With President Trump bent on tearing down relationships, getting out of treaties and insulting minorities, ethnic and religious groups, it dawned on him that what he was doing was not what he signed up for 14 years ago.

"When the President of the United States said at a press conference [August 11] that we might attack Venezuela, I had to explain that to my Charge D'affaires," he told The American Bazar in a recent interview. "Even more distressing was when President Trump said, after the Charlottesville violence, that 'there were some very fine people on both sides.'"

That was a turning point for Kulkarni, the son of an Indian father and a West Virginian mother. "It went against everything that I believed in as an American," he said. "My dad taught me that America was the land of opportunity for everybody, no matter what your color or religion is."

So, in December 2017, Kulkarni left the job because representing a government that is "going against ideals" that he has "always believed in" is not something he could continue doing. "We can't actually do our job and we can't represent America, when the government is not representing America," he said. "If this is what America represents, then I need to change that," he said.

So, the 39-year-old is now trying to "change that" by running for Congress from the Houston area, where he grew up.

He is one of the five candidates seeking the Democratic Party nomination from Texas 22nd congressional district.

If he wins the March 6 primary, Kulkarni will take on the GOP incumbent Pete Olson, who is currently serving his fourth term in Congress.

Gerrymandered district

The Cook Partisan Voting Index gives a 10-point advantage to Republicans in the district. In the 2016 presidential elections, Trump beat the Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton by 8 points in the district.

One of the dozens of highly gerrymandered districts across the nation, it contains areas of three suburban Houston counties: most of Fort Bend County and portions of Brazoria and Harris counties to dilute the Democratic votes.

Kulkarni said the district was "carved to be Republican" by cutting several minority areas out of it. Nonetheless, he is confident of winning the primary and trouncing Olson for two reasons.

One is the demographic diversity of the district. Over the years, it has become a majority minority district.

Whites constitute only a little over a third of the population. Hispanics form a quarter, Asian Americans 18 percent and African Americans nearly 14% percent.

"We never had a minority represent the district," Kulkarni said. "It has the largest Asian American population and the largest Indian American population in the state of Texas. We never had an Asian American or Indian American elected to congress from Texas in our history. The demographics are changing a lot, and a lot of us are interested in a representative

that looks more like America, more like the district."

The second factor that, according to the candidate, is working in his, or the eventual Democratic nominee's favor, is the current political climate in the district and county. Because of the unpopularity of Trump - whom he described as "more unpopular than any president in my lifetime" - Kulkarni predicated: "We are basically on the border of a tidal wave election for Democrats."

"We have more Democratic candidates running in Texas as far as I know since Lyndon B. Johnson was president," he said. "There's a lot of energy in the Democratic Party. We have candidate for every congressional district."

Kulkarni cited polls that show that Democrats are holding an 18-point advantage in generic ballots. "They have never recorded that number for an opposition party with 11 months to go before the election," he said. "I don't know it is possible to swing any farther from the president. These are unprecedented numbers. People who say that these districts are safe Republican seats, they are not looking at the sentiment of the country."

Kulkarni said Olson hasn't "really had a serious challenger in the last four elections here."

In 2016, the congressman defeated Democrat Mark Gibson, who is again vying for the party nomination, by nearly 20 points.

Kulkarni pointed out that in the last election, Gibson raised only \$24,000 for the entire campaign. With such a minuscule war chest, it is impossible to take down a well-financed incumbent. Olson, on the other hand, raised more than \$1.5 million in the last election cycle, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

"My campaign raised \$34,000 in the first 13 days," he said. "We are running a different type of campaign. We are running a serious and hard campaign, and we plan to win the district."

In the last quarter, Gibson raised \$13,000 and another primary opponent, Letitia Plummer, raised nearly \$19,000.

Targeting minority votes

In the primary, Kulkarni is focusing on winning the backing of Asian American and other ethnic minority groups. Gibson won only 23,084 votes in the Democratic primary in 2016.

The Indian American candidate can potentially win that many votes from just the Indian and South Asian American communities. There are 25,000 people in the district who were born in India.

But Kulkarni understands that Indians, traditionally, have not been the most enthusiastic of voters. "A lot of them stay out of politics," he said. "What I am trying to impress upon people as we go out to temples and to mosques I that even if you don't find politics interesting, politics is interested in you."

He constantly drives home the fact that a passive attitude toward politics is not going to make Indian Americans or other ethnic minorities safe. "Some people think, well, if I keep my head down, people won't attack me, and I won't be noticed," he said. "Well, in reality, if you start accepting some of these things, start accepting a president who wants to ban all Muslims, a president who thinks that a Mexican American, someone born in Indiana, can't be a judge. When does it stop?"

Kulkarni pointed out that he shares the same first names with Srinivas Kuchibhotla, the man who was shot and killed by a white nationalist in Olathe, Kansas, a month after Trump's inauguration. "A lot of Indian American families need to wake up to the fact that we are under threat," he said. "It's not something that affect only one minority group, it affects all of us."

The candidate said he has been making inroads into the community. "There are several Indian Americans who are Republicans that live in my district," he said. "They are supporting my campaign. They are hosting events. At the end of the day, the party affiliation is not as important as the values that underline."

Kulkarni said he is running a positive campaign, with a very optimistic message. "It's not anti-Republican, it's not anti-Trump event," he said. "It's pro-American."

That is why he is running a campaign focusing on issues such as education, universal healthcare, economic inequality, immigration reform and funding for veterans and national defense.

"We believe in public school system," he said. "A lot of families move into neighborhood specifically because they care about their children's education. When you take money out of the public school system, then you negate all of that."

He also emphasized the need for having leaders who understand basic things about science. "The congressman that we have, he actually said on the floor of the House that he shouldn't have to pay for prenatal care for women, because he has an X chromosome, which means he can't have babies," he said, pointing out that everyone has an X chromosome.

Kulkarni said he envisions an inclusive America, unlike the one that Trump advocates. He said: "The problem is when you have a president who is so blatantly stereotypes people by ethnicity and religion and gender and degrading women in public, undermining the free press, attacking our democratic institutions, attacking our courts, attacking the FBI, attacking the CIA, and just recently you hear his comments about other ethnic groups - repeatedly, again and again."

In fact, on his campaign website, the candidate terms the Trump-inspired polarization within the country as the *raison d'être* for his candidacy: "I have spent my career trying to reduce conflict in other countries, but right now hostility and conflict are being inflamed in our own country, through the politics of anger and demagoguery, demonization of specific ethnic and religious groups, threats to rule of law, degradation of women, and an undermining of democratic institutions like a free press," he says. "The greatest danger to our country right now is not a foreign power, but the internal divisions in our society. That is why I am coming home to Texas to serve."

Kulkarni is biracial: his father Venkatesh Kulkarni is an Indian immigrant; and mother Margaret Preston Kulkarni is West Virginian.

Margaret's family has been in the country for 400 years. "They go back to a time where there was no United States," Sri said.

In 1980, the couple moved to Houston, where Venkatesh would teach creative writing at Rice

University. Margaret worked as a systems analyst at AIG. (According to Sri's filings with the Federal Election Commission, his mother is the "Custodian of Records," as well as the treasurer of the Kulkarni campaign.)

Venkatesh Kulkarni, who grew up in Hyderabad and graduated from Osmania University, published a critically acclaimed novel, *Naked in Deccan*, which he called "Indo-American fiction."

He died in 1998 after battling leukemia for a year.

Kulkarni went to Lamar High School in Houston.

He moved to Austin for his undergrad at University of Texas in linguistics and Russian. (A polyglot, besides English and Russian, he speaks three other languages, Chinese, Hebrew and Spanish.)

During his father's illness, he took some time off to help his mother and siblings Silas, Margo, and Kris.

After his graduation in 2003, Kulkarni joined the Department of State and he was commissioned into the service by then-Secretary of State Colin Powell. His first overseas posting was in Taipei, where he served for two years.

Then he moved to Russia. "We had a better relationship back then," he joked. The diplomat would then serve in Iraq, where he was on a provisional reconstruction team, as part of a combined civilian military team.

"For a year and a half, I lived on a military base in Kirkuk, Iraq, which was a disputed territory between Kurds and Arabs," he recalled. "We were constantly being bombarded by rocket attacks IEDs being exploded. I was doing public affairs and training journalists there."

A year and a half later, he was transferred to Jerusalem. Among his main tasks serving at the US consulate in the ancient Middle Eastern city was mitigating conflict and between Israelis and Palestinians.

Postings in Kirkuk and Jerusalem made him "an expert on disputed territories," he joked.

Three years later, he would return to Washington, DC, to serve in the State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs. As digital media office, he ran the Facebook operation for the entire department.

In 2014, when Russia took over Crimea and sent troops into Eastern Ukraine, Kulkarni served as the campaign director of a task force set up within the department to counter the Russian propaganda in Ukraine. "I didn't know that time that the Russian government would do the same thing in the United States," he said referring to the Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

In 2015, Kulkarni was selected for the Pearson Fellowship, which allows Foreign Service Officers an opportunity to work on Capitol Hill for a year to learn about the legislative process. He worked for Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, the junior senator from New York as a foreign policy and defense advisor.

His stellar bio includes a midcareer master's program from Harvard's Kennedy School, which he did after completing the Pearson Fellowship.

Kulkarni said his education, training and his extensive background in foreign policy and national security, and experience in working on the Hill has prepared him to be a United States House of Representative.

(Source: AB Wire)

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Trump ready to speak to Mueller...

members of the Trump campaign, Trump's family

members, colleagues in the Cabinet and present and former White House officials.

He has been seeking the interview with Trump as part of his investigation. "I'm looking forward to it...I would love to do that, and I'd like to do it as soon as possible...I would do it under oath," Trump told reporters during an impromptu press conference outside the room of his Chief of Staff

John Kelly at the White House. He was responding to a question whether he was ready for an interview with Muller who wants to question him about his decision to fire his former national security advisor Michael Flynn and FBI director James Comey. Trump hinted that the interview might take place in the next couple of weeks.

(Source:PTI)

Trump 'known to' mimic Narendra Modi's accent

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Trump frequently mimics Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's accent, according to a report.

The Washington Post reported on Sunday, January 21, citing senior administration officials that Trump "has been known to affect an Indian accent and imitate" the Indian leader.

Modi reportedly told the US president during their Oval Office meeting that "Never has a country given so much away for so little in return" as the United States in Afghanistan.

According to the report, Trump views Modi's statement as "proof that the rest of the world viewed the United States as being duped and taken advantage of in Afghanistan."

It is not clear from the report whether Trump's mimicking was to drive home a point on the US involvement in Afghanistan or to ridicule Modi.

Indian American Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-IL, criticized Trump for mimicking Modi

"I was appalled to read that President Trump reportedly affected an Indian accent to imitate Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said in a statement issued Monday, January 22. "In the wake of the President's recent comments disparaging entire regions of the world while we still face such division at home, behavior that belittles our allies and 'otherizes' entire communities of Americans is one of the last things we need. Americans



Report cites senior administration officials as saying that Trump "has been known to affect an Indian accent and imitate" Modi.

are not defined by their accents, but by their commitment to this nation's values and ideals."

The president is known for mimicking others often to make fun of others. During the 2016 campaign, he mocked a disabled reporter during a speech in South Carolina. The reporter, New York Times' Serge Kovalski, has a chronic condition that affects

the movement of arms. Later he denied that he was mocking the reporter's appearance.

Earlier this month, Trump was widely criticized for allegedly calling Haiti, El Salvador and African nations "Shithole" countries during a White House meeting on immigration.

*Updated on 22nd January
(Source: AB Wire)*

SAALT ANNOUNCES MASS MOBILIZATION ON SATURDAY, FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF TRUMP'S MUSLIM BAN

The group will form a human chain and will march to the downtown Trump Hotel, and the headquarters of the US Customs and Border Protection.

WASHINGTON (TIP): The South Asian American advocacy organization SAALT will hold a mass protest in front of the White House on January 27, the first year anniversary of Trump's Executive Order 13769 that bans Muslims/Refugees from entering the United States.

The organization said that members of SAALT and its allies will form a human chain during the Islamic mid-day prayer on January 27th and will march to the downtown Trump Hotel, owned by the president's family, and the headquarters of the US Customs and Border Protection.

"DC friends, this Saturday, 1/27, on the one-year anniversary of the #MuslimBan, join SAALT and our allies for a mass mobilization in front of the White House to say in one unified voice, #NoMuslimBanEver," tweeted SAALT through its official handle.

Trump passed the Executive Order 13769, titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," which later came to be known as the Muslim ban.

The travel ban was introduced within days of Trump's swearing in as the president. The administration later tweaked the order to include more countries. Citizens from eight countries - Chad, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Somalia, and Yemen - are now banned from entering the United States for 90 days.

Faith leaders, members of the Muslim-American community, refugees and advocates who expressed opposition to Trump's Muslim ban are also expected to gather for Saturday's mass protest in front of White House.



Report: Trump wanted Mueller fired, backed off

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump ordered the firing of special counsel Robert Mueller last June, but he backed off the order after White House lawyer Don McGahn threatened to resign, according to a report January 25 in The New York Times.

The newspaper reports that Trump demanded Mueller's firing just weeks after the special counsel was first appointed by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

McGahn said he would not deliver the order to the Justice Department, according to The Times, which cites four people familiar with the request by the president. Trump argued at the time that Mueller could not be fair because of a dispute over golf club fees that he said Mueller owed at a Trump golf club in Sterling, Virginia. The president also believed Mueller he had a conflict of interest because he worked for the same law firm that was representing Trump's son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner.

Peter Carr, a spokesman for Mueller, did not immediately return a call for comment Thursday night. Ty Cobb, a White House lawyer working on the response to the Russia probe, declined comment Thursday night.

The response from Democrats was nearly immediate. Senator Mark Warner, D-Va, vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said that if the report in The Times is true, Trump has crossed a "red line." "Any attempt to remove the Special Counsel, pardon key witnesses or otherwise interfere in the investigation would be a gross abuse of power, and all members of Congress, from both parties, have a responsibility to our Constitution and to our country to make that clear immediately," Warner said. (AP)

Nasa honours 7 killed on space shuttle Columbia 15 years ago

CAPE CANAVERAL (TIP): NASA is honouring the seven astronauts killed aboard shuttle Columbia 15 years ago, with a special musical tribute by the son of Israel's first astronaut.

Singer and songwriter Tal Ramon traveled from Israel for Thursday's ceremony at Kennedy Space Center. It was just his second trip back since his father was killed on Feb 1, 2003. All seven astronauts - including Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon (EE-Lahn Ruh-MONE) - died when Columbia shattered in the skies over Texas, just minutes before a Florida touchdown.

Ramon performed two of his own songs. He later joined relatives of other astronauts killed over the decades, placing yellow, orange and pink roses at the Space Mirror Memorial. In all, 24 names are engraved in the large granite monument. (AP)

US federal court slaps Dr. Reddy's with \$5 million penalty; enters permanent injunction



NEW JERSEY (TIP): A federal court in New Jersey on Friday, January 19, slapped a penalty of \$5 million on Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Inc. and forced the pharmaceutical company to enter consent decree of permanent injunction after it allegedly distributed prescription drugs in packages that are not child-resistant.

The judgment came after Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Inc., the American subsidiary of Indian multinational pharmaceutical company based in Hyderabad, was found violating the US Poison Prevention Packaging Act (PPPA) and the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA).

Dr. Reddy's, by entering the consent decree will now have to implement a compliance program designed to ensure compliance with the PPPA and the CPSA.

According to the prosecution, packs of Dr. Reddy's oral drugs were found to be not child-resistant as required by the PPPA.

It alleged that the company had been distributing such prescription drugs till 2012, despite previous warnings explaining the consequences of the malpractices that were expected to fail the PPPA's child test protocol.

The complaint said that the firm, despite knowing that they have fielded medicines that are not compliant with PPPA, failed to inform CPSC "immediately" as they are likely to cause risk of serious injury or death. The complaint said Dr. Reddy's also failed to certify that its products were in conformance with the PPPA.

"Dr. Reddy's failed to ensure that children were protected from potentially harmful prescription drugs," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Chad A. Readler of the Justice Department's Civil Division. "The government will continue to take seriously alleged violations of laws meant to protect consumer safety."

"Child-resistant packaging is a critical safety measure put in place to protect our country's children," said CPSC Acting Chairman Ann Marie Buerkle. "I appreciate and value the support from and collaboration with the Department of Justice."

The consent decree has asked Dr. Reddy's to mandatorily implement a compliance program and call back all medicines that failed the compliance program.

The injunction further requires Dr. Reddy's to maintain internal controls and procedures designed to ensure timely, truthful, complete, and accurate reporting to the CPSC as required by law.

Even though Dr. Reddy's has agreed to settle the case, it has not admitted to doing any violations.

(Source: AB Wire)

US President Donald Trump may visit Britain this year: May's office

WASHINGTON (TIP): Donald Trump and British Prime Minister Theresa May discussed finalising the details of a visit by the US president to Britain later this year after a meeting in Davos on January 25. "The PM and president concluded by asking officials to work together on finalising the details of a visit by the President to the UK later this year," according to statement from May's office. (Reuters)

Save the Children suspends programmes in Afghanistan after attack

KABUL (TIP): Save the Children closed its offices in Afghanistan and temporarily suspended operations on Wednesday following an attack on its office in the eastern city of Jalalabad, the international aid organisation said.

"In response to this, all of our programmes across Afghanistan have been temporarily suspended and our offices are closed," a spokesman said in an emailed statement. "We remain committed to resuming our operations and lifesaving work as quickly as possible, as soon as we can be assured that it is safe to do so." (Reuters)

Bangladesh jails two Rohingya for protesting repatriation

COX'S BAZAR (TIP): Two Rohingya men have been jailed for a week for protesting against a controversial plan to repatriate the persecuted minority back to Myanmar, Bangladesh police said Wednesday.

Rohingya have erected banners, chanted slogans and staged angry rallies in crowded camps near the border in Cox's Bazar as tension mounts over the looming relocation of hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled a crackdown by the Myanmar military.

