

Miss World 2017, Manushi Chhillar to grace South Asian Women Empowerment In New York

NEW YORK (TIP): Miss World 2017 Manushi Chhillar from India has announced that she will be gracing the South Asian Women Empowerment Gala 2018 to be hosted by Bindu Kohli in New York.

This black tie gala event is title sponsored by Premal Badiani. Today, women have excelled in all domains and we have a lot to learn from each other. We believe in our uniqueness and are happy to be part of this event showcasing women who have made a big difference", said Premal Badiani. Manushi Chhillar won the coveted

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Manushi believes she has to work for empowerment of women the world over



Coldest PyeongChang greets Winter athletes with warmth

3000 athletes from 95 nations will march in the presence of several heads of States at the Opening, February 9

BY PRABHJOT SINGH IN PYEONGCHANG

PYEONGCHANG(TIP): Nearly 3000 athletes from 95 nations will march in unison in the presence of several heads of States, including the US Vice President Mike Pence, Canada's Governor General Julie Payette, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, to give a warm and colorful to the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games on Friday, February 9. Because of the extremely cold weather, perhaps the coldest of the past four editions, the organizers have done everything at their command, including providing blankets, to those who want to be part of the colorful bash that showcases South Korea.

cond on page 22



BREAKING NEWS

Government Shutdown begins past midnight, Feb 9

WASHINGTON (TIP): Government shutdown has happened for the second time in three weeks. A midnight deadline passed as Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky prevented a budget deal from passing. But lawmakers think the shutdown could end sometime Friday morning, without adversely impacting government functioning.

The next vote is at 1 a.m. ET. Paul will be allowed to speak again for an hour. Expect the final passage to happen after Paul's remarks. The bill then goes to the House, where a vote will happen between 4 a.m. ET and 6 a.m. ET. Lawmakers think the shutdown could be over before most federal workers wake up tomorrow morning.

Lawmaker slams Republicans over security clearances amid Porter scandal

WASHINGTON DC (TIP): A Democratic lawmaker is taking aim at his Republican colleagues following reports that White House Staff Secretary Rob Porter was able to continue to work in the West Wing despite being denied a permanent security clearance due to domestic abuse allegations made against him.

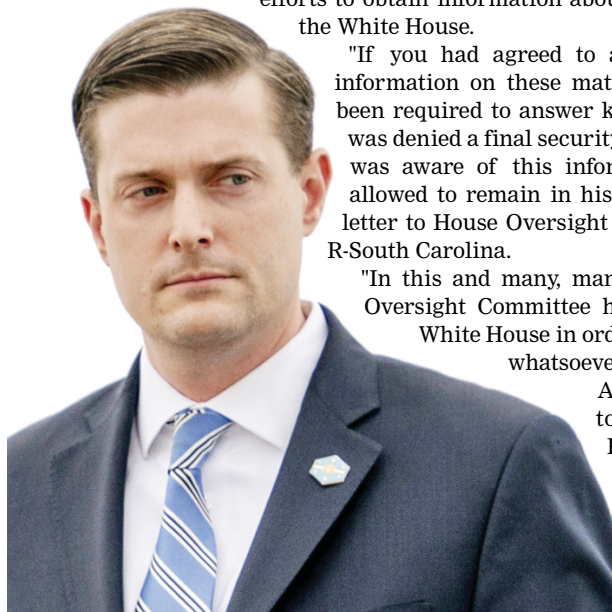
In a letter released on Thursday, February 8, Rep. Elijah Cummings of Maryland, the ranking Democrat on the House Oversight Committee, slammed Republicans for stonewalling his efforts to obtain information about the security clearance process at the White House.

"If you had agreed to any of our previous requests for information on these matters, the White House would have been required to answer key questions about why Mr. Porter was denied a final security clearance, who at the White House was aware of this information, and how Mr. Porter was allowed to remain in his position," Cummings wrote in his letter to House Oversight Committee Chairman Trey Gowdy, R-South Carolina.

"In this and many, many other areas, it appears that the Oversight Committee has constructed a wall around the White House in order to prevent any credible oversight whatsoever," he wrote.

A spokesperson for Gowdy declined to comment on Cummings' letter. Porter, who as White House Staff

Porter resigned Wednesday, Feb 7, with an undetermined effective date, amid the allegations of domestic abuse



Amazon to Roll Out Delivery at Whole Foods

DALLAS (TIP): The online retailing giant plans to roll out two-hour delivery at the organic grocer this year to those who pay for Amazon's \$99-a-year Prime membership, an Associated Press report says.

The move is the latest by Amazon to put its stamp on its recent purchase of Whole Foods. Amazon has cut prices on bananas, yogurt and other items, and began selling Kindle e-readers in some of its 470 stores.

Since Amazon bought Whole Foods last year, rival grocers have been working to increase delivery, worried about what Amazon might do. Target, for example, bought grocery-delivery company Shipt. Others have partnered with Instacart.

Amazon said deliveries will start Thursday, February 8, in Austin, Texas; Cincinnati, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; and Virginia Beach, Virginia. The service will be nationwide this year, the company said.

Shoppers will be able to order meat, seafood and other grocery items through Amazon's Prime Now app and website.

Amazon.com Inc., based in Seattle, said there's no extra fee for two-hour deliveries above \$35, but one-hour delivery will cost \$8.



Bangladesh ex-PM Zia gets 5-year RI in graft case

Son, tried in absentia, and 4 others jailed for 10 years

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was, on February 8, sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment for corruption, a body blow for the main Opposition leader who may be disqualified from contesting the next election in December, as thousands of her supporters staged protests against her jailing. The 72-year-old three-time PM was sentenced by Dhaka's Special Court in connection with the embezzlement of 21 million taka (\$250,000) in foreign donations meant for the Zia Orphanage Trust, named after her late husband Ziaur Rahman, a military ruler-turned-politician.

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Indian Origin Anesthetist Commits Suicide over Divorce in UK



George Eapen killed himself just hours after he received divorce papers from his second wife, Amy. The couple are pictured on their wedding day in 2014

Photo / courtesy Daily Mail

LONDON (TIP): An Indian origin anesthetist who was heartbroken after receiving divorce papers from his wife committed suicide by taking an overdose of a cocktail of drugs in the East Midlands region of England, a probe into his death concluded.

The 41-year-old George Eapen had separated from his general practitioner wife Amy after undergoing counselling to deal with angry outbursts and mood swings that had strained their relationship.

Born in India George Eapen had completed his medical studies in Chennai and worked at a Mumbai hospital before moving to the UK in 2001.

The 41-year-old had separated from his general practitioner wife Amy after undergoing counselling to deal with angry outbursts and mood swings that had strained their relationship, 'Daily Mirror' reported.

"George made a number of attempts at reconciliation, with letters and phone calls, clearly he had a great deal of difficulty accepting it (separation), said Derbyshire Assistant Coroner Peter Nieto.

It was when he received divorce papers in the post in October last year, that Eapen text some friends to say he was going to kill himself. He drove to a secluded area of Derbyshire's picturesque tourist spot known as Peak District, where he was discovered too late to be resuscitated, Chesterfield Coroners Court was told. Eapen worked as a consultant neuro-anesthetist at the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and was also a university lecturer.

It is said that he had been hurt when his first marriage ended within a year back in 2007. He met Amy in 2012 and the couple married two years later.

The widow sobbed in court as the details of Eapen's suicide were recounted at the probe.

The couple had separated over his anger management issues, with Amy moving out of their home in the suburb of Totley, Sheffield, last year. On October 14, when Eapen found the divorce papers from his wife, he went to work and then drove to the spot where he was later found dead.

"It was clear George was unhappy, but he had not contacted anyone prior to his actions or close enough to those actions to allow anyone to intervene. It's my view that he has done what he has done with the intention of committing suicide, said the coroner, who felt the anesthetist had the expert knowledge necessary to administer a toxic dose in the most effective way. The combination of the drugs he took caused acute respiratory arrest, leading to his death. The coroner added that there was no proof he had taken the drugs from his hospital workplace earlier in the day, but it was "reasonable" to assume that was the case.

Indian American Philanthropist's SM Sehgal Foundation makes presentation at 56th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development

NEW YORK (TIP): When citizens work towards moving up on the ladder of prosperity, development goals are automatically met, Ajay Pandey, the CEO of the SM Sehgal Foundation, told the United Nations' 56th Session of the Commission for Social Development in New York on February 5.

Making a presentation on the foundation's work with communities on rural development, he said engaging all groups segregated by varied factors is imperative to achieve impact.

The 10-day 56th Session of the Commission for Social Development, which began on January 29, concludes on February 7. It is primarily discussing "strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all."

Founded by the Indian American philanthropist crop scientist and entrepreneur Suri Sehgal, the Gurugram, India, -based SM Sehgal Foundation is present in some 700 Indian villages, impacting more than 230,000 villagers in five states. More than 50 percent of the people the foundation is working with are women.

Pandey named women, the elderly, the youth and the infirm as vulnerable groups, and said it is important to recognize the role of local government institutions and engagement of citizenry in initiating and affecting any development initiative.

"A prudent policy mix is therefore required that would strive for inclusive growth," he said in the written statement submitted before the Commission for Social Development. "One that could provide the opportunities and improve capabilities of 'the farthest behind' so as to enable them to participate in a sustainable growth process," he added.

Speaking from his experience in India and



South Asia, Pandey said "investment in social capital can thrust sustainable social development."

The work of the SM Sehgal Foundation among the rural poor shows that "an effective amalgamation of empowered citizenry and accountable institutions of governance can create inclusive spaces for equitable development, he said.

"Bringing in innovations in water security, food security and social justice, we have developed technologies and models such as the high pressure recharge well, bio sand filters and salt resilient crop varieties, some of which have been recognized by the United Nations as adaptable and scalable solutions," he said. "These models are now being adapted in several continents across the globe to create better future for all. Success of these models is however reliant on the foundational aspects of program designing which works on the principle of creating constructive democratic spaces for all. It is the good rural

governance initiative of the foundation that forms the basis of every innovation or intervention, thus planned."

Pandey said the foundation, through its 15,000 trained volunteers, who work as effective citizen participants in addressing the disconnect between promises of law and their grassroots reality, is helping bridge the ever-widening gap between policy and people.

"The foundation is working tirelessly to develop this initiative nationally and globally such that law and policies become people-centric in every sense - their formulations, implementation, correction should all be inclusive of masses," he said. "Through this initiative, communities work to secure good governance as they participate to strengthen democracy, rule of law, and justice. All this to break the difficulties that law, its language, its structures and their language together weave against the common people."

(Source: AB Wire)

Indian American community marches in support of Trump's immigration policy

WASHINGTON DC(TIP): At least 800 Indian Americans participated in a march outside the White House on Saturday, February 3rd, raising slogans in support of U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal to implement a "merit-based" immigration system in the country and demanding discontinuation of country quotas for Green Card approvals.

Marchers in front of the White House said the President's declared preference for "merit-based" immigration would tilt the balance in their favor.

"Trump loves Hindus," "Trump loves India," "Trump bringing Ram Rajya," "Indians love Trump," said the slogans at the march organized under the banner of the Republican Hindu Coalition (RHC), an organization led by Chicago-based businessman Shalabh Kumar who is believed to be close to Trump. The marchers were all Indian technology workers who had come from all over the U.S. - California, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, Illinois and New York.

Krishna Bansal, National Policy and Political Director of RHC, said Trump's proposal to end family unification immigration would open up more space for Indian skilled workers. Nearly half of the one million Green Cards issued every year goes to close relatives of American citizens regardless of their skills and the Trump administration wants to restrict this practice.

"Thirty per cent of the country's skilled immigrants come from India, but they have to wait several decades before being eligible for Green Cards. These are aspirants who are already here, contributing to the economy, paying their taxes and raising their families," he said. He said the group supported the proposal for building a wall on the U.S. southern border with Mexico and ending the diversity lottery program for Green Card allotment. The marchers supported the ending of what the administration calls 'chain migration.'

Krishna Mullakuri, whose application for Green Card is pending for five years, agreed with the view. He said the emphasis on merit as the



Indian Americans gathered in front of the White House in support of Trump's immigration policy

primary criteria for allowing new entrants into the country would work to India's advantage.

The march on Saturday, while endorsing Trump's approach to immigration, was to highlight the issues concerning the legal residents who are already in the country. "While the current discussion is primarily focusing on those who illegally entered the country, we are working with the lawmakers to get some attention on this group that reached this country legally but face uncertainty now," said Mr. Bansal.

The marchers supported this policy. "Dreamers pay for the wall," and "Make American strong again," they shouted. Bansal said the President's proposals were generous and those being offered a path to citizenship would be happy to pay a fee that would fund the wall.

An issue of particular concern for several of the marchers was the future of their children, who will lose their dependency status when they turn 21. "These are legal dreamers. Colleges are reluctant to admit them as their visa status has to be changed midway through the course. And once they are graduates, they go back to the end of the queue, again starting with an H-1B application," said Ramesh Ramanath, who grew up in Chennai. "While they address the issue of dreamers, this question also should get priority," he said.

Indian American lawyer is the primary author of Republican memo



Kashyap "Kash" Patel, an Indian American is credited with drafting the Republican Memo which accuses the FBI of political bias

WASHINGTON (TIP): A controversial Republican memo that accuses the FBI of political bias has primarily been written by Indian American lawyer Kashyap "Kash" Patel is ruling the news as according to a media report.

The "Kash memo" portrays the FBI in a negative light, alleging that the agency helped the Democratic party and its presidential candidate Hillary Clinton against Donald Trump, the eventual winner of the 2016 presidential elections, The New York Times reported.

The report said the explosive memo was primarily written by Patel, a committee staff member for Representative Devin Nunes, Republican of California and the chairman of the Intelligence Committee.

The office of Congressman Nunes where Patel works has refuted the report that he is the author of the memo which they assert is a collective and team effort.

"The problem is the lack of facts. Kash being the 'driving force' behind the memo is not a fact. Kash being the 'pusher of the memo' is not a fact. Unnamed people referring to 'the Kash memo' is not a fact," Jack Langer, a spokesperson for Nunes was quoted as saying by the Daily Beast.

Patel did not immediately respond to a PTI query on this.

In an email to The New York Times, Damon Nelson, staff director of the House Select Committee on Intelligence said that no single member was responsible for the memo and that its creation was a "team effort" that involved investigators who had access to source material.

"The clamor to identify 'an author' is indicative of an alarming trend by opponents of our investigation which is to promote spurious allegations against committee members and staff. They will not impact the committee's focus and commitment to continue this investigation," Nelson was quoted as saying.

At the same time, he praised Patel, saying, "We value Kash's dedication and his contributions to the committee's oversight efforts".

Patel did not immediately respond to a PTI query on this.

According to media reports, Patel attracted media attention early this summer when he travelled to London along with another staffer in search of Christopher Steele, author of a controversial dossier on Trump.

However, he could not succeed in his effort. Patel, 37, who grew up in New York, graduated from the University of Richmond in 2002. He is the chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence. He is senior counsel on counter terrorism.

Before joining the House Select Committee on Intelligence, Patel was a trial attorney in the National Security Division of the Justice Department.

INDIAN AMERICANS AMONG OAKLAND COUNTY'S ELITE 40 UNDER 40

OAKLAND(TIP): Indian Americans Shantha Kumari Rajendran, 36, and Adi Sethi, 27, have been named among Oakland County's Elite 40 Under 40.

According to the information posted on the county's website, County Executive L. Brooks Patterson's seven-year-old initiative "recognizes and spotlights dynamic leaders under the age of 40 who are making a difference in Oakland County and beyond."

Rajendran, who is a Staff Engineer-Systems Lead for Panasonic Automotive, is a 15-year veteran of the automotive industry as an Embedded Systems Engineer. She specializes in Human Machine Interface and User Experience and has filed 10 automotive patents, two of which were recently approved. She has submitted several technical papers to Society for Automotive Engineers (SAE) and Society for Information Displays (SID) conferences and is an active SAE volunteer.

"Shantha was the first woman in her family to finish school, university, become an engineer, work in the USA, get a master's degree with honors," her husband Ganapathy Lakshmanaperumal writes. "She has great balance between her career and family."

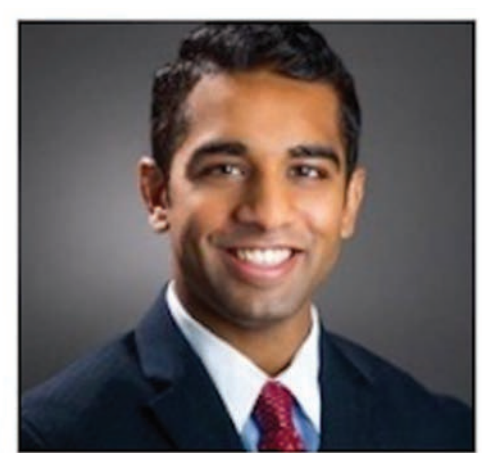
Rajendran holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Science Engineering and a master's in Management. A Stanford Certified Project Manager, she is pursuing her second master's degree at Harvard University.

Another Indian American Adi Sethi, 27, serves as the director of Asian Pacific American engagement at the Republican National Committee and the chief of staff of the Young Republican National Federation.

After completing both his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of



Indian Americans Shantha Kumari Rajendran (left) and Adi Sathi (right) have been named among Oakland County's Elite 40 Under 40



Michigan, Adi was elected in February 2015 to a two year term as a statewide Vice Chair of the Michigan Republican Party at the age of 24. For his work in this role, he was recognized in both 2016 and 2017 on Newsmax's annual list of 30 Most Influential Republicans Under 30. Over the last eight years, Adi has managed or advised on numerous successful political campaigns at the local, state, and federal level.

As a student, he was elected to serve as the Executive Director of the Association of Big Ten Students, an organization that consists of the 14 Big Ten schools from 11 different states and represents over 540,000 students. For his work in this role, he was invited to the 2013 White House Youth Summit and recognized by Red Alert Politics on their 2014 '30 Under 30' list. Most recently Adi was a 2016 Fellow in the Michigan Political Leadership Program

through Michigan State University's Institute of Public Policy and Social Research. He was previously an APAICS Legislative Fellow in the Office of Senator Orrin G. Hatch who serves as both the President Pro Tempore of the U.S.

Senate as well as the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. In his free time, Adi enjoys cheering on Michigan sports teams, working out, and watching Netflix documentaries.

