

## Trump Ready for Citizenship for Dreamers in Exchange for Border Wall and Slashed Immigration



Trump for pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million dreamers, with conditions not acceptable to Democrats.....

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** President Donald Trump said he will support a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children, according to a telephone briefing by the White House for Republican congressional staff members. His remarks could move negotiations on an immigration deal that is stalled in Congress, but Democrats have signaled that his proposal is a non-starter. The call, hosted by White House adviser Stephen Miller, **contd on page 32**

## 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 **contd on Page 32**



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

## Opting for major reforms, India can achieve 10 pc growth: Dr. Panagariya



**NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP):** "By all accounts, I have no doubt that (India) will get back to eight per cent plus (growth) **contd on Page 2**

"New India Lecture Series" is inaugurated at the Indian Consulate in New York City on January 22, 2018. Seen from L to R: Sanjay Bhatnagar, Dr. Arvind Panagariya, and Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty during conversations on India's current state of Economy  
Photo / Jay Mandal-on assignment

## 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 **contd on page 32**

## 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 **contd on Page 32**

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



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## Queens Borough President Melinda Katz to deliver State of the Borough Address on Friday, January 26

**QUEENS, NY (TIP):** Borough President Melinda Katz will deliver her annual State of the Borough address on Friday, January 26, offering a report on Queens' recent milestones and her vision for the future of the borough. It will be her fifth address, since her first term election in Nov. 2013. She got re-elected Nov 2017 for another 4-year term.

According to a press release issued by Sharon Lee from Borough President's Press office. Pre-registration from the public has been robust, and the venue is anticipated to reach capacity quickly. Doors will open at 9:00 AM. Members of the media seeking to attend

the event are kindly asked to email in advance to [press@queensbp.org](mailto:press@queensbp.org).

Arriving guests will enjoy music performed by a jazz quintet and a string ensemble, both from the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts. The program will begin with the presentation of colors by the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Ceremonial Unit, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Faatiha Aayat, a first grade student at P.S. 16 in Corona and resident of Elmhurst. Wendy Lin, a student at the Macaulay Honors College at the City University of New York (CUNY) and resident of Elmhurst, will sing the National Anthem. Gideon Frankel, Principal of the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, will deliver brief welcome remarks. Following the program, a brief reception will feature music by the string ensemble and catering by DelishNY of Corona.

**WHAT: Queens Borough President Katz Delivers 2018 State of the Borough Address**

**WHERE: Frank Sinatra School of the Arts (in the Tony Bennett Concert Hall), 35-12 35th Avenue in Astoria, Queens**

**WHEN: Friday, January 26, 2018 at 10:00 AM (doors open at 9:00 AM)**

The program will be live streamed via the Borough President's website, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. Official photos will be available on the Borough President's Flickr following the event.



Queens Borough President Melinda Katz will deliver State of the Borough address on Friday, January 26

# Opting for major reforms, India can achieve 10 pc growth: Dr. Panagariya

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

rate). India really today is probably the only game in the town," the professor of economics at the prestigious Columbia University said while addressing the inaugural "New India" lecture series, launched by the Consulate General of India here.

India has the potential to achieve 10 per cent growth rate, but it needs major reforms in areas in labor laws and land acquisition, former Niti Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya said.

He said Indian economy grew 7.5 per cent in the first three years of the Narendra Modi government, but two major reforms - demonetization and goods and services tax - brought the growth rate down a little.

In the current fiscal, he said, India will end up at 6.5 per cent, which is also a pretty good growth rate.

The "New India" lecture series is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a new India by 2022. It is an initiative of Indian Consul General Sandeep Chakrabarty.

He said that although China is probably growing at 6-7 per cent but its rate is likely to decline to five in the years to come.

Panagariya said that India will sustain its high growth rate for the next two decades at least with the current trajectory of reforms, unless it starts making mistakes again.

He also said that India is headed to become the world's fifth largest economy and there was no doubt that the country has got the potential to do 10 per cent.

"Certainly, there is no doubt that we have got the potential to do 10 per cent.

"For India to achieve the double-digit growth, the country needs major reforms in labor and land acquisition laws. It also needs significant privatization and a major reform of civil service, which is quite not sufficient to handle the large economy that India is now," Panagariya said.

To a question on next budget, the former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman said that the next budget is unlikely to be different from the previous budgets.

"It would be reform-oriented budget in my view. I think



Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty giving opening remarks  
Photo / Jay Mandal-on assignment

there is a lot of talk about reaching the fiscal consolidation plan.

Expecting that the budget will give clear indication of reforms," he said, adding that the agriculture sector could see more emphasis in the upcoming budget.

Refuted the notion that there was a large-scale unemployment in India, Panagariya said "Unemployment in India is not very high. Jobs are being created, but as the way policies were being adopted in India, in the end it gives very little incentive to employers to employ people in the formal sector." "This is a long-standing problem in India."

Panagariya said he enjoyed his three-year term in India as the Vice Chairman of Niti Aayog, and he would have stayed longer, if he did not have a permanent job at the Columbia University or the varsity would have given him a longer leave.

He described as "scandalous" a number of loans being given without any collaterals.

"It is scandalous. What kind of culture are we promoting? Absolutely unforgivable. If one looks at the banks situation, default by the farmers are relatively small.

"The problems are all coming from large industrialists, but this government is not letting them go. This government is very tough... The Prime Minister is very tough on the corruption issue," he said.



A View of the gathering

Photo / Jay Mandal - on assignment

## Valley Stream designated as one of the best places to live in America

**VALLEY STREAM, NY (TIP):** Village of Valley Stream Mayor Edwin A Fare will be joined by the Valley Stream Chamber of Commerce and local residents in a press conference, January 26, to announce that Valley Stream has been designated as one of the best places to live in America. Valley Stream was chosen by Money Magazine, one of the largest business publications in the United States. It is the only municipality chosen in NY State.

The village was also chosen based on its economy, education, affordability, convenience, safety, and quality of life.

"We are highly honored to have been selected as one of the premiere places to live in the United States," commented Valley Stream Mayor Ed Fare.

"Our businesses and residents work very hard to make our village everything it is, and it is nice to be recognized by such a prestigious honor"

Valley Stream was first settled by Scottish immigrants in 1834. With more than 38,000 residents.

Valley Stream it is the third most populous village in New York State.



"We are proud of our village and what it offers to its over 36,000 residents" - Mayor Ed Fare

## Sastha Preethi Puja held in NY

**FLUSHING, NEW YORK (TIP):** Nama Sangkeerthana Group organized 'Sastha Preethi', an event in praise of Lord Ayyappa of Sabarimala Hills of Kerala at Kubera Hall of the Maha Vallabha Ganapathy temple in Flushing, Queens last week.

'Sastha Preethi', as the name suggests, is the worship of Sree Dharma Sastha for the blessing of his divine grace. Lord Sastha, also popularly known as Lord Ayyappa is known to be the off-spring of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu (as Mohini, in his female form).

The most famous and well-known shrine of Lord Sastha is the Sabarimala Mountain situated at Kerala. Every year millions of devotees visit this shrine and seek the blessings of the Lord mainly during the Tamil months of Karthigai and Margazhi (Nov-Jan) period with great austerity and devotion.

The half-day event comprised a



Maha Ganapati Homam, Japam, Rudrabhishekam, Ayyappa Sahasranamarchana, Bhajan and Annadhanam. The event highlight was young girls under the age group of 8 to 12 performed bhajans for around 2 hours under the guidance of

Guru Tiruvarur A. Radhakrishnan. The Sastha Preethi Pooja created an incredible environment and filled the air with holy blessings according to the devotees who attended the program. The event was organized by Madhavan Krishnamachari.

# Santhigram celebrates a Decade of Promoting Wellness

BY GEORGE JOSEPH

**EDISON, NJ (TIP)** More than 500 people including elected officials and community leaders attended the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Santhigram USA, at the Edison Hotel in Edison, New Jersey, January 20.

The glittering event highlighted the growing influence of Ayurveda in the US as well as the remarkable journey of Santhigram. The event also launched three new projects of Santhigram, an Ayurveda training school, Santhigram herbal products and Santhigram Foundation.

Started in one room at the Edison Hotel a decade ago, Santhigram grew to become a brand name in Ayurveda in the US with 12 centers in five states.

But things were not going well initially and there were heartbreaks and disappointments. "When I landed in the US in 2007, I did not know where to go, whom to meet and how to start the business," Dr. Gopinathan Nair, who founded Santhigram along with his wife Dr. Ambika Nair, said.