Bangladesh insists the repatriation process will be voluntary but police have ramped up security in the camps.

Abdul Jabbar and Ali Hossain, both in their 60s, were sentenced Tuesday after being charged with creating a public nuisance.

Another man held for questioning at the protest was released Wednesday afternoon without charge on condition he will not "engage in any anti-government activities" or incite further protests, a police officer said.

Bangladesh had been due to start repatriating hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees this week after agreeing to a two-year timeline with Myanmar.

But it was delayed when Bangladesh said neither side was ready. Myanmar later blamed its neighbour for a lack of preparation, a charge Bangladesh has rejected.

Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion said two Rohingya had been arrested and a knife had been seized in raids on the camps where the men were murdered, a spokesman for the elite security forces said. (AFP)

Survivors of Taliban attack on Kabul hotel recount ordeal

KABUL (AFGHANISTAN) (TIP): Survivors of the Taliban attack on Kabul's Intercontinental Hotel are recounting the ordeal of the deadly, 13-hours-long standoff that claimed 18 lives, including 14 foreigners.

Mohammad Humayun Shams, telecommunications director of eastern Laghman province who was visiting Kabul and staying at the hotel, says he was able to escape by jumping into a tree from a hotel window as the attackers roamed the hallways, killing people.

Shams says that "it was the worst night of my life." He says that as he ran he didn't know who were the police and who were the Taliban — they all had same uniforms. (AP)

Indian in Pakistan jail has to wait till January 31 to know his fate



Hamid Nehal Ansari

PESHAWAR (TIP): Indian national Hamid Nehal Ansari, languishing in a Pakistani jail, even after serving a 3-year prison term, has failed to secure his release as authorities did not submit the record of his conviction by a military court and his jail warrant to a top court here.

Ansari, a Mumbai resident, was arrested in 2012 for illegally entering Pakistan from Afghanistan reportedly to meet a girl he had befriended online. He was tried in a military court and was given three years' rigorous imprisonment.

In November last year, he had filed a petition in the Peshawar High Court, pleading that he should not be treated as a "spy" as he was not involved in "anti-state activities". Though India has sought consular access to Ansari, Pakistan has not yet provided it, the Ministry of External Affairs had said in New Delhi earlier this month.

Resuming the hearing in the case, the two-judge Peshawar High Court (PHC) bench, comprising Chief justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Mohammad Ghazanfar, asked the respondents about production of Ansari's conviction order by the military court as well as details of his jail warrant.

However, the respondents did not submit the record of his conviction and his jail warrant that the court had earlier directed to produce today, the Express Tribune reported.

Later, the court strongly directed the

authorities to produce the records by January 31 and adjourned the case.

Ansari's legal woes comes at a time when India has legally challenged at the International Court of Justice the death sentence given by a Pakistani military court to Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav, for alleged spying.

During the hearing of Ansari's case, the court was told that the security agencies had recovered some photographs of Pakistan's sensitive locations from his possession, especially of the military related areas, the Express Tribune said.

However, the authorities did not provide

any details to support their claim, the report said.

Lawyer for Ansari, Qazi Muhammad Anwar, argued in the court that the Indian national was investigated by the security forces and tried by the military court.

He was sentenced to three-year imprisonment only for his illegal entry into Pakistan as nothing else was found against him to prove him a spy.

"Under the law, he has already completed the three-year jail term as he is behind bars in Pakistan since 2012 and should be released now," he said.

The counsel told the court that in Mardan prison Ansari is being treated like a spy as his jail warrant is also stamped with phrase 'anti-state activities' despite the fact he was not found to be involved in any such activities.

"Nehal Ansari is not a spy. He was tried by the military court and was awarded three-year imprisonment, which he has already completed," Anwar told the court.

Ansari was arrested by security agencies in 2012 from a hotel in Kohat, allegedly with a fake ID. According to his petition, he had come to Pakistan to meet a girl he had befriended on social media.

Ansari was tried in a military court and was given a three-year rigorous imprisonment that started from December 15, 2015. (PTI)

UN official says not safe yet for Rohingya return to Myanmar

DHAKA (TIP): It is not yet safe for the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims living in refugee camps in Bangladesh to begin returning to Myanmar, a senior United Nations official said on January 25.

While many Rohingya want to eventually return to their villages, UNICEF deputy executive director Justin Forsyth said that no one he met during visits to Bangladesh's refugee camps said they would go back now.

"This moment is not safe to go back," he said. "We have to improve the security situation inside Myanmar to send them back."

More than 680,000 Rohingya fled Myanmar's Rakhine state beginning in August, after Myanmar security forces began "clearance operations" in their villages in the wake of attacks by Rohingya insurgents on police posts. While most of the refugees left Myanmar in the first weeks of the crisis, Rohingya are continuing to trickle across the border into Bangladesh, complaining of mistreatment at home.

Forsyth spoke one day after former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson resigned suddenly from an advisory panel on the crisis, calling it a "whitewash and a cheerleading operation" for Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"She blames all the problems that Myanmar is having on the international media, on the UN, on human rights groups, on other governments, and I think this is caused by the bubble that is around her, by individuals that are not giving her frank advice," Richardson, once a close friend of Suu Kyi, said on Wednesday in an interview with The Associated Press in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city.

Richardson said Suu Kyi appeared to want the 10-member international advisory group, one in a string of Rohingya commissions set up by the Myanmar government, to endorse her policies.

"I'm not going to be part of it because I think there are serious issues of human rights violations, safety, citizenship, peace and stability that need to be addressed," said Richardson, who often works as an international troubleshooter. "I just felt that my advice and counsel would not be heeded."

Forsyth said he didn't know the details of the resignation but that "I understand his frustration."

Gradual repatriations of Rohingya were to begin on Tuesday under agreements signed by Myanmar and Bangladesh, but Bangladeshi officials delayed the returns at the last minute, saying more time was needed amid questions about safety and whether the refugees were returning voluntarily.

Forsyth urged Myanmar authorities to allow international organizations access to all the areas affected by the crisis.

Rohingya have long faced repression in Myanmar. They are widely dismissed as having migrated illegally from Bangladesh and are denied some of the most basic rights, including the freedom of movement. In 1982, nearly all Rohingya were stripped of their citizenship rights. (AFP)

Pakistan accuses India of exceeding its legitimate defence needs

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan on Jan 25 accused India of exceeding its legitimate defence needs and said New Delhi's buildup of advanced weapons would negatively impact strategic stability in South Asia and beyond.

Foreign Office (FO) spokesman Mohammad Faisal said there was a clear disconnect between India's declared policy of restraint and its relentless pursuit of an ambitious missile programme.

He alleged that the development of Agni V intercontinental ballistic missile showed India's real designs of pursuing hegemony. He termed it an "exercise in power projection".

"While every state has a right to its security, the buildup of sophisticated and advanced weapons and delivery systems by India far exceeds its legitimate defence needs," he said.

"Seen in the backdrop of other acquisitions of advanced capabilities in both the conventional and non-conventional domains, these developments will negatively impact strategic stability in the South Asian region and beyond," he said.

Faisal said Pakistan will continue to adhere to a policy of restraint and a responsible defence posture but will also take steps to ensure its defence.

Faisal said Pakistan believed in a peaceful neighbourhood, which is essential for peace and development. He said that cooperation instead of conflict was the only way forward but it should be reciprocated by actions and not words.

To a question about sharing of test reports of the shoes of Indian prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav's wife, he said "the report will be shared at an appropriate time."

Jadhav, 47, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April.

India had hit out at Pakistan for the way it treated the wife and mother of Jadhav when they met him in Pakistan on December 25.

He also accused India of launching a malicious propaganda campaign against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). (PTI)

Music composer Ilaiyaraaja, sportsmen Pankaj Advani, MS Dhoni among 2018 Padma award winners

NEW DELHI (TIP): Keeping its promise of honouring "unsung heroes", the government Jan 25 announced Padma Shri awards for personalities who served the poor, set up free schools and popularised tribal arts globally.

Lakshmikutty, a tribal woman from Kerala, who prepares 500 herbal medicine from memory and help thousands of people especially in snake and insect bite cases, is among the awardees.

She teaches at Kerala Folklore Academy and lives in a small hut made of palm leaves roof in tribal settlement in a forest. She is the only tribal woman from her area to attend school in the 1950s.

Arvind Gupta, an IIT Kanpur alumnus who inspired generations of students to learn science from thrash, has also been honoured with Padma Shri.

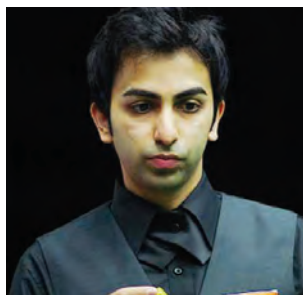
Gupta visited 3,000 schools in four decades, made 6,200 short films on toy-making in 18 languages and also hosted popular TV show Tarang in 1980s.

Internationally-acclaimed Gond artist Bhajju Shyam has also been awarded the Padma Shri.

Shyam is famous for depicting Europe through



Ilaiyaraaja



Pankaj Advani



MS Dhoni

Gond paintings, a tribal style of painting of Madhya Pradesh. Born in a poor tribal family, he worked as a night guard and electrician to support family before becoming a professional artist.

His 'The London Jungle Book' sold 30,000 copies and it was published in five foreign languages.

West Bengal's Sudhanshu Biswas, a 99-year-old freedom fighter who serves poor, runs school and orphanages and set up free school for poor, is also among the winners.

Kerala's medical messiah to terminally ill, M R Rajagopal, has also been honoured with Padma Shri. Rajagopal has specialised in pain relief care for neo natal cases.

Since last year, the Modi government has been honouring "unsung heroes" with the Padma awards to recognise people who have dedicated their lives to working for the poor or have risen from deprived backgrounds to excel in their own fields.

Maharashtra's Murlikant Petkar, India's first para- Olympic gold medalist, who lost his arm in

1965 Indo-Pak war, is another winner of the Padma Shri.

Tamil Nadu's Rajagopalan Vasudevan, who is known as plastic road-maker of India, developed a patented and innovative method to reuse plastic waste to construct roads, has also been given the Padma Shri.

Subhasini Mistry, a poor lady from rural West Bengal, who toiled 20 years as housemaid and daily labourer to build a hospital for poor in the state, is another awardee.

Nonagenarian farm labourer Sulagatti Narasamma, who provides midwifery services in backward region of Karnataka without any medical facility, too was awarded the Padma Shri.

Vijayalakshmi Navaneethakrishnan, an acclaimed Tamil folk exponent, who has dedicated her life towards collection, documentation and preservation of Tamil folk and tribal music, has also been given Padma Shri.

Another awardee is Yeshi Dhoden, monk physician of Tibetan herbal medicine working in remote areas of Himachal Pradesh.

Source: PTI

HungerBox raises \$2.5 million in pre-series A funding lead by Lionrock Capital and Kris Gopalakrishnan

BENGALURU (TIP): HungerBox, the Growth Story-promoted B2B food-tech company t announced, January 22, the closing of USD \$2.5 million in pre-series A funding led by Lionrock Capital and Kris Gopalakrishnan, Co-Founder, Infosys.

Started in 2016, HungerBox is a full stack, food-tech company that is focused on the B2B space and operates 100+ digital cafeterias for more than 75 corporate clients including Qualcomm, Microsoft, FirstSource, Accenture, CapGemini, Genpact, ABB, Amazon and McKinsey, across Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi/NCR and Jaipur.

"HungerBox's business has scaled tremendously over the last 15 months with nearly 7 million orders placed on our platform till date. We are clocking more than 120,000 daily orders and expect to scale this to half a million orders per day by end-2018," said Sandipan Mitra, CEO & Co-Founder, HungerBox. "The funding we have received from marquee investors will boost our ability to scale our operations to keep pace with the traction we are seeing for our digital cafeteria management solution."

Kris Gopalakrishnan, Co-Founder, Infosys commented, "There is tremendous potential for innovation in the B2B food-tech arena as corporate spends on F&B are already massive and growing year-on-year. HungerBox addresses this large space with an easily scalable model and an end-to-end solution that provides a win-win to employees as well as to corporate clients".

"The B2B food space has plenty of headroom for growth and innovation for years to come. The winners in the sector will be those with a powerful, tech-led offering and the ability to scale in-step with their clients. HungerBox certainly has all the credentials to be a leader in this space," said Hari Kumar, Founder &



Sandipan Mitra and Uttam Kumar, Co-Founders of HungerBox: ""The funding we have received from marquee investors will boost our ability to scale our operations to keep pace with the traction we are seeing for our digital cafeteria management solution."

CEO, Lionrock Capital.

Spending on F&B in the B2B space alone is estimated to reach US \$ 14 billion in India in 2018. The space is growing at ~ 15% per annum.

HungerBox's seamless, tech-led solution enables end-to-end digital cafeteria management with the company's proprietary technology platform connecting food vendors to employees within client organizations through a customized mobile app available to each employee.

Using the app, employees can view the F&B menu provided by all enlisted food vendors at their workplace café's, place orders and track delivery accurately. They can also provide ratings / feedback. HungerBox's solution provides admin teams at the client organization with the ability to track the entire F&B operation including food consumption, orders, feedback etc., in real-time. More than 50 different payment methods are integrated into the service offering including in-app purchases by an

employee, payment via smart cards, m-wallets, self-serve kiosks at the café's etc.

HungerBox uses latest technology advancements like IoT in its solution to seamlessly connect the vendor side hardware (designed by HungerBox) and employees of corporate. The HungerBox solution also provides features like 'Personalized Recommendations' to employees through its AI-driven technology, 'Health Mode' for health conscious employees, ability to undertake group-ordering and orders from restaurants in the vicinity when corporate cafés are closed etc.

HungerBox employs 200 staff across India and was started by Sandipan Mitra and Uttam Kumar, who are both veterans of the food tech space in India whose previous stints included global food takeaway ordering service Just Eat's India operations. HungerBox is promoted by GrowthStory, the venture-builder platform founded by serial entrepreneurs, K Ganesh and Meena Ganesh.

BSF REFUSES TO EXCHANGE SWEETS WITH PAK RANGERS OVER CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS

ATTARI (TIP): The Border Security Force (BSF) on Friday refused to exchange sweets and greetings with their Pakistani counterparts--the Pakistan Rangers, on the occasion of the 69th Republic Day.

The move by the BSF came following the heightened tension between both countries along the International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir due to repeated ceasefire violations by Pakistani forces leading to killing of soldiers and civilians on the Indian side.

Tension continues to prevail along the IB and LoC for the past few months due to repeated ceasefire violations.

BSF sources said it was conveyed to the Pakistan Rangers on Thursday that no sweets would be exchanged on Republic Day.

Border guards of both countries follow a tradition of exchanging sweets for the past several years on major religious festivals, like Eid and Diwali, and also during Independence Days of both countries and India's Republic Day. The BSF is on maximum alert along Punjab's barbed wire fenced 553-km IB with Pakistan.

In the past four to five years, border guards have skipped the exchange of sweets on a few occasions. The exchange ceremony is mainly held at the Attari-Wagah joint check post, 30 km from Amritsar.

Source: IANS

Ashok Chakra for Air Force's Garud commando

NEW DELHI (TIP): President Ram Nath Kovind will tomorrow present Ashok Chakra, India's highest peacetime military decoration, posthumously to Corporal Jyoti Prakash Nirala, a Garud commando of the Indian Air Force who died fighting terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir last year.

Kirti Chakra has been awarded to Major Vijayant Bisht, who led an ambush in Chorgali forest of Kashmir's Uri district, killed two terrorists and saved the life of another soldier.

Corporal Nirala was part of an offensive launched by the Garud detachment and a Rashtriya Rifles battalion in Chanderger village of Bandipora district on November 18.

The Garud detachment laid a close quarter ambush around the house where the terrorists were tipped to be hiding. Nirala positioned himself close to the approach of the hideout. While the detachment laid in wait, six terrorists rushed out, shooting and lobbing grenades.

AS I SEE IT

INDIA@68

Will Modi be India's Gorbachev?



By Virendra Pandit

Remember, Gorbachev, a modern man heading a medieval Communist Party, introduced Glasnost (Transparency), without exactly working much for Perestroika (Reconstruction) in the 1985-91 era. The result was the dissolution of the "secular" Soviet Union and emergence of an Orthodox Christian Russia on its ruins! Modi has often been talking about transparency; and rarely about reconstruction!

As the "Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic of India" celebrates its 68th anniversary on January 26, 2018, the world's largest democracy refuses to grow old. It remains young, and, therefore, rather unpredictable, as ever. In fact, India has retained her youthfulness due to this very unpredictability; the vast nation, as sociologists and historians have noted, changes every ninth mile! And you are never sure which India best represents India!!

When the war-crippled British Raj decided to leave India in 1947, dire warnings were given that the utterly brittle country of nearly 300 million diverse people divided across castes, creeds and customs would not survive for long and fall back upon its familiar, fissiparous path of slavery of another kind. India proved all dystopian warnings wrong.

Winston Churchill was among the first politicians to predict India's downfall from the British to the brutish era. The then war-time Prime Minister, who did not want to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, had claimed that an Independent India would quickly disintegrate and return to the medieval era. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, as Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly, had also expressed apprehension that India could lose her independence and territory once again and even become a dictatorship if she failed to put in checks-and-balances.

Nothing of the sort has, however, happened. On the contrary, despite odds, India has not only retained her independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, but has also been a beacon of independence to many "Third World" countries, thanks to its slow but sure progress and prosperity. She has not only emerged as the largest democracy in the world but also the third largest economy, the sixth space power, and an emerging world superpower. In other words, India has been a role model for many a nation the way her greatest son, Mahatma Gandhi, has been a role model for many a country vying for independence from a foreign yoke.