The Oakland County Executive's Elite 40 Under 40 program is an initiative of County Executive L. Brooks Patterson that recognizes and spotlights dynamic leaders under the age of 40 who are making a difference in Oakland County and beyond. In its seventh year, the program is open to individuals who live or work in Oakland County and are born AFTER December 31, 1978.

Indian American Researcher at University of Arizona named Regents' Professor



Hoshin Gupta's work is among the most renowned in the field of hydrology File picture

TUSCAN, AZ (TIP): An Indian American, Hoshin Gupta, researcher at the University of Arizona has been named Regents' Professor, the state's highest faculty rank. He has been a member of the faculty of the Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences at the university and was among three professors recently elevated as Regents' Professor recently.

Gupta was inducted at the annual ceremony held at the university on January 11, 2018.

Gupta is a hydrologist, systems theorist and philosopher with strong technical skills in complex algorithm development. His ideas, methods, and vision have set the standard in his field for 30 years and enhanced the ability to use models for learning and prediction in hydrology.

Gupta has tackled some of the most fundamental challenges of hydrologic modeling throughout his career. His multiple path-breaking contributions have enabled researchers to improve model parameterization, hydrologic modeling, and model evaluation.

An internationally reputed scientist, Gupta's research across disciplines has contributed to the enhanced understanding of human-natural system interactions.

Gupta's work is highly recognized nationally and internationally. One of his papers has been cited more than 1,500 times, and total citations for all of this work exceed 27,000 in Google Scholar. He has published 10 books and more than 170 peer-reviewed papers, and his work is among the most cited in the field of hydrology.

In the 2000s, Gupta was Executive Director of the SAHRA science and technology center to bridge water science with decision making. He was elected a fellow of the American Geophysical Union in 2009. Gupta has received several awards and honors including the European Geophysical Union's 2014 Dalton Medal and the American Meteorological Society's 2017 RE Horton Lecture Award. In 2013, he was elected Tucson Electric Power Fellow of the Galileo Circle of the University of Arizona. He has been selected by students as the winner of the department's annual award for teaching excellence on five separate occasions. Additionally, he was recognized by the University of Arizona with the 2014-2015 Graduate College Graduate and Professional Education Teaching and Mentoring Award.

"Being a member of the UA community for almost 34 years has been a rewarding and enriching experience," Gupta said. "To be recognized and valued in this way is very gratifying, not to mention extremely motivating."

The award goes to full professors who have demonstrated achievements resulting in national or international recognition. Regents' Professors are expected to exemplify the highest objectives and standards of the University through their scholarship, research or creative activities, and teaching.

Indian origin Google AR director will lead Facebook's AR platform



"Now, as I join the Camera/AR team at Facebook, I'm especially interested in building more conversation and momentum in cross-platform camera services," says Chandhok.

MENLO PARK, CA (TIP): Indian origin Nikhil Chandhok, Director of Product for Augmented Reality (AR) at Google, has joined Facebook to lead product management of its camera team working on AR.

Chandhok took to social media on January 29th with the announcement and shared a post on Facebook saying, "I want to share an exciting update. Today is my first day at Facebook!"

"Now, as I join the Camera/AR team at Facebook, I'm especially interested in building more conversation and momentum in cross-platform camera services," Chandhok posted.

"While I'm leaving the team at Daydream and Google, I'm proud of the work we did together. We gave developers ARCore and expanded access to augmented reality tools," he said.

"We also designed foundational aspects of AR platforms and explored how people use AR now and how they'll use it in the future," Chandhok added.

He also tweeted on January 30th, "Today is my 1st day at Facebook! There are massive opportunities ahead for AR and I look fwd to joining Facebook as we bring more AR experiences to life - for more people!"

INDIAN AMERICAN WOMAN & SON FOUND SHOT DEAD IN VIRGINIA HOME

The police were notified by a caller on Wednesday, February 1st, that a co-worker who lives in the 25000 block of Tomey Court had not come to work this week.

WASHINGTON (TIP): An Indian American woman and her son have been found dead at their home in a Virginia suburb of Washington, local police said.

The police have launched a manhunt to arrest the alleged killers who shot Mala Manwani, 65, and her son Rishi Manwani, 32.

The police were notified by a caller on Wednesday, February 1, that a co-worker who lives in the 25000 block of Tomey Court had not come to work this week.

"Deputies checked the residence and the adult in question and another adult were found deceased inside. Both appear to have died from gunshot wounds," said the Loudoun County Sheriff Office.

COMMENTS

"The case does not appear to be a random act and there is no indication of any threat to the public," police said.

The mother and son were the only ones living at the location.

INDIAN ORIGIN HOTELIER IN NEPAL ARRESTED FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING



Mashkoor Ahmad Lari has been the owner of Everest Hotel in Kathmandu for the last 30 years.

KATHMANDU (TIP): An Indian Origin hotelier in Nepal who was wanted by the Interpol, was arrested on February 3rd, on charges of drug trafficking. Mashkoor Ahmad Lari was arrested from the Maharajgunj area of Kathmandu, said a senior police officer at the Kathmandu Metropolitan Police Office.

The police were searching for the hotelier after drugs were found inside a package dispatched by him from Kathmandu to the Netherlands during a security check at Germany's Frankfurt Airport, the police said.

Mr Lari is the owner of Kathmandu's five-star Everest Hotel which was closed the building developed major cracks in the 2015 earthquakes.

He has been operating the hotel in Kathmandu for the last 30 years.

The police have filed a case for trafficking drugs against Mr Lari in the Kathmandu District Court after taking him into custody.

Indian American High School Girl Nominated as 2018 US Presidential Scholar in the Arts

WASHINGTON DC (TIP): Indian American Shreyah Mohanselman of Gahanna, Ohio, has been nominated in the Dance discipline amongst the nine artistic disciplines, chosen by YoungArts, the sole nominating agency for 2018 US Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

Shreyah Mohanselman, who has lived in New Albany her entire life, is a senior at Columbus Academy, where she has been a student since kindergarten. She has been involved with student government since middle school, was president of her class both her sophomore and junior years, and is focused on communication, spirit and community, and efficiency and organization in 2017 as student council president.

In addition to student government, Mohanselman plays the violin in the Columbus Academy Advanced Orchestra, serves as a student orientation leader for new students transitioning into the school and is an editor of the yearbook, a group she has been a part of since her freshman year.

All of this adds up to Mohanselman being an exceptional high school student - one that her school community at Columbus Academy and her home community of New Albany can be immensely proud of. But Mohanselman is actually best known for something else.

Her dancing.

"Dance has always been my passion," she says. "I started learning ballet when I was 4 years old at the New Albany Ballet Company. Shortly thereafter, I started learning the Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam."

Bharatanatyam and Odissi, a second form of classical Indian dancing that Mohanselman performs, are, as she explains, ancient art forms that were originally performed in temples. The dance depicts Hindu stories and are dedicated to gods and goddesses.

"The two dance forms have differences and similarities, and sometimes it is difficult to force the body to be true to both of these two conflicting dance forms," she says.

Mohanselman isn't simply a dancer, though; she's an award-winning dancer. She has won first place in the Federation of Indian Associations of Central Ohio's Indian solo dance competition for three consecutive



Shreyah Mohanselman after winning at 2018 National Young Arts Foundation. (Twitter image)

years. Additionally, Mohanselman has three first place and two second place finishes since 2013 in the Vindhya Cultural Association in Columbus, a competition that attracts talent from all across the state. In 2017, she was presented with a National Young Arts Winner Honorable Mention Award in Indian/classical dance.

Mohanselman's talent for dance has taken her to perform at venues all across the state, including many times at the Jeanne B. McCoy Community Center for the Arts, a place she says, "always feels like home."

And now she is nominated as 2018 US Presidential Scholar in the Arts

About 2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts and the YoungArts

2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts is one of the nation's highest honors for high school students who exemplify academic and artistic excellence. YoungArts is the sole nominating agency for this high honor and the 60 candidates, representing 25 states and nine artistic disciplines, are all YoungArts winners. These students have been nominated to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program for their artistic achievements.

The candidate applications will be reviewed

by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, which will ultimately select 20 high school seniors to be recognized as U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts for their academic and artistic accomplishments, demonstrated leadership, community service and outreach initiatives, and overall creativity. In June, the 20 arts scholars will join the other 141 U.S. Presidential Scholars from across the country in Washington, D.C. for the National Recognition Program. During the program, all scholars receive a Presidential Medallion presented on behalf of the President of the United States and participate in several recognition activities while in Washington, D.C.

"The National YoungArts Foundation is proud to partner with the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program to acknowledge our nation's most talented graduating high school seniors," said Carolina Garcia Jayaram, YoungArts President and CEO. "These young leaders excel in everything that they do, from their artistry and inquisitiveness, to their academics and activism. YoungArts congratulates each of the nominees on their accomplishments, and we look forward to announcing the selected arts scholars this spring."

Indian American President of USIBC is pleased with the Indian budget

WASHINGTON DC (TIP): US-India Business Council on Friday, February 2, praised the Union Budget 2018-19 calling it a move by the Modi government to leverage the growth and prosperity of India in the coming years.

The organization said, in a press release, that it is pleased that the budget contains many of its recommendations in critical areas such as infrastructure development, access to health care, affordable housing, energy, and education for all citizens form the backbone of any growing economy.

"American industry is committed to growing, strengthening, and sustaining these areas of collaboration with India," it said.

The three years of Modi-led government has given shape to a robust economy, which is on a growth path backed by strong reform agenda, the group said.

For the current year, USIBC has put the priority on ensuring greater ease of doing business, promoting certainty, transparency, and predictability in decision-making to ultimately, unlock greater growth and investment opportunities for businesses in both US and India whereby strengthening the US-India commercial partnership, it added.

"[The] American industry is committed to



USIBC President Nisha Desai Biswal says the group is pleased that the budget has included many of its recommendations

growing, strengthening, and sustaining these areas of collaboration with India," said USIBC President Nisha Biswal.

"In the last three years, India has been on a robust path to growth, backed by a strong economic reform agenda. USIBC's goal is to keep up the momentum of the US-India commercial partnership to ultimately, unlock

greater growth and investment opportunities for businesses in both nations," she added.

The USIBC, an advocacy organization, consists of 350 top-tier U.S. and Indian companies doing business in both the United States and India. It is part of the US Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation.

Xavier University School of Medicine holds its 42nd White Coat Ceremony

34 students presented White Coat and administered the Medical Student Pledge of Professional Conduct

ARUBA (TIP): Xavier University School of Medicine held its 42nd White Coat Ceremony on Friday, January 19th, 2018. 34 students were presented with their White Coats and they took the Medical Student Pledge of Professional Conduct.

President Ravishankar Bhooplapur addressed the audience of students, their family members, faculty, and staff at this momentous occasion. He welcomed the first lady Prime Minister of Aruba, Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes, and congratulated her on her election and in taking over the beautiful, happy island.

In his address, President Ravishankar Bhooplapur commended the students on choosing the right medical school and for entering this most noble profession. He emphasized the importance of their studies, and assured commitment from the most qualified faculty to provide them with a superb education. He also brought to everyone's attention Xavier's success of a 90% first time USMLE passing rate, and a 70% residency rate. President Bhooplapur thanked Xavier's faculty and staff, as well as the government of Aruba, for welcoming them with open hearts. He believes Aruba is the best island in the Caribbean, and a wonderful tourist destination. President Bhooplapur stated that Xavier is a "feather in the cap" of Aruba, in that it has a special place on the island. Finally, he thanked the Chair, Board of Trustees, and trustee Mr. Frank Croes for his continued guidance in Aruba.

Following the President's address, Prime Minister, Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes, spoke. She explained how she wanted to attend medical school after high school, but her only option at the time was to go to Costa Rica to study. While she said the country was beautiful and her studies went well, she missed home. Ultimately, she came back to Aruba, where her father decided she would study law. Mrs. Wever-Croes was excited when Xavier first came to the happy island of Aruba, as her dreams of a medical school on the island had come true. She assured continued support for Xavier, and appreciated that the school awarded an Aruban student a scholarship. She concluded by congratulating the students on receiving their White Coats.



Prime Minister of Aruba, Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes, with faculty, staff, and recent White Coat recipients at the White Coat Ceremony



President Ravishankar Bhooplapur presents Prime Minister, Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes with a gift.



PM addresses: The first female Prime Minister of Aruba, Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes, addresses the audience at the White Coat Ceremony.



Ravi Bhooplapur addresses: President Ravishankar Bhooplapur addresses the audience at the White Coat Ceremony

Xavier is fortunate and thankful that the Honorable Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes was in attendance at such a special event.

Xavier University School of Medicine has received accreditation from two accrediting bodies: CAAM-HP (Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions), and ACCM (Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine). We offer special scholarships for Aruban students. We have provincial loans for Canadian students, as well as loan programs for U.S. citizens and green card holders.

(Press Release)

Indian American Sikh man's Gas Station vandalized in Kentucky

The business was defaced with racial slurs and symbols including "swastikas."

KENTUCKY(TIP): A gas station and convenience store owned by an Indian American Sikh man in Greenup County, Kentucky, was defaced with racial slurs, and "white power" symbols and "swastikas."

According to the WSAZ news channel, the store owner Gary Singh was shocked to see his store walls sprayed with highly racist and offensive graffiti.

"I'm just really shocked that somebody is doing that," Singh told WSAZ.

He said he came to know about vandalism of his store from an employee on February 1st morning.

Police officers who checked the CCTV footage of the store found a ski masked man moving toward the store after 11:30 pm.

"I was really nervous about that," Singh told the channel. "It happened to me for the first time in this store in four years' time. I've never done wrong to the community here. I try to help the community all the time."

Singh told the channel that he came to the United States in the 90s to fulfill American dream and what happened to his store on Thursday was more than a nightmare.

The police have registered a case against the unknown miscreants and also seeking the opinion of county prosecutors on whether charges of hate crime can be registered.

Singh told the channel that he is ready to forgive the vandals and hoped that they don't mess with his livelihood in the future.

"Please don't do it to anybody else," Singh said. "Don't hurt anybody's feelings. Let them work and enjoy their life." This is not the first time that the store is getting vandalized. In 2014, a few former employees, whom Singh fired following a petty robbery, had vandalized the store.

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CONGRESS-BJP SPAR OVER RAFALE JET DEAL

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress and the BJP continued to exchange barbs over the Rafale aircraft deal on Thursday with Rahul Gandhi accusing the prime minister of allegedly changing the 'entire deal' to benefit a businessman, a charge debunked by the ruling party.

The Congress vice-president also asked why no questions were posed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on BJP president Amit Shah's son Jay, whose company his party alleged has witnessed a quantum jump in turnover since the Modi government came to power.

"You ask me so many questions and I answer all of them. I want to ask you, why don't you question Prime Minister Modi on the Rafale deal. Why don't you ask about Amit Shah's son? Why don't you question the prime minister who changed the entire Rafale deal to help a businessman?" he asked. Responding to Gandhi, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Congress is reminded of its rule when it rakes up such an issue.

"They are finding it difficult to accept that there has been no case of corruption in the three-year rule of the Narendra Modi government," Prasad, who was briefing reporters on cabinet decisions, said when asked about allegations levelled by Gandhi.

The Rafale deal was the focus of debate earlier this week as well when the Congress accused the government of compromising national interest and security while promoting "crony capitalism" and causing a loss to the public exchequer.

Congress' communications department head Randeep Surjewala alleged that the government neglected the interests of public sector Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

He also alleged that Dassault Aviation, the French manufacturer of Rafale aircraft, refused to transfer technology to it and instead entered into an agreement with Reliance Defence.

The BJP dismissed the allegation, claiming it was intended to "divert attention" as party bigwigs faced the prospect of being questioned in the AgustaWestland VVIP chopper scandal.

In a statement, Reliance Defence Limited dubbed the Congress' allegations as 'baseless and unfounded'.

It said its subsidiary formed a joint venture, Dassault Reliance Aerospace, after a bilateral agreement between two private companies and "the Indian government has no role to play in this".

Source: PTI

Treat Ayodhya case as a 'land issue', rules Supreme Court

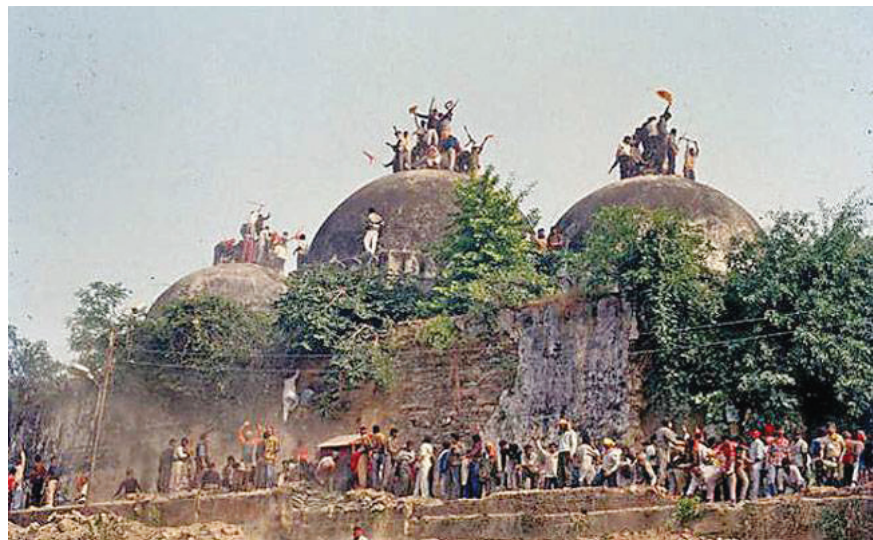
NEW DELHI (TIP): Amid claims and counter-claims by various Hindu and Muslim leaders over the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid site in Ayodhya, the Supreme Court on Feb 8 refused to be drawn into religious arguments, saying it was only a property dispute.

"We are treating it only as a land dispute. There are appeals and cross-appeals," a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra said after an advocate, who wanted to intervene in the matter, said it involved sentiments of 100 crore Hindus.

The Bench chose to keep pending all intervention applications filed by those who were not parties to the dispute before the Allahabad High Court. "We are not allowing the intervention application... We are not dismissing them... The applications for impleadment and intervention shall be considered at the appropriate time," said the Bench, which also included Justices Ashok Bhushan and S Abdul Nazeer. One such intervention application pending before the Bench is from BJP leader Subramanian Swamy.