"We humbly acknowledge the multitude of hurdles and challenges we faced, because there was absolutely no precedence in running an Ayurveda wellness business in the US. Coming to US with a dozen Ayurveda specialists in November 2007 exclusively with a mission of spreading Ayurveda wellness was a great challenge in itself."

In an interview earlier, he said he was fed up to a point that he wanted to throw away the medicines and gadgets in Hudson River and return to Delhi, where they had a successful business.

Yet they persisted, and several people came forward to help. Gradually things began to change and clients from far and wide came for the Ayurveda and Pancha karma treatment offered by the center.

"We are pleased to say with great pride that we have moved forward overcoming obstacles and managed to spread our wings to as many as five states, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Illinois and Wisconsin.

"This would not have been possible without the support of our dedicated team and the clients who had absolute faith in the effectiveness of the unique system of Kerala-specific Ayurveda treatments," he said.

Nair said it is gratifying to see the hundreds of patients cured with a holistic solution. But many are still not able to get the services due to insurance regulations. "Things are changing and we are helping our clients to get the coverage needed," he said.



Lighting the lamp of health with Swami Siddhananda, acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Bollywood actor Deepak Parasher, Padma Shri H R Shah and Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh

New Jersey State Senator Vin Gopal presented to Dr Gopinathan Nair, a joint resolution of the New Jersey Senate and Assembly honoring Santhigram. It noted that the company has established a model to emulate and set a standard of excellence toward which others might strive. "The Santhigram Kerala Ayurvedic Company has grown from its humble beginnings to its present vital and dynamic state due to the capable and effective guidance of President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Gopinathan Nair and Vice President and Chief Consultant Dr. Ambika Nair, as well as the steadfast commitment of its tireless staff. It is altogether proper and fitting for this Legislature to pause in its deliberations to recognize the Santhigram Kerala Ayurvedic Company, and to praise it as an essential and superb holistic health organization..." the proclamation said.

Noted guests joined the lamp lighting ceremony including New Jersey Utility Commissioner Upendra Chivukula, Congressional candidate Peter Jacob, Padma Shri H.R. Shah, chairman of TV Asia, Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh, chairman of Parekh Worldwide Media, Rajeev Bhambri, COO of India Abroad, Prof. Indrajit Saluja, editor of The Indian Panorama, Dr. Sudhanshu Prasad and Dr. Binod Sinha, prominent physicians and owners of E Hotel, Melinna Giannini, health insurance consulting specialist and president of ABC Medical Coding Solutions, Deepak Parashar, Bollywood actor and Swami Siddhananda, acharya of Chinmaya

Mission.

Dr. Gopinathan Nair and Dr. Ambika Nair honored several people, who helped them in the early days including Attorney Anand Ahuja, Vinay Mahajan, Late Ashok Diwakar, Alex Koshy Vilanilam, Aniyam George, Late Dr. Shakir Mukhi, PK Ramnachandran, Attorney Ram Cheerath, Gulshan Chhabra, Dr. Sudhansu Prasad, Sheela Sreekumar, Attorney Thomas Vinu Allen and Commissioner Upendra Chivukula.

Three people working with Santhigram for the last ten years-Reeja Beegum, Sheena Mohan and Jooly Joy-were honored at the event. Employees who completed more than five years, Nishad Balan, Meenu K Mani and Pradeep Pillai too were honored with excellence awards.

A souvenir with several articles on Ayurveda was released at the event.

Dr. Nair presented the details of the new projects. The Ayurveda training school has the approval of New Jersey State. Those who are successful in the training will be employed at the Santhigram centers.

The second project was introducing authentic Ayurveda products under the label of Santhigram Herbal. It includes products from tooth powder to hair pack and shampoo.

The Santhigram Foundation will support low income people suffering from acute ailments including autism in children to get Ayurveda and Panchakarma treatments. Several people in the audience pledged money for the noble cause.

The event began with a presentation by Dr.



New Jersey State Senator Vin Gopal presented to Dr Gopinathan Nair, a joint resolution of the New Jersey Senate and Assembly honoring Santhigram



Gopinath and Ambika Nair share their experiences with the gathering

Drakshayani on Ayurvedic diet and nutrition. When diet is wrong, medicine is of no use, when diet is right, medicine is of no use, she quoted the old saying. Ayurveda is based on the belief that nothing is right for everyone and everything is right for someone, she noted. "With a proper diet and lifestyle, Ayurveda's goal is to help each person to reach their maximum potential physically, emotionally and spiritually," she concluded.

The presentation given by Dr. Anurag Nair, a physician of modern medicine and one of the vice presidents of Santhigram noted the renaissance of Ayurveda.

He pointed out that till early 20th century all medical systems were respected equally. But the new inventions changed the western medicine and its effectiveness. Life expectancy shot up and maternal mortality and child deaths came down drastically. But modern medicine came with its side effects. For example, chemotherapy for cancer will affect kidneys and liver badly.

People are now looking for alternative medicines without these side effects and they have found out the value of Ayurvedic treatment. Ayurveda has become a complimentary medicine with modern medicine rather than an alternative medicine. The program started with a music concert with live orchestra by singers Anitha Krishna and Thahseen Mohammad.

Binu Nair, vice president proposed a vote of thanks to those attended and those who worked to make the event a success, including Tanvi Prenita Chandra, President of Renascent Media for incorporating new style of creative marketing, and Kulraaj Anand of 8K Radio. MCs Sanjiv Pandya of TV Asia and Aanchal Pahwa (Mrs. Bharat USA 2017) who conducted the program admirably received special appreciation.



Launching a new range of herbal products

## Indian American IIT grad marries gay partner in Maharashtra



Indian American Yavatmal native Hrish Mohan Kumar 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 Hrish 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.

Hrish, 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 Hrish'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 Sasthakar - 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, Sasthakar 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 Sasthakar said, "I could kill you for this." Sasthakar'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 Sasthakar 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, Punto 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)



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# NY's Communities of Color Have Less Access to Retirement Savings, Banks, Pay More for Caregiving, Housing

**AARP, Partners Launch Policy Solutions Agenda**

**AARP, Asian American and Hispanic Federations, NAACP, Urban League join in unprecedented effort to disrupt racial and ethnic disparities in health, economic security and livable communities among NY's 50+**

**NEW YORK, NY (TIP):** AARP and top advocacy organizations for New York's communities of color, on January 24, joined to launch an unprecedented policy solutions agenda aimed at disrupting vast racial and ethnic disparities among New Yorkers 50 and older as detailed in a new brief on health, economic security and livable communities.

"Disrupting Racial and Ethnic Disparities: Solutions for New Yorkers Age 50-Plus" ([aarp.org/NYDisruptDisparities](http://aarp.org/NYDisruptDisparities)), compiled by AARP in partnership with the Asian American Federation, the Hispanic Federation, the NAACP, and the New York Urban League, takes a first-ever look at gaps specifically affecting New Yorkers of color 50 and older. It is the launch for a three- to five-year effort in which AARP and its partners will welcome information and potential solutions from the public.

Read more at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

A panel discussion was held on policy solutions to remove existing disparities

Photo / courtesy AARP



# National Mentoring Month Celebrated: 5,000 Additional High School Students Participated in Mentorship Programs

**City agencies, mentoring nonprofits, public schools, and the business community engaged 10,000 New Yorkers as volunteer mentors to 25,000 high school students**

**NEW YORK (TIP):** To celebrate national mentoring month, Chief Service Officer Paula Gavin and Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina announced, January 25, that 25,000 high school students and 10,000 mentors participated in programs associated with the NYC Youth Mentoring Initiative. Launched in January 2017, this initiative brings together individuals from city agencies, mentoring nonprofits and businesses to mentor high school students. In 2017, the local business community recruited nearly 6,000 of their employees as volunteer mentors through NYC Service's Good for Me. Good for My City. campaign. Student participation increased 25 percent since the start of the initiative. This announcement puts the program on track to reach its goal of engaging 14,000 mentors and 40,000 students by 2022.

"Connecting young people to caring adults is key to ensuring students in our city have every chance for success," said Mayor de Blasio. "I want to thank the thousands of New Yorkers who answered the call to be a high school student's personal champion

over the last year."

"One year ago, our City came together to ensure more New Yorkers see the value in mentoring and take action, enabling more high school students to have a mentorship experience," said NYC Chief Service Officer Paula Gavin. "Today we celebrate the work of our partners and recommit ourselves to our City's high school youth through quality mentoring experiences. NYC Service is proud to continue collaborating with our partner agencies, mentoring nonprofits, and the Good for Me. Good for My City. partners to inspire more New Yorkers to mentor young people. I encourage every New Yorker to explore all the mentoring opportunities at [nyc.gov/mentornyc](http://nyc.gov/mentornyc) and personally experience the joy of inspiring someone else, while at the same time, allowing them to inspire you."