Of course, the 2,000-year-old Mother India has had to struggle hard to put up the make up of a 20-year-old lady and walk the ramp of world powers. She had her own hours of reckoning, even dictatorship of sorts. She had



Modi's popularity is independent of his own party's, that of his government or even of the RSS

As the year 2018 began, India's politics is agog with the possible changes in the offing. Despite his currently steamroller majority in the Lok Sabha and the emerging one in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House), Modi appears buffeted more due to the circumstances not of his making but what he inherited. Like the Mahabharata's great warrior Abhimanyu, he is struggling against seven enemies and he does not, apparently, know how to get out of the booby traps and landmines (<https://www.theindianpanorama.news/featured/featured-tired%20titan%20who%20after%20modi>).

to fight a war imposed by China in 1962, another by Pakistan in 1965, and a third during the Bangladesh Liberation in 1971. Also, she suffered a major embarrassment during the dictatorial Internal Emergency (1975-77), imposed by the then PM Indira Gandhi. Interestingly, it was also during the same Emergency that Mrs. Gandhi introduced the future seed of Indian politics: the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, adding the word "secular" to the Preamble. This "secular" word would become the determinant of whether the Republic of India would march in the 21st century.

For, when Mrs. Gandhi returned to power in 1980 after the brief Janata Party interregnum, she faced unprecedented turmoil in Punjab due to Pakistan-sponsored, financed and supported terrorism in the border state. For the first time, a "secular" India witnessed her Army storming a venerated shrine to flush out militants. India's secularism was stretched to the limits and the woman who sought to conceive a "secular" India was consumed by the very forces she had unwittingly unleashed.

Her son Rajiv Gandhi inherited the crown as well as the "secular" thorn from his mother. While he successfully fathered India's communication revolution, he was also

consumed by another kind of terrorism, from the Hindu Tamils of neighboring Buddhist Sri Lanka. Like his mother, he also stretched India's secularism to the limits by first succumbing to the Muslims in the Shah Bano case and then to the Hindus on the Ayodhya issue.

All governments that followed the Rajiv Gandhi era since 1989 were products of the struggle between the combination of Hindutva forces on one side and the "secular" ones on the other. This was the era of coalition governments in which alternated political groups led by the rightist Hindutva party, the BJP, and the "secular" fronts, led by the Congress, or ex-Congressmen.

Interestingly, again, while Indira introduced "secular" content in the Constitution, her son Rajiv succumbed to both the Muslims and the Hindus, in that order, thus changing the very creed of the Congress-only Mahatma Gandhi had changed this creed in 1919 when he turned the Indian National Congress from being a post office to the biggest mass movement for India's Independence.

This change of creed became unstoppable. In fact, the Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress seemed to be the last sigh of the Grand Old Party (GOP), having won a massive majority of 404

seats out of 533 in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) in 1984, riding a sympathy wave after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. In Independent India, this was the first election where the people voted on the basis of religion and a pro-Hindu sentiment began to take shape. Subsequently, it evolved further and empowered Narendra Modi to become the PM in 2014, heading the government led by the single dominant party (the BJP alone won 282 seats) after 30 years.

It is this Republic that India of the 21st century has inherited.

Where is India headed now?

As the year 2018 began, India's politics is agog with the possible changes in the offing. Despite his currently steamroller majority in the Lok Sabha and the emerging one in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House), Modi appears buffeted more due to the circumstances not of his making but what he inherited. Like the Mahabharata's great warrior Abhimanyu, he is struggling against seven enemies and he does not, apparently, know how to get out of the booby traps and landmines (<https://www.theindianpanorama.news/featured/featured-tired%20titan%20who%20after%20modi>).

Only in the last week, fresh salvos have been fired at him. His friend-turned-foe, Dr Pravin Togadia, International Working President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, has gone ballistic against him and his government, even claiming that he could be killed in an organized "encounter" with the police! This demonstrates the internal bickering in the larger Sangh Parivar, and Modi may lose many foot soldiers for the ensuing 2019 General Elections next year, to be preceded by elections to eight state Assemblies. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which heads the Sangh Parivar, has been claiming to be the only champion of

contd on Page 30

Priorities for the United Nations in 2018



BY ASOKE MUKEJI

“While these three priorities should engage the UN in 2018, the fact that the world is impacted by violent conflict and degrading poverty will ensure that "securing" the peace will have to precede "sustaining" the peace. The experience of multilateral diplomacy over the past seven decades has shown that to sustain peace, the focus has to be on resolving disputes peacefully, as set out in Chapter Six of the UN Charter. Any optimism about the success of the UN to become "fit for purpose" must be based on the convergence of the efforts of the UN Secretary General and the UNGA for preventive diplomacy, giving primacy to the diplomacy of peace over the diplomacy of war", says the author.

As the United Nations (UN) approaches its 75th anniversary in 2020, the world it represents has changed beyond recognition. From its original 51 founding members, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) today has 193-member countries. While the three "pillars" of the UN continue to be global governance in the political, socio-economic, and human rights areas, there is growing restiveness among the majority of the UNGA member states for reforming the UN to reflect ground realities.

The UNGA's new assertiveness in influencing decisions on UN functioning was on display during the November 2017 vote in the UNGA on electing judges to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The unscripted situation, in which India's candidature enjoyed majority support among the countries in the UNGA, was offset by the power play in the UN Security Council (UNSC), orchestrated by the solidarity of its five permanent members, which prevailed on several other non-permanent members to consistently back the candidate of the United Kingdom. This deadlock was finally resolved through mature diplomacy, with the United Kingdom deciding to concede the election in view of the overwhelming preference of the UNGA. India remained the sole candidate for the fifth ICJ seat, which it duly won, being the only name left on the ballot. This outcome has been greeted in many countries as a harbinger of reforming the UNSC itself by the UNGA.

The issue of "UN reforms", articulated by the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and endorsed by President Donald Trump of the United States at their joint meeting in New York in September 2016, has received prominence. However, these are reforms of the UN Secretariat, and reflect the interests of the main financial contributors to the UN budget. The intention is to get more "value" for money,



The author, who was India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York from April 2013 to December 2015, takes a close look at the issues before the United Nations, and lists the priorities for the World Body in 2018. The three priorities, according to him, are "Completion of process of reforming the UNSC"; "accelerated implementation of the socio-economic goals of Agenda 2030"; and "reforming the Human Rights Council to uphold fundamental human rights and freedoms".

with a parallel attempt to ensure that the interests of financial contributors are reflected in the key managerial positions of the Secretariat.

Member states of the UN represented in the UNGA, on the other hand, are acutely conscious that the UN faces a larger test of its credibility related to its decision-making process and the priorities it gives to its negotiated agendas. In these areas, the impetus for UN reform has to come from the UNGA, and not the UN Secretariat.

The linkage and inter-dependence between peace and development has been woven into the UN Charter since 1945. The perception that the world needs to "sustain" the peace arrived at after the end of the Second World War by "securing" the peace, created the two main organs of the UN under the UNGA. Realpolitik determined that one organ, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), mandated by the UN Charter with the "primary responsibility" for maintaining international peace and security, operated on non-democratic principles. This was essentially due to the privilege given by Article 27.3 of the UN Charter to the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) to veto any decision of the UNSC without giving any reason or accountability. The other organ, the Economic and Social Council or ECOSOC, responsible for global socio-economic development, was imbued by the democratic principle of one-country one-vote, and adherence to the UNGA's process of taking decisions by majority voting.

Due to this dichotomy, the focus of UN reform in the UNGA has been on the UNSC. The emergence of new challenges and threats to international peace and security in the 21st century has been accompanied by the mushrooming of crises across all the continents of the world. These include Europe (Ukraine and Cyprus), Asia (Syria, North Korea, Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan), Africa (South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and Mali) and Latin America (Haiti and until recently Colombia). The UNSC has been singularly ineffective in resolving these crises, often looking to the UN peacekeeping operations it mandates to perform the role of preventive diplomacy.

The first priority of the UNGA in 2018, therefore, must be to complete the process of reforming the UNSC. The mandate for this reform was given to the UNGA by world leaders at the 2005 UN Summit thirteen years ago. The Summit had declared that "early reform" of the UNSC was needed to "enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions."

How can the UNGA implement this objective in 2018? The UNGA has made incremental progress in implementing its mandate for UNSC reform. It has already agreed on five key areas for UNSC reforms, as well as on inter-governmental negotiations to conclude these reforms. In September 2015, the UNGA unanimously agreed to consider a text submitted by 122 countries (including permanent members France and the UK) containing proposals on each of the five areas, which would be integrated into a UNGA resolution.

Before 14 September 2018, when the 72nd Session of the UNGA ends, a minimum of 129 members of the UNGA must table and adopt a resolution amending the UN Charter to reform the UNSC. This will set the timetable for implementing the reforms holding elections to the new seats of the UNSC in 2019, enabling a reformed UNSC to begin operating by 2020, when the UN marks its 75th anniversary.

The opposition to any such attempt will continue to come from the five permanent members of the UNSC. However, in the UNGA these five countries do not have the veto. A two-thirds majority is needed to adopt such a UNGA resolution. This will set the stage for applying the moral power of the UNGA, based on its broad-based interest in reforming the UNSC, to prevail over the status-quo position of the five permanent members. In this context, introducing a multi-stakeholder campaign, including global thought and business leaders, in favor of a UNGA resolution on reforming the UNSC would accelerate the acceptance of such a resolution by the permanent members. Such an approach paid dividends in the UNGA's success in September 2015 on agreeing on the ambitious UN socio-economic development objectives contained in Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development. A multi-stakeholder approach is also built into the UN's implementation of the

Tunis Agenda for a digital global society.

A second major priority for UNGA member states in 2018 will be to accelerate implementation of the socio-economic goals of Agenda 2030. The overarching goal of this Agenda is the eradication of poverty by 2030. While individual members of the UNGA have agreed to focus on their national socio-economic programs to achieve the targets of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at the core of Agenda 2030, the time has come for the UNGA to focus attention on two critical "means of implementation" which have been agreed to by all countries to catalyze this process.

These two areas are financing for development and the application of technologies for development. The way forward has been identified by the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Conference of July 2015, and the UNGA High-Level Review of the Tunis Agenda for a World Information Society in December 2015. At its High-Level Political Forum meeting in July 2018, the ECOSOC and the UNGA will have an opportunity to convene a dedicated forum to assess how global commitments on these two areas are being implemented on the ground in individual member states of the UNGA. This effort must be driven by member states, to ensure that the UN is responsive to their aspirations on the ground.

A third priority for the UNGA in 2018 is in the area of human rights. Already, calls have been made by the United States for reforming the HRC. These calls should be addressed within the UNGA framework. The UNGA has demonstrated its ability to address concerns expressed by some countries at the profile of countries represented in the HRC. For example, in 2015, Pakistan was unable to get re-elected to the HRC, as was Russia in 2016.

Reforming the HRC needs to go beyond the representation of countries, and address the ability of the HRC to uphold fundamental human rights and freedoms, as set out in the UN Charter. The UNGA in 2018 must address the actual work being done in the HRC, especially in its Universal Peer Review or UPR process. This process is critical to ensure adherence to the UN Charter's human rights standards. The fact that the HRC devotes only three hours to the UPR of each of the 193 members of the UNGA is one such issue, since this limited time applied uniformly to all countries being reviewed does not allow either the country being reviewed or the countries reviewing the scope for a focused interactive discussion. Making such reforms in the HRC will enable it to become the main body under the UNGA for human rights issues. This, in turn, will mean that any concern on human rights issues by UN member states should be raised in the HRC, and not in the UNSC, which has been the practice for more than two decades now, resulting in "perilous interventions" in the words of a distinguished Indian envoy to the UN.

While these three priorities should engage the UN in 2018, the fact that the world is impacted by violent conflict and degrading poverty will ensure that "securing" the peace will have to precede "sustaining" the peace. The experience of multilateral diplomacy over the past seven decades has shown that to sustain peace, the focus has to be on resolving disputes peacefully, as set out in Chapter Six of the UN Charter. Any optimism about the success of the UN to become "fit for purpose" must be based on the convergence of the efforts of the UN Secretary General and the UNGA for preventive diplomacy, giving primacy to the diplomacy of peace over the diplomacy of war.

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India is a proud Republic, with a vibrant democratic system with the largest constitution of the world, which guarantees inalienable equal rights to all of its nearly 1.3 billion people. But the road to Republic has not been smooth. There was a long struggle to realize the dream of a vast population to be an independent nation and a Republic. Much sweat and blood went in to the struggle.

On December 9, 1946 the Constituent Assembly met for the first time in the Constitution Hall of Parliament House, with the intention of putting together the document that would go on to form the backbone of the independent India's government. Exuberant and full of hope, the 207 members out of 292 present in the first session started the debate and discussions which would continue for the next three months, culminating in the constitution of India.

British government sent the Cabinet mission to India in 1946 to discuss with Indian leaders, the process for the peaceful transfer of power. As per the guidelines laid down by the mission, provincial legislative elections were held resulting in the nomination of 292 representatives who would go on to form the Constituent Assembly. Those elected included Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana AbulKalam Azad, Sarojini Naidu and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, among others. The task at hand was humongous. Resolutions laid out had to take care of aspects like territorial integrity, socio-economic equality, justice of law and minority rights. Setting out the objectives for the Constituent Assembly, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, "The first task of this Assembly is to free India through a new constitution, to feed the starving people, and to clothe the naked masses, and to give every Indian the fullest opportunity to develop himself according to his capacity. This is certainly a great task."

In the next 3 years, the Constituent Assembly held 11 sessions over 165 days. The draft constitution was approved on December 9, 1949. About a month later, on January 26, 1950 the Constitution of India came into force officially, making the newly born nation of India a modern republic.

The date chosen for the official enforcement of the constitution had a significance attached to the sentiments of the Indian nationalists. When on December 31, 1929, Nehru hoisted the tricolor in Lahore and demanded "purna swaraj", the date set for independence was January 26, 1930. The day was celebrated as the "purna swaraj" day for the next 17 years. When independence was finally granted in 1947 however, the day set upon by the British was August 15. It is said that the independence day was so chosen to coincide with the second anniversary of the day when Japanese forces submitted to allied powers after the Second World War. In the words of Ramachandra Guha, "freedom finally came on a day that resonated with imperial pride rather than nationalist sentiment."

When the constitution of India was born, it was considered necessary by the makers of the document to celebrate it on a day associated with national pride and the best choice available was that of "poorna swaraj" day- January 26. For the next 68 years, India has been celebrating January 26 as the date when it elevated itself from an independent nation to a modern republic, strengthened in all its glory by a fully functioning constitution.

Republic Day is celebrated with great pomp and show throughout the nation each year. Preparations begin almost a month ahead of the actual day. A massive parade is held in the capital of India which reflects a touch of modernity in the display of

INDIA'S REPUBLIC DAY — A HISTORIC OCCASION

History of January 26; Birth of constitution of India; Grand celebrations



A bird's eye view of Rajpath during the full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi on January 23, 2018. Source: Facebook

might and technology and the capabilities of growth in various sectors. While the parade symbolizes the power and force, the different regional tableaux reflect the cultural themes and motifs.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first President of India. He took the oath of office at the Durbar Hall in the Government House, which was followed by the Presidential drive along the five-mile route to the Irwin Stadium. He unfurled the National Flag at the stadium. This transition of India into a sovereign democratic republic nation is indeed a historic event. The two-decade long journey, right from the conceptualization of the dream in 1930 to its actual realization in 1950, is certainly worth a grand celebration. Today, the Indian Constitution is the longest in the world, consisting of 397 articles and 12 schedules, providing a single citizenship for the whole nation.

The national holiday is celebrated with festivities and patriotic fervor across the whole nation.

REPUBLIC DAY PARADE

The grandeur of the Republic Day of India is visible in the grand parade that is held along Rajpath, beginning from Raisina Hill near the Rashtrapati Bhavan (President's Palace) and moving on to Rajpath past India Gate and proceeding to the Red Fort.

The occasion witnesses the presence of the President, the Prime Minister and several other high-ranking officials of the country. The parade starts with the arrival of the President of India, who is escorted by a group of bodyguards on horses. Next, the Prime Minister of India offers wreaths at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate in memory of the martyrs of the Indian army.



Full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade at Rajpath on January 23, 2018.

The national flag is unfurled by the President of India, who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces. This is succeeded by the cheerful tune of the National Anthem and a 21-gun salute. Led by three different divisions of the armed forces, viz: Navy, Army and Air Force; the Republic Day Parade has all of them displaying their might along the Rajpath, saluting the President. The Armed Forces staff performs motorcycle rides whereas the staff of the Indian Air Force performs flying parade in fighter planes.

The rich and colorful culture of India is showcased in the Republic Day parade. Traditional as well as cultural performances are given by professionals belonging to different regions. School children in picturesque costumes also participate in the display of different aspects of the glorious history of the country on this big day.

The real heroes of the nation are honored with bravery awards and medals. National Awards are given to children for selfless sacrifice and bravery.

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BEATING THE RETREAT CEREMONY

Continued from page 16

The Republic Day celebration ends officially with the Beating the Retreat ceremony, which is held on the 29 January every year. The event symbolizes retreat after a day on the battlefield and features remarkable performances by the Indian Air Force, the India Navy, and the Indian Army.

CHIEF GUESTS ON R-Day

The chief guests on Republic Day of India 2018 are 10 Great Leaders of the 10 nations of the world. They are Heads of ASEAN states. Below is the list of names of chief guests and their nations:

- Sultan and incumbent Prime Minister Hassanal Bolkiah - Brunei
- Prime Minister Hun Sen - Cambodia
- President Joko Widodo - Indonesia
- Prime Minister ThonglounSisoulith - Laos
- Prime Minister Najib Razak - Malaysia
- President Htin Kyaw - Myanmar
- President Rodrigo Roa Duterte - Philippines
- President Halimah Yacob - Singapore
- Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha - Thailand
- Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc - Vietnam

Republic Day 2018 has some very special features associated with it.

For the first time in history, India will celebrate its Republic Day 2018 with the great leaders of all 10 Asean countries (Association of South East Asian Nations).

It is very special because the Southeast Asian bloc completed its 50 years of formation (created on 8 August 1967) and India completed its 25 years of partnership (started in 1992) with the grouping in 2017.