The top court asked all parties to file English translation of documents relied upon in two weeks and posted the matter for March 14. It did not commit to a "day-to-day" hearing of the case.

The top court is seized of cross-appeals challenging the Allahabad High Court's September 30, 2010, verdict dividing the 2.7-acre disputed land at the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid site equally between Ram Lalla, Nirmohi Akhara and Sunni Wakf Board. All three chose to challenge the order before



A file photo of 'kar sewaks' demolishing the disputed structure.

the top court. Besides, there are more than 10 other appeals as well.

Thursday's hearing was in sharp contrast to the one held on December 5, which was marred by a heated exchange after senior counsel Kapil Sibal, Rajiv Dhawan and Dushyant Dave — representing Muslim appellants — insisted that the case should be heard only after the 2019 Lok Sabha poll as it might impact the electoral outcome.

Additional Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Uttar Pradesh Government, told the Bench that 504 exhibits, including scriptures such as the Ram Charit Manas and the Bhagavad Gita, their excerpts and 87 depositions along with the translations had been filed.

Advocate Ejaz Maqbool, appearing for one of the appellants, gave an overview

of the documents already filed and those required to be filed. The Bench directed the Registry to make available copies of two video cassettes to advocates for various parties on payment of actual cost.

The otherwise peaceful proceedings witnessed some banter after senior counsel representing Ram Lalla, CS Vaidyanathan, said the other side should submit a synopsis of their legal propositions to make it easy for all concerned to assist the court.

"The High Court's verdict is an insult to justice," Dhawan said. He requested day-to-day hearing, but the Bench didn't appear inclined. "There are 700 cases pending where citizens are crying for justice," said CJ Misra, clarifying he was not commenting on the importance of the Ayodhya case.

Sonia Gandhi says Rahul is her boss too, wants to work with like-minded parties to defeat BJP

NEW DELHI (TIP): Launching an all-out attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Narendra Modi government, former Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Feb 8 said she would work with "like-minded political parties" to ensure its defeat in the next general elections.

Addressing the Congress Parliamentary Party, of which she is the chairperson, Sonia alleged that the government was orchestrating violence against minorities to polarise society for narrow political gains.

She added that this would also be seen in Karnataka, which goes to the polls in a few months.

Sonia told party MPs to work with dedication, loyalty and enthusiasm, asking them to work with new party president Rahul Gandhi to strengthen the party.

She added that Rahul is also her boss. "We have elected a new Congress president and on your behalf and on my own, I wish him all the very best. He is now my boss too — let there be no doubt about that — and I know that all of you will work with him with the same dedication, loyalty and enthusiasm as you did with me," she said.

"I am confident that we will work cohesively under his leadership to revive our party's fortunes. That process has begun," she said.



While stressing that her son is in charge, Sonia Gandhi also made it clear that she would take the lead in rallying other parties against the ruling BJP ahead of national elections that follow a series of state polls this year.

However, News18 reported that a section of the old guard in Congress was reluctant to deal with Rahul for political negotiations. Congress' call for a meeting of Opposition parties ahead of the Budget Session was also

met with a lacklustre response from non-BJP parties, the report said.

"It has been almost four years since this government came to power, this has been a period in which institutions which have come

HIGHLIGHTS

- She said she was convinced Congress's defeat in 2014 was an aberration
- She urged the party to be ready for the national elections
- "Reality is different," she said on PM Modi's offensive against Congress

under systematic assault — Parliament itself, judiciary, media and civil society. Investigative agencies have been let loose against political opponents," The Indian Express quoted Sonia as saying.

"The minorities feel unsafe and are being subjected to barbarous attacks. Dalits have come under renewed and widespread atrocities, as have women. In many cases, this violence, especially against minorities and Dalits, is not sporadic or random, but orchestrated to polarise our society for narrow political gains. We saw this both in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. We will no doubt see it again in Karnataka. Such polarisation is criminal in a democracy, yet those in power look the other way," NDTV further quoted her as saying.

1984 riots: Delhi Sikh body releases Jagdish Tytler's 'confessional' video

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) on Feb 5 released a video of a purported sting operation of former Congress MP Jagdish Tytler wherein he has allegedly admitted to killing 100 Sikhs during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

While releasing a series of five video clips before the media in New Delhi, DSGMC president and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) national spokesperson Manjit Singh GK claimed that an unknown man on February 3 handed over an envelope to his security guards. The envelope had GK's name written over it with the instruction "to be opened only by GK." It contained a pen drive having the five video clips allegedly recorded in 2011 and some documents of transcripts thereof, he added.

GK alleged that in clip 3, Tytler has admitted that he has killed 100 Sikhs and nothing happened to him except a sham inquiry.

"This is Tytler's confession to the crime he has committed during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. He should be arrested," he said.

He added, "Tytler has audaciously confessed to his crimes like a proclaimed offender. In clip 1, Tytler has expressed remorse for not being able to recover Rs 150-crore cash from his friends. In clip 2, he has stated that his son is in a company which has accounts in Swiss bank and he also boasts about going to Rajya Sabha or being offered the chief ministership of Delhi."

GK further alleged, "Clip 3 is shocking wherein Tytler said he had lost faith in then PM Manmohan Singh. Clip 4 contains videos where Tytler boasts

Tytler files police complaint against GK

NEW DELHI (TIP): Senior Congress leader Jagdish Tytler has filed a complaint with the Delhi Police against Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) president Manjit Singh GK and unknown persons, saying that they had released a doctored video which allegedly showed him admitting to killing hundreds of Sikhs in 1984.

He asked the Delhi Police to register an FIR against Manjit Singh and remove the objectionable video from websites and social media.

The complaint said: "Manjit Singh recently played several doctored video clips at a press conference claiming them to be of some sting operation. He falsely stated that I had confessed to having killed hundreds of Sikhs in the riots. The statement attributing the killing of Sikhs to me is false and outlandish and the video clips are doctored."

"GK could not convincingly state as to how he got the alleged video clips and/or who conducted the sting operation. His explanation was that an unidentified youth had left a sealed packet with a security guard at his residence is ridiculous," the complaint reads.



about being close to judiciary and how he got justice Pathak and his wife appointed to the court."

He warned that in case the investigation agencies fail to arrest Tytler within 24 hours, the DSGMC will launch protests against the police and other government agencies, besides raising the issue in Parliament.

SUKHBIR SEEKS CASE AGAINST GANDHI FAMILY

Meanwhile, SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal demanded a case be registered against the Gandhi family for "engineering the massacre" of thousands

of Sikhs in Delhi and in other parts of the country in the wake of the "evidence" on Tytler.

Sukhbir alleged that the fact that Tytler was seen bragging that he was behind the murder of 100 Sikhs in Delhi in 1984 and boasting that he had been promised a Rajya Sabha seat or chief ministership of Delhi by the Congress high command proved the Gandhi family's "direct involvement in the 1984 genocide". He added, "Now it is incumbent that the courts of law to ask the Gandhi family to explain why it was offering such inducements to a criminal who had the blood of innocent Sikhs on his hands?"

4 arrested for firing in Srinagar hospital, helping Pak terrorist escape

SRINAGAR (TIP): Four men have been arrested for yesterday's firing in a Srinagar hospital that enabled Pakistani terrorist Naveed Jutt to escape from police custody. The police said they have tracked down on the motorcycle and the vehicle they had used for the getaway. The escape of 22-year-old Jutt when he was taken to the hospital for a routine check-up with five other prisoners, has been put down to a detailed conspiracy. The superintendent of Rainawari Central Jail has been suspended, Jammu and Kashmir home secretary said.

Gunshots rang out in the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital yesterday, when the prisoners were brought into the Out Patients' Department. Two policemen accompanying the prisoners collapsed. One died on the spot, the other in the hospital. In the confusion, Jutt managed to escape with the pheran-clad men, who had come on a motorbike.

Naveed Jutt, 22, has been at the jail since 2016, since his arrest two years before. Senior police officers said he managed to get a court order to stay in a Srinagar jail even though all Pakistani terrorists are lodged outside Kashmir.



Naveed Jutt escaped from a hospital in Srinagar when he was taken for a medical check-up.

His escape, said state police chief SP Vaid, had been carefully planned with active collaboration from inside the jail. The police had prior information about Lashkar activities inside the jail.

Naveed Jutt was known to be close to Abu Qasim, who headed Lashkar-e-Taiba in Kashmir and was killed by security forces in 2015. He is also close to Zaki ur

Rehman Lakhvi, one of the masterminds of 26/11 terror attack in Mumbai.

The police said Naveed Jutt was involved in several terror attacks in Kashmir, including one in which a teacher on election duty was killed. He is also believed to be behind the killing of at least seven policemen. *Source: NDTV*

UNION MINISTER GIRIRAJ BOOKED FOR LAND GRAB

PATNA (TIP): Union Minister Giriraj Singh has been booked for grabbing land belonging to a Dalit in his native Bihar, the police said today.

The FIR against Singh and 32 others was lodged on February 2 on the orders of a special SC&ST court where the



complainant had filed an application under Section 156(3) of the CrPC, seeking directions to the police for registering a case against the accused, SHO of Danapur police station in Patna district Sandeep Kumar Singh said.

The BJP MP from Nawada is Union Minister of State (independent charge) for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The complainant, Ram Narain Prasad, a resident of Asopur village, alleged that the accused grabbed 2.6 acres that he owned and abused him when he protested.

Tejaswi Yadav, Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, whose party (JD-U) is a BJP ally, tweeted: "Nitish Kumar ji, don't hesitate, speak up, awaken your inner voice and rush to the Governor's house with your letter of resignation. Your dearest friend Giriraj Singh has grabbed three acres of land belonging to Dalits." In another tweet, he took potshots at Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi. BJP spokesman Rajiv Ranjan said Giriraj Singh was a law-abiding citizen. "Attempts by some people to politicise the issue is deplorable." *Source: PTI*

IAF officer arrested for passing secret info to Pakistan's ISI

NEW DELHI (TIP): An Indian Air Force (IAF) officer was arrested on Thursday by Delhi Police allegedly on charges of spying and passing secret defence-related information to Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) after he was honey-trapped.

Group Captain Arun Marwaha, 51, was detained on January 31 by the air force's Intelligence Wing with his smartphone at the IAF headquarters. He was questioned by the air force and handed over to the Delhi Police on February 7. "We have arrested a senior officer of the Indian Air Force. He has been booked under the Official Secrets Act. Further investigation is on," MM Oberoi, special commissioner (special cell) of Delhi Police, said without divulging further details. Marwaha was honey-trapped by ISI agents using two accounts of a social networking site in December 2017, police said. He allegedly engaged in seductive conversations with the agents masquerading as models.

His mobile phone has been seized and an FIR has been registered at New Delhi's Lodhi Colony police station after the IAF's complaint following its initial probe.

Police said they have not found any evidence of monetary exchange and added that he was passing classified information in lieu of sex chats.

"We have found some objectionable conversations and pictures on his mobile phone," an investigating officer said.

Donald Trump Jr to visit India later this month

NEW DELHI (TIP): Donald Trump Jr, Executive Vice President of the Trump Organization, is expected to visit India in late February to officially launch Trump Towers in Gurugram and Kolkata.

Trump Jr is scheduled to visit four Indian cities to cover the sprawling Trump portfolio. He will also attend Global Business Summit in the national capital.

Global realty brand Trump Towers is making its debut in North India through real estate firms M3M India and Tribeca Developers, which launched a luxury housing project last month in Gurugram entailing investments of Rs 1,200 crore.

Commenting on his upcoming visit, Donald Trump Jr said: "India is such an incredible country and our brand has enjoyed tremendous success in the region for many years".

"This trip is a celebration of all we have achieved, including the launch of the Trump developments in Kolkata and Delhi which have been underway for many months. The teams in India have been working very hard to deliver residences that are truly second to none and I am looking forward to visiting these spectacular projects very soon," Trump Jr said.


**GUEST
COMMENT**

Cease fire: on India-Pakistan LoC tensions

India and Pakistan must restore calm along the LoC and International Boundary

The 2003 ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan is now alive only in the breach, with violations intensifying in number and much damage to life and livelihood along the border. The drift can only be arrested through high-level political intervention to save this very significant bilateral agreement between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. In the latest incident, four Indian soldiers, including an Army Captain, were killed in the Bhimber Gali sector in cross-border firing that went on through most of Sunday. These casualties are a natural extension of what has been unfolding along the International Boundary as well as the Line of Control for the past several months. As a result, 2017 has turned out to be the worst year since the agreement brought calm to the border 15 years ago. The ceasefire agreement had resulted in a dramatic drop in military casualties, and thousands of border residents had been able to return home from temporary shelters on both sides. It is important to see the 2003 agreement in the immediate context of the time. It came just four years after the Kargil war, and soon after India and Pakistan almost went to war following the December 13, 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament. The agreement was historic, and a triumph of diplomacy - Pakistan Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali announced a unilateral ceasefire on the Line of Control on Id; India suggested including the Siachen heights, and the ceasefire was eventually extended to the International Boundary. It was the high point of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's premiership, and his successor, Manmohan Singh, heeded the legacy.

Now, as the two countries are caught in a spiral of almost daily exchanges of fire along the border, there is a danger of political rhetoric acquiring its own momentum. Already, 2017 has been the worst year along the border since the ceasefire came into force, with at least 860 incidents of ceasefire violations recorded on the LoC alone. By way of comparison, in 2015 there had been 152 incidents, and in 2016 there were 228. January 2018 recorded the highest number of ceasefire violations in a month since 2003, according to estimates. According to data mentioned in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, between January 18 and 22, 14 people including seven civilians were killed and over 70 were injured in firing from the Pakistan side along the International Boundary in Jammu, Kathua and Samba districts as well as along the LoC in Poonch and Rajouri districts. Thousands of civilians have been forced to flee their border homes. Peace on the border is difficult to achieve at the tactical level by military leaders. Restoring the ceasefire requires real statesmanship, not brinkmanship.

(The Hindu)

AS I SEE IT

A MOMENT FOR INDIAN LIBERALISM



By Rajeev Bhargava

Is a new liberalism, shaped profoundly by Indian cultural conditions, just round the corner?

Liberalism is probably more challenged in India today than in any other democracy in the world. Why? First, conservative communities appear to have gained untrammelled power in recent times. Self-proclaimed custodians of caste and religion are perpetually breathing down the necks of young men and women, dictating who they must meet, converse with, befriend and marry, what they should eat, wear, watch or read, whether they can use mobile phones, and even where they can go and when. By encroaching on the most intimate relationships of love and friendship, interfering in matters of pleasure or habit, they suffocate personal freedoms and violate the very basic norms of individual choice.

Second, people find it increasingly difficult to express themselves freely. A public culture of hurt sentiment, violated collective honor, offence and alleged humiliation and the social and political license to react to it in whatever brutal manner possible have created such a climate of fear that creative artists, intellectuals and even ordinary persons in public conversations hesitate to say what comes to their mind and look over their shoulder to see if big daddy is watching. The threat of social intimidation and legal harassment makes public expression so expensive that people would rather stay silent or remain aloof from public life.

Third, large corporations and the government have access to virtually every detail about us, making us vulnerable and insecure. Methods of surveillance become more opaque, even as they attempt to make us transparent against our will. The minutest details of one's private and intimate life are available today to large, powerful organizations at the press of a button. Is it not frightening that to call or visit friends and family, we must undergo CCTV cameras, finger printing and face recognition?

Fourth, confidence in the rule of law is badly shaken. Is there any assurance that

law will be enforced evenhandedly, indeed, that it will be enforced at all? On the contrary, we often fear excesses by official agents at every level of government, worry that power will be abused, that some person in charge of law and order will behave lawlessly, even brutally.

Freedom to say 'no'

What do the power of the state, the community, individual choice and expression have to do with liberalism? Everything. The term 'liberalism' has come to mean different things to different people and is associated with: (a) demands for greater overall equality, (b) defense of individual reason and autonomy, (c) a tool against moral conservatism, (d) cosmopolitanism and humanism, and (e) free markets. Overused, it suffers from what happens routinely to words with wide currency: it generates less light, more heat, and even greater cacophony. Yet, a moment's reflection shows that one value has always lain at its heart: the freedom of an individual to say no; to say that enough is enough and that something ominously coming towards me up close, stalking me, is no longer bearable and must be stopped; that there is a little world of my own, my private universe, that no one may enter if I do not give permission, and a place exists in public for me too that must not be impeded as long as others are not harmed. In my largely private but also partly public world, I must live without fear or favor.

One such bulwark against habitual and pervasive acts of cruel interference is the dismantling of private armies commanded by powerful custodians of communities and the creation instead of an impartial public power (the state) governed minimally by the rule of law - a law that protects my mini-kingdom, where I am sovereign - and that liberates me from fear itself. But then the same rule of law must also shield me from arbitrary, unexpected

and unnecessary acts of state coercion. Whatever else liberalism might come to have mean, it stands for personal freedoms in the face of intrusion by every form of organized power. Indeed, classical liberalism in western societies emerged precisely in response to persistent attempts to throttle the then burgeoning assertions of individual freedom by oppressive communities, a meddling church, and abusive state power.

In this minimal sense, the term 'liberal' no longer has a restricted spatial or temporal application. It has a much wider usage and has resonated in India with acts of renunciatory Brahmins, with movements led by the Buddha and Mahavira, by the early Lingayats, by those inspired by Nanak, Kabir, Akka Mahadevi and Mira as well as Phule and Ambedkar. This 'thin' liberalism has nothing uniquely western about it. Indeed, there are modern liberalisms and ancient ones, and just as there have been liberalisms in the past, there will be liberalisms in future. The message in all these is common, clear and simple: don't force anything down anyone's throat, stop the deliberate infliction of physical or emotional pain on individuals, especially upon a weaker person, no matter how valuable you believe your cause to be.

An inevitable revolt

If the current climate of oppression or violent threats continues, a revolt against the current set-up will invariably arise. Young, self-reflective men and especially women facing continual restrictions, Dalits, lower Other Backward Classes, poor Muslims, people from smaller towns and rural areas will seize the moment, demanding greater opportunity to exercise individual choice and freedom of expression. Is a new liberalism, different from the one articulated by traditional, metropolitan English-speaking elites, shaped profoundly by Indian cultural conditions, just round the corner?