"As the first in my family to go to college, I know it's not a given that our students envision themselves going to college or pursuing certain careers. Strong mentoring is one way that we open students' eyes to the options available to them and put them on the

path to success," said Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina. "I look forward to our continued partnership with NYC Service as we strengthen and expand mentoring programs for New York City high school students."

Mentors will continue to be recruited through citywide promotion of volunteer opportunities through colleges and universities, associations, faith-based organizations, and businesses. Increased mentee participation will be driven by the establishment of mentorship programs in 400 high schools, expanding embedded mentoring programs in DYCD workforce development programs, and expanding community-based organization programs at CBO centers.

Thirty four businesses have already committed to the Good for Me. Good for My City. campaign in 2018, collectively pledging to recruit nearly 7,000 employees as high school mentors.

**About NYC Service:** NYC Service, a division of the Office of the Mayor, promotes volunteerism, engages New Yorkers in



"Connecting young people to caring adults is key to ensuring students in our city have every chance for success," said Mayor de Blasio

service, builds volunteer capacity, and mobilizes the power of volunteers and national service members to impact New York City's greatest needs. To learn more about NYC Service and connect to mentoring opportunities across New York City, visit [nyc.gov/mentornyc](http://nyc.gov/mentornyc).

Read more at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

# Restaurant Workers & Allies Rally Against Restaurant Association for One Fair Wage

**Research shows that raising the tipped wage correlates to a decrease in sexual harassment claims**

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Restaurant workers and coalition partners, on January 25, rallied in the fight for One Fair Wage, a national effort to bring New York in line with seven other states, that pay tipped workers their state's general minimum wage, on top of their tips. In New York, tipped food service workers make a subminimum wage ranging from \$7.50 - \$8.65, relying on tips to bring them up to the state's general minimum wage, which ranges from \$10.40 - \$13.00, depending on the region. The National Restaurant Association (NRA) and the NYS Restaurant Association oppose one fair wage for tipped workers on the grounds that it will hurt employers and employees alike, despite evidence to the contrary in states like California and Nevada where the restaurant industry continues to thrive. Tipped-wage workers in states with one fair wage also report making as much or more in tips than

tipped-wage workers in New York.

"Sexual harassment is standard practice in the restaurant industry where employers are willing to profit off women but won't pay them a fair wage," said Saru Jayaraman, President and Co-Founder of ROC United, and author of *Behind the Kitchen Door: The People Who Make and Serve Your Food*. "With just a small change in policy New York can make a big difference for a majority female workforce." Jayaraman recently appeared on HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher* to discuss the issue, and attended the Golden Globes with Amy Poehler as part of the #TimesUp campaign to end sexual harassment across industries.

With nearly 13 million employees, the restaurant industry is the single-largest source of sexual harassment charges filed by women with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), with a rate twice that of the general female workforce.

Read more at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



Restaurant workers & allies rally in New York

# Indian American Democrats Omar Vaid, Radhakrishna Mohan seeking to run for Congress from NY 11th district

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Two Indian Americans are among the more than half a dozen Democrats vying to unseat GOP Rep. Dan Donovan in New York's 11th congressional district.

Omar Vaid and Radhakrishna Mohan are seeking their party's nomination from the only New City congressional district that is currently held by the Republicans. The primary in New York is scheduled for June 26th. The 11th district is one of the least demographically diverse congressional districts in Big Apple. Nearly three fourths of the population is white.

It is also the second congressional district in the country where at least two Indian Americans are running against each other in the primaries. In the Illinois 8th, two Indian Americans are running for the GOP nomination to take on incumbent Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, who is also an Indian American.

Vaid, whose parents came to the United States from Gujarat, is a strong advocate of the rights of immigrants and unions. He believes "that both immigrants and unions make America stronger," according to his website.

He grew up in Illinois and Florida and moved to New York City after earning a bachelor's degree in business management to launch his career in the movie industry.

Vaid works on both props and set decoration for New York productions. So far, he has worked on TV shows such as "Luke Cage" and "The Get Down."



Omar Vaid and Radhakrishna Mohan are seeking their party's nomination from 11th district, one of the least demographically diverse congressional districts in New York

He has been a union member since joining the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 52, in 2009.

Information technology specialist Radhakrishna Mohan, who moved to the United States from India in 1989, has been an employee of the state of New York for the past 28 years. The New York State Insurance Fund employee also serves as an executive board member of chair of workers' compensation statewide committee.

He has a master's degree in economics and a degree in mathematics and statistics and an associate degree in computer science.

Like Vaid, Mohan is also a union activist and leader.

He says on his campaign website that he successfully introduced telecommuting in the workplace and had his joint motion



passed at the PEF convention to mandate equal time off for NY State female employees, which is now awaiting passage in the state legislature.

Mohan advocates workers comp benefits and opposes privatization of state government jobs.

## Issues

Vaid proposes affordable education, better transportation, stern action to fight climate change, quality Medicare for all, more union jobs and greater workers' rights.

"It is no secret that today in America the top 0.1% own as much as the bottom 90%," he writes on his website. "To make matters worse, 99% of new income goes to the 0.1%. People rightfully feel the economy is rigged, jobs don't pay what they used to, and unionizing efforts are in decline. It's time

for the billionaires to pay their fair share."

Vaid believes in a free-market system but regulated to protect the average citizen from corporate overreach and abuse. "I won't accept so much as a free meal from a corporate lobbyist," he says on the campaign website.

"We have the power to change all of this," says Vaid. "I don't believe there is any other way forward. We must recalibrate our economy, so the pie begins to grow for everyone. Unity is our way forward. America is the greatest nation on Earth."

So far Vaid has been running a campaign largely focusing on social media. He has more than 20,000 Twitter followers.

'Ask not, what your country...'

"Today, I want to serve as your voice on Capitol Hill: a voice that echoes your concerns; a voice that matters; a voice that cares," Mohan says on his website. "I strongly believe in the famous quote of President John F Kennedy, 'Ask not, what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.'"

He adds that he wants to play an active role in making the "community, state and country a safer, better place to raise my children, run my business, render service to the community and forge a future filled with unlimited promise and realized potential."

Other candidates running for the Democratic nomination are Michael DeCillis, Paul Sterling, Max Rose, Zach Emig, and Michael DeVito Jr.

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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.

*(The author is a former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York. He can be reached at 1955pram@gmail.com)*



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. Muly, 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. Muly, 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 mahendrav07@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.**

"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 IITs 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. Laser Technologist, 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



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

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.

*contd on Page 32*

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## Indian American Samir Paul, running for Maryland statehouse, gets key endorsements

Paul is running for an open seat from District 16.



**MARYLAND (TIP):** The Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) and national Trump resistance organization Run For Something have endorsed Indian American educator Samir Paul, who is running for the Maryland House of Delegates from District 16.

"In a chaotic political environment, we have to reaffirm our commitment to public schools as a place where we give every young person a shot. Samir is the perfect steward of that bold vision," MCEA President Chris Lloyd said in a statement issued by the Paul campaign.

These are the first organizational endorsements of any challenger for the District 16 race, according to the campaign.

Run For Something, a leading Trump resistance group that launched in early 2017 to support young, progressive candidates for office, also extended their support to Paul.

"Young people aren't the future; we're the present. I'm proud to be part of a nationwide tidal wave of millennials claiming a seat at the table. I see this as an opportunity to show my students that they're never too young to make a difference," Paul said about Run For Something's endorsement.

The district, which is in the affluent Bethesda area of the Montgomery County, are currently represented by Democrats C. William Frick, Ariana B. Kelly and Marc A. Korman.

Kelly and Korman are running again, while Frick is running for county executive.

In the most recent filing, Paul reported having \$108,000 cash on hand-most by a challenger vying for the open seat.

"We're off to a strong start, and we have the resources to run a robust campaign," he said. "These fundraising numbers are validation that our efforts to knock on doors and talk to voters are making an impact. This community wants to protect and strengthen our schools, transportation, economy, and environment, and I'll never stop fighting for that vision - no matter what's happening down the Red Line in Washington."

Paul's parents came to the United States in the early 1980s.

"My family's American story was made possible by great public schools, and I'm eager to join with teachers, parents, and the wider community to renew that promise for my students and for a whole new generation of young people," he said. "I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work. It's a great honor to have the support of educators across the state," he added.