- It is for the first time that ASEAN Flags will be displayed through fly in the sky over Rajpath.
- It is for the first time that one of the floats will show "All India Radio" to display Prime Minister's monthly address "Mann Ki Baat".
- One of the floats will be there from Income Tax Department to display anti-black money drive.
- 113 BSF women will perform motorcycle stunts such as pyramid, shaktiman, fish riding, seemaprahari, bull fighting, etc.
- Aircraft Carrier (IAC) Vikrant is going to be displayed by the Indian Navy which will be commissioned in 2020.
- "Nirbhay missile" and the "Ashwini radar system" from The Defence Development and Research Organization will be displayed.
- "Airborne Early Warning and Control System (Netra) is going to fly over the Rajpath.
- Group of students from Delhi school will perform to represent Indo-ASEAN ties.
- Around 700 students from the guest countries will perform in the parade other than the Indian Army, Air Force, and Navy.
- A float by Punjab will be displayed under the theme "Sangat and Pangat" (Sangat means communal harmony; Pangat means community kitchen) representing love for humanity.
- Folk dances of many countries like Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, etc will be performed.
- Around 61 tribal guests are invited to participate in the Republic Day celebration.
- 100-odd government agencies are involved in the preparations of Republic Day parade 2018.
- State capitals will celebrate republic day in the presence of governors of state.



Punjab tableau showcasing 'sangat' and 'pangat' during full dress rehearsal on January 23, 2018.



Himachal Pradesh float.



A float displaying Indian Navy might.



FAMOUS QUOTES BY FREEDOM FIGHTERS

On this occasion, it will be pertinent to remember our great freedom fighters and what inspiring words they uttered.

"Give me blood, I will give you freedom" — Subhas Chandra Bose

"Patriotism is religion and religion is love for India" — Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

"A country's greatness lies in its undying ideals of love and sacrifice that inspire the mothers of the race" — Sarojini Naidu

"The sanctity of law can be maintained only so long as it is the expression of the will of the people" — Bhagat Singh

"The shots that hit me are the last nails to the coffin of British rule in India" — Lala Lajpat Rai

"Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it."
— Bal Gangadhar Tilak

"Every Indian should now forget that he is a Rajput, a Sikh or a Jat. He must remember that he is an Indian." — Sardar Patel

"If yet your blood does not rage, then it is water that flows in your veins. For what is the flush of youth, if it is not of service to the motherland." — Chandra Shekhar Azad

"Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge... At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom."
— Jawaharlal Nehru

"We believe in peace and peaceful development, not only for ourselves but for people all over the world." — Lal Bahadur Shastri.

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a parliamentary system of government. The Republic is governed in terms of the Constitution of India which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November 1949 and came into force on 26th January, 1950.

The Constitution provides for a Parliamentary form of government which is federal in structure with certain unitary features. The constitutional head of the Executive of the Union is the President. As per Article 79 of the Constitution of India, the council of the Parliament of the Union consists of the President and two Houses known as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha).

Article 74(1) of the Constitution provides that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head to aid and advise the President, who shall exercise his/her functions in accordance to the advice. The real executive power is thus vested in the Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head.

Background

The major portion of the Indian subcontinent was under British rule from 1857 to 1947. When the Constitution of India came into force on 26 January 1950, it repealed the Indian Independence Act. India ceased to be a dominion of the British Crown and became a sovereign democratic republic. The date of 26 January was chosen to commemorate the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence of 1930.

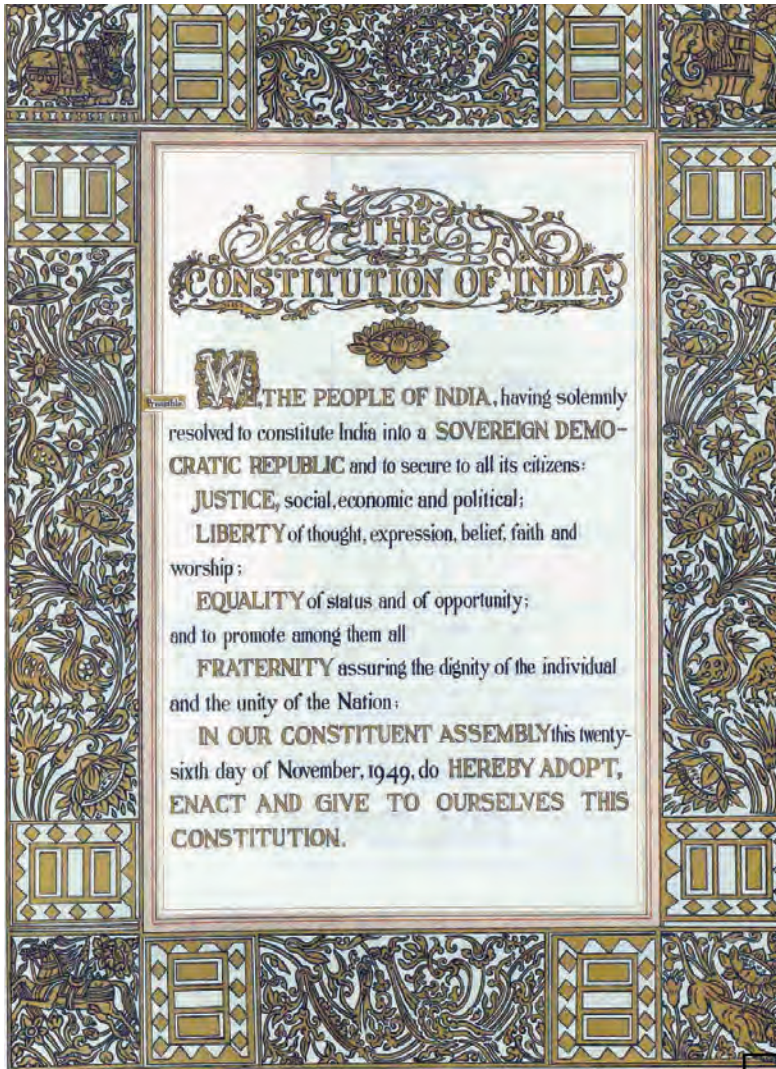
Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 60, 324, 366, 367, 379, 380, 388, 391, 392, 393 and 394 of the Constitution came into force on 26 Nov 1949 and the remaining articles on 26 Jan 1950.

Previous legislation used as sources

It is drawn from many sources. Keeping in mind the needs and conditions of India its framers borrowed different features freely from previous legislation viz. Government of India Act 1858, Indian Councils Act 1861, Indian Councils Act 1892, Indian Councils Act 1909, Government of India Act 1919, Government of India Act 1935 and the Indian Independence Act 1947. The last legislation which led to the creation of the two independent nations of India and Pakistan provided for the division of the erstwhile Constituent Assembly into two, with each new assembly having sovereign powers transferred to it, to enable each to draft and enact a new constitution, for the separate states.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

It was drafted by the Constituent Assembly, which was



*The original text of the Preamble to the Constitution of India.
Photo / Wikimedia Commons*

elected by elected members of the provincial assemblies. The 389 member Constituent Assembly took almost three years (two years, eleven months and eighteen days to be precise) to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for independent India, during which, it held eleven

sessions over 165 days. Of these, 114 days were spent on the consideration of the draft Constitution. On 29 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly set up a Drafting Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to prepare a draft Constitution for India. While

deliberating upon the draft Constitution, the assembly moved, discussed and disposed of as many as 2,473 amendments out of a total of 7,635 tabled. Dr B.R. Ambedkar, Sanjay Phakey, Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Kanaiyalal Munshi, Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, Sandipkumar Patel, Maulana AbulKalam Azad, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Nalini Ranjan Ghosh, and Balwantrai Mehta were some important figures in the assembly. There were more than 30 members of the scheduled classes. Frank Anthony represented the Anglo-Indian community, and the Parsis were represented by H. P. Modi. The Chairman of the Minorities Committee was Harendra Coomar Mookerjee, a distinguished Christian who represented all Christians other than Anglo-Indians. Ari Bahadur Gurung represented the Gorkha Community. Prominent jurists like Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer, Benegal Narsing Rau and K. M. Munshi, Ganesh Mavalankar were also members of the Assembly. Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Durgabai Deshmukh, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Vijayalakshmi Pandit were important women members

The first temporary 2-day president of the Constituent Assembly was Dr Sachchidananda Sinha. Later, Rajendra Prasad was elected president of the Constituent Assembly. The members of the Constituent Assembly met for the first time on 9 December 1946.

Drafting

On the 14 August 1947 meeting of the Assembly, a proposal for forming various committees was

presented. Such committees included a Committee on Fundamental Rights, the Union Powers Committee and Union Constitution Committee. On 29 August 1947, the Drafting Committee was appointed, with Dr B. R. Ambedkar as the Chairman along with six other members assisted by a constitutional advisor. These members were Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi (K M Munshi, Ex- Home Minister, Bombay), Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer (Ex- Advocate General, Madras State), N Gopalaswami Aiyengar (Ex- Prime Minister, J&K and later member of Nehru Cabinet), B L Mitter (Ex- Advocate General, India), Md. Saadullah (Ex- Chief Minister of Assam, Muslim League member) and D P Khaitan (Scion of Khaitan Business family and a renowned lawyer). The constitutional advisor was Sir Benegal Narsing Rau (who became First Indian Judge in International Court of Justice, 1950-54). Later B L Mitter resigned and was replaced by Madhav Rao (Legal Advisor of Maharaja of Vadodara). On D P Khaitan's death, T T Krishnamachari was included in the drafting committee. A draft Constitution was prepared by the committee and submitted to the Assembly on 4 November 1947, which was debated and over 2000 amendments were moved over a period of two years. Finally on 26 November 1949, the process was completed and the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution. 284 members signed the document and the process of constitution making was complete. This day is celebrated as National Law Day or Constitution Day.

The assembly met in sessions open to the public, for 166 days, spread over a period of 2 years, 11 months and 18 days before adopting the Constitution, the 308 members of the assembly signed two copies of the document (one each in Hindi and English) on 24 January 1950. The original Constitution of India is hand-written with beautiful calligraphy, each page beautified and decorated by artists from Shantiniketan including Beohar Rammanohar Sinha and Nandalal Bose. The illustrations on the cover and pages represent styles from the different civilizations of the subcontinent, ranging from the prehistoric Mohenjodaro civilization, in the Indus Valley, to the present. The calligraphy in the book was done by Prem Behari Narain Raizada. It was published in Dehra Dun, and photolithographed at the offices of Survey of India. The entire exercise to produce the original took nearly five years. Two days later, on 26 January 1950, the Constitution of India became the law of all the States and territories of India.



First day (9 December 1946) of the Constituent Assembly.

Photo / Wikimedia Commons

JOURNEY OF INDIAN REPUBLIC

A salute of 21 guns and the unfurling of the Indian National flag by Dr. Rajendra Prasad heralded the historic birth of the Indian Republic on January 26, 1950; 894 days after our country became a dominion following withdrawal of British Rule. Since then, every year the day is celebrated with great pride and happiness all over the nation.

The transition of India from a British colony to a sovereign, secular, and democratic nation was indeed historical. It was a long journey of around two decades that started with the conceptualisation of the dream in 1930 to its actual realization in 1950. A look into the journey that led to the birth of Indian Republic will make our celebrations more meaningful.

Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress

The seeds of a republican nation were sowed at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress at the midnight of 31st December 1929. The session was held under the presidency of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru. Those present in the meeting took a pledge to mark January 26 as "Independence Day" in order to march towards realizing the dream of complete independence from the British. The Lahore Session paved way to the Civil Disobedience movement. It was decided that January 26, 1930 would be observed as the Purna Swaraj (complete Independence) Day. Many Indian political parties and Indian revolutionaries from all over the country united to observe the day with honour and pride.

Constituent Assembly Meetings

The Indian Constituent Assembly, which was constituted as a result of the negotiations between the Indian leaders and members of the British Cabinet Mission, had its first meeting on December 9, 1946. The Objective of the Assembly was to give India a constitution, which would serve a lasting purpose and hence appointed a number of committees to thoroughly research the various aspects of the proposed constitution. The recommendations were discussed, debated and revised many times before the Indian Constitution was finalized and officially adopted three years later on November 26, 1949.

Constitution came into force

Though India became a free nation on August 15, 1947, it enjoyed the true spirit of Independence on January 26, 1950 when the Constitution of India finally came into force. The Constitution gave the citizens of India the power to govern themselves by choosing their own government. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, took oath as the first President of India at the Durbar Hall in the Government House and this was followed by the Presidential drive along a five-mile route to the Irwin Stadium, where he unfurled the National Flag.

Ever since the historic day, January 26 is celebrated with festivities and patriotic fervor all around the country. The day owes its importance to the constitution of India that was adopted on this day. On this Republic Day, read what the great Constitution of India, that propounds liberal democracy, has in its store. Let's also feel proud in pronouncing what the Preamble to our Constitution (External website that opens in a new window) says.

History of Indian Tricolor

"A flag is a necessity for all nations. Millions have died for it. It is no doubt a kind of idolatry



January 26, 1950, also happens to be the day that Dr Rajendra Prasad was chosen as the first President of independent India.



It took Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, also called the Architect of Indian Constitution, two years and 11 months to draft it. It is said, the Assembly gathered for 166 days spread over two years before the final version was formed. Leaders took the best aspects from other countries' constitutions, like, for example, the concept of liberty, equality and fraternity came from the French constitution while the Five-Year Plans came from the USSR constitution, the idea of division of power between Union and State has been taken from the Canadian constitution, the directorial elements from the Constitution of Ireland, the emergency carriage system from German Constitution.

which would be a sin to destroy. For, a flag represents an Ideal The unfurling of the Union Jack evokes in the English breast sentiments whose strength it is difficult to measure. The Stars and Stripes mean a world to the Americans. The Star and the Crescent will call forth the best bravery in Islam."

"It will be necessary for us Indians Muslims, Christians Jews, Parsis, and all others to whom India is their home-to recognize a common flag to live and to die for." — Mahatma Gandhi

Every free nation of the world has its own flag. It is a symbol of a free country. The National Flag of India was adopted in its present form during the meeting of Constituent Assembly held on the 22 July 1947, a few days before India's independence from the British on 15 August, 1947. It served as the national flag of the Dominion of India between 15 August 1947 and 26 January 1950 and that of the Republic of India thereafter. In India, the term "tricolour" refers to the Indian national flag.

The National flag of India is a horizontal tricolor of deep saffron (kesari) at the top,

white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The ratio of width of the flag to its length is two to three. In the centre of the white band is a navy blue wheel which represents the chakra. Its design is that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. Its diameter approximates to the width of the white band and it has 24 spokes.

Evolution of the Tricolour

It is really amazing to see the various changes that our National Flag went through since its first inception. It was discovered or recognised during our national struggle for freedom. The evolution of the Indian National Flag sailed through many vicissitudes to arrive at what it is today. In one way it reflects the political developments in the nation. Some of the historical milestones in the evolution of our National Flag involve the following:

The first national flag in India is said to have been hoisted on August 7, 1906, in the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park) in Calcutta now Kolkata. The flag was composed of three horizontal strips of red, yellow and green.

The second flag was hoisted in Paris by Madame Cama and her band of exiled revolutionaries in 1907. This was very similar to the first flag except that the top strip had only one lotus but seven stars denoting the Saptarishi. This flag was also exhibited at a socialist conference in Berlin.

The third flag went up in 1917 when our political struggle had taken a definite turn. Dr. Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak hoisted it during the Home rule movement. This flag had five red and four green horizontal strips arranged alternately, with seven stars in the saptarishi configuration super-imposed on them. In the left-hand top corner (the pole end) was the Union Jack. There was also a white crescent and star in one corner.

During the session of the All India Congress Committee which met at Bezwada in 1921 (now Vijayawada) an Andhra youth prepared a flag and took it to Gandhiji. It was made up of two colours-red and green-representing the two major communities i.e. Hindus and Muslims. Gandhiji suggested the addition of a white strip to represent the remaining communities of India and the spinning wheel to symbolise progress of the Nation.

The year 1931 was a landmark in the history of the flag. A resolution was passed adopting a tricolor flag as our national flag. This flag, the forbear of the present one, was saffron, white and green with Mahatma Gandhi's spinning wheel at the center. It was, however, clearly stated that it bore no communal significance and was to be interpreted thus.

On July 22, 1947, the Constituent Assembly adopted it as Free India National Flag. After the advent of Independence, the colours and their significance remained the same. Only the Dharma Charkha of Emperor Asoka was adopted in place of the spinning wheel as the emblem on the flag. Thus, the tricolour flag of the Congress Party eventually became the tricolour flag of Independent India.

Colours of the Flag

In the national flag of India the top band is of Saffron colour, indicating the strength and courage of the country. The white middle band indicates peace and truth with Dharma Chakra. The last band is green in colour shows the fertility, growth and auspiciousness of the land.

The Chakra

This Dharma Chakra depicted the "wheel of the law" in the Sarnath Lion Capital made by the 3rd-century BC Mauryan Emperor Ashoka. The chakra intends to show that there is life in movement and death in stagnation.

Flag Code

On 26th January 2002, the Indian flag code was modified and after several years of independence, the citizens of India were finally allowed to hoist the Indian flag over their homes, offices and factories on any day and not just National days as was the case earlier. Now Indians can proudly display the national flag any where and any time, as long as the provisions of the Flag Code are strictly followed to avoid any disrespect to the tricolour. For the sake of convenience, Flag Code of India, 2002, has been divided into three parts. Part I of the Code contains general description of the National Flag. Part II of the Code is devoted to the display of the National Flag by members of public, private organizations, educational institutions, etc. Part III of the Code relates to display of the National Flag by Central and State governments and their organisations and agencies.

Julian Assange embassy stay dangerous to health: doctors

LONDON (TIP): The ongoing six-year confinement of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in London's Ecuadorian embassy is dangerous to his physical and mental health, according to new clinical assessments.

A pair of doctors reached the verdict after spending 20 hours over three days in October performing "a comprehensive physical and psychological evaluation" of Assange, The Guardian reported Wednesday.

