

## Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif faces probe for laundering \$4.9 bn to India: Reports



Nawaz Sharif is now facing a probe for allegedly laundering USD 4.9 billion to India

**World Bank denies reports Sharif laundered US\$ 4.9 billion to India**

ISLAMABAD (TIP): In further trouble to Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan's top anti-corruption body on Tuesday, May 8, ordered a probe against the embattled former Prime Minister and others for allegedly laundering USD 4.9 billion to India, media reports said. **contd on Page 32**

## Trump scraps the Iran nuclear deal, calling it 'embarrassment'

Iran will remain in N-deal, says Rouhani  
European leaders call on Washington to let them carry on with pact

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump on Tuesday, May 8, pulled out of the landmark nuclear deal with Iran, an Obama-era accord which he has repeatedly criticized.

"It is clear to me that we cannot prevent Iran's nuclear bomb. The Iran deal is defective at its core. Therefore, I am announcing today that the United States would withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal," Trump said.

Moments later he signed a fresh set of sanctions against Iran and warned countries against any cooperation with Iran on its nuclear weapons program. Ever since his election campaign, Trump has frequently criticized the Obama-era Iran nuclear deal, also



contd on page 32

Trump has scrapped nuclear deal with Iran. But Iran's President Rouhani says Iran will remain in deal

## Israel attacks Iranian targets in Syria

JERUSALEM (TIP): In the largest operation in Syria since the signing of disengagement agreement in 1974, Israel said, May 10, it has struck almost all of the Iranian infrastructure on Syrian soil during the overnight raids in retaliation to a barrage of rocket fire on its territory by Iran. The Israel Defense Force claimed that the overnight clash, the largest-ever direct clash between the Iranian and Israeli armies

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## Ritzy Glitzy New York Indian Film Festival kicks off, with celebrities in attendance

MABEL PAIS/ BIDISHA ROY



The Red Carpet. Jay Mandal's fabulous photograph says it all. From L to R: Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty, Mira Nair, Salman Rushdie, Aroon Shivdasani, Asaf Mandvi, Madhur Jaffrey and Sree Sreenivasan. Photo / Jay Mandal -on assignment

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The longest-running, most prestigious South Asian Film Festival in North America, NYIFF, kicked off on May 7 at the Village East Cinemas in the lower east side of Manhattan at 181-189, 2nd Avenue, New York, NY 10003.

The Festival boasts 78 shorts, documentaries and feature films screened over the period of 6 days. The Festival continues until May 12 at the location. **(Read more on page 3 and 16)**

## TRUMP: WILL MEET KIM ON JUNE 12 IN SINGAPORE

**Meeting with Trump will be positive for Koreas, says Kim Jong-un**

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump today, May 10, announced that he will meet North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on June 12 in Singapore for a historic meeting to discuss denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.



contd on page 32

The much-anticipated meeting between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un will take place on June 12 in Singapore



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# JOIN OUR VISION: A Fundraiser for the Eye Foundation of America



**NEW YORK (TIP):** Join the Eye Foundation of America for an evening of music by Prasanna in support of its work fighting childhood blindness around the world.

The Eye Foundation of America has worked towards eliminating avoidable blindness for 40 years, especially among children. Alongside our international partners, we're bringing eye care to those in the greatest need in an affordable, accessible manner.

That's why we need your help to reach our fundraising goal of \$500,000. Event proceeds will support several programs, including: eye screening for premature babies, providing glasses for school children, and developing a new children's eye hospital that will provide state of the art care for all children, regardless of a family's ability to pay.

Our musical guest, Prasanna, is a world-renowned guitarist whose repertoire includes Indian Carnatic music, jazz, metal, and more. An acclaimed composer for Oscar-winning films like "Smile Pinki," Prasanna is a longtime co-collaborator with A.R. Rahman on films such as "Lagaan," continues to record solo and collaborative studio albums, and serves as educator and founder of the Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music.

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**Eye Foundation of America**