Paul, who left a lucrative job in the private sector to teach computer science at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, his alma mater, was named Montgomery County's "Rising Star Teacher of the Year" in 2016. Last year, the National Education Association recognized him as one of its "30 Under 30" educators.

Paul started the STEM Talent Pipeline program for young for giving science education to 40 young, low-income, and underrepresented minority 3rd-grade girls.

According to his campaign website, Paul was a teacher representative at the 2016 White House summit on expanding computer science education and led his students to the highest average AP Computer Science Exam scores in five years. He is also a leader in the Montgomery County Education Association, where he helps organize the county's 13,000 teachers.

"I want to be a voice for public institutions that make stories like mine possible for families across Maryland," he said on his website. I want to make it easier to raise a family, move around the region, start a business, and age with dignity and comfort. That's why I'm running to represent District 16 in Maryland's House of Delegates this June."

Paul earned his bachelor's in computer science from Harvard University. He also holds a Master's degree in teaching from American University.

# Indian American Doctor Couple Indicted in Health Fraud Case

**The Rakhits intentionally distributed controlled substances outside the usual course of medical practice**

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** An Indian American doctor couple has been indicted on charges of committing healthcare fraud by performing unnecessary medical tests and procedures on patients to get payouts from insurance companies.

Dr Ashis K Rakhit, 65, and his wife Jayati Gupta Rakhit, 56, specialize in cardiovascular disease and internal medicine and practiced in Cleveland, Ohio.

According to the indictment, the Rakhits ordered and performed unnecessary medical tests between 2011 and 2018, including unnecessary nuclear stress tests, cardiac catheterizations, bone density scans, echocardiograms, EKGs, carotid artery scans, venous ultrasounds of the legs and abdominal ultrasounds.

They also recorded false symptoms in patient records to justify medically unnecessary tests on patients, including shortness of breath, palpitations, hypertension and abnormalities in breathing, according to the indictment.

The Rakhits billed Medicare, Medicaid and private insurers with inflated codes to reflect a service more costly than that which was actually performed, according to the indictment.

The Rakhits also intentionally distributed and dispensed controlled



Dr Ashis K Rakhit, 65, and his wife Jayati Gupta Rakhit, 56, specialize in cardiovascular disease and internal medicine and practiced in Cleveland, Ohio

substances outside the usual course of medical practice.

Ashis Rakhit is charged with distributing Percocet and Xanax in 2017, while Jayati Rakhit is charged with distributing Tramadol, according to the indictment.

"This couple violated the trust of their patients, the taxpayers and the community," US Attorney Justin E Herdman said.

"They performed unnecessary medical tests and billed for services

they didn't actually provide in exchange for prescription medications - all of this at a time when our region is inundated in opioid deaths and addiction," he said.

"Not only did these physicians put their patients through unnecessary medical procedures so they could line their pockets with extra income, they also prescribed controlled narcotics that were not medically required," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Stephen D Anthony. **(Source: DOJ)**

## Indian Origin ISIS Man, Dubbed "New Jihadi John", Designated Global Terrorist By US

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The US designated Indian-origin ISIS terrorist from Britain Siddhartha Dhar along with a Belgian-Moroccan citizen as global terrorists and imposed sanctions on them, the State Department said.

Siddhartha Dhar, a British Hindu who converted to Islam and now goes by the name Abu Rumaysah, had skipped police bail in the UK to travel to Syria with his wife and young children in 2014.

Siddhartha Dhar was dubbed as the "New Jihadi John" and became a senior commander of the dreaded outfit, the report had said.

The State Department has designated two ISIS members, Siddhartha Dhar and Abdelatif Gaini, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Section 1(b) of Executive Order which also imposes sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of US nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the US, a state department spokesperson said in a statement.

These designations seek to deny Siddhartha Dhar and Abdelatif Gaini the resources they need to plan and carry out further terrorist attacks, it said.

Among other consequences, all of Siddhartha Dhar's and Abdelatif Gaini's property and interests in property subject to US jurisdiction



Siddhartha Dhar, a British Hindu who converted to Islam and now goes by the name Abu Rumaysah

are blocked, and US persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with them, it said.

Siddhartha Dhar was a leading member of now-defunct terrorist organization Al-Muhajiroun. In late 2014, Siddhartha Dhar left the United Kingdom to travel to Syria to join ISIS, it said.

He is considered to have replaced ISIS executioner Mohammad Emwazi, also known as "Jihadi John", it said.

Siddhartha Dhar is believed to be the masked leader who appeared in a January 2016 ISIS video of the execution of several prisoners ISIS accused of spying for the UK, the statement said.

Abdelatif Gaini is a Belgian-

Moroccan citizen believed to be fighting for ISIS in the Middle East. Abdelatif Gaini is connected to UK-based ISIS sympathizers Mohamad Ali Ahmed and Humza Ali, who were convicted in the UK in 2016 of terrorism offenses, it said.

Today's action notifies the US public and the international community that Siddhartha Dhar and Abdelatif Gaini have committed or pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism, it said.

Terrorism designations expose and isolate organizations and individuals and deny them access to the US financial system. Moreover, designations can assist the law enforcement activities of US agencies and other governments, it said.

# 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 Kovaleski, 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)

## 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)

## 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)

## 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

**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



Hamid Nehal Ansari

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.

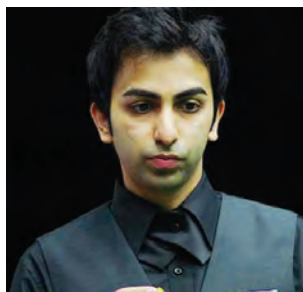
Gupta visited 3,000 schools in four decades, made 6,200 short films on toy-making in 18 languages and also hosted popular TV show Tarang in 1980s.

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.

# INDIA'S REPUBLIC DAY — A HISTORIC OCCASION

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

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



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.

Continued on page 17



# 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 NajibRazak - Malaysia
- President Htin Kyaw - Myanmar
- President Rodrigo Roa Duterte - Philippines
- President HalimahYacob - 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.

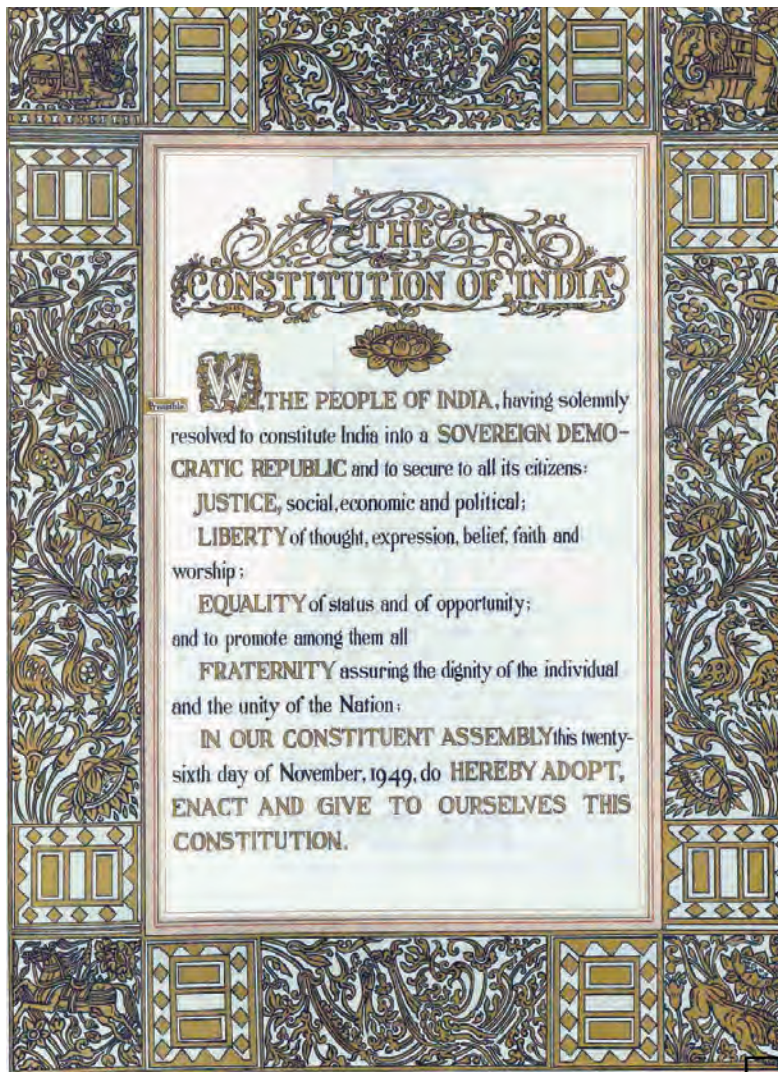
Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 60, 324, 366, 367, 379, 380, 388, 391, 392, 393 and 394 of the Constitution came into force on 26 Nov 1949 and the remaining articles on 26 Jan 1950.