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The Grounding of Air India



By Pulapre
Balakrishnan

“ If Air India, nationalized in the 1950s, is now privatized, we would have come full circle. However, its case is more symbolic than substantive. Today there is no dearth of air-travel service providers in India, and the public airline reportedly has less than 15% market share. This is not the case in some other areas of the economy where public provision is fundamental. Take rail travel, which has no substitute. For it to serve its public purpose, the financial health of the Indian Railways is vital”.

Having announced its decision to sell Air India, the government is making arrangements to do so. The move itself has come after multiple efforts by successive governments to resurrect the national airline. Though there has been news of it finally turning in an operating profit under a determined CEO, its debt, reportedly a staggering \$8.5 billion, must weigh on the minds of a public drawn into a discussion of its future.

The beginnings

It is unfortunate that so iconic an entity, once feistily steered by J.R.D. Tata, has met this fate, but it is not uncommon in the history of India's public sector: To understand this ending, we would have to start at the beginning, and that was with the transformation of the economy attempted in the 1950s. While there were monumental gaps in that attempt, there were also creative innovations, the most important being the public sector. By design, the public sector was to exist along with a private one resulting in what had been referred to as 'the mixed economy'. To those hankering after institutional purity this was no more than a joke, an arrangement that had strengths of neither full-bodied American-style capitalism nor of out-and-out Soviet-era communism. Half a century later, the Soviet empire imploded and for a brief moment in 2008, the American one teetered on the brink, having been taken there by its vanguard, finance capital. We can now see that the mixed economy, combining the public and private sectors, is superior to one located at either extreme.

So, if the public sector is a force for the good, why is it that we see Air India, and a section of the rest of the Indian public sector, in so unsound a financial condition? In its early days, the public sector had been quite healthy. This need hardly come as a surprise when we recognize the then Indian leadership's motive for building one. Stripped of its somewhat ideological construction as straddling 'the commanding heights' of the economy, it was to have a central role in the quickening of the economy after 1947. Wrecked by two centuries of colonialism, India's economy was moribund. The post-colonial Indian leadership had envisaged the public sector as the ship that would steer the economy out of the morass. And they were not wrong.

Under Nehru, India's economy rose spectacularly, and public investment was the principal engine of growth in that remarkable phase. Used as we are to Air India having to, at times, borrow even to finance its working capital, it may come as a surprise to know that it was still making profit into the second half of the 1960s. As for the public sector as a whole, during the Nehru era its savings had grown faster than that of the private corporate sector. Actually, to an extent India's public sector had financed itself.

Nehru's speech at the inauguration of the second plant of the Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) in Bangalore in 1962 is instructive in this regard. He congratulated the workers of HMT



When the public sector does not serve the public interest, it becomes a millstone around our necks

for having produced a second plant entirely out of the surplus of the first one. In one stroke, this conveys the rationale imagined for India's public sector at the moment of its conception. It had been imagined as a source of investible funds for the public purpose. Underlying this was the belief that the private sector may not generate the necessary surplus, especially if the economy was not first quickened through public investment.

It is noteworthy that in the heyday of the public sector, India's private corporate sector had not done badly at all. Its investment rose at least much as that of the public, demonstrating that claims of its suppression due to the license-permit raj are exaggerated. It is true that some entities had been excluded by licensing. Licensing was necessary to ensure that resources were used in accordance with the plan for industrialization, but it was the case that private firms receiving licenses benefited greatly from the expansion of the market resulting from public investment. It is perhaps not known widely enough that in the Nehru era India grew faster than China.

What went wrong?

So, if the public sector had such a central role in lifting India

out of a morass, why are we where we are today? Why is Air India awaiting the gavel? This has entirely to do with politics. Politics underwent a sea change in the second half of the 1960s and with this the de facto status of the public sector was to change. It became the handmaiden of Indira Gandhi's attempt to gain absolute control. Performance no longer counted, and the public sector was now validated by its very existence. Intimation of the changed policy stance appears in the form of an entry in an 'Economic Survey' from the 1980s emphasizing that a large section of employees of the public sector were those absorbed from loss-making units. This was to be a point of no return as the public sector was no longer treated as the fulcrum of the economy but as a political instrument. It was not as if some successes, such as of Maruti Udyog, were not to come yet but the original sense of purpose was lost.

If Air India, nationalized in the 1950s, is now privatized, we would have come full circle. However, its case is more symbolic than substantive. Today there is no dearth of air-travel service providers in India, and the public airline reportedly has less than 15% market share. This is not the case in some other areas of the economy where public provision is fundamental. Take rail travel, which has no substitute. For it to serve its public purpose, the financial health of the Indian Railways is vital.

We have reason to believe that this is threatened. The present Minister for Railways has announced that the decay of the capital stock has contributed to reduced safety. In particular that the recent spate of derailments has to do with inadequate signaling equipment and damaged tracks. Scarcity of funds for proper maintenance of the capital stock is directly related to populism. The replacement in 2012 by his party supremo Mamata Banerjee of a Railways Minister who had raised passenger fares demonstrates the role of politics in running India's public sector into the ground. Unlike the airlines, the railways are a life-line for a large number of Indians, and maintaining their good health is vital to their interest. It is naïve to imagine that the public sector can remain immune to inflation in the economy.

Meanwhile, an effort to turn around the public sector has come from an unlikely section. The Communists of Kerala, prone to rationalizing inefficiency when it suits their politics, have now embarked upon a revival of the State's public sector undertakings. This has met with success in a short time, with at least some loss-making units turning profitable. The parlous state of public finances may have forced this political party's hand but the move itself shows maturity. Hopefully it will serve as a model for the rest of the country. The public sector would be a jewel when worn in the public interest. When it is not, as was the case with Air India, it turns into a millstone around our necks.

(The author is Professor of Economics of Ashoka University and Senior Fellow of the IIM Kozhikode)

BUILDING STRONG SCHOOLS THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



By Carmen Fariña

School buildings are neighborhood hubs and I encourage you to get involved, spend time at your local school and invest in the next generation of leaders", says the author.

With over 50 years of experience as an educator, I know that it truly takes a village to deliver for students. In each school community, that village is made up of teachers, administrators, support staff, outside partners and of course, families.

While I often say it all comes down to what happens in the classroom, when it comes to building strong school communities, families are critical partners.

That's why, as Chancellor, I've made family engagement a priority for all of our schools, and there has been an unprecedented investment in families. Whether we're bringing parents into the classroom to teach robotics, inviting parents to learn English alongside their children, or providing professional development to parent leaders, we're constantly rolling out innovative programs that provide unique opportunities for parents to get involved in schools.

My message to all parents, grandparents, family members or alumni reading this: school buildings are neighborhood hubs and I encourage you to get involved, spend time at your local school and invest in the next generation of leaders. From PA/PTA President to field trip chaperone to mentor, only when the village is engaged in school-based activities, events and decision-making, can we foster the development of a

community deeply committed to the success of our students.

And when we invest in families, they want to invest in us. That's why we've increased our outreach to families. When I became Chancellor four years ago, requiring all schools to host at least one Parent-Teacher Conference at night and extending meeting time to accommodate working families were no-brainers. As a result of these efforts, the number of parents attending family conferences increased by 43 percent since 2013. We've also removed barriers for families that speak a language other than English at home by expanding our translation and interpretation services in over 200 languages.

The opportunities in New York City are endless, and Career Day events, mentorship programs and beautification projects help us bring those opportunities into schools and classrooms, and expose our students to endless possibilities. For example, alumni from the Bronx spent a Saturday morning painting classrooms and planting a garden at the Longwood Preparatory Academy. This is

one of many ways the millions of former New York City public school students are getting involved through P.S. Alumni.

All across the world, our alumni are doing amazing things: starting businesses, investing in their communities and raising families. P.S. Alumni taps into the incredible network of mentors, volunteers and advocates ready to give back and help students find success.

For alumni who are also parents of current public school students, it's time to get involved. You know firsthand the important role that education plays throughout your life and why it's so important to build a strong foundation. Whether you're volunteering to do a read-aloud in your child's class, or speaking at your alma mater for College Awareness Day, now is the time to share your experience and help shape the next class into the future leaders of this City and of the world.

That work starts in your neighborhood and at your local school. The doors are always open.

(The author is New York City Schools Chancellor)



I'M A HOARDER: KAREENA ON FASHION

Actor Kareena Kapoor said she would not want to make any changes to her wardrobe as she considers herself a "hoarder".

The actor, who returned to the ramp at the grand finale of the Lakme Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2018 yesterday, said it would not be possible for her to do away with the hobby of collecting things anytime soon.

When asked if she would want to modify her personal collection, Kareena told the reporters, "I don't think I'll change anything in my wardrobe. I (still) hoard my jeans from the time, probably, when I was 20-21. I'm a hoarder. I like to collect things. So getting rid of something... That's not happening any time soon."

The actor turned showstopper for Anamika Khanna's "Nudes Reinvented" collection with Lakme Absolute.

She added that with changing times actors have started paying more attention to how they dress.

"Actors have become fashion conscious. I think it's amazing. Well as long as you're comfortable in what you wear. Once you're comfortable with what you're wearing, I think you're automatically considered stylish and fashionable," she said. *Source: PTI*

SALMAN CHOOSES WARINA HUSSAIN OVER ISABELLE KAIF FOR LOVERATRI



Salman Khan introduced Warina Hussain, as his brother-in-law Aayush Sharma's leading lady in the film *Loveratri*, which is a Salman Khan production.

According to a report in *SpotBoyE*, Salman wanted his rumoured ex-girlfriend, Katrina Kaif's younger sister, Isabelle to play the lead.

Isabelle has been trying to make her way into showbiz for a while now. She even moved to Mumbai, and Salman has been trying to make her feel settled.

Back to *Loveratri*, Salman was keen on casting Isabelle opposite Aayush Sharma. Though Isabelle cleared the look test, she wasn't able to give a satisfactory audition.

According to the report, Isabelle was still not used to cameras, and she wasn't comfortable in Hindi. A source said that the role required a strong fluency in Gujarati and Hindi.

Meanwhile, Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif are riding high on the success of their film, *Tiger Zinda Hai*, which crossed Rs 300 crore in India. Salman is now working on *Race 3*, and Katrina is busy with Shah Rukh Khan's *Zero*.

I was in a committed relationship, but for a year, I've been single: Priyanka

She has made a smooth transition from Bollywood to Hollywood, but it's not just her work that's keeping Priyanka Chopra in news these days. The *Baywatch* actor, who is all set to return to Hindi films, recently opened up on her relationship status.

For the longest time, Priyanka has remained tight-lipped about her relationship status. Back in 2016, when she was asked about her marriage plans, she said in an interview, "When there is a ring on my finger, which is actually given to me, then I'll tell the world. Till then no one can claim me."

Cut to 2018, Priyanka in an interview to *Filmfare* admitted that she was in a very committed relationship until last year.

"I'm a serial monogamist. I was in a very committed relationship. But since almost a year, I've been single. I've met a bunch of people. I've gone out with people. I let someone woo me but no. My mind hasn't exploded, not yet!," Priyanka told the magazine.

The 35-year-old actor says that she is single after a long time and is getting a lot of attention. But she's not in the right frame of mind to get into a relation. "I've been single after a really really long time. I get a lot of attention. But I don't know what to do with it. Of course, I like it. I'm a girl and I'm vain," she added.

On the work front, Priyanka has two Hollywood films in pipeline - *A Kid Like Jake* and *Isn't It Romantic?*



No secret detention, torture camps in Lanka: President to Tamils

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on Monday assured the minority Tamil community that his government was not running any secret detention and torture camps in the country.

Sirisena said he was concerned about the people who are still missing years after the end of nearly three-decade-long brutal civil war.

"I have several times met the relatives of the disappeared persons. I am concerned about the problem of their missing relatives," Sirisena said while campaigning in the Tamil-dominated Jaffna city for the February 10 local council election.

"They have told me that the missing people are being held by the government in secret detention camps. I made inquiries and I tell them on behalf of the government that there are no such camps run by the government," he said.

Sirisena said his government had addressed the concerns of the Tamils by returning to them their land that had been held for military purposes since the mid 1980s.

The Tamil and international rights groups had blamed the former Mahinda Rajapaksa government of running secret detention and torture camps.

The relatives of the missing persons have regularly held public demonstrations, demanding urgent government attention to their concerns.

The government has set up an Office of Missing Persons (OMP) which is yet to become operational.



The OMP was one of the accountability mechanisms advocated in UN Human Rights Council resolutions on Sri Lanka since 2013.

The UN panel called for the establishment of independent international court to probe alleged war crimes committed by both the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the government troops during the last stages of the civil war which ended in 2009.

According to the government estimates,

around 20,000 people are still missing due to various conflicts including the 30-year-long separatist war with Lankan Tamils in the north and east which claimed the lives of at least 100,000 people.

The LTTE, which led the separatist war for a separate Tamil homeland, was finally crushed by the Lankan military in 2009 with the death of its supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran. (PTI)

India could be behind killing of Chinese national: Pakistan Interior Minister

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal on Feb 8 alleged that India could be involved in the targeted killing of a Chinese national in Karachi, media reports said.

Iqbal said Pakistan has established a strong force of ten thousand personnel for the protection of Chinese citizens but India which has undue apprehensions over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects may be involved in the killing of the 46-year-old managing director of a shipping firm in Pakistan.

Chinese national Chen Zhu was killed on Monday after being shot in the head by unidentified gunmen in Karachi.

In an interview to BBC, the minister alleged that Indian death row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav had admitted that India's intelligence agency was involved in sabotaging CPEC projects.

"Representatives of our neighbour country have gone on record to say that India is against the deepening trade partnership between Pakistan and China," Iqbal was quoted as saying by the Express Tribune.

The interior minister said that confessional statements by Jadhav in this regard are evidence of India's "subversive activities" in the region.

Refusing to rule out India's involvement in the targeted killing of a Chinese national, Iqbal said, "The recent target killing of a Chinese national in Karachi is another link of this espionage chain. India could be involved in this."

The minister stated that the "nefarious designs of the enemy" would not succeed, and the relationship between Pakistan and China will only improve further.

Thousands of Chinese workers are employed in development of about USD 60 billion worth of infrastructure projects under Beijing's 'Belt and Road' initiative. The port and road-building projects have come under frequent attacks in Balochistan. (PTI)

Pakistan bans media coverage of Valentine's Day celebrations

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's electronic media watchdog on Feb 7 directed the local media to refrain from promoting and showing celebrations of Valentine's Day as such activities were against the Islamic teachings.

The Islamabad High Court in a verdict passed on a petition submitted by a citizen on February 13, 2017, had prohibited the celebration of Valentine's Day (on February 14) in public spaces and government offices across the country "with immediate effect".

The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) issued the directives in the light of the IHC verdict passed in February last year.

"In the meanwhile, respondents are directed to ensure that nothing about the celebration of Valentine Day and its promotion is spread on the Electronic and Print Media," the PEMRA said in a statement.

"No event shall be held at official level and at any public place. Chairman, PEMRA is directed to ensure that all the TV channels shall stop the promotion of Valentine Day, forthwith," it said. (PTI)

Afghan, Pakistan officials meet in Kabul to talk differences

KABUL (TIP): Pakistani and Afghan officials have met for a second round of talks about allegations levelled against Islamabad in the wake of recent deadly militant attacks in Kabul that have killed over 200 people.

A joint statement after the day-long meeting in the Afghan capital said the two sides promised to keep talking.

After the recent attacks, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's government has insisted Pakistan's failure to rout Taliban militants from safe havens on its soil is spurring the insurgency inside Afghanistan.

Kabul also accused Islamabad of harboring the Taliban, who are allegedly being trained in Islamic seminaries in southwestern Pakistan.

Pakistan denies the charges. Islamabad says Saturday's meeting was part of a larger dialogue while the Afghans billed it as a response to their accusations against Islamabad. (AP)

Maldives president Abdulla Yameen shuns European diplomats

MALE (TIP): Maldives President Abdulla Yameen refused today to meet senior European diplomats who were the first foreign dignitaries to visit the troubled nation since his crackdown on the islands' judiciary. Envoys from the European Union, Germany and Britain arrived in the capital after top judges and several other dissidents were arrested this week, as Yameen appeared to gain the upper hand in a bitter power struggle.

The tiny island nation has been grappling with a political crisis after the president refused to obey a Supreme Court order to release nine political prisoners and declared a state of emergency.

The German Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Jorn Rohde, said the trio requested meetings to discuss Yameen's crackdown on dissent which the UN human rights chief had dubbed "an all-out assault on democracy".

"Sadly the Maldivian government refuses dialogue today with my UK/EU colleagues... Our requests were unfortunately refused," Rohde said on Twitter. "That is surely not the way forward."

The diplomats, based in neighbouring Sri Lanka but also accredited to the Maldives, arrived in Male after the regime said it was open to foreign observers visiting the country.

However, foreign media have effectively been barred after authorities imposed tough visa conditions and warned they would take up to three weeks to process applications.

The UN has urged Yameen to lift the state of emergency, and was due to discuss the crisis gripping the Indian Ocean archipelago in a closed-door meeting at the Security Council today.

"The Maldives have seen in recent years attacks on political opponents, on journalists, on civil society and human right defenders, and what is happening now is tantamount to an all-out assault on democracy," UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said yesterday.

Western governments, as well as neighbouring India and China have asked their citizens not to go on holiday to the Maldives, a nation of 1,192 tiny coral islands scattered 800- kilometres across the equator. (AFP)

Bangladeshi loses legs as mine explodes on Myanmar border

DHAKA (TIP): A Bangladeshi farmer lost both legs when he stepped on a landmine reportedly planted by Myanmar security forces in a buffer zone between the two countries, officials said on Feb 6.

The incident happened near the southern Bangladesh border town of Naikhongchari on Saturday when Badiur Rahman crossed into the zone. "His cow strayed inside the Myanmar border in no-man's land. He accidentally stepped on a mine when he went there to fetch the cow," said Sarwar Kamal, a local government administrator.

The 45-year-old was rushed to a local clinic and later moved to hospital in the southern port city of Chittagong.

"His condition is very critical," said Marjia Khatun, a nurse.

Bangladesh border officials accuse Myanmar security forces of planting mines along border areas.