"While the results of the evaluation are protected by doctor-patient confidentiality, it is our professional opinion that his continued confinement is dangerous physically and mentally to him, and a clear infringement of his human right to healthcare," they wrote in the newspaper.

The duo- Sondra Crosby, a doctor and associate professor at Boston University's school of medicine and public health, and Brock Chisholm, a London-based clinical psychologist- renewed calls for Assange to be given safe passage to a hospital.

The clinicians called for the British Medical Association and others to lobby the UK government to provide healthcare, but noted most doctors are unwilling to enter the embassy to treat him.

"Our assessment reveals that he has had no access to sunlight, appropriate ventilation or



outside space for over five and-a-half years," the doctors added.

"This has taken a considerable physical as well as psychological toll."

Wikileaks in 2016 released medical records claiming its founder's mental health was at risk then if he remained in the embassy, predicting it was "highly likely" his mental health would deteriorate.

Assange moved into the embassy in the British capital in 2012 to escape extradition to Sweden, where he faced accusations of rape and sexual assault. Swedish prosecutors dropped their investigation in May last year,

but Assange still stays indoors, fearful he will be arrested for breaching his bail if he leaves.

He recently became a citizen of Ecuador, but the British government said the move did not change his legal status.

US Attorney General Jeff Sessions last year said Assange's arrest was a US "priority".

Ecuadoran President Lenin Moreno said Wednesday that his country and Britain are seeking an arrangement that guarantees Assange's life and safety from US reprisal and also allows for him to "punished for the mistake he made" in releasing classified US documents. Moreno did not elaborate. (AFP)

China invited to take part in major US-led naval exercise

BEIJING (TIP): China has been invited to participate in a major US-led naval exercise, Chinese officials said on January 25, despite tensions between Beijing and Washington over activity in the disputed South China Sea.

The Chinese military took part in the RIMPAC drill, billed as the world's largest international naval exercise, for the first time in 2014 and again in 2016.

"We have received the American invitation," Chinese defence ministry spokesman Wu Qian told reporters. A Chinese delegation has been sent to the US to discuss logistics, he added.

RIMPAC, which stands for Rim of the Pacific Exercise, is held off Hawaii every other year in June and July.

The invitation comes as tensions remain high between the two world powers over Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

China claims most of the waterway - believed to hold vast oil and gas deposits and through which \$5 trillion in trade passes annually - and has built up islands and military installations in the sea.

Vietnam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei also have claims in the sea.

Last weekend Beijing said it had dispatched a warship to drive away a US missile destroyer which had "violated" its sovereignty by sailing close to a shoal in the sea.

American military officials also said Thursday that a US aircraft carrier will port in Vietnam in March, a first for the allies and former foes.

"Freedom of navigation and access in the South China Sea will be critical to (Vietnam) economically, of course, and their security efforts," US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters en route to Vietnam from Indonesia on Wednesday. (AFP)

UN LAUNCHES \$330 MILLION APPEAL FOR LIBYA

TRIPOLI (TIP): The United Nations launched an international appeal Thursday for \$330 million dollars to fund humanitarian aid projects for almost one million people in Libya, a country plunged in chaos and a hub of illegal migration.

Maria Ribeiro, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Libya, outlined the priorities for a Humanitarian Response Plan for 2018 at a news conference in Tripoli.

The target is "to reach at least 940,000 people" through 71 projects at a cost of \$330 million to be carried out in partnership with municipalities, civil society and ministries, she said.

In 2017, the international community contributed \$98 million, 68 percent of the funding requested, she said, adding that the European Union, United States and Japan were the top donors.

Ribeiro said that last year's aid reached "540,000 people across Libya... whether Libyans, migrants or asylum seekers", adding that the number in need of humanitarian aid has climbed to 1.1 million people, a third of them children. Libya has been wracked by chaos since its 2011 uprising that toppled and killed longtime dictator Moamer Kadhafi, with rival authorities and militias battling for control of its oil riches. The North African country has long been a transit hub for migrants seeking a better life in Europe, but people smugglers have stepped up their lucrative business since the revolution (AFP)

Need to teach boys to be men: Malala Yousafzai

DAVOS (TIP): Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani activist working on gender equality, on January 25 called for teaching boys to be men and said what is needed is to educate young men on the issue of women's rights.

Speaking here at the World Economic Forum (WEF), the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize said such an education would be a crucial step towards ending gender inequality.

"When we talk about feminism and women's rights, we're actually addressing men. Men have a big role to play. We have to teach young boys how to be men. In order to be a man you have to recognise that all women and all those around you have equal rights and that you are part of this movement for equality," she said. Malala, who defied Taliban's ban on girls going to school, said she realised education was not just about reading books but about the empowerment of women too.

She said the Taliban knew women will get empowered by education and therefore they were against girls going to school as they did not want women to be equal to men.

She said her role model is her father who challenged the society and allowed her to go to school, even as there were many other girls whose parents did not allow them to read.

She said a movement is building up and women are realising their voices are so important for the change that they want to see. "Earlier we wanted men to do something for us, but that time has gone now, we're not going to ask men to change the world, we're going to do it ourselves," she said. Malala said she alone cannot send all girls to school and there is a need for a collective responsibility where everyone, including world leaders, have a role to play. (PTI)



31 dead in South Korea hospital blaze: Yonhap

SEOUL (TIP): At least 31 people were killed in a blaze at a hospital in South Korea on Friday, Yonhap news agency said, with dozens more injured.

Video footage and pictures showed a helicopter flying above the building in Miryang, engulfed by heavy grey smoke and surrounded by multiple fire trucks.

The five-storey structure housed a nursing home as well as the hospital, and the South's Yonhap news agency said 31 people had been killed, citing firefighters at the site.

Earlier the national fire agency put the toll at 19.

"Two nurses said they had seen fire suddenly erupting in the emergency room," said fire chief Choi Man-Woo, but the cause of the blaze was not immediately known.

All the patients had been evacuated, he added.

"The victims came both from the hospital and the nursing home. Some died on their way to another hospital."

Pictures showed survivors being brought out wrapped in blankets, and firefighters picking their way through the blackened shell of the building after the blaze was extinguished. Around 200 people were in the Sejong Hospital building when the fire broke out, police said.

The fire came only a month after 29 people were killed in an inferno at a fitness club in the South Korean city of Jecheon -- a disaster blamed on insufficient emergency exits, flammable finishing materials and illegally parked cars blocking access to emergency vehicles. (AFP)

British PM to visit China as Brexit looms

BEIJING (TIP): British Prime Minister Theresa May will visit Beijing next week, China said on January 25, as her country looks to bolster trade links ahead of its departure from the European Union.

The relationship between the two countries has grown in importance as London contemplates its economic future after it officially leaves the EU in March 2019.

May will be in China from January 31 to February 2 in what the Chinese foreign ministry touted as a "historical visit".

"We attach great importance to our relation with the UK," ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular press briefing.

"We hope we can continue to further deepen our political mutual trust, expand our cooperation and to elevate our bilateral relations to a new high."

The visit to China will be May's first as her country's leader.

During her trip, she will meet with Chinese leaders and travel to Shanghai and Hubei, Hua said.

Britain has said it will leave the EU's single market and customs union so that it can strike its own trade deals with countries outside the bloc, making China's huge market an attractive target.

In preparation, a parade of top officials have travelled to China in recent months.

Britain's trade minister Liam Fox recently returned from a trip to China, where he discussed market access for British exports, including its key sector of financial services. In December, finance minister Philip Hammond visited the Asian giant to work out final preparations for a "stock connect" linking the London and Shanghai exchanges, and had agreed to examine the possibility of connecting their bond markets as well. (AFP)



SUNNY LEONE'S WAX FIGURE TO BE EXHIBITED AT MADAME TUSSAUDS IN NEW DELHI

Actress Sunny Leone's wax figure will be placed at the Madame Tussauds museum here. It will be displayed alongside statues of other leading celebrities in a yet to be announced theme, read a statement.

A team of expert artists flew in from London to meet Sunny for the sitting in Mumbai, where they took over 200 specific measurements and images were taken to create an authentic figure.

"I am thrilled and grateful to Madame Tussauds for creating my figure. Having my own wax figure is completely overwhelming. This is the first time I have undergone a sitting and I must thank the entire team for making it a unique and memorable experience. I am equally excited to see 'me' at the attraction and can't wait for the fans reaction (when) it will be finally displayed later this year," said Sunny.

Pointing out that the actress has a "massive fan base", Anshul Jain, General Manager and Director, Merlin Entertainments India Pvt Ltd, said, "Announcing her figure at the attraction is equally enthralling for us, and we are certain that this will give her fans millions of memories to carry home with lots of selfies."

Source: IANS

TWINKLE KHANNA MEETS MALALA FOR PAD MAN PROMOTION AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY

LONDON (TIP): Indian actor Twinkle Khanna met Malala Yousafzai at Oxford University while promoting her husband Akshay Kumar's upcoming movie 'Pad Man'. The two ladies posed with other students and faculty members of the prestigious university while holding sanitary pads.

During media interactions, the Pakistani women's activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner praised the movie theme which revolves around menstrual awareness and women hygiene. Malala said that Pad Man has an inspiring message. She said, "I'm really excited to see the film Pad Man... because the message behind the film is truly inspiring."

Twinkle also spoke to the Oxford students in her speech. She complained that Indian school girls in villages have to sit with a rag cloth or a rolled-up sock or even wadded up newspaper between their legs. "Pads are still seen as a luxury item. It is odd that pads are taxed at 12 percent in India but brooms are tax free," she resented.

Pad Man is Twinkle's maiden production. It stars Akshay Kumar, Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte. Pad Man will now release on February 9, 2018.



Malala (third from left) and Twinkle, next to her at promotion of Pad Man at Oxford University.

Release Date: February 9

Director: R Balki

Cast: Akshay Kumar, Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte

Producer: Twinkle Khanna

Trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-K9ujx8vO_A

Official Site:

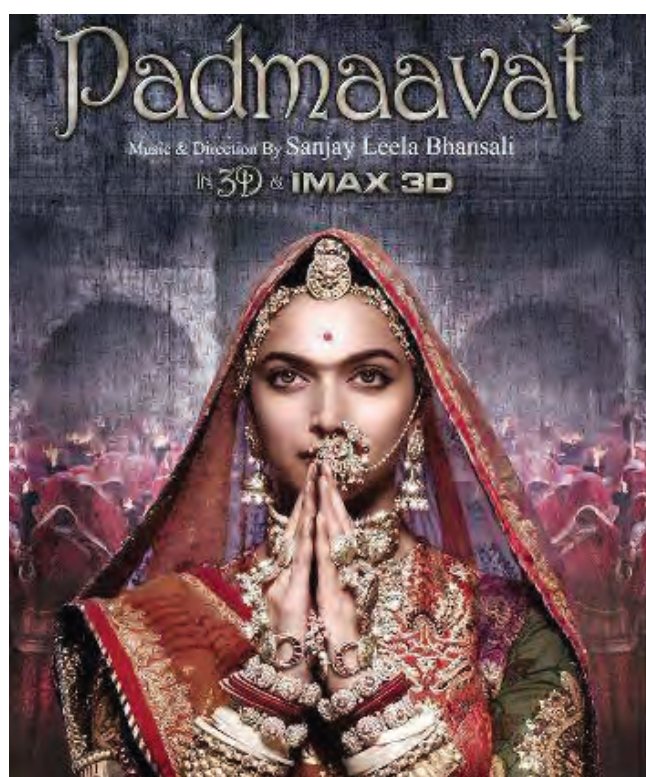
<https://www.facebook.com/PadManTheFilm>



SYNOPSIS

Pad Man is a fictionalized account of Padmashri Arunachalam Muruganatham, the man who revolutionized the manufacture of the low cost sanitary napkin in India. Lakshmi is a newly married, humble welder from a rural village in the heart of India. Lakshmi's incredible journey starts when he is shocked to discover that his wife uses an unhygienic cloth during her periods. Unable to afford a branded pad, he decides to make a sanitary pad himself. After several attempts, his irate wife refuses to be a part of his experiments. Lakshmi's love and concern for his wife, his determination to make the pad, leads him into situations that cause so much shock and embarrassment that it compels his wife to leave him and his village to banish him.

MOVIE REVIEW



PADMAAVAT

Cast: Deepika Paukone, Ranveer Singh, Shahid Kapoor

Director: Sanjay Leela Bhansali

Set in 1303 AD medieval India, Padmaavat is the story of honor, valor and obsession. Queen Padmavati is known for her exceptional beauty along with a strong sense of justice and is the wife of Maharawal Ratan Singh and pride of the Kingdom of Chittor, a prosperous kingdom in the north west of India. The legend of her beauty reaches the reigning sultan of Hindustan – Allaudin Khilji.

The sultan who is a tyrant, is fixated with wanting anything that is of exceptional beauty for himself. He lays siege on the impregnable fortress of Chittorgarh. After a grueling 6 months, he returns empty handed. He becomes obsessed and now wants to capture Chittor and its Queen at any cost.

He returns with a bigger army and ranging fury. He attacks Chittor with brutal force and a bloody and fearsome battle takes place between the righteous Maharawal Ratan Singh defending his kingdom and the honor of his queen and Sultan Allaudin Khilji. Khilji manages to breach the fortress but in vain as the Queen chooses to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect her dignity.

The film is a quintessential Bhansali work- it's a visual spectacle in every which way. The scenes are shot and edited (for most part) with such finesse that despite not having a surprise ending, the film makes for a gorgeous cinematic experience.

Deepika is an epitome of grace and she delivers a knockout performance as a Rani yet again. Her portrayal of Padmavati is all things ethereal and keen. And even though she doesn't have many dialogues, it's her eyes that do the talking. Plus, her being a strategist in times of conflict, gives her an edge. Shahid does a controlled act of the righteous king and does full justice to his part. With kohl-ed eyes and an impressive build, he looks the part. But the film only and only belongs to Ranveer Singh.

He is in top form and doesn't bat an eye lid while playing a character so black and honestly, despite being an anti-hero in the film, he actually makes you root for him. He is eclectic and wins every scene he is in. His eccentric moves and dialogue delivery make him an ever-ideal fit for Khilji. As a menacing ruler, who is atrociously self-consumed with the idea of victory and becoming the Sultan and gaining possession of all things exquisite, Khilji's depiction might raise some eyebrows but as far as performance goes, no one could have done it better than a meat-mincing Ranveer.

Plus, despite the fact that Khilji doesn't even share a frame with Padmavati per se, their forbidden love story is likely to stay with you long after you leave the theatre.

WOMEN'S BRAINS ARE MORE STIMULATED THAN MEN'S WHEN AROUSED

Turns out, a woman's mind is much more complex than a male's when it comes to intimacy. According to a recent McGill University study, a female mind reacts much more and is more stimulated than a male one when aroused.

In the study conducted on 20 men and 20 women, each of the individuals was shown erotic film clips while their brain vitals were scanned by two scanners. One of the scanners was an MRI machine that tracked stimulation in their brains. The other was a heat-seeking camera that measured levels of arousal through participant's genitals. While not massive, the recorded difference between stimulation levels between male and female brains highlighted the consistent disparity between the two counterparts.

"There were no brain regions in men with stronger brain-genital correlations than in women", the study stated, according to the Independent. While interesting, the sample size for the study was too small, according to Qazi Rahman, a psychology lecturer at King's College London. He further added that more detailed research would be required to draw such certain conclusions. However, he did not deny the complexity of female arousal.

In the case of women, oxytocin (also known as intimacy/cuddle hormone) is released during sex and this hormone encourages bonding and empathy, which leads to an increased feeling of bonding and intimacy.

In the case of men the brain releases more of a hormone, which can make them susceptible to sex addiction. When



a man has an orgasm, the main hormone which is released is dopamine (pleasure hormone) and this surge can be addictive.

Men's arousal pattern has repeatedly emphasized their sensitivity to visual stimuli. As soon as the lust-inspiring image registers in their brain, they become turned on, not only physically but also psychologically. Exposure to such erotic stimuli immediately

activates that part of their brain that is related to getting an erection. Women, on the other hand, react differently to different stimuli, with their responses varying from emotional to sexual or a mix of both.

The study made use of a total of 134 previous studies of which approximately 1, 900 men and 2, 500 women were a part to come to this conclusion.

Make-up tips for brides-to-be



Don't go overboard by giving your eyes and lips a dramatic makeover and preferably choose a balance look. Also, ensure you remain stress-free to look your best, suggest experts. Nalin Verma, Co-Founder, Euro Chroma Institute of Cosmetology and Punithi, Beauty Expert at 7 Shades by Punithi Unisex Salon, have shared tips:

- The main idea of a perfect bridal make-up look is to accentuate the best features, and at the same time, keep the overall look simple, yet gorgeous. As it is, Indian brides are loaded with jewellery and heavy dresses. So, it is best to keep the make-up natural.
- If you want a classic bridal look, opt for vermilion red, coral red, deep red and pink red lip colours. Ditch pastel or nude shades.
- Highlight eyes or lips, not both. Fresh and effortless make-up styles are dominating the modern bridal trend. Lips could be kept moist or matte depending on the event.
- For blushing cheeks, shades of pink, red and orange are the colours of choice for most brides.
- Mascara is a good option to give a neat look to the eye lashes.
- In order to obtain a long-lasting look, start by cleansing your face well and then patting it dry to ensure that there are no traces of dirt or oil on the face.
- Indian brides love gold eye make-up since it goes well with their red, fuchsia, or green lehengas, ghagras, or heavy saris. So, if you want to play it safe, this is the colour to go with. Paint the eyelids with a gold or peachy pink shade, and use some charcoal shadow on the exterior lid contours to give a subtle, smoky effect. You can achieve this by using a brown shade on the inner crease area. You can also use golden eye shadow instead of silver for the brow bones.
- If you are hiring a make-up artist, make sure you explain what you need clearly. Explaining things in advance will help you get the look you want. If the make-up artist is new, then it is always recommended to get a trial session before your wedding day. *Source: ANI*

FOOD CORNER

PANEER MAKHMALI

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups paneer (cottage cheese) cubes, 1 tbsp butter, 1 tsp oil, 1 cup sliced onions, 1/2 cup milk, 1 1/2 tsp garam masala, salt to taste
To Be Ground Into A Thick Paste (using 2 Tbsp Of Water)

2 cups chopped coriander (dhania), 1/2 cup, chopped mint leaves (phudina) leaves, 1 tbsp roughly chopped green chillies, 12 mm (1/2") piece ginger (adrak), 1/4 cup broken, cashewnuts (kaju), 1/4 cup curds (dahi), 2 garlic (lehsun) cloves, 1 tbsp lemon juice, salt to taste.