## 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 Ayengar (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. Jawarhar 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.



## 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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-K9ujx8vO_A)

Official Site:

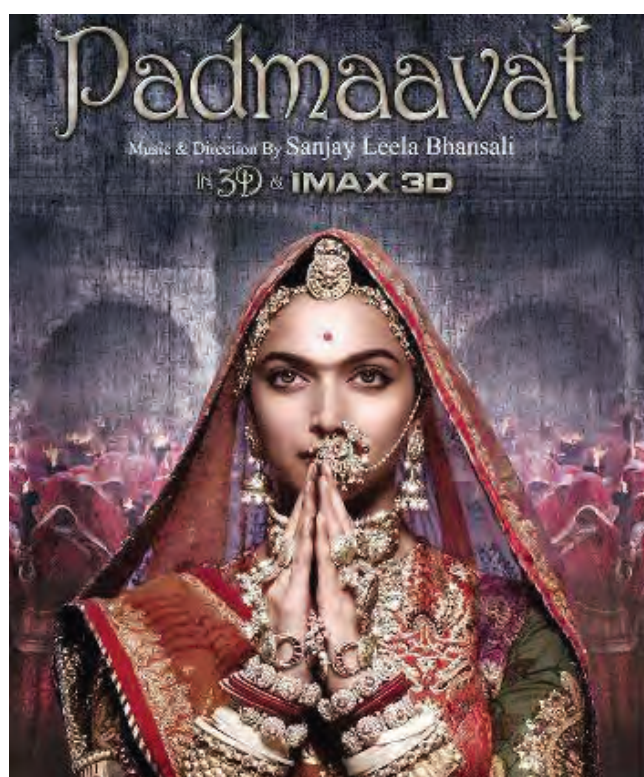
<https://www.facebook.com/PadManTheFilm>



### 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 Palkone, 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.



## 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.



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# OPINIO

# 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- Sonda 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)

## 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)

## 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)



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

**T**urns 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



**D**on'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 tsp 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 tsp 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 tsp 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.
- **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.

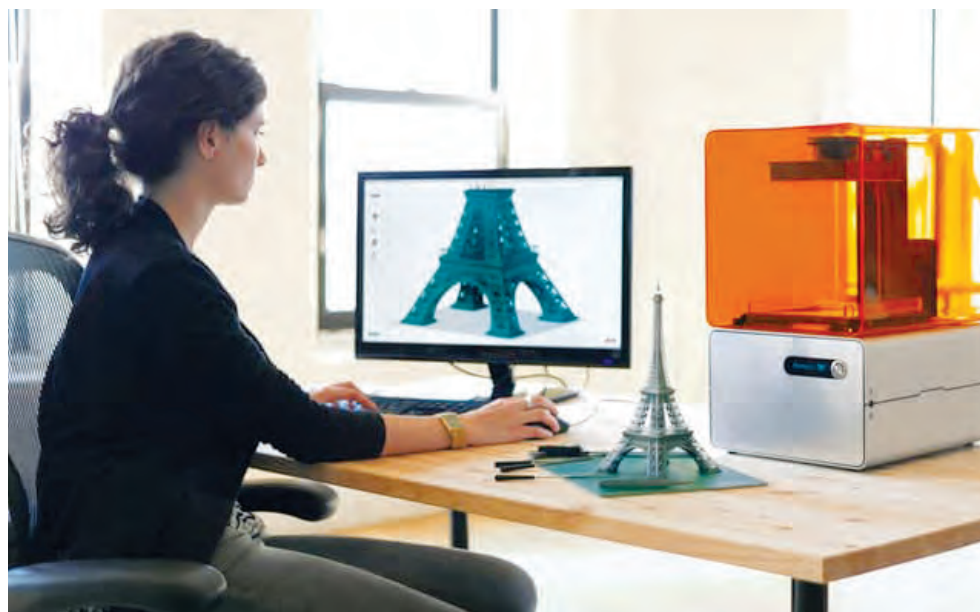
1. The software will disrupt most traditional industries in the next 5-10 years.
2. Uber is just a software tool, they don't own any cars, and are now the biggest taxi company in the world.
3. Airbnb is now the biggest hotel company in the world, although they don't own any properties.
4. Artificial 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.



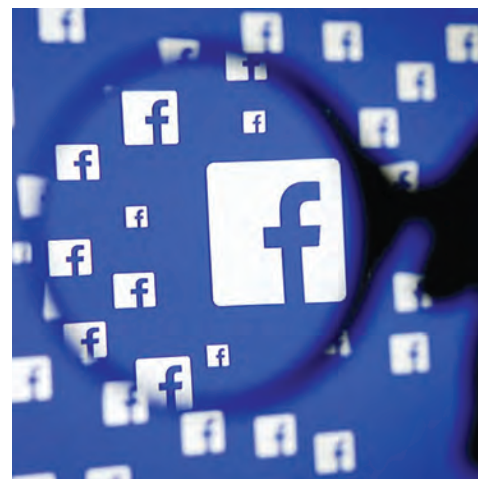
Most car companies will doubtless become bankrupt. Traditional car companies use the evolutionary approach and just build a better car, while tech companies (Tesla, Apple, Google) will do the revolutionary approach and build a computer on wheels.

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 Canalsys 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.



### 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](mailto:info@bejandaruwalla.com) and on phone 011-91-8141234275 [www.bejandaruwalla.com](http://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?

# BIRTH OF GANGA

The river Ganga has supreme importance in Hindu religion. There are many interpretations regarding the birth of the holy river Ganga. It is said that the river Ganges came into birth when the lord Brahma washed the feet of Vishnu. In Ramayana Valmiki added that Ganges was the daughter of the mighty Himalaya and Menaka. According to his writings the Divinities made her abduction and took the river to heaven. After taking Ganga to heaven, Ganga began living inner side of the Karmandala. Karmandala is a vessel shaped spout.

On the other side in Ramayana, according to Kirittivas the lords had taken the river Ganga to the lord Shiva to marry with him. The other versions illustrate that at a time Ganga lived on Mount Kailash and for the pleasure of the god the river flowed in a spiritual manner.

Years later there was a king whose name was Sagara. He had two wives. One of his wives born sixty thousand sons magically. For the betterment of the kingdom the king went in Himalayas for ritual worship. One of the parts of this ritual worship was a horse. Due to feel jealous Indra had stolen the horse from that particular area. Seeing that, Sagara said to all his sons to go in search of the horse. And all the sons of Sagara expand every where on the Earth to find out the horse.

After a hard work they found the horse in the Underworld. Where a sage was performing the meditation. The sage who was doing the meditation was Kapila. The children conceived that the horse was stolen by the sage Kapila. They started blaming the sage and become the cause of interruption during his penance. Being disturbed, the sage opened the eyes breaking his worship when years had passed. And saw the sons of the king there. The sage looked in rage at the sons of Sagara and all the sixty thousand sons were burnt to death. Until the ultimate religious rite completed all the spirits of the sons kept wondering.

After all this unfortunate happenings Bhagiratha, son of Dilip promised to be brought the Ganga to Earth. Because the water of the Ganga could purify the souls of the sons and led them to paradise. And Bhagiratha offered prayer to Brahma to get the Ganga down to the Earth. Bhagiratha succeeded to agree Brahma, and he ordered the Ganga to go down to Earth. This made Ganga to feel insulting. And she decided that when she fell on earth the entire earth be swept by Ganga. At that time Bhagiratha experienced the moment dangerous and prayed to lord Shiva to break Ganga's descent. In arrogance Ganga fell on the head of Shiva.



But Shiva trapping Ganges in his hair, and harmoniously disclose her in small streams.

Mythologically, it is said that the holy river Ganga flows carrying the blessings of Lord Vishnu. Followers of the Hindu religion call this holy river "Mother Ganges". The river is also very popular as Vishnupadi among Hindu devotees. The river has immense respect not

only in India but across the world. Pilgrims all from over the globe visit Haridwar to experience Hindu cultural traditions and the spiritual Arti of Mother Ganges.