Border Guard Bangladesh commander Anwarul Azim said the area where Saturday's incident happened was unfenced and grazing cows very often strayed across.

"The Myanmar army planted those mines a while ago. Rahman accidentally stepped on one of those and lost both his legs," he told AFP. Myanmar troops have been accused of waging an ethnic cleansing campaign against the country's Rohingya Muslim minority, nearly 700,000 of whom have fled to Bangladesh since last August.

Rights activists say the mines are aimed at preventing the refugees from returning to their villages. "By planting these mines, the Myanmar army is trying to ensure that the Rohingya refugees would never try to return home," said Bangladeshi rights activist Nur Khan Liton. (AFP)



IT'S TIME OF THE YEAR TO CELEBRATE LOVE



Valentine's Day is synonymous with love. It is renowned for being the 'most romantic day of the year'. And many of us use it as an opportunity to show affection for our loved ones with cards, flowers or chocolates.

But why exactly do we celebrate Valentine's Day and why does it fall on February 14?

Well, we've trawled through the history books to find out the real reasons so you don't have to - and the background casts a very different light on the holiday.

HOW DID VALENTINE'S DAY BEGIN?

Valentine's Day is an old tradition thought to have originated from a Roman Festival known as Lupercalia, according to History.com.

It was held on February 15 as a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture.

During the celebrations boys would draw names of girls from a box and the pair would be partners during the festival. These matches often led to marriage.

The festival survived the initial rise of Christianity but was outlawed at the end of the 5th century when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St Valentine's Day.

CHAUCER MAY HAVE MADE IT ALL UP

Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales writer, may have actually been behind Valentine's Day. The medieval English poet took quite a few liberties with history.

He'd drop his poetic characters into real-life historical events leaving readers wondering if that's what really happened.

There is no actual record of Valentine's Day before Chaucer's poem in 1375.

It's in Parliament of Foules that he links the tradition of courtly love to the St Valentine's feast day - the tradition didn't exist until after his poem.

*Cupid draw back your bow
And you let your arrow go
Straight to my lover's heart for me
Nobody but me*

*Cupid please hear my cry
And let your arrow fly
Straight to my lover's heart, its for me*

*Now I don't need to bother you, but I'm in
distress*

*There's dangerous of losing all of my
happiness*

*But just between the two of us our love is
concealed
So help me if you will*

*So, Cupid draw back your bow
And let your arrow go
Straight to my lover's heart, it's for me
Nobody but me*

The poem refers to February 14 as the day of birds coming together to find a mate. "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate," he wrote and maybe invented Valentine's Day as we now know it.

WHO WAS ST VALENTINE?

The St Valentine that inspired the holiday may have been more than one man.

The saint officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church was a real person who died around AD 270.

An account from 1400s describes Valentine as a priest who was beheaded by Emperor Claudius II for helping Christian couples wed.

The emperor had banned marriage as he thought single men made better soldiers.

Valentine felt this was unfair, so he celebrated marriages in secret.

When the emperor found out he was thrown in jail and sentenced to death.

There are similarities between the priest's and bishop's stories, which leads people to believe they are the same man.

There's so much confusion around St Valentine that the Church stopped veneration of him in 1969 - though he is still listed as an official saint.

"Valentinus" is from the Latin word for worthy, strong or powerful, and was a popular name between the second and eighth centuries AD meaning there are several martyrs with the same name.

There are actually a dozen Valentines listed and there's even a Pope Valentine.

The actual day we celebrate is known as St Valentine of Rome to set him apart.

WHAT DOES HE REALLY HAVE TO DO WITH LOVE?

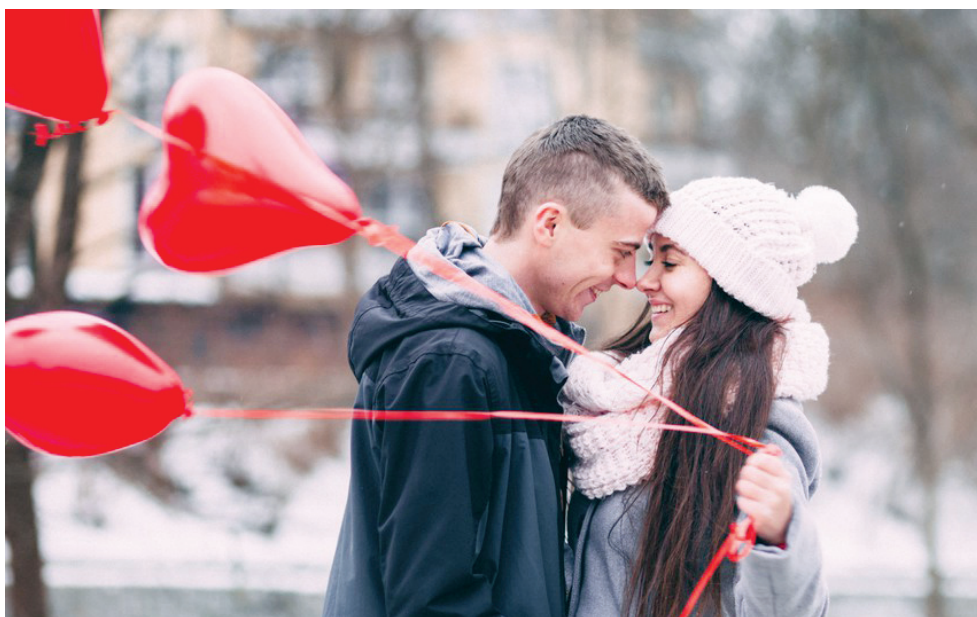
Valentine did help marry couples in secret, which is arguably very romantic.

He is the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy among other things, like the plague, fainting and travelling. That doesn't stop people calling on his help for those romantically involved. He's now also patron of engaged couples and happy marriages.

WHY IS HIS SKULL KEPT IN ROME?

Yes, that's right. St Valentine's skull is housed and adorned in flowers in Rome. It's actually on display in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Cosmedin.

Continued on page 19





Continued from page 18

It was found when people were excavating a catacomb near Rome in the early 1800s. The skeletal remains and other relics now associated with St Valentine were dug up. It's the norm for these to be split and distributed to reliquaries - places that keep relics - around the world. If you wanted to see other parts of the saint, he's on display in the Czech Republic, Ireland, Scotland, England and France.

WHY DO WE GIVE VALENTINE'S CARDS?

There is a story that Valentine sent to prison letter to a young girl he had fallen in love with and signed it "From your Valentine". The idea of Valentine's card originated from it.

WHY IS THE DAY ALWAYS CELEBRATED ON FEBRUARY 14?

Some believe that Valentine's Day's is celebrated mid-February to mark the anniversary of St Valentine's death.

Others maintain that the Christian church decided to place St Valentine's feast day at this time of the year in an effort to 'Christianize' the pagan festival of Lupercalia.

WHY ARE ROSES ASSOCIATED WITH VALENTINE'S DAY?

Roses have been the symbol of love since the early 1700s when Charles II of Sweden brought the Persian poetical art known as the "language of flowers" to Europe.

Throughout the 18th century, ladies loved their floral dictionaries, which listed the symbolic meanings of different flowers, according to YourTango.com.

The red rose was believed to be the flower favored by Venus, the Roman Goddess of Love, and has therefore come to represent that.

WHY CUPID?

Cupid is the god of desire, erotic love, affection and attraction. He is the son of Venus, goddess of love, and war god Mars. Cupid in Latin is 'amor', which means love.

WHEN DID VALENTINE'S DAY BECOME COMMERCIAL?

It wasn't until the 18th century that Valentine's Day took off in England. Lovers began to send trinkets, cards and flowers to their loved ones.

A huge amount of printed cards would get sold. In 1913 Hallmark Cards in Kansas City began mass producing specific Valentine's Day cards.

Now about a billion cards are sold every year and it's the second biggest card sending time of the whole year.

WHY DO WE SIGN CARDS ANONYMOUSLY?

Apart from the embarrassment, there was an actual tradition started by the Victorians.

They thought it was bad luck to sign the cards with their actual names.

It was also the Victorians that sent roses as they were Venus' favorite flower.

(TIP Bureau)



Activists of India's right-winged Bajrang Dal shout slogans against Valentine's Day during a protest in Hyderabad, India, on Feb. 14, 2017.

WHY THERE'S A WAR ON VALENTINE'S DAY IN INDIA?

Strangely enough the day of love - Valentine's Day, attracts a lot of hate in India. Each year, as heart-shaped balloons fill the streets of metropolitan cities, a small but vocal minority aggressively opposes any V-Day celebrations. Unlike one group in Japan that is against the "passion-based capitalism" that fuels the holiday, those opposing it in India are conservative groups protesting against the Western values they believe Valentine's Day represents.

The actions against the holiday include vandalism (where mobs break coffee tables and windows in restaurants), moral policing, calls to ban any celebrations, and threats of violence against couples who display public affection.

The group that has gained the most attention this year for its opposition to Valentine's Day is the Hindu Mahasabha. The extreme right-wing group plans to marry off singles who declare their love for each other, either in person or through social media.

Protests against Valentine's Day have grown as Hindu fundamental groups gain momentum in India. Opposing interracial marriages has become a cornerstone of their agenda, and "love jihad," the idea that Muslim men are trying to marry Hindu women and forcing them to convert to Islam, has become a huge talking point for right-wing groups.

Despite the opposition, Valentine's Day is celebrated across India. Outpouring of love will always defeat acts of hate.



INDIAN ORIGIN MAN IN UK JAILED FOR 18 YEARS FOR KILLING EX-WIFE



The prosecution claimed that Ashwin Daudia committed the murder as he grew resentful of his ex-wife who had joined a dating agency to meet other men.

LONDON (TIP): An Indian origin man in UK on trial for killing his ex-wife and then stuffing her body into a suitcase was sentenced on Friday, February 2, to at least 18 years in jail for murder.

Ashwin Daudia, 51, had denied the murder charge, claiming he lost his temper during an argument with Kiran Daudia at their home in Leicester last January and did not attack her deliberately. The prosecution, however, claimed that Mr Daudia, who followed the court proceedings through a Gujarati interpreter, had continued to lie about the circumstances surrounding the killing and had committed the murder after growing increasingly resentful of his ex-wife, who had joined a dating agency to meet other men.

"I was angry, I lost control," he told the Leicester Crown Court, adding that Kiran Daudia had initially assaulted him and to silence her, he put his hand over her mouth and then forcefully squeezed her neck.

However, the jury did not accept his version of events and found him guilty of killing his 46-year-old ex-wife.

He admitted in court that he had lied to his two sons, relatives and the police and told them that his ex-wife did not return home from a morning shift at the call center she worked at and hid her body in a suitcase to prevent his younger son from seeing it. The suitcase, along with the dead body, was discovered by the local police a day after the murder.

The accused was caught on CCTV dragging his ex-wife's body in a suitcase before dumping it in an alleyway.

The couple, who had an arranged marriage in India in 1988, were divorced in 2014 but continued living separate lives under the same roof.

The factory worker husband was to move out of the family home on January 16, 2017, when the attack occurred, the Leicester Mercury reported.

The victim's sister had bought the couple's family home in Leicester to ensure that Ms Daudia could continue living there without her ex-husband after the divorce.

Their two sons chose to "side" with their mother and had relatively little to do with their father.

During the two-week murder trial which concluded on Friday, Ashwin Daudia claimed he lost his temper when his ex-wife shouted at him because he had not packed his bags or moved out. He claimed she swore at him and told him to go and die in India.

He denied the prosecution's suggestion that he had waited for his ex-wife to return home from work to deliberately kill her.

"I didn't do it deliberately, at that time my mind wasn't working," he told the court.

EU doubts 2020 Brexit vision, sees longer goodbye

BRUSSELS (TIP): Senior EU figures have told Reuters Britain will not be ready to make a full break from the European Union by the end of 2020 as Brexit transition plans foresee and the bloc is bracing for a much longer goodbye.

The British government may be thinking on similar lines.

Several diplomats and Brussels officials familiar with the discussions said a host of unresolved issues, including the Irish border, and British in-fighting over what kind of future trade relationship to ask for left many convinced the transition will end up being longer.

Two senior EU officials said British negotiators appeared to be sounding out other governments' attitudes to an extension to the 21-month transition currently on offer, although others said they believed British Prime Minister Theresa May still aims to have a free trade deal negotiated to start in January 2021.

May has publicly denied looking for extra time. The EU says it is willing to be "flexible", though France and other EU governments have been clear they oppose Britain staying in the half-way house for years, fearing the



arrangement would become permanent and a basis for a messy, long-term compromise.

As formal talks on the transition got under way in Brussels this week, EU diplomats said any extension would be agreed only after Britain formally leaves in March 2019, so that London would remain under pressure to conclude a trade deal or face its economy going off a "cliff edge" from 2021.

LEVERAGE: "Nobody believes in transition until the end of 2020," one person said. "But we don't want to propose an extension straight away

- that is a leverage we have over London in the talks."

They acknowledge May cannot say she might prolong a transition which, by binding London to EU rules and budgets without having a say on them, is deeply unpopular with Brexit supporters: "To ask for an extension now would be to upset the Brexiteers who want out swiftly and at any cost." Michel Barnier, the EU chief negotiator who will brief the media on Friday on the outcome of this week's talks, has said he believes Britain can negotiate a free trade deal in under three years. EU and British officials note that while an EU deal with, say, South Korea took seven years, Britain has regulations in line with the EU now, substantially cutting the need for change.

Concluding a transition deal by March was supposed to be an easy part of Brexit negotiations after months spent last year cajoling London into committing to pay tens of billions of euros in outstanding commitments to Brussels and hammering out a deal to give lifetime rights to 3 million EU citizens in Britain. (Reuters)

UK mulls pet shop puppy sale ban

LONDON (TIP): Pet shops and other third-party dealers in the UK could be banned from selling puppies under tough new welfare rules to prevent so-called 'puppy farming', the British media reported today.

Under the proposals, people buying or adopting a dog would deal directly with a breeder or rehoming centre.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said the plan would be examined as part of a new package of measures aimed at driving up welfare standards. Gove said he wanted to introduce a ban on third-party sales of puppies "to do everything we can to make sure the nation's much loved pets get the right start in life". Enhanced licensing conditions for breeders are already due to come into force this year.

Under the new rules, breeders or sellers of dogs must be licensed and will not be able to sell puppies and kittens under eight weeks old, the BBC reported.

Puppies must also be shown alongside their mother before a sale is made, and - amid concern over online sales - purchases must be completed in the presence of the new owner.

Some 800,000 dogs are sold in the country every year, mostly through breeders.

Last year, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs suggested a ban on third-party sales could lead to the creation of an illegal market, The Independent reported. But the Dogs Trust welcomed the government's latest thinking on the issue, which is subject to a consultation. Paula Boyden, veterinary director for the Dogs Trust, said: "If a ban was introduced now, puppy farmers could exploit loopholes such as setting themselves up as unregulated re-homing centres or sanctuaries.

"Licensing and inspection of dog breeders and sellers must also be stronger to ensure that everyone involved in the trade is on the radar of local authorities."

The deputy chief executive of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Chris Wainwright said: "We have always said that an end to third party sales alone would not be enough to end the puppy trade crisis, and we are pleased that this is being looked at alongside enhanced licensing conditions for breeders." (PTI)

Vladimir Putin, 7 rivals register for Russia's presidential race

MOSCOW (TIP): Russia's election officials have registered eight candidates for the March 18 presidential election, including President Vladimir Putin.

With his approval ratings topping 80 per cent and rivals trailing far behind, Putin is set to easily win a fourth term.

Putin's most vocal critic, the 41-year-old opposition leader Alexei Navalny, has been barred from the race due to a criminal conviction that he calls politically motivated. Here is a quick look at the Russian presidential candidates.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: The 65-year-old Russian leader served two four-year presidential terms in 2000-2008 before shifting into the prime minister's seat due to term limits. Putin continued calling the shots during the next four years as his longtime associate Dmitry Medvedev served as Russia's president.

Before stepping down to let Putin reclaim the top job in 2012, Medvedev initiated constitutional changes that extended the presidential term to six years.

A Putin victory in March would put him on track to become Russia's longest-serving leader since Josef Stalin. The legal limit of two consecutive presidential terms means that Putin won't be able to run again in 2024, but many observers expect him to continue playing the top role in Russian politics even after that.

KSENIA SOBCHAKL: The 36-year-old star TV host casts herself as a choice for those who have grown tired of Putin and his familiar challengers and want liberal changes. The daughter of Putin's one-time patron, the late reformist mayor of St. Petersburg, she has assailed the Kremlin's policies but largely avoided personal criticism of Putin.

Observers believe that Sobchak's involvement in the race will help combat voter apathy and boost turnout to make Putin's victory look more impressive.

Some think she also could help the Kremlin counter Navalny's calls to boycott the presidential vote and could split the ranks of the liberal opposition. Sobchak has denied being in collusion with the Kremlin.

PAVEL GRUDININ: The 57-year-old millionaire strawberry farm director has been nominated by the Communist Party, but he's openly proud of his wealth and rejects basic Communist dogmas.

Until 2010, Grudinin was a member of the main Kremlin party, United Russia. He has been openly critical of Russia's current political and economic system, but avoided criticizing Putin. His nomination has been seen as an attempt by the Communists to broaden the party's appeal beyond aging voters nostalgic for the Soviet Union.

VLADIMIR ZHIRINOVSKY: The 71-year-old leader of the ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party has won notoriety for his xenophobic statements. This will be the sixth time he has run for president.

GRIGORY YAVLINSKY: The 65-year-old liberal economic expert ran against Putin in the 2000 election, garnering about 6 per cent of the vote.

Yavlinsky has denounced the Kremlin's policies and frequently criticized Putin, calling for more political freedoms and a more liberal economic course. His support base is a relatively small number of middle-aged and elderly liberal-minded voters in big Russian cities.

BORIS TITOV: Putin's 57-year-old business ombudsman is running for president for the first time, nominated by a pro-business party. Before becoming an advocate for business, Titov had a successful career dealing in chemicals and fertilizers. His platform has focused on creating a more favorable business environment.

SERGEI BABURIN: The 59-year-old legal expert played a prominent role in Russian politics in the 1990s, opposing the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union and becoming one of the leaders of a parliament rebellion against President Boris Yeltsin in 1993.