Method

- Combine the paneer along with the marinade in a deep bowl, toss gently and keep aside for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Heat the butter and oil in a deep non-stick pan, add the onions and sauté on a medium flame for 2 to 3 minutes.



- Add the marinated paneer, milk, garam masala and little salt, mix gently and cook on a medium flame for 2 minutes, while stirring occasionally.
- Garnish with onion rings and serve hot with parathas or butter naan.

Ingredients

MALAI KOFTA

Ingredients

1/2 cup crumbled paneer (cottage cheese), 1/2 cup boiled, peeled and mashed, potatoes, 1/4 cup grated carrot, 2 tbsp finely chopped capsicum, 1 tbsp tomato ketchup, 1 tsp chilli powder, a pinch of turmeric powder (haldi), 1 tsp grated ginger (adrak), 1/2 tsp grated garlic (lehsun), 1 tbsp chopped coriander (dhania), 3 tbsp cornflour, salt to taste, oil for deep-frying

For The Gravy

2 cups fresh tomato pulp, 1 cup roughly, chopped onions, 2 tbsp cashewnuts (kaju), 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp garlic (lehsun) paste, 1/2 tsp ginger (adrak) paste, 1/2 tsp green chilli paste, 1 tsp sugar, 1 tsp garam masala, 1 tsp chilli powder, salt to taste, 2 tbsp fresh cream.

Method

Combine all the ingredients in a deep bowl and mix well.

Divide the mixture into 8 equal portions and roll each portion into a cylindrical shape.

Heat the oil in a deep non-stick kadhai and deep-fry, a few koftas at a time on a medium flame, till they turn golden brown in colour from all the sides.

Drain on an absorbent paper and keep aside.

Combine the onions and cashewnuts in a mixer and blend till smooth. Keep aside.

Heat the butter in a deep non-stick pan, add the onion-cashewnut paste, garlic paste, ginger paste and green chilli paste and cook on a medium flame for 2 minutes, while stirring occasionally.

Add the tomato pulp, sugar, garam masala, chilli powder, salt and 1/2 cup of water, mix well and cook on a medium flame for 3 to 4 minutes, while stirring occasionally.

Switch off the flame and add the fresh cream and mix well.

Just before serving, arrange the koftas in a serving dish and pour the hot gravy over them.

Serve immediately garnished with fresh cream.

THE BEST WAYS YOU CAN TRICK YOURSELF INTO DOZING OFF

If you are someone who hardly gets a sound sleep than time now to add smart options in your sleeping habit like mint flavoured throat sprays and sleeps masks.

Ankit Garg, co-founder and CEO of Wakefit and Devrath Vijay, Founder of the Functional Training Studio suggest some smart options to add in your lifestyle for wonderful sleep.

- **Anti-snoring products:** From tongue stabilising devices to nasal pathway cleaners, anti-snoring products have been the most popular tools allowing people (and their roommates) to have a restful sleep. Snoring is an embarrassing habit that not only points to a lack of good health, but also causes great inconvenience to others.
- **Memory foam mattresses:** Arguably the most popular sleep enabling products, urban India is seeking mattresses that provide hours of blissful sleep. They enable deep sleep by providing optimal spine support by taking the contour of the body shape, thus ensuring that sleepers don't toss and turn unnecessarily.
- **Mint-flavoured throat sprays:** Containing a unique time-release formula which coats the back of the throat throughout the night, reducing the vibrations of the soft tissues that cause snoring, throat sprays are a great help for those who snore when lying on their backs. Mitigating the frustration caused by disturbed sleep and the ill-effects it can have on any



relationship, brands have proven to be extremely effective at curtailing the sound and offering relief.

- **Noise reducers:** By curbing the ambient noise to create a calm, relaxed surrounding, noise reducers help people sensitive to even the slightest of noises to sleep. It has been seen that ambient noises in urban environment have been a major cause for sleep reduction. Noise reducers prove to be a solid aide for the urban insomniac to deal with sleep-related problems.
- Sleep mask-resembling opaque aviators, sleep masks are a great help for people who find it difficult to close their eyes and doze off

even in the presence of minimal light. Used most often by frequent flyers or people whose work involves a lot of travel, it is an ideal and inexpensive tool to have if you are planning to take a quick power nap.

- **Herbal pillows:** Filled with organic flax seeds and aromatic herbs such as Lavender, eucalyptus, lemongrass, lemon balm, rosemary, verbena and chamomile, these small pillows provide a gentle, soothing heat and calming aroma after they are warmed in a microwave. The scent as well as the comfort of the pillow is often enough to quickly put an otherwise restless sleeper into a deep slumber. *Source: IANS.*



SLOW DOWN AGEING WITH ANTIOXIDANT RICH FOOD

Slow down ageing, reduce the risk of heart diseases and diabetes — these are some reasons why it is important to consume antioxidant-rich foods like dark chocolates, nuts, kidney beans, cranberries and tomatoes, suggest experts.

Sonia Narang, Wellness Expert at Oriflame India and Mehar Rajput, Nutritionist at Fitpass, shares tips:

- The reason that antioxidants are often touted as “anti-aging” compounds is because they help protect from age-related diseases, which are caused in part by free radicals and inflammation. Antioxidants such as alpha lipoic and others found in pine bark and green tea. They produce valuable anti-inflammatory results by increasing circulation and cell metabolism.
- Different antioxidants benefit different parts of the body: Beta carotene is beneficial to eye health. Lycopene is beneficial for helping prostate health. Flavonoids are beneficial for heart health. Spirulina has a variety of antioxidants and other substances that are beneficial in boosting immunity. It helps in enhancing both the non-specific and specific immune system.
- A diet rich in antioxidants is important to keep the level of ageing low and in maintenance of good health.
- Anti-inflammatory effects: Antioxidants in your morning tea and coffee may help prevent heart disease. Antioxidant Polyphenol found in tea and coffee helps in preventing oxidation of fats (a process that promotes inflammation and increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other ailments).
- Immune booster: Antioxidants are present in fruits. Vitamin A, C and E, polyphenols and certain minerals like selenium, that boost immune system are there in fruits.
- Prevent risk of cancer: During cancer, the level of antioxidants reduces drastically and consuming food high in antioxidants can help improve the symptoms.
- Prevent diabetes: Diabetes is often accompanied by an increase in the formation of free radicals and harmful compounds. The elevated glucose level in the blood can lead to damaged cells because of oxidation. Use of antioxidants can reduce the glucose level and complications of diabetes.
- Some of the eatables rich in antioxidants include dark chocolate, pomegranate, pumpkin seeds, cilantro, blueberries, nuts, kidney beans, cranberries, goji berries and tomatoes. *Source: IANS*

HEART ATTACK RISK HIGH WITH EVEN ONE CIGARETTE A DAY

Just one cigarette a day carries nearly half the risk for heart attack and stroke as smoking a full pack of 20, according to a large-scale study.

“If someone smokes one cigarette instead of 20 per day, intuitively we’d think that the risk drops to 1/20, or 5%,” said lead author Allan Hackshaw, a professor at University College London, whose paper analysed 141 previous studies.

“This seems to be the case for lung cancer, but is not true for heart attacks and stroke, where one cigarette per day carries around 50 % of the risk of a pack a day,” he told AFP.

Smokers should not be fooled, in other words, into thinking that a few cigarettes a day — or even just one — carries little or no long term harm, he added. “Whilst it is great that smokers try to cut down — and they should be positively encouraged to do so — in order to get the big benefits on cardiovascular disease they need to quit completely,” he said by email.

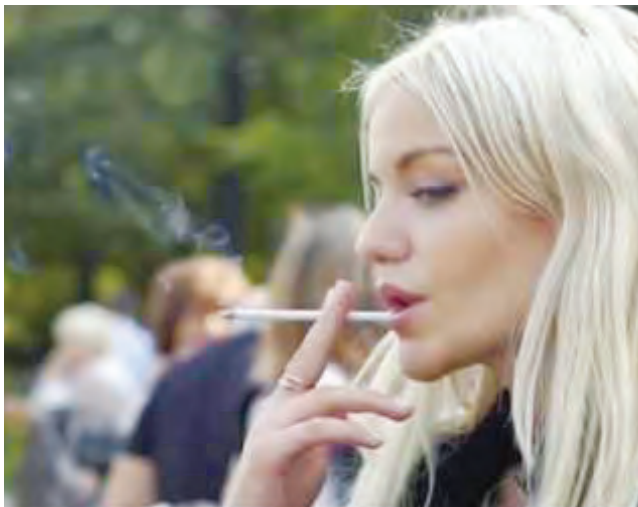
Tobacco kills about seven million people worldwide every year, according to the World Health Organization. About two million of those deaths are due to cardiovascular disease, mainly coronary heart attacks and stroke.

Earlier research suggested that smoking a few cigarettes a day was linked to a higher-than-expected risk of heart disease, but findings were inconclusive.

To probe deeper, a team of scientists led by Hackshaw analysed the results of 141 studies, estimating the relative risk of one, five or 20 cigarettes a day. They found that men who lit up once a day had 46 % of the excess risk of heart disease associated with smoking a full pack a day, much higher than expected. For strokes, the excess risk was 41%.

For reasons that are not fully understood, the risk for women was somewhat smaller — 31 and 34 %, respectively.

“It could be a mixture of biological difference and



differences in lifestyle,” said Hackshaw. Overall, long-term smoking shortens life expectancy by 12-15 years.

“This well conducted study confirms what epidemiologists have suspected but few among the public have,” commented University of Oxford professor Paul Aveyard, who was not involved in the research.

“The implication is obvious -- anyone who smokes should stop.” At the same time, he added, it would be wrong to conclude that cutting down is useless. “There is more reason to believe that lower cigarette consumption will reduce the risk of chronic lung disease and lung cancer, the other two big causes of early death from smoking,” he said via Britain’s Science Media Centre. *Source: AFP*

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Our Rapidly Changing Digital Hi-Tech World: The future is approaching faster than one can handle



By
Cliff Rajkumar

In 1998 Kodak had 170,000 employees and sold 85% of all photo paper worldwide. Within just a few years, their business model disappeared and they went bankrupt. What happened to Kodak will happen to many industries in the next 5-10 years. Did you think in 1998 that 3 years later you would never take pictures on film again? Yet digital cameras were invented in 1975. The first ones only had 10,000 pixels but followed Moore's law. So as with all exponential technologies, it was a disappointment for a time, before it became way superior and became mainstream in only a few short years. It will now happen again (but much faster) with Artificial Intelligence, health, autonomous and electric cars, education, 3D printing, agriculture and jobs.

Welcome to the 4th Industrial Revolution. Welcome to the Exponential Age.

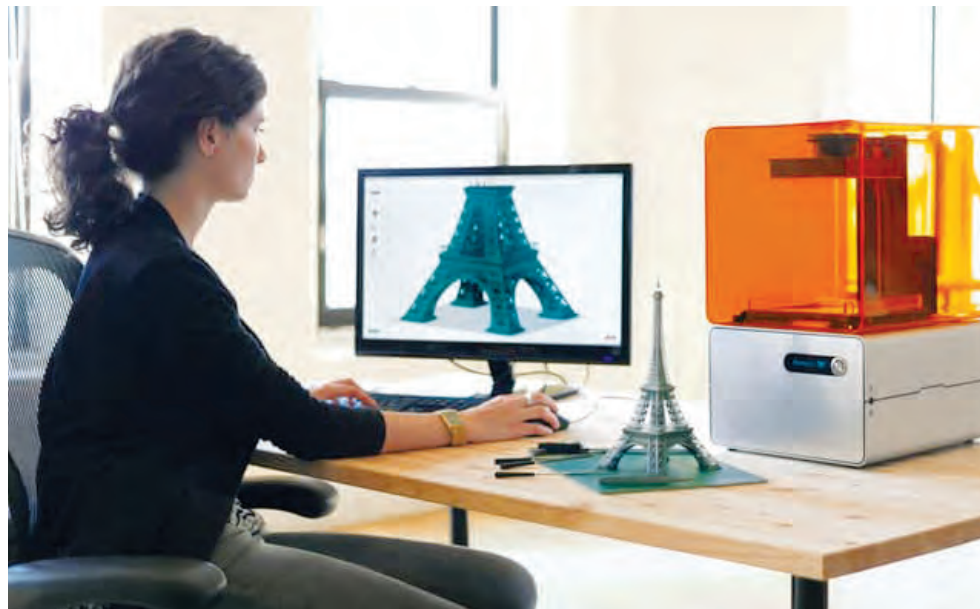
1. The software will disrupt most traditional industries in the next 5-10 years.
2. Uber is just a software tool, they don't own any cars, and are now the biggest taxi company in the world.
3. Airbnb is now the biggest hotel company in the world, although they don't own any properties.
4. Artificial Intelligence: Computers become exponentially better in understanding the world this year, a computer beat the best Go-player in the world, 10 years earlier than expected.
5. In the US, young lawyers already don't get jobs. Because of IBM's Watson, you can get legal advice (so far for more or less basic stuff) within seconds, with 90% accuracy compared with 70% accuracy when done by humans.

So, if you study law, stop immediately. There will be 90% fewer lawyers in the future, only omniscient specialists will remain.

6. Watson already helps nurses diagnosing cancer, its 4 times more accurate than human nurses.
7. Facebook now has a pattern recognition software that can recognize faces better than humans. In 2030, computers will become more intelligent than humans.
8. Autonomous cars: In 2018, the first self-driving cars will appear to the public. Around 2020, the complete industry will start to be disrupted. You won't want to own a car anymore. You will call a car with your phone, it will show up at your location and drive you to your destination. You will not need to park it, you only pay for the driven distance and can be productive while driving. Today's very young children will never get a driver's license and will never own a car.

It will change the cities because we will need 90-95% fewer cars for that. We can transform former parking spaces into parks.

1.2 million people die each year in car accidents worldwide. We now have one accident every 60,000 mi (100,000 km); with autonomous driving that will drop to 1 accident in 6million miles (10 million km). That will save a million lives worldwide each year.



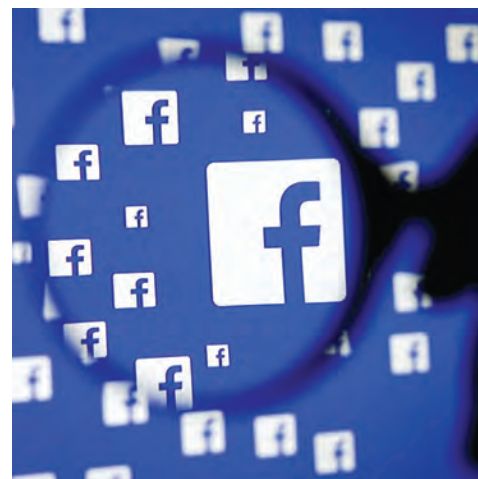
Most car companies will doubtless become bankrupt. Traditional car companies use the evolutionary approach and just build a better car, while tech companies (Tesla, Apple, Google) will do the revolutionary approach and build a computer on wheels.

Many engineers from Volkswagen and Audi are terrified of Tesla.

9. Insurance companies will have massive trouble; without accidents, the insurance will become 100x cheaper. Their car insurance business model will disappear.
10. Real estate will change. Because if you can work while you commute, people will move further away to live in a more beautiful neighborhood.
11. Electric cars will become mainstream about 2020. Cities will be less noisy because all new cars will run on electricity.
12. Electricity will become incredibly cheap and clean: Solar production has been on an exponential curve for 30 years, but you can now see the burgeoning impact.

Last year, more solar energy was installed worldwide than fossil. Energy companies are desperately trying to limit access to the grid to prevent competition from home solar installations, but that simply cannot continue - technology will take care of that strategy.

13. With cheap electricity comes cheap and abundant water. Desalination of salt water now only needs 2kWh per cubic meter (@ 0.25 cents). We don't have scarce water in most places, we only have scarce drinking water. Imagine what will be possible if anyone can have



as much clean water as he wants, for nearly no cost.

14. Health: The Tricorder X price will be announced this year. There are companies who will build a medical device (called the "Tricorder" from Star Trek) that works with your phone, which takes your retina scan, your blood sample and your breath into it. It then analyses 54 biomarkers that will identify nearly any disease. It will be cheap, so in a few years, everyone on this planet will have access to world-class medical analysis, nearly for free. Goodbye, self-serving medical practitioners and establishments.
15. 3D printing: The price of the cheapest 3D printer came down from \$18,000 to \$400 within 10 years. At the same time, it became 100 times faster. All major shoe companies have already started 3D

printing shoes.

Some spare aeroplane parts are already 3D printed in remote airports. The space station now has a printer that eliminates the need for the large number of spare parts they used to have in the past.

At the end of this year, new smartphones will have 3D scanning possibilities. You can then 3D scan your feet and print your perfect shoe at home.

In China, they already 3D printed and built a complete 6-story office building. By 2027, 10% of everything that's being produced will be 3D printed.

16. Business opportunities: If you think of a niche you want to go in, first ask yourself: "In the future, will we have that?" and if the answer is yes, how can you make that happen sooner?

If it doesn't work with your phone, forget the idea. Any idea designed for success in the 20th century is doomed to failure in the 21st century.