The pilgrims, Rishis, Munies, Pandits and the Hindu religion professionals take a holy dip into the blessed river. Worshipers believe that the Mother Ganga washes away the past sins of the followers as per the Hindu scriptures. It is one of the supreme rivers in India. The river flows eastern direction through the Gangetic plain and from the northern side of India it enters into the Bangladesh.

One of the most significant Kumbh Mela happens once after 12 years and the Ardha

Kumbh Mela after every 6 years on the bank of the river Ganga at the site of Haridwar and the Chhat puja too. Being so popular and significant its length 2510 kilo meter also compared with the great rivers of Asia or of the world. The River Ganga is mentioned in Rig-Veda, it is the soonest of Hindu scriptures. At the time of Indo-Aryan the Saraswati and the Indus River were the major rivers but later the three Vedas gave more importance to the river Ganges just because of its many references.

## Ganga in Hinduism

In Hindu mythology, the revered Ganges has extreme significance. From the mythological point of view, this sacred river is known as Goddess Ganga. The followers of the Hindu religion also call it as "Mother Ganges". Locally, they use the term "Ganga Maa" to refer to the sacred river. The river Ganga is adored as a "Goddess". Ganga is one of the most popular rivers in the world. The river is also very famous for its unequal length and width all over the globe. In Purans, it is mentioned that not only the touch even the name of the river purifies the souls of the Hindus.

The water of the sacred river Ganga is known as "Ganga Jal". This water is considered as the most pure water on the earth. River Ganga came into existence from Gaumukha, sited in the state of Uttaranchal. The site also has rich popularity among the worshippers in India. The source of the Ganga River flows touching the various pilgrimage destination like Kedarnathji, Haridwar, Allahabad and Varanasi. All these are the utmost sites of worship where people from all over India approach here. Having covered a distance through the Sundarbans delta of 2,510 kilo meter the river meets in Bay of Bengal.

Ganga is shown as a beautiful woman representing half of the body of a fish in stead of legs and half of the woman. Ganga use to ride on the water monster named Makara. Ganga is illustrated in many Hindu scriptures as Purans, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Rig-Veda. The birth of Ganga is distinctively described in Hindu scriptures. During the self-abasement of Jahnvi he drank the whole water and ordered her to come out of his ears. Mahabharata depicts Ganges as wife of Shantanu and mother of Bheesma.

Haridwar, Kedarnath and Badrinath are the major sites constitute of different shrines and temples for pilgrimage. Everyday followers of the Hindu religion have bath in the sacred water. When they are sick, pilgrims also drink the holy water to get blessed.



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'If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it? If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it? Indian alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one.'

## OUR RICHMOND HILL SUBWAY ELEVATOR IS HERE



*A determined push by community leaders brings elevator to A Train Station Lefferts-Ozone Park. Community advocate Albert Baldeo opens the door for the babies and parents to access the A train.*

BY ALBERT BALDEO

Our fight to secure and complete the only subway elevator in the Richmond Hill/ Ozone Park community has been won, and it is now working! Thanks to all, including the Daily News, the West Indian, Caribbean Life, Queens Chronicle, Times Ledger, Kaieteur News, NY Guyana Chronicle, The Indian Panorama, Stabroek News, Guyana Times, and other media for publishing our petitions and public appeals to deliver and complete this important asset in our community - an absolute necessity for seniors, the physically challenged, babies, kids and pregnant mothers.

This \$29 million project, commenced since 2014, was scheduled to be finished since the end of 2016, but excuses have abounded each time we enquired about the completion date. Anyway, better late than never! The MTA must be reminded that prompt and proper maintenance is a necessary component of public transportation and services.

We also wish to remind the Mayor to deliver on his promises to increase the amount of senior centers, deliver better schools, hospitals, city services and personnel, transparency in how benefits are awarded in our neighborhood, and to stop the over criminalization of New Yorkers-like stop making criminals of poor people who cannot afford the fare to travel to work on the trains-while transforming this city into a beacon that is in solidarity with the poor and working-class. He must also audit and scrutinize the many failing city agencies that routinely waste and abuse our tax dollars, while preserving New York as a "sanctuary city."

*(Albert Baldeo is a civil rights activist and community advocate, and his political battles placed previously ignored minority communities like Richmond Hill and Ozone Park firmly on the political and economic map. As the President of the Baldeo Foundation and Queens Justice Center, he has continued to fight for equal rights, dignity and inclusion in the decision-making process. He can be contacted at the Baldeo Foundation: AlBaldeo@aol.com or (718) 529-2300).*

## Indian American Found Guilty of Moving Money for International Drug Trafficking Organizations

LOS ANGELES, CA(TIP): A federal jury has convicted an Indian American man from Monrovia, California, for his role in an international money laundering organization that conspired to move millions of dollars in proceeds for narcotics traffickers that included the Sinaloa Cartel.

Harinder Singh, 32, who also goes by "Sonu," was found guilty Jan. 19, of conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy to operate an unlicensed money transmitting business, and operating an unlicensed money transmitting business, according to a Jan. 23 press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California.

Singh is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Christina A. Snyder on April 30. He faces a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison for the conspiracy count, and five years for each of the other two charges.

Prosecutors say in this case, drug traffickers used a traditional hawala network of brokers spanning the United States, Canada and India to secretly transfer millions of dollars of drug proceeds to the United States, where brokers such as Singh delivered money to couriers acting on behalf of the Canadian drug traffickers and Mexican drug cartels.

The jury deliberated for less than two hours before finding Singh guilty of all three charges. With the verdicts against Singh, prosecutors have convicted 18 defendants who were named in a 2015 grand jury indictment that was the first major case in the United States involving "hawala" transfers of drug money.

The evidence presented during the two-week trial in United States District Court - which included Punjabi language wiretap calls, Punjabi-speaking witnesses and a money laundering expert - showed that Singh participated in a "hawala" conspiracy that was moving money generated from drug sales in Canada to the United States to pay for multi-kilogram drug shipments that were purchased in Los Angeles and then routed back to Canada for distribution, the press release says.

A hawala is an alternative form of money remittance which operates outside of traditional banking or financial systems, where the transfer of monetary value occurs between the brokers - who are typically located in



different countries, but sometimes in different cities in one nation - based solely upon the trust that exists between the brokers.

The hawala system, which originated on the Indian subcontinent, does not rely on promissory instruments, the Justice Department noted; rather, it relies on trust and long-established connections between brokers that are typically based on familial, ethnic, religious, regional and/or cultural grounds. Through hawala transactions, only the value of the money is transferred, not the money itself.

Singh was stopped by the California Highway Patrol in October 2012, which led to the discovery of \$274,980 in United States currency in rubber-banded stacks wrapped in black plastic. While the traffic stop was being conducted, special agents with the Drug Enforcement Administration were conducting surveillance and observed Singh's wife exiting the couple's apartment complex carrying a bag - which later revealed \$388,100 in United States currency, again rubber-banded in stacks and similarly wrapped in black plastic.

Prior to the traffic stop and the seizure at Singh's apartment complex, a federal wiretap intercepted Punjabi language calls indicating that Singh and co-conspirators communicated over multiple telephones to arrange for the pick-up, transport and delivery of large amounts of United States currency - in amounts of up to \$800,000 - across the Los Angeles area.

During the course of a four-year investigation by the DEA's LA Strike Force and IRS Criminal Investigation, authorities seized nearly \$15.5 million in bulk United States currency, 321 kilograms of cocaine, 98 pounds of methamphetamine, 11 kilograms of MDMA ("ecstasy") and nine kilograms of heroin.

Previously in this case, 17 defendants have pleaded guilty, and several have already been sentenced, receiving prison terms as high as 70 months. The indictment also charges four other defendants who are currently fugitives.

Singh is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Christina A. Snyder on April 30. At the time of sentencing, Singh will face a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison for the conspiracy count, and five years for each of the other two charges.

*(Source: DOJ)*

## India@68

CONTD FROM PAGE 8

all that was Great in India of the bygone "Golden Age", the only repository of the Hindu culture and civilization. But, ironically, the once-monolithic RSS is becoming more and more brittle and fissiparous in the image of India of Yesterday that it increasingly represents! The India of Tomorrow is going to be very different and the RSS would, predictably, embrace more and more irrelevance.

Having known Modi personally since 1998, I can fairly assume that even Modi, apparently, realizes this increasing irrelevance of the RSS in which he cut his political teeth and activism since the early 1980s. A gizmo-loving Modi has almost been a 'misfit' in the RSS, being too modern an activist-politician emerging from the Sangh Parivar which has a strangely medieval, even ancient, mindset. But, like Atal Behari Vajpayee before him, he has had to suffer in silence this foot-soldier providing agency. That he is not an ideological junkie was proved when he systematically cut to size and made irrelevant the various Parivar constituents during his Chief Ministership of Gujarat (2001-14).