MAXIM SURAIKIN:

The 39-year-old has been nominated by the Communists of Russia, a fringe group that casts itself as an alternative to the main Communist Party. He was trained as an engineer and ran a small computer business. In 2014, Suraikin ran for governor of the Nizhny Novgorod region, getting about 2 per cent of the vote. (AP)



NATALIE PORTMAN ON HOLLYWOOD SEXUAL ABUSE: 'I HAVE 100 STORIES'

Natalie Portman has revealed she has "100 stories" of sexual harassment in Hollywood - including receiving "rape fantasy fan mail" when she was just 13-years-old. The Oscar-winning actress opened up about her experiences in an interview with Porter Magazine, explaining she had endured harassment and manipulation from studio executives throughout her career.

And her problematic experiences began when she was a child star, with one so-called fan sending her a rape fantasy.

At 18, a local radio station made a countdown for her birthday - "the date I would be legal to sleep with" - and endured movie reviewers commenting on her "budding breasts" in their articles. Because she didn't want to do "kissing scenes" earlier in her career, Portman also explained she was perceived "prudish, conservative, nerdy, serious, in an attempt to feel like my body was safe and my voice would be listened to."

"I felt the need to cover my body and to inhibit my expression and my work in order to send my own message to the world that I'm someone worth of safety and respect," she said. "The response to my expression, from small comments about my body to more threatening deliberate statements, served to control my behaviour through an environment of sexual terrorism."

PARIS HILTON MAY HAVE THREE WEDDING DRESSES ON HER BIG DAY

Just over a month after Paris Hilton announced she was engaged to Chris Zylka, fans want to know any and all details regarding her upcoming wedding day.

As the businesswoman is finding out, planning a ceremony is easier said than done.

"I've been traveling a lot since I got engaged so I'm going to have a meeting with my mom soon," Paris revealed while celebrating the Rachel Zoe Fall 2018 Presentation with Belvedere Vodka. "We've been on the phone all the time just trying to figure out where we want to do it and the date. It's a lot to plan."

She continued, "It's so hard to plan something like this. My schedule is so crazy. I have friends and family all over the world and I really want it to be the perfect day. Hopefully somewhere close so that everyone can make it from my family."

One thing fashion lovers are curious to find out is which famous designer will have the honor of dressing Paris when she says "I Do."

According to the former Simple Life star, she hasn't made a decision just yet. At the same time, one look likely won't be enough.

"I'm getting so many different calls from designers. Now I'm looking through all the designs and trying to pick which one but there are so many gorgeous choices. It's hard to pick,"



Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's Pre-Valentine's Day Plans Revealed

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and Prince Harry and Meghan Markle already have big plans for that week.

Kensington Palace announced the couple will visit Edinburgh Feb. 13 for their first official joint visit to Scotland.

It looks like the two already have a pretty packed itinerary. They will begin their day by visiting the Esplanade in front of the famous Edinburgh Castle. There, they will be greeted by the Royal Marines Scotland Band. Harry took over the role as Captain General of the Royal Marines from Prince Philip back in December. Then, the couple will watch the firing of the One O'clock Gun—a tradition that dates back to 1861.

After witnessing the gun firing, the couple will head to Social Bite, a sandwich shop that donates its profits to social causes, such as homelessness. During their visit, Harry and Meghan will learn about the organization's work, meet the staff and get a tour of the kitchen.

At the end of their visit, the two lovebirds will attend a reception at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. There, they will celebrate the achievements of the country's youth for Scotland's Year of Young People 2018. The Year of Young People gives people 8 to 26 years old a platform to voice their opinions

about social issues and showcase their talents.

Kensington Palace did not reveal whether Harry and Meghan will stay in Scotland for Valentine's Day. However, given his romantic proposal, we're sure Harry has something special for his future bride. After all, Meghan is a big fan of the holiday. Even before her days as a future royal, the former Suits star celebrated the romantic occasion and encouraged others to do the same—even if it meant "being your own Valentine."

"I think you need to cook that beautiful dinner even when it's just you, wear your favorite outfit, buy yourself some flowers, and celebrate the self love that often gets muddled when we focus on what we don't have," the actress wrote back in 2016 via her blog The Tig.

This also won't be the first time Meghan has traveled for the holiday. Back in 2016, the actress took a trip to New York to celebrate the occasion with her friends.

"This Valentine's Day I will be with friends, running amok through the streets of New York, likely imbibing some cocktail that's oddly pink, and jumping over icy mounds in my new shoes through the salted snowy streets of the West Village," she wrote via her blog.



LAMPS TO AMP UP THE LOOK IN YOUR HOUSE

Not only are they the essentials to a well-lit room, but also make an impact on the way your house looks. Here are a few lamp choices for your abode

Your home decor is incomplete without proper lights. Apart from the usual tube lights, lamps (floor and table) not only light up your home but also add a classic touch to your pad. But before you start shopping for floor lamps, here are a few things that you must remember.

Make room for enough light

The first and the foremost thing that you need to understand is that floor lamps apart from being a decorative piece in your house should also spread enough light. You can probably try using a big floor lamp, while have another one placed on the table next to the bigger one.

Should complement your furniture

Mix and match is not restricted to upholstery alone. You should try and get hold of a floor lamp that goes along with your furniture. Try getting a lamp shade in quirky colours like pop pink, striking green or electric blue that you can then match with your cushion colours.

Choose sleek designs

When opting for floor lamps, make sure that you do not pick bulky ones. Not only do they take enough space in your house but it will also not go along with your house decor. Choose from sleek design options that will make way for other furniture pieces in your house.

Add a vintage touch to your room

Opt for lamp shades that lend a classic touch to your abode. You can go in for shades that look regal. You can then complement the lamp shade with single-toned curtains to complete the look.



LIGHTING DECORATES A ROOM

Light fixtures are a key element in the design of a room. "Think of decorative lighting as architectural jewelry. It can dress up or dress down the look," lighting designer Randall Whitehead says. Consider style, shape, color, and size when choosing a light fixture as the perfect accessory.



Opt for quirky lamp shades

The lamp shade in your room can serve to be the focal point in your house. Choose from a variety of quirky lamp

shades to amp up the look. These lamp shades can be placed almost about anywhere in your house - from your bedroom to your living or dining area.

NATURAL WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HAIR GROW FASTER

Who doesn't yearn for long lustrous hair? But often due to inadequate nourishment and damage, our natural hair growth is hindered. So what can we do so as to increase the pace of our hair growth? Just follow these simple tips and see the astounding results on your own.



Trimming to the rescue

Yes, you heard it right. Regular trimming of hairs every eight to ten weeks ensures fast hair growth. What happens is that due to excessive dirt and sun, the end of the hair usually gets damaged and rough, inducing split ends. When you regularly trim your hair, those split ends get cut off, leaving your hair to breathe and grow without any hurdle.

Make conditioner your friend

You might have noticed that often the ends of the hair are thinner and damaged when compared to the root end connecting to the scalp. This is because the lower end doesn't get nourished well. Conditioning after every hair wash helps seal the cuticle at the end and prevents the hair from further damage. This makes your hair healthier; and healthier hair grows faster.

Relaxing hot oil massages

A good hot oil massage can be a perfect stress buster for you. Massaging your hair with a good hot oil every week ensures that your hair is healthy and there are no more hair strands lying on your floor or brush. Try using coconut, olive or lavender oil so as to bring that beautiful luster to your hair and help you hair grow.

Regular brushing every night

You must have heard that excessive brushing can cause hair fall and physically harm your hair. Well, not always. It simply depends on the brush you use. Using synthetic bristles can create friction in hair and thus actually damage hair. Instead, using the right brush such as the boar bristle brush can actually increase the blood circulation of the scalp. Make sure that you are combing your hair for at least 50 times before you retire for the night. Brushing the hair makes your roots stronger and hair grow faster.

Don't wrap your wet hairs in towel

Most of us have a habit of wrapping our wet hairs in a towel just after shampooing, little realizing about the drawbacks of this habit. Wet hair is prone to even more hair fall and wrapping them in a towel can make this even worse. Our hairs get rubbed with those massive towel fibers making those strands of hair to fall. Instead, go for a microfiber towel, if you simply can't resist this habit.

FOOD CORNER

CASHEW CHICKEN FRIED RICE

If you are in the mood for Asian, this easy cashew chicken fried rice is the perfect recipe to satisfy your craving. Inspired by restaurant-style fried rice, this dish is packed with chicken, pineapple, red pepper, peas and toasted cashews. This one pot meal is all you need instead of turning to take-out.

Ingredients

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

chopped

Directions

Step 1: Marinate chicken in 2 teaspoons of soy sauce and freshly ground black pepper and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Step 2: Heat one tablespoon of oil in a large skillet or wok over medium high heat. Add the chicken to the pan and cook until the chicken is no longer pink, about 7 to 8 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.

Step 3: In the same pan, add a teaspoon of oil and gently scramble the eggs. Scoop the eggs into a bowl and set aside.

Step 4: Add one tablespoon of oil to the pan and add the pineapple and red pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, until the pineapple is caramelized on the edges and the red pepper has softened, about 3 to 5 minutes. Then add the green onion, peas, ginger and garlic. Cook, while



stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds or longer. Transfer the contents of the pan to your bowl of eggs.

Step 5: Add the remaining two teaspoons of oil to the pan. Pour in the cashews and toast them, stirring constantly, until the cashews smell fragrant and have turned golden brown, about 30 seconds. Add

the rice to the pan and stir to combine. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice is hot, about 3 minutes.

Step 6: Pour the cooked vegetables and eggs back into the pan with the rice and stir to combine. Season with soy sauce, chili garlic sauce, and lime juice. Taste and adjust seasoning as necessary. Garnish with fresh cilantro.

SKIPPING MEALS CAN INCREASE BELLY FAT

If you are dieting with a size zero figure in mind, think again! Researchers have found that skipping meals can ultimately result in abdominal weight gain.

"This does support the notion that small meals throughout the day can be helpful for weight loss, though that may not be practical for many people," said senior author of the study Martha Belury, professor of human nutrition at The Ohio State University in the US.

"But you definitely do not want to skip meals to save calories because it sets your body up for larger fluctuations in insulin and glucose and could be setting you up for more fat gain instead of fat loss," Belury explained.

In the study, mice that ate all of their food as a single meal and fasted the rest of the day developed insulin resistance in their livers.

When the liver does not respond to insulin signals telling it to stop producing glucose, that extra sugar in the blood is stored as fat.

These mice initially were put on a restricted diet and lost weight compared to controls that had unlimited access to food.

The restricted-diet mice regained weight as calories were added back into their diets and nearly caught up to controls by the study's end.

But fat around their middles - the equivalent to human belly fat - weighed more in the restricted-diet mice than in mice that were free to nibble all day long.

An excess of that kind of fat is associated with insulin resistance and risk for Type-2 diabetes and heart disease



What happens to your body when you skip a meal?

Skipping meals can also cause your metabolism to slow down, which can cause weight gain or make it harder to lose weight. "When you skip a meal or go a long time without eating, your body goes into survival mode," says Robinson. "This causes your cells and body to crave food which causes you to eat a lot!"

Why is it bad to not eat?

When our metabolism thinks we are starving, it gets rid of calorie-hungry muscle tissue. Studies show that up to 70% of the weight lost while eating less comes from burning muscle—not body fat! ... And that is why eating less is not an effective long-term fat loss approach.



Health risks of sleeping too much

It's a little hard to believe there's such a thing as sleeping too much, since so many of us feel like it's a struggle to get barely enough. But it's true - you can sleep too much.

While it's tough to pinpoint the 'just right' amount, most adults need between seven and nine hours a night. Regularly logging more than nine hours of sleep a night may be a sign of an underlying medical condition, but it also puts you at risk for a whole host of health concerns. Here are some of the biggest risks of too much sleep.

Raise depression risk

In a 2014 study of adult twins, researchers found that long sleep duration increased a person's risk of depression symptoms. The study participants, who slept between seven and nine hours a night, had a 27% heritability of depressive symptoms, while those who slept nine hours or more had a 49% heritability. It could impair the brain. A 2012 study found that among elderly women, sleeping too much (or too little) worsened the brain's functioning over a six-year period. Women who slept more than nine hours each night (or fewer than five) displayed changes in their brains on par with aging two years, it was reported at the time.

Might make it harder to get pregnant

In 2013, a Korea research team analysed the sleep habits of more than 650 women undergoing in vitro fertilisation. They found that pregnancy rates were highest among the women who got seven to eight hours of sleep a night and lowest in women who got nine to 11 hours. The findings, however, did not establish a clear causal relationship. "We know that sleep habits can certainly alter circadian rhythms, hormone secretions and menstrual cycles," said Dr Evan Rosenbluth, a reproductive endocrinologist, adding, "But the effect on infertility is a little harder to tease out, because there are so many details that are hard to control." Sleeping too much can substantially increase diabetes risk.

It can lead to weight gain

The same researchers also looked at body weight gain among adults over a six-year period. They found that short and long sleepers gained more weight over the six years than people who slept seven to eight hours a night. People who slept nine to 10 hours each night were 25% more likely to have gained five kilos over the study period, even after controlling for food intake and physical activity. "Hence, these results emphasise the need to add sleep duration to the panel of determinants that contribute to weight gain and obesity," the authors wrote in the study.

Dairy diet before exercise reduces risk of bone breaks: Study

A pre-exercise dairy diet may reduce the risk of bone breaks, according to the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS).

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported the AIS had found a dairy-rich meal around two hours before exercise could counter calcium lost during exercise.

Athletes in low-impact sports, such as cycling, rowing and swimming, lose calcium through sweating which can weaken the bones and lead to osteoporosis later in life.

Head of sports nutrition at the AIS, Louise Burke, said the research backed by Dairy Australia showed the body, when seeking calcium for blood sweat, used the digesting food rather than bones, Xinhua news agency reported.

"It stops your bones from having to dissolve a little bit, to put the calcium back into the blood stream, as to being lost from the blood sweat," said Burke.

"Your body is doing that to keep blood calcium levels stable."

"So any time it feels that a little bit is going down, it has to rush to the nearest available calcium source to get it back into the blood stream."

High-impact exercise like running stimulates bone growth and the opposite is true for low-impact exercise, where the lack of weight bearing activity leads to low bone mineral density.

The AIS suggested athletes consume three standard dairy serves before exercise.



"In one case, we have had the team chef create some breakfast recipes including cheese omelettes, bircher muesli and smoothies with milk and yoghurt to help athletes meet this target," Burke said.

Burke said weekend cyclists could benefit by considering what to drink after their morning rides.

"All cyclists could think about their choice of pre-ride breakfast or, when they stop at a cafe on a weekend ride, consider ordering a latte or hot chocolate rather than a short black."

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SHARK SKIN INSPIRES DESIGN FOR BETTER DRONES, PLANES



BOSTON (TIP): Harvard scientists have developed a new structure inspired by shark skin that could improve the aerodynamic performance of planes, wind turbines, drones and cars.

The study published in the *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* sheds light on a decades-old mystery about sharkskin.

Sharks and airplanes are not actually all that different.

Both are designed to efficiently move through fluid (water and air), using the shape of their bodies to generate lift and decrease drag, researchers said.

The difference is that sharks have about a 400 million-year head start on the design process, they said.

"The skin of sharks is covered by thousands and thousands of small scales, or denticles, which vary in shape and size around the body," said George Lauder, professor at Harvard University in the US.

"We know a lot about the structure of these denticles - which are very similar to human teeth - but the function has been debated," said Lauder.

Most research has focused on the drag reducing properties of denticles but Lauder and his team wondered if there was more to the story.

"We asked, what if instead of mainly reducing drag, these particular shapes were actually better suited for increasing lift," said Mehdi Saadat, a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard, who holds a joint appointment at the University of South Carolina.

For inspiration, they turned to the shortfin mako, the fastest shark in the world. The mako's denticles have three raised ridges, like a trident.

Using micro-CT scanning, the team imaged and modelled the denticles in three dimensions. Next, they 3D printed the shapes on the surface of a wing with a curved aerodynamic cross-section, known as an airfoil.

"Airfoils are a primary component of all aerial devices," said August Domel, a PhD student at Harvard.

"We wanted to test these structures on airfoils as a way of measuring their effect on lift and drag for applications in the design of various aerial devices such as drones, airplanes, and wind turbines," said Domel.

The researchers tested 20 different configurations of denticle sizes, rows and row positions on airfoils inside a water flow tank.

They found that in addition to reducing drag, the denticle-shaped structures significantly increased lift, acting as high-powered, low-profile vortex generators.

Cars and planes are equipped with these small, passive devices designed to alter the air flow over the surface of a moving object to make it more aerodynamic.

Most vortex generators in the field today have a simple, blade-like design. *Source: PTI*

NASA satellite maps global distribution of cloud ice

WASHINGTON (TIP): A bread loaf-sized satellite has produced the first map of the global distribution of atmospheric ice in the 883-Gigahertz band, an important frequency for studying cloud ice and its effect on Earth's climate, NASA said on Wednesday.

IceCube—the diminutive spacecraft that deployed from the International Space Station (ISS) in May, last year—has demonstrated in-space a commercial 883-Gigahertz radiometer capable of measuring critical atmospheric cloud ice properties at altitudes between five to 15 kilometres.

NASA scientists pioneered the use of submillimeter wavelength bands, which fall between the microwave and infrared on the electromagnetic spectrum, to sense ice clouds.

However, until IceCube, these instruments had flown only aboard high-altitude research aircraft. This meant scientists could gather data only in areas over which the aircraft flew. *Source: PTI*

Microsoft enhances real-time translation for three Indian languages

NEW DELHI (TIP): To make technology accessible and productive for all Indians, Microsoft on Feb 7 announced the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Deep Neural Networks (DNN) to improve real-time language translation for Hindi, Bengali and Tamil languages.

This technology will help users in getting results that are more accurate and natural while surfing the Internet across any website on the Microsoft Edge browser, on Bing search, Bing Translator website, as well Microsoft Office 365 products like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Skype.

"We are committed to empower every citizen and business in India by bringing the power of AI into their daily life and become a driving force for Digital India," Sundar Srinivasan, General Manager-AI and Research at Microsoft India, said in a statement.

"We have supported Indian languages in computing for over two decades and more recently have made significant strides on voice based access and machine translation across languages," Srinivasan added.

The translator is equipped with "TrueText"—a satellite DNN-based system that filters repetition, pauses, and indifferent words, enhancing the



translation's appropriateness.