<http://www.eyefoundationofamerica.org/>



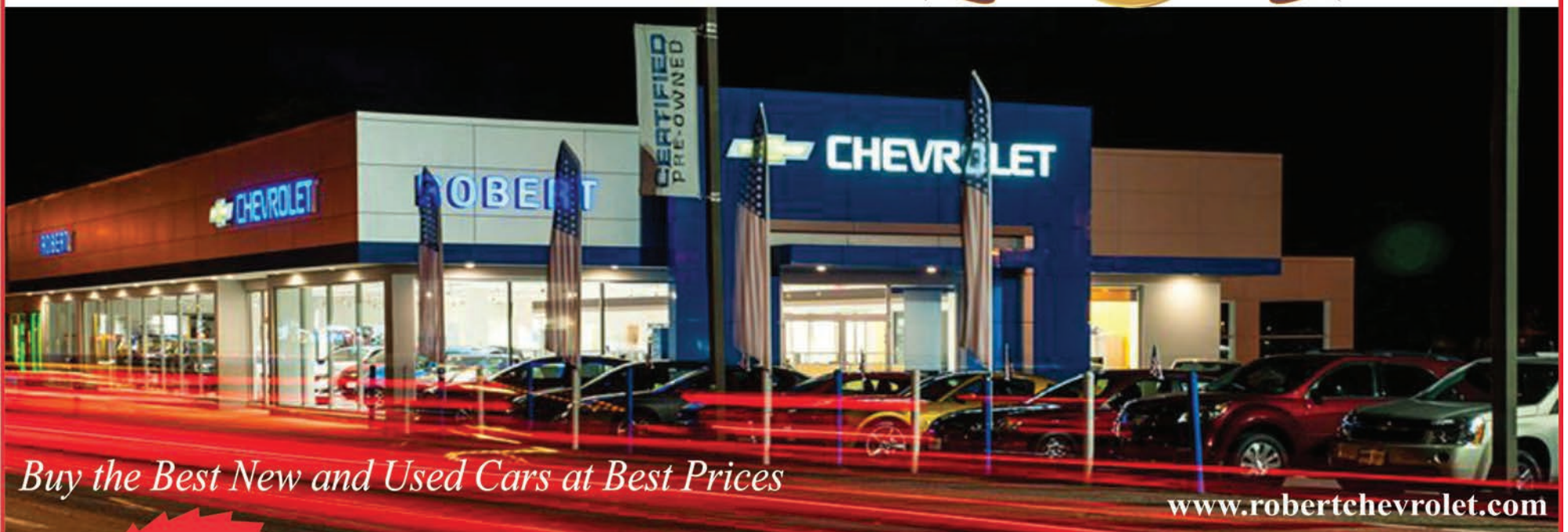
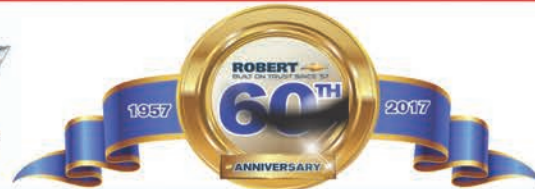
*Indian guitarist Prasanna has singular ability to perform traditional Indian classical Carnatic music on guitar.*

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# THE 18TH EDITION OF NEW YORK INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL KICKS OFF

Aroon Shivdasani, the founding member and Executive & Artistic Director of IAAC calls it a day

BIDISHA ROY

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** The 18th edition New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) opened up with U.S. premiere of Ravi Jadhav's Marathi language film *Nude* (with English subtitles) at Village East Cinema on Monday, May 7.

This year NYIFF, the flagship event of Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC), showcases four world premieres, two international premieres, six North American premieres, one U.S. premiere and 11 New York premieres from four South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka), as well as North America and the United Kingdom. The entire festival schedule comprises 78 films in 11 different languages (English, Hindi, Marathi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Tulu, Konkani, Bengali & Assamese).

The media was invited to cover the NYIFF kick-off press conference on Friday, May 4th at the Consulate General of India.

In his welcome speech Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty highlighted the contribution of Aroon Shivdasani, the founding member and Executive & Artistic Director of IAAC. "What you have done is absolutely incredible. The scale and magnitude of the festival has reached a new height because of your hard work and work of love. India-US relationship has gone stronger because of people like you", he said.

Aroon Shivdasani, who announced her retirement from IAAC at the press conference, gave a brief history of the journey of IAAC since its inception in 1998. "In 1998, Indian artists were invisible, unknown and unappreciated in North America. For last 20 years, we have been promoting, showcasing and building an awareness of the invisible arts of India through presentations of Indian film, dance, art, music, theatre, literature and fashion," she said.

Aseem Chhabra, NYIFF Director gave the specifics of the films. The festival will close on May 12 with the New York



Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty, Aroon Shivdasani, the founding member and Executive & Artistic Director of IAAC and NYIFF Director Aseem Chhabra pose with film makers and actors at the Consulate  
Photo/ Jay Mandal -on assignment

premiere of veteran NYIFF director Hansal Mehta's biopic on Islamic fundamentalist Omar Saeed Sheikh, OMERTA. This year's centrepiece slot will be Miransha Naik's Konkoni language film *JUZE* (with English subtitles), making its North American premiere at NYIFF.

### Additional highlights at the festival include:

- Tribute to late Shashi Kapoor and late Sridevi
- Merchant-Ivory Retrospective
- Discovering the Film & Television Market in India Panel Discussion
- Shooting Films in New York State Panel Discussion
- The Inclusion Rider's Role in Diversifying Hollywood Panel Discussion

- Networking events and nightly parties
- Opening and Closing Night Red Carpets

The New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) is the oldest, most prestigious film festival screening premieres of feature, documentary and short films made from, of, and about the Indian subcontinent in the Independent, arthouse, alternate and diaspora genres. Seven days of screenings, post-screening discussions, industry panels, award ceremony, special events, nightly networking parties, red carpet galas, media attention and packed audiences build an awareness of Indian cinema, entertain & educate North Americans about the real India, and add to the amazing cultural diversity of New York City.