And he also, apparently, realizes that the 2019 electoral battle will be very different

from the one he won in 2014. Then, he could blame the Congress-led Government of Dr Manmohan Singh for the various ills; now, he cannot blame his own government for multiple failures to keep promises! Ironically, he continues to be the most popular politician in India at a time when his party is losing out, beginning with his home state of Gujarat.

In other words, Modi's popularity is independent of his own party's, that of his government or even of the RSS. In still other words, it is somewhat like "Modi is India and India is Modi", to borrow a famous phrase from the Emergency era when the then Congress President Dev Kant Barooah pronounced that "Indira is India and India is Indira!"

A major reason for this overriding popularity of Modi is, apart from his own well-oiled PR network, also the failure of the country's polity to produce another leader. In 2018, as of now, India is beset with the "There Is No Alternative" (TINA) syndrome. Although Rahul Gandhi, now the Congress President, has been able to revive some confidence during the last six months, he is no match to Modi's political acumen, machinations and the ability to turn adversity into opportunity. Modi has been a full-time politician, with no baggage attached or inherited, and with no family, whereas

Rahul has been a reluctant politician for most of his career.

And it is Modi, not Rahul, who has actually inherited the political mantle of Indira Gandhi!

Which takes us to figure out what Modi could do best, and the next.

In the early 1980s, Indira's lieutenants like the then Union Minister Vasant Sathe had released trial balloons wondering whether the country could adopt a Presidential system of governance to replace the current parliamentary system. The debate died down with the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi. It has been revived again.

Can, therefore, Modi introduce the Presidential system? I remember Sathe having told me in the 1980s that, for this, the Parliament will have to merely pass an Amendment to make the President to be elected directly by the people. That is, election to the Presidency and the Lok Sabha will both be direct, and independent of each other. Be that, as it may, India could have in Modi her first President directly elected by the people!

Clearly, it would be a paradigm shift in the Republic of India which will celebrate its Diamond Jubilee in 2024. Modi has often been talking about how India should celebrate the 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022 and hinted that he could continue to helm the affairs until 2024!

As the first step towards this 'destination', Modi has been advocating holding of elections to the Lok Sabha and the state

Vidhan Sabhas, simultaneously, ostensibly to save money. In the first two decades of Independence, simultaneous elections were held, but Indira Gandhi stopped this practice. If Modi revives it, he could have the advantage of superimposing his persona all over the simultaneous General Elections. Since he has no match, he is likely to win a Presidency hands down; and, even if the BJP/NDA lose the poll or majority, he will have the independence of being the elected President.

Will, then, Modi-as-President be like Trump-as-President?

Maybe.

But he also risks becoming India's own Mikhail Gorbachev! 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!

*(The author is a journalist since 1983 and has worked with newspapers, news agencies and magazines in English and Hindi languages. He has contributed articles on diverse subjects. Currently, he is working as Consulting Editor with Business Line, the business daily of The Hindu Group of Publications in India. He is based in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India. He can be reached at Virendra.pandit@gmail.com)*

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## Pageantry Marks Celebration of....

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.

## Trump Ready for Citizenship for...

outlined the demands for any deal on DACA, which includes a \$25 billion "trust fund" for a border wall, an end to family reunification, also called "chain migration" by conservatives, and an end to the diversity visa lottery.

But in a more detailed outline of the proposal released by the White House later on Thursday, January 25, it calls for a massive increase in border security and a massive decrease in legal immigration by aiming to "protect the nuclear family migration" by only allowing family immigration sponsorships

to include spouses or children, rather than extended family members.

In addition to \$25 billion in border security, it would appropriate funds to add new enforcement officers, immigration judges and prosecutors - efforts to more quickly deport people who are in the country without legal papers.

The path to citizenship would be provided to DACA recipients via a "10-12 year path" that includes "requirements for work, education and good moral character."

A path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants known as Dreamers is a significant concession for Democrats, most of whom say they will not support any deal that does not provide for citizenship. It's similar to a bipartisan proposal by Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Dick Durbin, D-Ill., also includes a path to citizenship for Dreamers.

But Democrats say that the massive increase in border security, elimination of most family migration and the end to the diversity visa lottery is a lopsided deal.

"Dreamers should not be held hostage to President Trump's crusade to tear families apart and waste billions of American tax dollars on an ineffective wall," Durbin said in a statement. "This plan would put the administration's entire hard-line immigration agenda - including massive cuts to legal immigration - on the backs of these young people."

Trump told reporters Wednesday night before leaving for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, that he'd support legalization that would "morph" into citizenship.

Some Republicans, especially those with more hard-line views on immigration, praised the plan.

"The president's framework is generous and humane, while also being responsible," Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., said.

Immigration activists, however, blasted the plan for ending family reunification, and vowed to oppose it.

"They think that by offering up a spoonful of sugar - relief for Dreamers - they can get Congress and the American people to swallow the bitter medicine of radical nativism," Frank Sharry, founder of America's Voice, an immigration rights group. "We are going to fight this tooth and nail."

United We Dream Advocacy Director Greisa Martínez Rosas, who would be a DACA beneficiary, went further in a statement.

"Let's call this proposal for what it is: a white supremacist ransom note," she said. "Trump and Stephen Miller killed DACA and created the crisis that immigrant youths are facing. They have taken immigrant youth hostage, pitting us against our own parents, Black immigrants and our communities in exchange for our dignity."

The ACLU also did not pull any punches, saying that "the only community that benefits from this supposed generosity are white supremacists."

The nonprofit advocacy organization added that the "proposal is clearly an effort to sabotage bipartisan talks on the issue by continuing to put issues on the table that are non-starters."

Rep. Luis Gutiérrez, D-Ill., chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Immigration Task Force, said in a tweet that

Trump's proposal didn't "pass the laugh test."

And Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chair Michelle Lujan Grisham, D-N.M., excoriated the bill in a statement.

"We cannot allow the lives of young people who have done everything right to be used as bargaining chips for sweeping anti-immigrant policies," she said. "The White House is using Dreamers to mask their underlying xenophobic, isolationist, and un-American policies, which will harm millions of immigrants living in the United States and millions of others who want to legally immigrate and contribute to our country."

Meanwhile, other Democrats in the House and Senate - as well as liberal advocates - shared their continued displeasure with Trump's proposal on social media.

## 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 Mueller 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)

contd from Page 10

## Can India and the Global 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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## 'PADMAAVAT' HITS SCREENS AMID TIGHT SECURITY



**NEW DELHI/MUMBAI (TIP):** Sanjay Leela Bhansali's much-debated 'Padmaavat' released in over 4,000 screens across the country on Jan 25—barring some states such as Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh—amid high security and tension.

A day after a school bus in Gurugram was attacked by protesters—mainly some Rajput outfits which allege that the film distorts their history and defames their queen Padmavati, audiences defied threats of violence to stream into theatres to watch the opening day shows of the period film starring Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor. Over 10 lakh people watched the Rs 150-crore film on the first day, maker of the film Viacom 18 said. Many of those who watched the film condemned the violence of the last few weeks and said there is nothing objectionable in the film. The movie was not released in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. The Multiplex Association of India, which represents around 75 per cent of multiplex owners in the country, yesterday said its members would not screen the film in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Goa in view of the tenuous law and order situation.

The tension was palpable with security personnel mounting vigil at cineplexes and single-screen halls but the day passed without any major incident despite violence in some places, including in Rajasthan, Bihar, UP and Madhya Pradesh. Arterial roads were blocked, shops vandalised and bike rallies taken out in some places in Rajasthan. "Our protest against the film is continuing. The Rajput Karni Sena took out a bike rally in Jaipur and similar protests took place in other areas also," said the group's president Mahipal Makrana. About 24 shops were damaged in stone-pelting incidents in Udaipur.

## UNIFORM PAPER FOR NEET THIS YEAR: CBSE TO SC

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** There will be a uniform question paper for the National Eligibility-Cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to various medical colleges from this year, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) informed the Supreme Court on Thursday.

Questions will be translated in regional languages and question papers will have questions in both English and one language of the region/state where examination was to be held, CBSE counsel Tarachand Sharma told a Bench.

The top court had in August last year said there should be a common question paper after some students complained about different sets of questions for various languages.