DNN have the capability of encoding more granular concepts like gender (feminine, masculine, neutral), politeness level (slang, casual, written, formal) and type of word (verb, noun, adjective).

The technology is also available for Android and iOS devices users through Microsoft Translator app which can recognise and translate languages from text, speech and even photos.

For its partners and customers, Microsoft also provides APIs on Azure

contextual

that they can use in their products.

According to Microsoft, while facing complexities for translating Indian languages, especially of Dravidian and Aryan subdivisions and a dearth of digital content in Indian languages, DNN-powered translation systems have shown at least a 20 per cent improvement in translation quality for all Indic languages which are currently supported.

The company also supports text input in all 22 constitutionally recognised Indian languages across its products and Windows interface in 12 languages. *Source: IANS*

New AI system can train robots for armies

WASHINGTON (TIP): Scientists have developed an artificial intelligence technique that will teach robots and computer programmes to interact with a human instructor and perform tasks for the army.

Researchers at the US Army Research Laboratory and the University of Texas at Austin considered a specific case where a human provides real-time feedback in the form of critique.

First introduced by researchers as Training an Agent Manually via Evaluative Reinforcement (TAMER), the team developed a new algorithm called Deep TAMER.

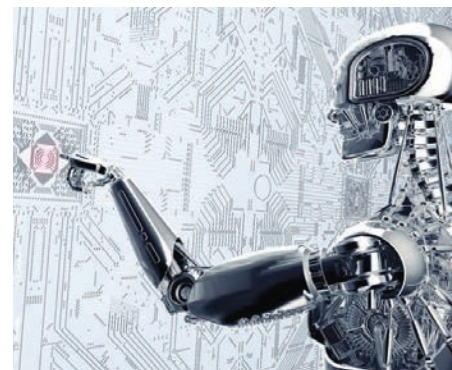
It is an extension of TAMER that uses deep learning — a class of machine learning algorithms that are loosely inspired by the brain to provide a robot the ability to learn how to perform tasks by viewing video streams in a short amount of time with a human trainer.

The team considered situations where a human teaches an agent how to behave by observing it and providing critique, for example, "good job" or "bad job" - similar to the way a person might train a dog to do a trick.

Many current techniques in artificial intelligence require robots to interact with their environment for extended periods of time to learn how to optimally perform a task.

During this process, the agent might perform actions that may not only be wrong, like a robot running into a wall for example, but catastrophic like a robot running off the side of a cliff.

Help from humans will speed things up



for the agents, and help them avoid potential pitfalls, said Garrett Warnell, a researcher at the US Army Research Laboratory.

As a first step, the researchers demonstrated Deep TAMER's success by using it with 15 minutes of human-provided feedback to train an agent to perform better than humans on the Atari game of bowling - a task that has proven difficult for even state-of-the-art methods in artificial intelligence.

Deep-TAMER-trained agents exhibited superhuman performance, besting both their amateur trainers and, on average, an expert human Atari player.

Within the next one to two years, researchers are interested in exploring the applicability of their newest technique in a wider variety of environments: for example, video games other than Atari Bowling and additional simulation environments to better represent the types of agents and environments found when fielding robots in the real world. *Source: PTI*

Solar System 2.0 may have water rich planets: Study

GENEVA (TIP): Planets around the faint red star TRAPPIST-1, just 40 light-years from Earth, may host significant amounts of water, scientists say.

The TRAPPIST-1 planetary system was first detected in 2016. Last year, further observations showed that there are at least seven planets in the system, each roughly the same size as the Earth.

These are named TRAPPIST-1b, c, d, e, f, g and h, with increasing distance from the central star.

Scientists led by Simon Grimm at the University of Bern in Switzerland have now applied very complex computer modelling methods to all the available data and have determined the planets' densities with much better precision than was possible before.

"The TRAPPIST-1 planets are so close together that they interfere with each other gravitationally, so the times when they pass in front of the star shift slightly," said Grimm.

"These shifts depend on the planets' masses, their distances and other orbital parameters," he said.

"With a computer model, we simulate the planets' orbits until the calculated transits agree with the observed values, and hence derive the planetary masses," he added. *Source: PTI*

Fortis promoters Malvinder, Shivinder Singh resign from company's board

NEW DELHI (TIP): Fortis Healthcare promoters Malvinder Mohan Singh and Shivinder Mohan Singh have resigned as directors from the company's board following the Delhi high court order upholding the Rs 3,500 crore arbitral award in favour of Daiichi Sankyo.

The Singh brothers have jointly tendered their resignation to the Board of Fortis Healthcare, which will discuss it in the meeting on February 13, the company said in a filing to the BSE.

"Malvinder Mohan Singh, executive chairman and Shivinder Mohan Singh, non-executive vice-chairman have tendered their resignation from the directorships of the company," Fortis Healthcare said.

The resignation is intended to free the organisation from any encumbrances that may be linked to the promoters, the letter said.

"In light of the recent high court judgement upholding the plea of Daiichi Sankyo to enforce the arbitration award, we believe this is in the interest of propriety and good governance," it said.

The Delhi HC had on January 31 upheld an international arbitral award of Rs 3,500 crore passed in favour of Japanese pharma major Daiichi Sankyo, which has alleged that the former promoters of India's Ranbaxy Laboratories had concealed information about proceedings against them by American food and drug department.

A tribunal in Singapore had passed the verdict in favour of Daiichi, holding that the former Ranbaxy promoters and brothers, Malvinder Singh and Shivinder Singh, had concealed information that the Indian company was facing a probe by the US Food and



Shivinder Mohan Singh (L) and Malvinder Mohan Singh have jointly tendered their resignation to the board of Fortis Healthcare, which will discuss it in the meeting on 13 February.

Drug Administration and the Department of Justice, while selling its shares.

With the resignation of the promoters, the board will be "better enabled and empowered to guide the future direction of the organisation without anyway being hampered by the Daiichi Sankyo judgement and our association at the Board," the letter said.

"The members of the board are also requested to look into all inter-group transactions and distance the promoter group from Fortis Healthcare Ltd in a manner that enables continuity of the operations of the organisation and deliver on its mission of enriching and saving lives," the Singh brothers wrote in the letter.

The high court order paved the way for enforcement of the 2016 arbitral award passed by the Singapore tribunal against the Singh brothers who had sold their shares in Ranbaxy to Daiichi in

2008 for Rs 9,576.1 crore. Sun Pharmaceuticals Ltd later acquired the company from Daiichi.

Daiichi had approached the high court in 2016 to seek the enforcement of a Rs 2,562 crore Singapore arbitral award passed in April 2016, along with an additional claim of interest and lawyers' fees incurred in connection with the proceedings.

The tribunal's award had come after the Japanese company invoked arbitration clause against Singhs, alleging that they concealed important information while selling Ranbaxy in 2008.

Daiichi had entered into a settlement agreement with the US Department of Justice, agreeing to pay \$500 million penalty to resolve potential, civil and criminal liability.

The company had then sold its stake in Ranbaxy to Sun Pharmaceuticals for Rs 22,679 crore in 2015. *Source: PTI*

HOME LOANS TAKEN PRIOR TO APRIL 2016 MAY BE CHEAPER

NEW DELHI (TIP): Old home loans are likely to become cheaper with the RBI asking banks to link from April 1 the base rate with MCLR, which is more sensitive to policy rate signals.

The RBI had introduced the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rates (MCLR) system with effect from April 1, 2016 on account of limitations in the base rate regime.

Home loans taken before April 1, 2016 were based on base rate, which was arbitrarily decided by banks. Interest rates, which have a bearing on the MCLR, have been moving southwards post-demonetisation.

"With the introduction of the MCLR system, it was expected that the existing Base Rate linked credit exposures shall also migrate to MCLR system," RBI said on Developmental and Regulatory Policies yesterday.

It is observed, however, that a large proportion of bank loans continue to be linked to the Base Rate despite the RBI highlighting this concern in earlier monetary policy statements.

"Since MCLR is more sensitive to policy rate signals, it has been decided to harmonise the methodology of determining benchmark rates by linking the Base Rate to the MCLR with effect from April 1, 2018," the RBI said.

Under the base rate and BPLR, banks were following individual methodologies for computing the minimum rate at which they could lend. Under the MCLR, RBI asked all banks to follow the marginal cost of funds method to arrive at their benchmark lending rate. MCLR is calculated after factoring in banks' marginal cost of funds (largely, the interest at which they borrow money), return on equity (a measure of banks' profitability), and negative carry on account of cash reserve ratio. *Source: PTI*

HARLEY-DAVIDSON RECALLS 1.75 LAKH BIKES IN US



WASHINGTON (TIP): Harley-Davidson is recalling nearly 175,000 bikes in the US due to fears the brakes could fail, a government regulator said. If brake fluid is not replaced for a "prolonged period" beyond the recommended two-year schedule, deposits may form on internal components "reducing braking ability and increasing the risk of a crash," the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said. *Source: AFP*

Bitcoin drops below \$6,200 for first time in three months

TOKYO (TIP): Bitcoin plunged 20 per cent to a three-month low, its latest sharp loss following a series of setbacks for the cryptocurrency that, with a collapse across global mainstream markets adding to the selling.

The virtual currency fell to \$6,190 for the first time since mid-November, according to Bloomberg News, and represents the latest hammering for a unit that saw a stratospheric 26-fold rise last year.

Today's collapse comes just six weeks after bitcoin hit a record high of \$19,511, fuelled by a flood of speculators looking to make a quick buck, with warnings it could fall another 50 per cent. Since those heady days the cryptomarket — which includes dozens of other units — has been pounded by news of crackdowns by governments including in China, Russia and South Korea, one of the biggest markets for the sector. On Thursday, India said it would "take all measures to eliminate" cryptocurrencies' use as part of a payment system and in funding illegitimate activities, while Japanese authorities raided a virtual currency exchange after it lost \$530 million to hackers.



CCI slaps Rs 136-crore fine on Google

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Competition Commission on Thursday imposed a fine of Rs 136 crore on internet giant Google for unfair business practices in the Indian market for online search.

After a detailed probe on the complaints filed in 2012, the regulator through a majority order said the penalty is being imposed on Google for "infringing anti-trust conduct".

On the CCI ruling, a Google spokesperson said the company is "reviewing the narrow concerns identified by the Commission and will assess our next steps".

Globally, this is one of the rare cases where Google has been penalised for unfair business ways, even as it has been under probe in several countries.

It was alleged that Google is indulging in abuse of dominant position in the market for online search through practices leading to search bias and search manipulation, among others.

For this case, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) considered markets in India for online general web search services and for online search



advertising services as the relevant ones.

The penalty amount of Rs 135.86 crore translates to 5 per cent of the company's average total revenue generated from India operations from its different business segments for the financial years 2013, 2014 and 2015, according to the CCI order. The ruling has come on complaints filed by Matrimony.com and Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) — back in 2012 — against Google LLC, Google India Pvt Ltd and Google Ireland Ltd. *Source: PTI*

Forbes releases first crypto rich list; Ripple co-founder Larsen at top

NEW YORK (TIP): Forbes has released its first ever list of richest people in cryptocurrency, which is topped by Ripple co-founder Chris Larsen, with an estimated crypto net worth of USD 7.5-8 billion.

There is a huge spike in the value of the unregulated cryptocurrencies, which are 'mined' using secret algorithms based on the blockchain technologies.

According to Forbes, the average 2017 price change of Bitcoin, Ethereum and XRP, three of the most common cryptocurrencies, is a whopping 14,409 per cent. As per the publication, there are now nearly 1,500 cryptoassets in existence, valued at an aggregate USD 550 billion, up 31 times since the beginning of 2017.

"Fortunes of this magnitude should never be allowed to lurk in the shadows," Forbes Editor Randall Lane said.

The list also features Joseph Lubin with crypto net worth (USD 1.5 billion), Changpeng Zhao (USD 1.1-2 billion), Cameron & Tyler Winklevoss (USD 900 million-1.1 billion) and Matthew Mellon (USD 900 million-1.1 billion).

Others in the list include Brian Armstrong, Matthew Roszak, Anthony Di Iorio, Brock Pierce, Michael Novogratz, Brendan Blumer, Dan Larimer, Valery Vavilov, Charles Hoskinson, Brad Garlinghouse. *Source: PTI*

Indian American Founders of Medical Firm Step Down as Part of Settlement Deal

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): Indian American entrepreneurs Rishi Shah and Shradha Agarwal, the chief executive officer and president, respectively, will be stepping down from their positions at Outcome Health to settle allegations of fraud.

The company, which provides health education technology to improve patient outcomes at physician practices nationwide, announced on Jan. 26 that it has settled all litigation with its investors. The company places digital screens in doctors' offices that run health-related content as well as advertisements from drug companies. "As a result of the settlement, the equity investors, lenders and company's founders are recommitting \$159 million to Outcome Health, which will be used to reduce the company's debt by \$77 million and further strengthen and scale its technology platform, automated processes and overall customer operations. Founders Rishi Shah and Shradha Agarwal have moved into the roles of Chairman and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors from their previous positions. The expanded Board of Directors, which also includes three new independent directors and two investor representatives, is launching a search for a new CEO," the statement from the company said.

The founders raised \$225 million in funding last year, which was reportedly set aside by Shah and Agarwal. The \$159 million will be part of the \$225 million they had raised, the Chicago Tribune reported. The Indian American duo was barred in November from using the \$225 million after the investors sued them. A court filing on Jan. 26 said that the money will be used for settlement with the investors, the report added.

The company raised \$500 million in July 2017 but after the Wall Street Journal reported that the company had overcharged clients by misleading them about their reach and manipulated campaign results, the investors, including Goldman Sachs and Google and a fund co-founded by Illinois gubernatorial candidate J.B. Pritzker, sued the company in November 2017. Outcome Health denied the allegations and said that the lawsuit was without cause.

The company has so far lost 200 of its 535 employees and shelved its plan of moving to a different headquarters. Shah had made it to Forbes 400 list as the 206th richest American in October 2017. The net worth of the 31-year-old college dropout was estimated to be \$3.6 billion. He was also named as one of the richest Americans under the age of 40.

Shah and Agarwal, both 32, were also included in the Fortune magazine's list of '40 Under 40' in 2017. The annual ranking list of influential young people under 40, who the magazine calls "disruptors, innovators, rebels and artists" inspiring others, featured them on rank 38.



Rishi Shah and Shradha Agarwal will step down from their respective positions of the chief executive officer and president at Outcome Health.

Indian Origin Girl Cracks UK's Math Hall of Fame

LONDON (TIP): An eight-year-old Indian origin schoolgirl has entered the UK's Mathematics Hall of Fame, an online mathematics based competitive tool aimed at primary school pupils.

Sohini Roy Chowdhury competed with primary school pupils from across Britain and other countries to also

make it into the top 100 World Hall of Fame after solving mathematical puzzles with speed and accuracy.

"She feels really excited to solve math in an online learning environment to earn a place on the live World Hall of Fame," said her father Mainak Roy Chowdhury, an accountant by profession with an MBA in finance.

"Sohini's great grandfather, D N Roy, was a qualified locomotive engineer from Scotland and worked for the Indian Railways. I would say Sohini has inherited her interest in math genetically," he added.

Mathletics is described as an engaging, supportive online learning resource targeted at primary school level math curriculum, allowing children to play live mental arithmetic games against other children from all over the world. Their scores are constantly updated and only the world's 100 best make it to the leader-board.

New Delhi born Sohini joined in the competition this year as a student of Nelson Primary School in Birmingham.

"Sohini has displayed some higher-level understanding of the math covered this year. She applies herself to all her learning and this has been reflected in her attainment this year," said her schoolteacher in reference to the Mathletics achievement.

The schoolgirl wishes to become a doctor when she grows up.



Sohini Roy Chowdhury competed with primary school pupils from across Britain and other countries to also make it into the top 100 World Hall of Fame after solving mathematical puzzles with speed and accuracy.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Miss World 2017, Manushi Chhillar to grace South...

title after seventeen years when Priyanka Chopra, a fellow Indian won the same title. Earlier Ms Aishwarya Rai Bachchan had won the title and become the first Indian to ever win the Miss World title.

Bindu Kohli, a household name on the East Coast is a well-known television host and a promoter of high quality events. She hosted Miss Shilpa Shetty last year in various cities in US with multiple events to mark women empowerment in USA. "This premium event will be ideal to present and felicitate Miss Manushi Chhillar in USA amongst high profile guests and several women achievers in USA", said Bindu Kohli. She continued, "I believe in quality and class and I am sure to make it a memorable event".

Bindu Kohli entertainment is an event management and production company based in

New York. Some of the others proud sponsors for this event are Shaheen, Leonard Palazzo, Munawar & Andrews-Santillo LLP, AR Helping, and The Indian Panorama.

Bangladesh ex-PM Zia gets 5-year RI in graft case

The verdict simultaneously sentenced Zia's "fugitive" elder son and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) senior vice-president Tarique Rahman as he was tried in absentia. Rahman and four others have been sentenced to 10 years in prison.

The case is one of dozens pending against Zia, who has been a rival of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for decades. The charges against her had already led to her boycotting polls in 2014, which triggered widespread protests.

Zia, wearing a white sari, appeared in the heavily guarded courtroom amid heightened political tension. While sentencing Zia, the judge read out the abridged version of the 632-page verdict in 10 minutes.

He said though all convicts played an identical role in the crime, Zia was given a lesser term taking into account her "age and social status". The court also said that the defense tried their best to hinder the trial proceedings as they sought time on 35 occasions in the name of changing the court.

The other convicts are former lawmaker Kazi Salimul Haque Kamal, businessman Sharfuddin Ahmed, ex-PM's principal secretary Kamal Uddin Siddiqui and her nephew Mominur Rahman.

Zia became the second head of government after former dictator-turned-politician HM Ershad to be convicted in a graft case.

"I will be back, there is no need to cry," Khaleda Zia today told her weeping relatives and supporters, minutes before the three-time former Bangladeshi premier was sentenced to five years in jail related to a graft case.

According to experts, Zia will have to stay in jail for at least three days until Sunday. It will depend on the High Court whether it will give Zia bail or not. The conviction means that Zia, could be barred from contesting the General Elections in December this year.