17. Work: 70-80% of jobs will disappear in the next 20 years. There will be a lot of new jobs, but it is not clear if there will be enough new jobs in such a short time. This will require a rethink on wealth distribution.
18. Agriculture: There will be a \$100 agricultural robot in the future. Farmers in 3rd world countries can then become managers of their field instead of working all day on their fields.
19. Aeroponics will need much less water. The first Petri dish produced veal; which is now available and will be cheaper than cow produced veal in 2018. Right now, 30% of all agricultural surfaces is used for cows. Imagine if we don't need that space anymore.
20. There are several startups who will bring insect protein to the market shortly. It contains more protein than meat. It will be labelled as "alternative protein source" (because most people still reject the idea of eating insects).
21. There is an app called "moodies" which can already tell in which mood you're in. By 2020 there will be apps that can tell by your facial expressions if you are lying. Imagine a political debate where it's being displayed when they're telling the truth and when they're not - it will ultimately compel all politicians to be truthful (a truly unique & novel occurrence).

BY 2020 (some suggest this is happening now) WHAT A UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNS IN THE FIRST YEAR OF A 4 YEAR DEGREE - WILL BE IRRELEVANT AND REDUNDANT BY THE TIME THE THIRD YEAR IS COMPLETED.

OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN ARE ENTERING A COMPLETELY NEW WORLD THAT IS BECOMING FOREIGN TO US WITH EACH NEW YEAR.

(Article / Courtesy Ashook Ramsaran, President, Indian Diaspora International Council)

(The author is a Business and Financial Consultant and Entrepreneur, with over 40 years of senior executive experience with three of the world's largest corporations-ITT Industries of Canada, Financial Services Div. (1977-90); Senior VP & Director, HR and Administration, Deutsche Bank Int'l Financial Services Division (1990-03); Senior VP, HR and Administration with GE Capital, Int'l Financial Services Division (1993-2004). He is the National Coordinator, Indian Diaspora Council, Canada)

Xiaomi pips Samsung as India's top smartphone co: Analysts

NEW DELHI (TIP): Chinese handset maker Xiaomi overtook Samsung to become the top player in the Indian smartphone market in the December quarter, ending the Korean company's six-year dominance, reports by Canalys and Counterpoint Research said.

Samsung asserted, however, that it is "India's Number 1 smartphone company by a distance".

According to Counterpoint's report, Xiaomi has grown its market share to 25 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2017, up from 9 per cent in the year-ago period.

Samsung, on the other hand, saw its market share falling to 23 per cent in the latest October-December quarter, from 24 per cent a year ago. The top 5 tally also included Lenovo, Vivo and Oppo.

For the entire 2017, Samsung managed to hold on to the top position with 24 per cent share, followed by Xiaomi with 19 per cent share, Counterpoint data stated.

During the second half, players such as Xiaomi were particularly disruptive with aggressively-priced, broad portfolio taken to market with an effective channel expansion strategy, Counterpoint Research Associate Director Tarun Pathak said.

"This helped Xiaomi surpass the long-time market leader, Samsung, for the first time ever. This performance ended Samsung's six-year market dominance," he added.

Pathak also noted that Xiaomi ended 2017 in India on a very strong note.

"Not only did the brand grow 259 per cent year-on-year, but it also saw three of its models within the top five bestselling smartphone list of 2017," he added.

Samsung had the most number of



models in the top 10 selling list, leveraging its advantage of a strong presence across all the price bands, Pathak said.

Canalys, in its report, said Xiaomi led the smartphone tally in the fourth quarter with shipments close to 8.2 million units (27 per cent market share), compared to Samsung's more than 7.3 million smartphones (25 per cent share) shipments.

Canalys attributed Xiaomi's success to the player's localisation in channel strategy, marketing and products in the Indian market.

"I believe our constant innovation across products, operating model and commitment to India has helped us win over our Mi fans. India is a key market

for us and we will continue to launch new products and product categories for Indian Mi fans," Xiaomi India MD Manu Jain said.

A Samsung India spokesperson cited data from research firm GfK -- which tracks sales to end consumers—to say Samsung had a 45 per cent value market share and 40 per cent volume market share in November 2017.

"Samsung is a full range player and lead the smartphone business across every segment of the Indian market in 2017," the spokesperson said.

Canalys said the total smartphone shipments in the fourth quarter were under 30 million units, while Counterpoint said the number was about 32 million. *Source: PTI*

TO PUSH EXPORTS, GOVT HIKES DUTY DRAWBACK RATES

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a major relief to exporters, the government today raised duty drawback rates on 102 items which will make Indian exports more competitive in the global market.

As a step towards more efficient Input Tax Neutralisation on exports, after considering various representations from the trade and industry, the government has enhanced the all industry rates of duty drawback for 102 tariff items, a Finance Ministry statement said.

The export items mainly include marine and seafood products, automobile tyres and bicycle tyres/tubes, leather and articles of leather, yarn and fabric of wool, glass handicrafts and bicycles, it said.

"It is a welcome move. This would provide some competitiveness to Indian exporters in global market," the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said.

He said duty drawback by and large has been enhanced in most of the items except for chemical items where there is some reduction.

The statement said the "revised rates of duty drawback will help address the concerns of these export sectors and make India's exports more competitive in the global economy". The enhanced rates of duty drawback will be effective from January 25, it said.

The revision of duty drawback is a welcome relief to the exporters and their cash flow should improve, which had been adversely impacted because of delayed refunds and increased input cost in GST, Bipin Sapra, Tax Partner, EY India said.

Source: PTI

Apple shipped 29 mn iPhone X units in Q4 2017: Canalys

SINGAPORE (TIP): Apple shipped 29 million iPhone X units in the fourth quarter of 2017, Singapore-based market research firm Canalys has said, adding that this has made iPhone X the world's best-selling smartphone model over the holiday season.

"Another notable highlight for the iPhone X is that of the 29 million shipped, seven million were in China," Canalys said late on Tuesday.

"The iPhone X performance is impressive for a device priced at \$999, but it is slightly below industry expectations," said Ben Stanton, analyst at Canalys.

"Apple struggled with supply issues in early November (2017), but achieved a massive uplift in production in late November and throughout December. This helped it meet and even exceed demand in some markets by the end of the quarter," he added.

One major benefit to Apple is that customers are increasingly realising the residual value of their old smartphones, opting for trade-in programmes to offset the high price of the iPhone X.

"But that big price tag, and Apple's split launch strategy, still had an impact, and shipments were not the fastest ever for an iPhone," Stanton added.

Earlier this week, Ming-Chi Kuo, the most famous analyst with KGI Securities when it comes to Apple, said the Cupertino-based giant may discontinue the first-generation iPhone X sometime in mid-2018 as the second-generation model is set for launch later this year.

Kuo has estimated that Apple would ship about 18 million iPhone X units in the January-March quarter in 2018.

According to Canalys, Apple's iPhone SE, 6s, 7 and 8 models also shipped well in Q4.

The older handsets are still popular with iPhone users looking for value for money.

"Apple is looking at its best performance to date, all thanks to the massive changes it made to its portfolio in Q3," said Canalys analyst TuanAnh Nguyen.

While new technologies, such as Face ID and bezel-less displays, help to justify the \$999 price tag and maintain competitiveness with Samsung, Huawei and Google, "having a larger portfolio allows Apple to meet its overall shipment targets, and protect its market leadership in the premium segment", Nguyen added.

According to Kuo, "we revise down 1Q18 and 2Q18 shipments of iPhone X to 18 million units and 13 million units, respectively, lower than market consensus of 20-30 million and 15-20 million units".

"We expect iPhone X will go to end of life (EOL) around mid-2018 and that total life cycle shipments will be around 62 million units, lower than our previous forecast of 80 million units," the analyst claimed. *Source: IANS*

ONGC gets govt nod to sell stake in IOC, GAIL to fund HPCL buy

NEW DELHI (TIP): State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) has got approval from the government for selling its stake in IOC and GAIL to help fund the Rs 36,915 crore acquisition of HPCL.

ONGC holds 13.77 per cent stake in nation's biggest refiner Indian Oil Corp (IOC), which at today's trading price is worth over Rs 26,200 crore. It also holds 4.86 per cent stake in gas utility GAIL India Ltd, which is worth over Rs 3,847 crore.

Top sources with direct knowledge of the issue said the government gave ONGC nod to sell its shareholding in IOC and GAIL earlier this month but the



company is waiting for the right price to offload the shares.

For the moment ONGC is funding the Rs 36,915 crore acquisition of government's 51.11 per cent stake in oil refining and marketing firm Hindustan

Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) from the about Rs 12,000 crore cash it has and short-term borrowing.

Sources said ONGC is a zero-debt company and wants to retain that status. The short-term loan it is availing have provision to pre-pay without any penalty.

It plans to pre-pay the one-year tenure loan it is taking for HPCL buy by selling IOC and GAIL shares in due course, they said. Sources said ONGC had held talks with Life Insurance Corp of India (LIC) for selling IOC and GAIL shares but the state-owned insurer insisted on buying them at 10 per cent discount to the prevailing price.

IMF warns against steps to restrict global trade

DAVOS (TIP): IMF chief Christine Lagarde cautioned against any measure that may stifle international trade, saying any such step would undermine the recovery in global economic growth.

"We are certainly seeing two clear engines of growth. One is investment which is growing pretty well and the other is international trade that is growing even faster than the global economic growth," she said.

She said there is a need to fire on all cylinders for sustained growth and trade



is a very important part of that and any measure that seeks to restrict trade will hurt growth in a big way.

Asked whether she was being diplomatic by not directly mentioning the steps underway in the US, Lagarde said, "Who will agree with measures that impacts trade adversely? Opening barriers under a rules-based system is what is always a welcome step."

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the foremost economic agenda of President Donald Trump has been to ensure sustained economic growth and one can see the positive reaction from the stock markets.

contd from page 1

Pageantry Marks Celebration...

ministers of the Modi government, including Home Minister Rajnath Singh, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, Health Minister JP Nadda, Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan were among those present on the occasion.

BJP president Amit Shah was also present.

The ASEAN leaders, here to attend the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, are the chief guests at the Republic Day parade which was termed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "historic and unprecedented".

The ASEAN, founded in 1967, comprises Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Brunei.

The ASEAN leaders attending the parade are Singaporean Premier Lee Hsien Loong, Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Philippines President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, Thailand's Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Myanmar's State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Lao PDR's Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith.

Twenty-three tableaux, including those representing various states, ministries, the All India Radio (AIR) among others, will roll down the Rajpath.

Public broadcaster Doordarshan has 38 cameras installed for the coverage of the celebrations. For the first time, six cameras have been deployed for coverage beyond India Gate.

The parade commenced amid a heavy security blanket with thousands of security personnel, anti-aircraft guns and sharpshooters deployed in view of the event being attended by ASEAN leaders.

Cold weather conditions and dense fog failed to dampen the spirits of those who came to watch the parade
(Source: PTI)

India's PM Modi Urges...

groups in Canada are planning to hold what they call the 'Punjab Independence Referendum' in the year 2020.

In July 2016, India had raised the issue with Canada after Trudeau appeared in a Nagar Kirtan event in Toronto that featured Khalistani flags and posters of extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwale.

On 30 April, Trudeau had addressed a parade for 'Khalsa Day', which included events glorifying Sikh militant leaders. Trudeau's Liberal party has a number of influential figures belonging to separatist Sikh organizations as elected leaders.

Harinder Kaur Malhi, a legislator from Trudeau's party, who had moved a resolution against India, to recognize the anti-Sikh riots of November 1984 as a genocide, was also felicitated during the parade. The resolution was passed by the Ontario Assembly on 6 April last year.

India had condemned the move, calling it a "misguided motion based on a limited understanding of India, its constitution, society, ethos, rule of law and its judicial process". The issue was also raised with Canada's Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan during his visit to India the same month.

The issue could be raised again during Trudeau's visit to India next month.

DFW South Asian Film...

and festival director Jitin Hingorani. "Our major programming themes include: father/son and father/daughter stories, films with children as central characters and portraits of South Asian families living and working in Europe."

"We are thrilled about our partnership with DFW SAFF," said Ipsita Dasgupta, President, Hotstar International, the lead sponsor for the festival. "We think the Dallas/Fort Worth audience will truly engage with our content. Hotstar is a premium destination for Indian films, television serials, documentaries and sports. And we are proud to be screening our CinePlay DANCE LIKE A MAN, as part of the festival's programming to give viewers a taste of the original content on our digital platform."

Texas Premiere of documentary ASK THE SEXPERT

International Premiere of Gujarati children's film DHH

International Premiere of feature film BHASMASUR

U.S. Premiere of Indo-Italian film BABYLON SISTERS



Our opening night film is the U.S. premiere of WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY, directed by Iram Haq and starring Adil Hussain and Maria Mohdiah.

Sixteen-year-old Nisha lives a double life. At home with her family she is the perfect Pakistani daughter, but when out with her friends, she is a normal Norwegian teenager. When her father catches her in bed with her boyfriend, Nisha's two worlds brutally collide.

To set an example, Nisha's parents decide to kidnap her and place her with relatives in Pakistan. Here, in a country she has never been to before, Nisha is forced to adapt to her parents' culture. WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY is a moving drama about the complex relationship between a father and daughter.



Our centerpiece film is the Dallas Premiere of Arshad Khan's personal documentary ABU, a journey to the center of a fragmented family while they grapple with religion, sexuality, colonialism and migration. Through a tapestry of narratives composed of family footage, observation and classic Bollywood films, gay-identifying Pakistani-Muslim filmmaker Arshad Khan takes viewers through the tense relationships between family and fate, conservatism and liberalism and modernity and familiarity.

Our closing night feature is the International Premiere of Marathi film CHUMBAK (THE LOTTERY), a coming-of-age story of Baalu, a 15-year-old, waiter-boy in Mumbai, who is on the crossroads of his



aspirations and morals.

Baalu dreams of escaping this wretched life with a small little business of his own, a little sugarcane juice stall near his village's public Bus-Stand. Having exhausted all means, a desperate and broke Baalu, along with his street-smart friend Dhananjay (a.k.a Disco), make a plan to put together the money with the only way they can think of - the infamous 'Nigerian SMS Scam.' But, of the hundreds expected to respond to his text messages, no one but one man falls for it...a simple, poor, mentally-slow villager named Prasanna.

Caught between his guilt and conscience of fleeing such a man and the greed to fulfill his ambitions, Baalu will now have to make a choice. Chumbak is the story of these choices for Baalu that shall shape his life.

JINGO Media, a public relations and events management company based in New York City and Dallas, created this 'first-ever South Asian film festival in North Texas' in 2015. Since then, DFW SAFF has achieved significant milestones in the community, which include:

Recognition by Governor Greg Abbott as "The Most Innovative Small Business in Texas" in 2017

More than 1500 unique visitors attend film screenings, networking events and after-parties over a four-day-period in Dallas and Addison

More than 25% of the audience is typically NON-South Asian

Mainstream sponsors like Wells Fargo, Mercedes Benz and Parish Episcopal School, to name a few

Mainstream media coverage by The Huffington Post, NPR, Good Morning Texas, The Dallas Morning News, Theater Jones, to name a few.

Complete Lineup (Feb. 8th to the 11th):

Complete Lineup (Feb. 8th to the 11th):
Thursday, February 8th: Highland Park Village Theater, Dallas

6 to 7 p.m. - Cocktail Reception/Pakistani Programming begins at 7:15 p.m.

MEHRAM (Short Film)
WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY (Opening Night Feature Film)

Red Carpet & After-Party at Bistro 31
Friday, February 9th: AMC Village on the Parkway, Addison 6:30 p.m.

Hotstar's Cineplay: DANCE LIKE A MAN (Arts Programming)

Q&A with Actress Suchitra Pillai and Hotstar Spokesperson (TBD) 8:30 p.m.

LOVE AND SHUKLA (Valentine's Day Love Programming - Feature Film)

Q&A with Director Siddhartha Jatla
Valentine's Day After-Party (TBD)

Saturday, February 10th: AMC Village on the Parkway, Addison Noon

ASK THE SEXPERT (Documentary)
1:30 p.m.: LGBTQ Shorts Programming

AARSA
SISAK
DEVI
KHOL
MAACHER JHOL

Q&A with actress Priyanka Bose, actor Shawn Parikh and director Faraz Mariam Arif Ansari

3:15 p.m.: Indo-European Programming

LA LUNE FOLLE (French Short Film)

BABYLON SISTERS (Italian Feature Film)
5 p.m.: Indo-Western Programming

FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW (Short Film)
THE VALLEY (Feature Film)

Q&A with director Sangeeta Agrawal, director Saila Kariat & actress Suchitra Pillai
7:15 p.m.: Centerpiece Programming
ABU (Documentary)

Q&A with director Arshad Khan
After-Party at Saffron House
Sunday, February 11th: AMC Village on the Parkway, Addison
Noon: Education/Family Programming

MEDIUM (Short Film)
DHH (Feature Film) 2:45 p.m.

BHASMASUR (Feature Film)

Q&A with director Nishil Sheth 4:30 p.m.
CHUMBAK (Closing Night Feature Film)

Q&A with director Sandeep Modi, actor Swanand Kirkire and producer Naren Kumar
7 p.m. onwards - Closing Night Party (by invitation only)

Trump arrives in Davos to...

"globalists" he bashed in the 2016 election campaign.

Meanwhile, a day after sending the dollar reeling with comments supportive of a weak US currency, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the Trump administration was not seeking a trade war but would defend its economic interests.

At a news conference at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Mnuchin played down his comments on Wednesday, January 24, that a weaker dollar was "good for us as it relates to trade and opportunities", saying they had been "balanced and consistent".

The remarks were seen by markets as departing from traditional US currency policy and elicited thinly veiled warnings from European finance ministers, as US President Donald Trump arrived in Davos to promote his "America First" agenda.

"I thought my comment on the dollar was actually quite clear yesterday," Mnuchin told reporters. "I thought it was actually balanced and consistent with what I've said before, which is, we are not concerned with where the dollar is in the short term." Mnuchin said there were "both advantages and disadvantages of where the dollar is in the short-term" and stressed that the US wanted fair economic competition.