# MODI DEFENDS GLOBALIZATION AT DAVOS SUMMIT

**DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (TIP) :** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi mounted a defense of globalization at the World Economic Forum on Jan 23, urging joint action on climate change and economic cooperation, in a speech some delegates took as a swipe at U.S. President Donald Trump's America First agenda.

Modi, making the forum's first speech by an Indian head of state in more than two decades, did not mention Trump by name but he criticized the rise of protectionism in remarks delivered three days before the U.S. President will address the summit.

"Instead of globalization, the power of protectionism is putting its head up," Modi said, speaking in Hindi and causing an initial flurry in the audience of business and political leaders as people reached for their translation headsets.

"Their wish is not only to save themselves from globalization, but to change the natural flow of globalization."

Modi is leading a big government and business delegation to the summit in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, aiming to showcase India as a fast-growing economic power and a potential driver of global growth.

His opening address was a moment of personal triumph for the nationalist leader once shunned by the West for failing to prevent communal rioting in his home state. The occasion also recognized India's growth as an economic and geopolitical power.

Anindya Bakrie, chief executive of media company PT Bakrie Global Ventura, part of Indonesia's Bakrie conglomerate, said Modi's remarks were a welcome contrast to U.S. isolationism.

"For developing countries, when we hear the U.S. talking about isolationism it's a bit concerning. So to have more and more leaders talk about the benefits of globalization is really good," Bakrie said.

Arun Kumar, chairman and CEO of accounting firm KPMG in India, said: "He laid out where India stands in terms of his preference for a multi-polar and multicultural world."

Under his America First agenda, Trump has threatened to withdraw from the North American free-trade agreement, disavowed the global climate change accord and criticized global institutions



Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivers his speech at the plenary session of the World Economic Forum, in Davos.

**Modi, making the forum's first speech by an Indian head of state in more than two decades, did not mention Trump by name but he criticized the rise of protectionism in remarks delivered three days before the U.S. President will address the summit.**

including the United Nations and NATO.

Modi's speech echoed some of the points made by Chinese President Xi Jinping at last year's Davos summit, but he failed to generate the same enthusiasm.

A year ago, Xi, speaking days before Trump was inaugurated, staked out China's position as the world's economic powerhouse, promising a greater openness to globalization.

However, Xi, who is not attending this year, is not seen to have delivered on the broad promises made at Davos over the past year, but his speech was seen as a key moment in China's attempt to fill a void created by a more inward-looking United States.

Modi arrived in Davos on Monday for a one-day trip. His visit was marred by travel delays, as heavy snow in the ski resort town made it impossible for Modi to take a helicopter to Davos from Zurich and the roads were clogged with traffic.

In his speech, Modi laid out three big challenges facing the world: climate change, terrorism and growing protectionism.

"The result of this is that we are seeing new types of tariff and non-tariff-based barriers being imposed. Bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations appear to have come to a halt," he said.

He said the world must come together to solve these issues and India could show it the way, referring frequently to ancient Indian thought and scriptures that call for harmony between humans and nature and refer to the world as family.

Modi said climate change was a major threat to the world, yet the world had failed to come together to tackle it. He said everyone wanted carbon emissions to be cut, but the rich world was not ready to help developing economies with new technology.

India, one of the world's fastest growing major economies and a growing contributor to pollution, has said it is keen to honor its commitment to clean up the environment despite Trump pulling out of the Paris accord on cutting carbon emissions.

Modi also highlighted reforms and policies his administration had undertaken to make India more open. He said his government had abolished some 1,400 archaic laws. "We are removing red tape and laying the red carpet," Modi said. Some business leaders said India still had a lot of work to do to attract more investment, including taming bureaucracy, tackling corruption and cleaning up pollution. *Source: Reuters*

## India, ASEAN to bolster maritime security ties with eye on China

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** With an eye on growing Chinese influence in the region, India and the Asean nations on Friday decided to step up maritime and counter-terror cooperation and bolster connectivity plans during a commemorative summit, the second such gathering in a little over five years.

The summit between India and the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) also looked at ways for the speedy conclusion of a balanced and mutually beneficial Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, a trade pact being negotiated by 16 nations.

The summit marked India's 25 years of engagement with Asean, which is key to New Delhi's Act East policy and the Indo-Pacific strategy. The 10 members of Asean and India



PM Narendra Modi with ASEAN leaders in New Delhi.

have a combined population of about 1.8 billion and a combined GDP of more than US \$4.5 trillion. Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

who earlier joined the Asean leaders for a retreat meeting on maritime cooperation and security, said at the plenary of the summit

that India shares the grouping's view on rules-based order for the oceans and seas.

The word maritime was mentioned 14 times in the Delhi Declaration issued by the leaders after their summit.

In a boost for India's position on terrorism, the term "cross-border terrorism" – an oblique reference to Pakistan-sponsored terrorism – found an approximate mention in the declaration, which spoke of "countering cross-border movement of terrorists" as part of a "comprehensive approach" to fight the menace. The declaration also spoke about the decision to "deepen cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, violent extremism and radicalisation through information-sharing, law enforcement cooperation and capacity building under the existing Asean-led mechanisms".

# Eye Foundation of America - Run Goutami Eye Institute Awarded for 'Elimination of Avoidable Blindness in Childhood and Beyond'



Goutami Eye Institute



V.V. Kumar Secretary & COO, Goutami Eye Institute receiving the award from the Andhra Pradesh Minister Smt. Paritala Sunithamma (left in Saree)



The Award

**VIJAYWADA, AP/ MORGANTOWN, WV (TIP):** Government of Andhra Pradesh has recognized the yeoman services being rendered by Eye Foundation of America -run Goutami Eye Institute in Rajahmundry.

Government of Andhra Pradesh, Department of Welfare of Differently Aabled, Transgender & Senior Citizens, conferred on the Institute the Certificate of Appreciation for the service being rendered by it in "Elimination of Avoidable Blindness in Childhood and Beyond".

The award was presented on a very special day- the 209th Birth Anniversary of Louis Braille on January 4, 2018 at Vijayawada. Presenting the award, Smt. Paritala Sunithamma, Cabinet Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh lauded the great humanitarian work being done by Goutami Eye Institute and Eye Foundation of America.

V.V. Kuma, Secretary & COO, Goutami Eye Institute received the plaque and a shawl on behalf of Goutami Eye Institute.

Kumar later told The Indian Panorama that Goutami Eye Institute was the only one selected for the Award in East Godavari in Andhra Pradesh. He gave entire credit for the recognition to his team and the guiding light of the Institute, Chairman of Eye Foundation of America, Dr. V.K. Raju.

Dr. V.K. Raju, Morgantown, West Virginia based Ophthalmologist and Chairman of Eye Foundation of America which runs the Goutami Eye Institute said he was immensely pleased with the recognition of "our services". He thanked the government of Andhra Pradesh for conferring the honor. He said there was much to be done to prevent avoidable blindness, particularly among children and that he would continue to do his best in this direction as he has been doing all over the world, in particular in India, Africa and Asia.

Goutami Eye Institute is a registered not-for-profit organization established in Rajahmundry - Andhra Pradesh, India under the Societies Act of 1864. The outpatient services were commenced on 15th August 2005. The surgical services were initiated on 13th October 2005, the world sight day.

The mission of the Institute is to protect, preserve and restore the treasured gift of sight for improving quality of life by

providing caring service, irrespective of the socio-economic status, with due emphasis on education and research.

The 3-story building totaling 16,000 sq feet encompassing outpatient clinics for paying and non-paying people, two operating theatres, children play and exclusive pediatric recovery and wards suits, resource center, space for administration and catering services. Of the total 90 beds, 75 are for under privileged sections of community. Comprehensive Ophthalmology, Pediatric Ophthalmology and Low Vision services were initiated to start with. In July 2006, services in Oculoplasty were added.

The commitment of Goutami towards training and education in eye care is spread across medical and non-medical spheres. Long-term fellowships for young post-graduates and Short-term fellowships and observer ship for practicing ophthalmologists and periodic Continuing Medical Education programs with eminent national and international faculty are available for medical fraternity.

The Institute is a contributor to ORBIS International (<http://www.orbis.org/>) initiated teleophthalmology program.

For mid-level eye care personnel, different certificate courses are available in Ophthalmic Assistantship, Ophthalmic nursing, Ophthalmic theatre, Ophthalmic technician and Optical Services.

Training of Key Informants, like teachers, medical practitioners, primary health care workers,

etc., in identifying and referring people, especially of children, with eye problems is done periodically.

Education of community on avoidable causes of blindness and visual impairment is undertaken in the form of patient information series on different eye ailments and through health talks.

For further information, please contact  
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