The law says if someone is convicted for at least two years, he or she cannot contest the election for the next five years, The Daily Star said. In Zia's case, if the high court gives her bail and yet upholds the sentencing, then she will be disqualified from the poll, it said.

BNP stares at split

Political analysts believe Bangladesh Nationalist Party may split as several senior leaders could disassociate them from Zia. Their grouse is Zia's elder son Tarique Rahman, BNP senior vice-president, who is learnt to be wielding authority from London, ignoring the party veterans. Rahman has sought asylum in the UK as he is also facing several criminal charges.

(With inputs from PTI)

Lawmaker slams...

Secretary controlled access to the president and the flow of information into the Oval Office, resigned Wednesday after his two ex-wives went public with multiple allegations of domestic violence.

According to reports, Porter served in the White House without a full security clearance. Sources tell ABC News that senior White House officials were aware of the allegations against Porter while he worked in the Oval Office.

Cummings has repeatedly pressed Gowdy to subpoena the White House - and asked the White House directly - for information regarding the security clearances Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, President Trump's former national security adviser, and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser. He and other Democratic leaders have asked the administration to explain the status of Kushner's clearance given reported omissions on his security clearance questionnaire.

Cummings recently revealed that the Department of Defense approved 165 interim security clearances over a three-year period, giving access to the government's sensitive and secret information to people who later failed background checks.

Cummings is not alone in calling for a congressional inquiry into questions about Porter's security clearance. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, D-New York, who served as President Bill Clinton's White House staff secretary and as a deputy staff secretary, wrote to Gowdy on Wednesday asking for an investigation.

"Mr. Porter's history made him a primary target for blackmail while serving in the role," he wrote. "Allowing him to handle sensitive national security documents without conducting a background check is cause for bipartisan concern." (Source: ABC)





Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

Weekly Horoscope: February 12 - February 18, 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 the overlying theme of this period is finance and you will be busy with loans, funds, buying and selling of personal assets, even trying your luck in the stock market. It is a time for new beginnings and you are keen to make your work more profitable. You can definitely do it if you put in focused efforts. You attract money this period and will possibly see an increase in your personal income through loans, fixed deposits, dividends.

Taurus:

You will be daring and enterprising and even a pioneer of sorts. Money trends are positive as you ponder your goals and aims for the current period. Setting goals, making plans and implementing them will occupy you and keep your energy levels high. Take care of your health, as you could overextend yourself in pursuit of material gains. You push ahead with all guns blazing and see most of your plans being released.

Gemini:

Your creative streak reveals itself and you find ingenious solutions to your money and relationship problems. But, despite it, you are plagued by a sense of insecurity deep down. It is possible that you feel restless and dissatisfied with your life and this could spill over into your intimate relationships. Children and pets could be a source of worry. Travel for work / pleasure will be beneficial and you attend meetings, seminars and conventions and win applause for your prowess in work.

Cancer:

You have worked hard to consolidate your position and now feel confident that your finances are stable. You have taken a lot of risks earlier which could have led to some degree of loss at work. You are now cautious and read the fine print carefully. There is better rapport too between you and your co-workers and boss. You could be involved in developing new contacts or more business for your company and will be travelling on work.

Leo:

This is a time to slow down but it won't be easy as your sights are firmly fixed on making more money. Children / siblings / extended family will crave and need your attention and your time. Health may need attention too and alternative therapies will prove effective. Visits to places of worship will calm your agitated mind. You look for truth and the meaning of life and may seek out a guru for guidance. Your life is fairly well balanced but there could be stagnation in relationships.

Virgo:

Your interest in money matters continues and you think of ways and means to increase your assets. You love making money and spending it too. You can also be flamboyant and make it a point to display your material worth. Meetings with financial planners, and dealing with loans, funds, assets will keep you occupied. There will be fun times too with social and outings with loved ones. This is a good period in life and you taste success in whatever you do.

Libra:

The financially hectic period of the last period slows down and there is a sense of a quiet and calm now. This low-key period could propel you to seek out adventures and shake things up a bit. Nothing ventured, nothing gained - so true in your case, and you are ready to try your luck, gamble away your money, and also seek out adventures of the heart. You might even find the courage to propose to your sweetheart, and then there may be an engagement or marriage on the cards.

Scorpio:

Keep your bags packed as you may have many trips this coming period. Yes, says Ganesha, be prepared to take overnight trips or short getaways for both work and pleasure. Meeting new people and even those you have lost touch with, personally or through email, phone or snail mail is not ruled out. Check out new technology to raise your communication levels. There will be some obstacles at work, but the family and close friends are behind you like a rock to motivate and support you.

Sagittarius:

You also have the co-operation and support of your boss and co-workers. People find you pleasant and agreeable as you go out of your way to help others in need. There may be a windfall now and you could gain a lot from an inheritance which you didn't expect. Loans / interest / bonuses and even payment stuck for a long time will now be accessible to you. Don't go overboard and spend it all. Exercise control and be moderate, says Ganesha, and success is yours.

Capricorn:

A really busy period, even a hectic one, as everyday chores take your time. Despite leaving you totally engrossed and sometimes exhausted, it is still an enjoyable period. You also manage to find time for your spiritual aspirations. Apart from work, there are social interactions and quality time spent with friends, family and loved ones. You love entertaining and being entertained and there will be a plethora of outings, picnics and get-togethers. You will be the soul of the party.

Aquarius:

Your fine interactions with people, especially with family members / work associates have been enjoyable and even empowering. The introspective phase gives way to more pressing, earthly concerns. The welfare and security of your loved ones is of paramount importance now and you need to take care of their needs and wants. There could be unexpected expenses as you over-reach yourself to help others.

Pisces:

Your sustained hard work now bears fruit. It is payback time now and Ganesha shows you with rewards. Salary raises, promotions and perks are part of this well-deserved package and you will have to take care that it doesn't bloat your ego further. Other money-related matters such as funds, loans, deposits, taxes, trade, agencies, legal matters could give you gains, both expected and unexpected, and could become a cause of great jubilation at home.

COLDEST PYEONGCHANG GREETES WINTER ATHLETES WITH WARMTH

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

A special stadium erected for only opening and closing ceremonies here in PyeongChang is without a roof and has no physical barriers to prevent strong chilly winds sweeping the venue with the temperature expected to be around seven degrees Fahrenheit.

The previous coldest Winter Olympic Games were in Lillehammer, Norway, in 1994 while the last two editions - Sochi and Vancouver - were clubbed in the warmer winter category.

The 23rd edition of the Winter Olympic Games being held in northeastern South Korea, including the hilly PyeongChang, the coastal area of Gangneung and Jeongseon, have been the biggest ever.

Since the venue of the opening ceremony is at a higher latitude than the other Olympic venue sites, PyeongChang draws severe cold weather. The stadium can seat about 35,000 spectators. There are not many Koreans keen to attend the opening ceremony. They rather prefer to watch it on Television in little warmer environs.

Looking at past records, PyeongChang has been one of the coldest regions in South Korea as it is located at nearly a half mile above sea level. It is also notorious for its biting winds that come sweeping in from the Manchurian Plain and Siberia.

The Organizing Committee of PyeongChang Olympic Committee spent about \$58 million to build the PyeongChang Olympic Stadium without a roof. As a part of cost-cutting, even no central heating has been provided because it would have been too expensive.

To keep the spectators attracted, the organizers provided spectators with heating pads, a blanket, and a raincoat, besides other things, according to the AP. They also put up polycarbonate walls along the highest points of the stadium to block winds and portable gas heaters between rows. People could also buy hot drinks and food to keep themselves warm in the stadium.

The meteorologists predicted that temperature during the Olympic Games would be lower than temperatures recorded during the 1994 Lillehammer Games in Norway, which has the record for the coldest Olympics thus far, at negative 11 degrees Celsius, or about 12 degrees Fahrenheit.

The 2018 Winter Olympics may set several new records, including being the coldest. But it's not the first recent Winter Olympics to have weather issues - the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and the 2014 Games in Sochi became famous for not being cold enough during their respective games. Temperatures were above freezing during the competitions, causing snow to melt.

Both Canada and the US besides the hosts South Korea with substantial number of athletes would be cynosure of all eyes. Many athletes who had events before or immediately after the ceremony naturally gave a miss to the ceremony.

Tale of two cities

We all know about two Punjabs, two Bengals and two Koreas. Do we know about two Pyeongs?

If you google search "Pyeong", the expected answer would be "PyeongChang is very different from Pyongyang. Do not confuse, please."

Intriguingly, the same answer was given by the Governor of South Korea's Gangwon province, Choi Moon-Soon, when he addressed international media some time ago.

History is full of instances, when cities, provinces and even nations had similar



Opening ceremony will be a virtual fashion parade on a cold windy evening



"This is how we will enter the stadium on 9. February 2018," declared Team Deutschland on its Facebook page (Photo/ Team Deutschland).



This is expected to be France's Opening Ceremony outfit at PyeongChang 2018. Needless to say, France is the fashion capital of the world

names. There was East Berlin and West Berlin but now one unified Berlin. There was East Germany and West Germany but now a unified Germany.

The German example apart, there are hardly any other instances when cities, provinces or nations with similar names merged.

The case of Korea is an example.

It is not an uncommon mistake to confuse PyeongChang and Pyongyang even though the two cities representing South Korea and North Korea have slight variation in their spellings.

Both PyeongChang and Pyongyang have been hawking newspaper headlines for different reasons.

PyeongChang has been in the news as the host city of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games. And it will also enter history books as the host of coldest Winter Games in past several decades.

And Pyongyang have been in headlines about a possible nuclear war threatening the world in general and the US in particular.

PyeongChang is a county in South Korea's Gangwon province in the east of the Korean Peninsula while Pyongyang is the capital city of North Korea in the west of the Korean peninsula.

While the Olympic host county has a small population of 44,000, its North Korean name sake has 2.8 million inhabitants.

While PyeongChang has the slogan of "Happy700 Pyeongchang" referring to the country's elevation of 700m, the North Korean capital is listed at 38m and has the slogan "Dynamic Labors".

The South Korean county is the official host of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games, the earlier speculation of North Korea sharing hosting duties of some events were rejected due to a lack of time to prepare the possible venue.

Interestingly when South Korea hosted the 1988 summer Olympic Games at Seoul, North Korea boycotted the games.

South Korea's current Winter Olympic medal count is far more impressive with 26 gold, 17 silver and 10 bronze than North Korea with 0 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze.

As host nation, South Korea is guaranteed entry in all sports on the 2018 Winter Olympic program while North Korea agreed to participate in the PyeongChang 2018 games following negotiations with South Korea. North Korea has sent 22 athletes, including 12 members for a unified Korean women's hockey team.

Kimchi, a must for all Korean food, is much spicier in South Korea. In addition, South Koreans have access to American fast food giants, that are barred from doing business in the North. "Cold noodles" or naengmyeon is a classic North Korean dish.

Popular destinations in PyeongChang include Woljeongsa Temple, the exciting Ocean 700 Water Park or the Korea Botanic Garden. while in Pyongyang popular tourist destinations are the State Circus, the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum or The Metro and all tours in Pyongyang must be guided and officially sanctioned.

Six nations - Ecuador, Eritrea, Kosovo, Malaysia, Nigeria and Singapore - are making their debut at PyeongChang 2018. They will be mostly represented by their expatriate athletes in speed skating, cross country skiing, alpine skiing, figure skating and two-woman bobsleigh.

Klaus Jungbluth Rodriguez, 38, will represent Ecuador at its first Winter Games. He is known as the "Tarmac Skier", given his

CONTD ON PAGE 23



USA sportspersons will look like this



The Norwegians probably have an official Olympic uniform, but that doesn't matter. All eyes are on what their curlers will wear. Once known just for their colorful pants started at Vancouver 2010, Norway's men's curling team returns with a full checkered suit this time.

CONTD FROM PAGE 22

training on roller skis in the city of Guayaquil and now in Australia.

A PhD student in sports sciences at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia, Rodriguez began by creating an Ecuadorian Ski Federation from scratch with the help of his National Olympic Committee (NOC), in order to be able to compete in cross country skiing events under the aegis of the International Ski Federation (FIS).

Canadian-Eritrean Shannon-Ogbani Abeda will not be the first African to take to the Alpine skiing slopes at the Olympic Winter Games, but he opens the way for Eritrea, the East African country where his parents are from. Born in Alberta on 15 May 1996 and having grown up and studied IT sciences in the Olympic city of Calgary, Abeda began his trailblazing career by competing at the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck in 2012 which, he says, opened his eyes to the top international level. He did not manage to qualify for the Sochi Games in 2014, but several top 20 places on the FIS circuit over the past couple of years have helped him earn a place at PyeongChang 2018, in the slalom and giant slalom events.

Kosovo made a magnificent Olympic Summer Games debut with a gold medal won by judoka Majlinda Kelmendi in the -52kg category in Rio in 2016. Now it is the turn of Alpine skier Albin Tahiri to gift his country with its first participation in the Winter Games.

Indeed, he is going to compete in all of the Alpine skiing disciplines, even if he is in fact more of a specialist in the speed events. Albin has skied since he was a child in Slovenia, the country in which he grew up, and where Alpine skiing is very popular. His presence in PyeongChang represents more for him and his country as he becomes the first athlete from Kosovo to compete in Winter Olympics.

The tropical State of Malaysia is making its Winter Games debut with not one, but two competitors. Chronologically, it was young skier Jeffrey Webb, 18, who secured the first ticket to PyeongChang, in the slalom and giant slalom events.

Very much inspired by his idol, Marcel Hirscher, he was also the first Malaysian to compete at the Asian Winter Games, in Sapporo in 2017. Based in the US, he has skied from a young age. His two races in YongPyong have given him experience at the highest international level.

At the end of September 2017, skater Julian Yee posted on social media a photo of himself in front of the Olympic rings at Gangneung Olympic Park, where he will perform his



PyeongChang Olympics beckon

short and freestyle programs in the men's figure skating events at the PyeongChang Games on 16 and 17 February. The photo was posted with this comment: "It has been a long, tiring, and meaningful journey. The milestone has been achieved and Malaysia will for sure be at the 2018 Winter Olympics! I've finally made it! Thank you to everyone who has supported me and given me the strength. Without you guys, it would be impossible."

Julian qualified on 29 September when he finished in 6th place in the 49th Nebelhorn Trophy, an international competition that is part of the "ISU Challenger Series" staged in Oberhof, Germany. He is also a four-time Malaysian champion, and winner in August 2017 at the South East Asian Games, organized at the national skating rink in Kuala Lumpur.

Pilot Seun Adigun and her team-mates Ngozi Onwumere and Akuoma Omeoga grew up and studied in the US and are all former high-level sprinters. Under the Nigerian flag, Adigun competed in the 100m hurdles at London 2012. Onwumere won medals at the African Games in 2015 in the 200m and 4x100m relay. Omeoga, meanwhile, competed for the University of Minnesota in the 100m and 200m.

In 2014, Adigun turned to bobsleigh with the aim of reaching the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018. She recruited Onwumere and Omeoga, and the pioneering African women trained in Houston, Texas, in a wooden luge that they nicknamed "The Mayflower". They then launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise the finances needed for their participation in the World Cup (equipment, accommodation, travel expenses), and also attracted the attention of Worldwide Olympic Partner Visa, which lent its support and made them members of "Team

Visa". Their journey on toboggans on ice at the IBSF World Cup 2017-18 led to the first Olympic qualification of an African bobsleigh team.

At 18, Cheyenne Goh becomes the first Singaporean athlete to compete at the Winter Games. Based in Canada since the age of 4, she began practicing ice hockey, then turned to speed skating. A fruitful decision as now, having competed in four ISU World Cup events with a best result of 20th place in the 1500m in Shanghai, Goh clocked up enough points to allow her to write this page in her country's history.

Besides these expatriates, mostly Americans or Canadians, the United States has the biggest contingent of overseas athletes here. Needless to say, that the hosts South Korea (Korea) will have the biggest contingent. The US squad has 240 athletes, including 107 women. Canada follows next with 227 competitors, including 103 women.

Among Asian countries, Japan is sending 124 athletes (72 women) while China has 81 (46 women) in their contingents. Coming to Europeans, Germany's contingent will have 157 athletes (61 women) while Switzerland will have 169 (71 women). There will be 23 women athletes in the Australian squad of 51.

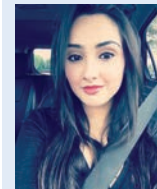
Both India and Pakistan are sending two men athletes each.



Prabhjot Singh, Executive Editor, PTC News, is currently in PyeongChang for the 2018 Winter Olympic Games
(Article /Courtesy PTC News)

The Philadelphia Eagles defy odds at Super Bowl LII

BY MARVI SAJID



NEW YORK (TIP): The Philadelphia Eagles rallied for a comeback against the New England Patriots with a 41-33 win for their epic championship victory.

Coming into Super Bowl LII Tom Brady and his patriots were the clear favorite, but that wasn't enough to close the door on the real Cinderella story Nick Foles.



The Philadelphia Eagles rallied for a comeback against the New England Patriots with a 41-33 win for their epic championship victory

The 29-year-old back up quarter-back may have just become one of the most legendary stories in Philadelphia sports history. Nick Foles, started his NFL season uncertain about what was to come. In fact, the QB almost quit his NFL career 18 months ago but decided to give it one last shot. He signed with the Philadelphia Eagles as a backup quarterback to Carson Wentz. Little did we know that moment would change his entire career.

Carson Wentz injured his right knee mid-December as the NFL regular season was coming to a close. That ensured Nick Foles the opportunity of a life time as the fairytale came against five time champion and three time MVP Tom Brady. But the story only gets better, as Nick Foles stamped his mark in history as the first player in a Super Bowl to make a pass and catch one. Overall Foles, converted on 28 of his 43 passes tallying 373 yards and 3 touchdowns.

The Super Bowl champ spoke about his take on the game, and what lead him to one of the greatest Sports stories of all time:

"The big thing that helped me was knowing that I didn't have to be Superman," he said. "I have amazing teammates, amazing coaches around me, and all I have to do is go play as hard as I could and play for one another, play for those guys and not look at the scoreboard, not look at the time. Just go out there and play. Don't worry about it and we came away with a victory. It doesn't get any bigger than this."

And for those of us who have not gotten enough of the Eagles QB, rumor has it this is far from the last time we see this Philadelphia Hero.

(Marvi Sajid is a New York based commentator on US sports)



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