"We want free and fair and reciprocal trade. So, I think it's very clear. We're not looking to get into trade wars. On the other hand, we are looking to defend America's interests." But the finance ministers of France and Italy expressed concerns about Mnuchin's remarks, which pushed the dollar down to multi-year lows. A stronger euro, hovering at a three-year peak against the dollar, could hurt the European economy by making its exports less competitive. It also risks complicating the European Central Bank's exit from years of ultra-loose monetary policy.

"We want currency levels to reflect economic fundamentals," French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire told reporters in Davos. His Italian counterpart Pier Carlo Padoa-Schioppa said Mnuchin's comments reminded him of American policy in the 1970s and expressed concern about a trade war.

(Source: PTI)



THE INDIAN PANORAMA

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Shree Ganeshaya Namah

Bejan Daruwalla is world's most famous astrologer today. He appears regularly on world wide TV shows. Bejan who has been a professor in English, has authored a number of books on astrology. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on March 29, 2012, lunched one of Bejan's books, '2012- End of the World? Bejan contributes to a number of journals and newspapers in many parts of the world which include Berkley Communications (London) Times of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai) and The Indian Panorama (New York and Texas). Bejan's predictions have mostly been correct and people the world over rely on his predictions.



Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone 011-91-8141234275 www.bejandaruwalla.com

Weekly Horoscope: January 29 - February 04, 2018

Ganesha says in digital terms speed + space + spirituality + showmanship = Sagittarius.

Add to it the great divide between illusion / reality, evolution / revolution, freedom / captivity, knowledge / wisdom. The archer pierces the eye of the Sun and hits infinity.

Finally, Sagittarius is all about freedom. Sagittarius is both fast and furious.

Aries:

Ganesha says as a result of your evaluation of yourself, there is genuine evolution. You gain in credibility, popularity and authority. People look up to you. Creative pursuits, be it the cinema, television, the performing arts, every aspect of the media, hobbies, even speculation and playing the market, will be indulged in. You have an open frame of mind leading to greater ingenuity as well as better, brighter ideas. Bonds and ties of love will give you new focus.

Taurus:

As a result of your involvement with family and domesticity, your handling of people is marvelous. Anyway, as I have always said, Taureans have a genuine fondness for people, in fact for the entire human race. You have reached a point in your personal growth where there is no room for hurt, acrimony, false expectations or acquisitions in all your interactions. Ganesha says that this has also been achieved in the professional sphere.

Gemini:

This is a period of quality interactions. There is gain at all levels; you make money and also powerful emotional bonds. You know that being adjustable and adaptable makes for greater happiness, peace, contentment. Ultimately, that's what we all desire. You are more relaxed and responsive to others, and there are gains in the offing. You stand on solid ground and there is no dilly-dallying. You make sustained progress, and impressive as a result.

Cancer:

Money and the people in your life, though not necessarily in that order, will be the two main themes in this period. You will reach out to new and old friends and acquaintances and make good profits from business as well. You will be moving at great speed in a bid to improve both these areas of your life. But Ganesha warns against too much socializing and also mixing business with pleasure.

Leo:

Watch out for new developments. You will be looking at true growth, comprising your own assets and your larger role in the community. You will look inwards at your own limitations and will also spend time with welfare activities and charities. You move positively from the worldly affairs that occupied you till recently to more self-analysis and introspection. Your main criterion is personal growth and you will do all that you can to progress in the right direction.

Virgo:

You probably feel that you have been pursuing the wrong goals. The focus will be on loans and funds and, strangely, on passion and sex. There may also be some neuroses, anxiety, minor ailments and an unsettled feeling to contend with. You may turn to prayer and meditation. This is a testing time and you will tap into the spiritual nooks and crannies of your being, and your soul for answers. A lot has been happening and much too soon. You need to take stock of life and to slow down.

Libra:

Your good spirits will be restored. There will be success with people and you want to have fun and enjoy the limelight. You seek out good company, good friends, good food and all the good things of life which I mentioned earlier. Being sociable, amiable and outgoing, you will be partying and socializing. Ganesha has given you charisma and charm, even good looks and a deceptively seductive manner. The entire family will draw closer and surround you with warmth.

Scorpio:

Money and the people in your life will both be in sharp focus this period. You will look at new avenues of business, sources of income. Ganesha warns against both, a) too much socializing, once again, and not to b) mixing business with pleasure. This may lead to situations you don't want to get into and are better off without. You are friendly and sociable and also keen to get on with overhauling of your both career and income.

Sagittarius:

Your life is moving at a certain pace and in the right direction and you will be fulfilled with a sense of satisfaction. Ganesha sends you your due rewards in several ways. This is a joyous phase filled with good tidings. There is a welcome twist too with travel, journeys for fun or for work, partnerships and ties, whether new or old romantic ties and attachments, even greater joy in matrimony and other bonds.

Capricorn:

This is the time for the expansion and extension of your mental horizons. New inclinations and predilections, a new focus, are even more likely to emerge than they were last period. You move towards spirituality and the higher issues of life and are concerned with justice, law and order and the higher consciousness. More than just acquiring knowledge, it will be a widening of the vistas of your mind that interests you. Travel, publicity, visits, interviews, meets, conferences, collaborations and networking within and outside the family.

Aquarius:

At one level, you are at the crossroads. You need to make strong decisions. You don't want your success / popularity, good interactions to slip and falter. It is also a good time to help the community at large, to share resources, give charity or monetary help. You work with purpose and want to get your act together professionally in the larger social context as well as within your immediate social circle.

Pisces:

You will look at changing your lifestyle and priorities. You need to get your act together and need to do some hard rethinking. Ganesha tells you to look deep within yourself: you have had too much of a social life, been a party animal, and your expenses are also mounting. You need to guard against arousing animosity in others as well. Take the necessary precautions and you are in line for the four Gs - gains, glory, good times and genuine companions. What more does one need?



OSCARS: PRIYANKA CHOPRA TO ANNOUNCE NOMINATIONS

Indian actor, Priyanka Chopra has been chosen to announce the list of nominations for the 90th Academy Awards. The news was confirmed by the award's official Instagram page, The Academy.

Priyanka will do the honours along with some renowned names of Hollywood - Michelle Rodriguez, Rebel Wilson, and Rosaria Dawson. Though she is not new to the awards ceremony as this will be her fourth consecutive year on the red carpet, it is going to be her first more-active role in the workings.

The voting process began on January 5 and the nominations had to be submitted by January 12. Now the balloting for Oscar 2018 nominations will come to a close on January 23. Nominations for all 24 categories will be announced from the Academy's Samuel Goldwyn Theater. Announcements will be made in a two-part, live presentation by the mentioned stars. Expectations and speculations are running high about who is going to bag the golden statuette.

In one of the images shared by The Academy, Priyanka is seen lounging in black cigarette trousers and metallic shimmery top. The page also shared images of Rebel Wilson, Michele Rodriguez, and Rosario Dawson.

Source: ANI

EXPERIENCED 'SEXUAL TERRORISM' AT 13, SAYS NATALIE PORTMAN



The discussion of sexual misconduct in Hollywood is in its prime - more and more actresses are joining the conversation with their stories. Reportedly, the latest entrant in the never ending list of actresses is Natalie Portman, who revealed that she was sexually terrorised as a child after the shooting of her first feature film.

The Academy-award winning actress, who was present at Women's March in Los Angeles with fellow actresses Eva Longoria and Constance Wu, spoke about her terrifying experiences growing up as a child star. She said, "I turned 12 on the set of my first film 'Leon: The Professional', on which I play a young girl who befriends a hitman and hopes to avenge the murder of her family. The character was spontaneously developing and discovering her womanhood, her voice and her desire. At that moment of my life, I too was discovering."

She described other instances of sexual objectification that she faced soon after the film's release, including movie reviewers talking about her "budding breasts" and her local radio station starting a countdown to her 18th birthday to keep track of "the date that I would be legal to sleep with." The actress added, "I understood very quickly, even as a 13-year-old, that if I were to express myself sexually, I would feel unsafe. And that men would feel entitled to discuss and objectify my body to my great discomfort."

Source: ANI

MOVIE REVIEW



12 STRONG

Cast: Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, Michael Peña, Navid Negahban

Director: Nicolai Fuglsig

12 Strong tells the story of an elite team of U.S. special forces and paramilitary officers who were sent to Afghanistan during the first days of the war there, shortly after the September 11 terrorist attacks, to wage unconventional war against the Taliban regime. Known as the "Horse Soldiers," these operatives made their way through the unforgiving terrain of the country literally on horseback, embedded with members of the nation's insurgent Northern Alliance -- with neither side quite trusting the other -- as they fought one of the initial battles to reclaim Afghanistan from the oppressive Taliban rule.

Chris Hemsworth stars as retired Special Forces Captain Mitch Nelson (based on the real-life Mark Nutsch), who has just started unpacking boxes with his wife (Elsa Pataky, the real Mrs. Hemsworth) and daughter in their new home when the planes launch their deadly attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Nelson immediately heads to base and wants in on the American response even if he has yet to see actual combat himself. His commanding officer is understandably reluctant, but with the

help of his Chief Warrant Officer Hal Spencer (the always dependable Michael Shannon), Nelson gets to re-assemble his squad (which also features welcome faces like Michael Peña and Moonlight's Trevante Rhodes) and sneak them into Afghanistan.

There they meet General Abdul Rashid Dostum (Navid Negahban), who is help them find Taliban strongholds where they can stage ground assaults and call in airstrikes. Dostum simultaneously wants to intimidate the Americans and yet at the same time wave them in the face of the Taliban, represented by Khaled (Fahim Fazli). Nelson is unsure of Dostum's strategy and is worried about betrayal at every turn, while Dostum is concerned that the Americans have no idea what to do in this harsh country -- the "graveyard of empires" as he calls it -- and will abandon the mission if it gets too difficult.

That fascinating aspect of Afghanistan -- that no major world power, including the U.S., has ever been able to solve it militarily or geopolitically -- is given a certain amount of lip service in 12 Strong, which is based on the non-fiction book Horse Soldiers by Doug Stanton. So is the idea that even with all its awesome power, the U.S. military would be forced to fight a lot like they're back in the 19th century. But first-time director Nicolai Fuglsig (working from a screenplay by Ted Tally and Peter Craig) backburners those themes for a straight action-adventure formula, as Hemsworth's men plunge into battle and emerge largely unscathed themselves as they mow down the almost cartoonishly-portrayed Taliban baddies (they might as well be Imperial stormtroopers) by the dozens.



By Mahendra Ved

INDIAN DIASPORA IS GROWING

The author finds a growing number of overseas Indians taking part in the electoral process in the countries of their adoption, which, he says is good for them. The Indian diaspora now total 31.2 million. D. Mulay, secretary, Department of Overseas Indians in the Ministry of External Affairs said they were impacting their societies and the economies.



'whatever you do, be great at it and make sure people remember you for it'".

As a woman, she could have a formidable rival in Oprah Winfrey, who has captured Hollywood's imagination after her Golden Globes address. Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks, Meryl Streep - all want "president Oprah Winfrey in 2020".

Another Indian-American, Aruna Miller, last week filed nomination papers to run for the US Congress from a Congressional seat in Maryland. Two dozen Indian Americans are contesting elections across America and in Canada, there are four Indian ministers.

Across the Atlantic in Britain, Indian IT czar Narayana Murthy's son-in-law, Rishi Suna, and Goa-born Suella Fernandes have joined the Theresa May government.

Her earlier team had Priti Patel. The British Parliament has many Indian-origin lawmakers like Keith Vaz.

They are among 285 Indian origin parliamentarians across the globe. Past heads of state have included New Zealand's Anand Satyanand and Singapore's C.V. Devan Nair. Prime ministers and ministers, who were elected in 19 countries, total more than 70. The recent entrants to the prime ministers' club are Antonio Costa (Portugal) and Leo Varadkar (Ireland).

The Indian diaspora now total 31.2 million. D. Mulay, secretary, Department of Overseas Indians in the Ministry of External Affairs said they were impacting their societies and

the economies.

India observed Jan 9 as the day for Indians overseas. The annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) has evolved into a biennial affair. It was held this month in Singapore. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted over 141 overseas Indian parliamentarians and mayors from 23 countries. Only sitting members of parliament and mayors - no ministers, heads of government/state or parliament speakers were invited. Delegations came from Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Curacao, Jamaica, US, Canada, the United Kingdom, Holland, New Zealand, Switzerland and Fiji.

As Modi spoke to them, Congress President Rahul Gandhi addressed the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin in Bahrain the same week, reflecting domestic political interest overseas Indians generate.

Modi rhetorically said: "No matter where you are, I believe your ancestors will be very happy to see you all here. Your achievements (as legislators in your countries) are a point of pride for us. Even when you are nominated for political office anywhere, we are very happy. You affect geo-politics and the world and frame laws. Indians watching these developments are very happy to hear about your achievements."

Unsurprisingly, overseas Indians are seeking voting rights in India. A day before the commencement of PBD, Delhi journalist S. Venkat Narayan filed a public interest litigation before India's Supreme Court seeking quashing of amendments made in the Citizenship Act in 2004, which deny voting rights to overseas citizens of India (OCI).

Venkat Narayan said the denial of voting rights to persons having OCI status violated fundamental rights as it was "discriminative to a class of citizens of India who are not only being denied equality before law and equal protection of laws, but also rights and freedoms relating to life, liberty and dignity of the individual".

From getting elected abroad to seeking a voice in the Indian election, will the wheel take a full circle?

(The author, NST's New Delhi correspondent, is the president of the Commonwealth Journalists Association 2016-2018 and a consultant with 'Power Politics' monthly magazine. He can be reached at mahendraved07@gmail.com)

(Source: New Straits Times)



By Ven Parameswaran

Can India and the Global Indians Contribute to the Scientific and Technology Revolution?

"The only way the U.S. can expand its lead in Science and Technology is by working together with the scientists in India. According to a recent report in the Times of India, India is all set to produce the world's largest number of engineers. While 85% Indian men have shown interest in engineering, the number stands at a close 79% among women in India", says the author.



Sir C.V. Raman of Bangalore won a Nobel prize in Physics several centuries ago

"Science & Engineering Indicators", a voluminous document, describing the state of American technology was just released by the National Science Foundation and National Science Board. This contains facts and figures on research and development, innovation and engineers. But the report's startling conclusion lies elsewhere: China has become-or is on the verge of becoming-a scientific and technological superpower.

After all, science and technology constitute the knowledge base for economically advanced societies and military powers, and China aspires to become the world leader in both. Still, the actual numbers are breathtaking for the speed with which they have been realized.

25 years ago, China's economy was tiny, and its high-tech sector barely existed. Since then, here is what has happened.

China has become the second largest R&D spender, accounting for 21 per cent of the world total of nearly \$2 trillion in 2015. Only the U.S., at 26% ranks higher, but if present growth rates continue, China will soon become the biggest spender. From 2000 to 2015, Chinese R&D outlays grew an average of 18% annually, more than 4 times faster than the U.S. rate of 4%.

There has been an explosion of papers on technology by Chinese teams. Although the U.S. and the EU each produce more studies on biomedical subjects, China leads in engineering studies. American papers tend to be cited more

often than the Chinese papers, suggesting that they involve more fundamental research questions, but China is catching up.

China has dramatically expanded its technology workforce. From 2000 to 2014, the annual number of bachelor's degree graduates went from about 359,000 to 1.65 million. Over the same period, the comparable number of U.S. graduates went from 483,000 to 742,000. This includes graduates of Chinese and Indian origin, may be 50%.

Much of China's high-tech production once consisted of assembling sophisticated components made elsewhere. Now, says the report, it is venturing into demanding areas such as "supercomputers and smaller jetliners."

China still lags in patents received. Over the past decade, American firms and inventors account for about half the US patents annually. I should point out that there are so many eminent Indian American scientists and technologists who have accumulated large number of patents. 40% of start-ups in the Silicon Valley are started by Indians.

Zero and mathematics were invented in India. Algebra, Trigonometry, and Decimal /Fraction systems were invented in India. Albert Einstein said that without zero there is no computer or internet. The Indian Institute of Technology is

the topnotch in the world. A degree from IIT is equal to combined degrees from Harvard, M.I.T. and Princeton stated Leslie Stahl, CBS 60 Minutes anchor after she visited the IIT's in India. Sir C.V. Raman of Bangalore won a Nobel prize in Physics several centuries ago. So many other Indians have also won the Nobel prize in Science. Professor Ramanujan of Cambridge University, U.K. has made original contributions to advanced mathematics. LaserTechnologist, Bhowmik of Los Angeles had 100 patents.

The only way the U.S. can expand its lead in Science and Technology is by working together with the scientists in India. According to a recent report in the Times of India, India is all set to produce the world's largest number of engineers. While 85% Indian men have shown interest in engineering, the number stands at a close 79% among women in India.

In India, the Software services industry alone recruits about 300,000 people every year. Engineering tops the list of professions seen as most vital for economic growth.

TRUMP OFFERS TO SHARE 100% of U.S. TECHNOLOGY

President Trump has made a huge policy change benefitting India. Trump stated that the US will share 100 per cent of all its technology with India and treat India as its closest ally. This

will enable American companies to set up shops in India and allow them to transfer technology to Indians.

Because of comparative advantage and availability of large supply of engineers, these American companies in joint venture with Indian companies could contribute to scientific and technological revolution, especially R&D.

I recall that after India first tested nuclear bomb the US imposed heavy sanctions against India. This prevented Indian scientists from attending international conventions. This sanction continued for long and never lifted. Only after President George W Bush's offer of nuclear civil agreement, such sanctions were removed.

If the U.S. and India work hand in hand, China will find difficult to compete for global leadership in Science and Technology.

(The author, a resident of Scarsdale, NY is a former President & CEO, First Asian Securities Corp, NY. An MBA from Columbia Business School, he is the Chairman, India, National Republican Asian Assembly, Washington D.C, and Senior Vice Chairman, Indian American Republican Committee)



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