(READ RELATED STORY BY MABEL PAIS ON PAGE 16)

## TECHNOQUEENS WIN THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



Lto R: Sahana Patel, Ria Bhatia, Amneet Kaur, Aarna Tyagi, Risha Bansal and Falak Doshi, Coach Rohit Bhatia

**JERICHO, NY (TIP):** TechnoQueens' - a Jr. First Lego League team comprised of six young and bright girls from Elementary Schools in Jericho, NY - goes on to win the Top Award in FIRST World Championship held in Detroit, Michigan in the week of April 27th. TechnoQueens represented Long Island in this World Expo with 55+ teams from other participating countries and across the

USA. This Rookie team won many hearts with their prominent presentation skills, impressing the judges with their sound research and engaged kids, families of other participating teams with their innovative model design. The team received the most coveted and voted upon 'Team Choice' Award, with each of the participating team casting their ballots on key aspects for their favorite team in the Expo. At the end of the first day of the Expo, Top 3 teams were chosen for the top spot and on another round of secret ballot votes - the winner was announced at the Awards Ceremony. Other 2 competing teams were from China and Taiwan. TechnoQueens exhibited all Core values of the program, creativity of their solution, outstanding Lego Model and 'ShowMe' team Poster.

TechnoQueens won the 'Research & Discovery' Award for their Learning journey around Project Solution 'VillAquaTech' - bringing clean water to ideal and remote Village communities in the world. As part of the People Pipeline Campaign with WaterAid, the girls raised around 3000\$ and were able to bring Clean water and Toilets to kids in school in Nicaragua. Helping Community and making an impact to the world, even if it's small, is a key proud part of TechnoQueens journey in this year's Aqua Adventure program.

All this started in September 2017, when the girls started to come together through common friends and families from nearby schools in Jericho and decided to form their own team. Coach, Rohit Bhatia, father of one of the girls put the team together (Ria Bhatia, Amneet Kaur, Aarna Tyagi, Falak Doshi, Risha Bansal and Sahana Patel) and there's never been looking back since. Girls named their team as they believe Queens rule the world and so do they in this Technological-driven modern world!

Read full story on [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

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## Indian Origin Nitin Bawankule named new Google Cloud head, India



Google on May 8th named Nitin Bawankule as the head of Google Cloud, India

**MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (TIP):** Search engine giant Google on May 8th named Nitin Bawankule as the head of Google Cloud, India.

Bawankule, who has been associated with Google for more than six years, is currently the head of sales for Google verticals. He will report to Google Cloud Managing Director Rick Harshman, who heads the Asia Pacific operation of Google.

Bawankule has over 20 years of experience serving major technology companies. Prior to his joining Google, he worked with Dell, Motorola Mobility, Whirlpool and Godrej.

"Nitin brings with him an excellent mix of digital, technical and consumer products sales experience. We are very excited to have him join our team and take our India story to the next level," Harshman said.

Bawankule completed his post graduate diploma in management from IIM Bangalore. He earned his bachelor's degree in engineering from VNIT Nagpur.

He has wide experience working in industries ranging from Digital Consumer Electronics, Telecom, and IT.

According to Bawankule, by 2020, the public cloud services market in India is poised to reach \$4.10 billion.

"Business leaders across industries are increasingly adopting cloud technology because they understand it helps solve a number of real challenges - teams work better together, data becomes useful to make smart decisions and companies create new value to stay competitive in a quickly changing economy," Bawankule said.

While speaking at Google Digital Retail India 2020, he said, "By the year 2020, every fourth purchase in organized retail will be online."

## Indian origin Village Girl Turned Wellness Chef competes on Chopped

**NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP):** Dalia David, a simple farm girl from India has made it to "Chopped" (a reality cooking show on Food Network) breaking the rules set by culture, becoming the first Indian Wellness Chef to compete on the show and showcasing the importance of mindful eating.

Dalia will be showcasing her talents on Food Network's "Chopped" on May 15th at 9pm EST in the Episode "Plum Surprise".

She feels this episode is important because it represents the 1st generation Indian immigrants who are pushing cultural norms and choosing careers that give them meaning instead of taking on more traditional roles expected and chosen by their family (i.e, doctor, pharmacist, engineer). She is honored to be representing the young girls in Indian villages who have big dreams.

### About Dalia David

Dalia hails from a pineapple plantation in Southern India and spent her childhood on rice paddy fields surrounded by coconut trees and acres of banana trees. Coming from a farming family, her meals came from the earth and at a young age she became aware of how food nourished her body and provided strength for the day. This has influenced her food philosophy greatly. Dalia's purpose is to create meals for families that cater to their personal eating style and improve their strength and vitality. Her food philosophy is simple; it should be healthy, delicious, and satisfy cravings. Specialties are plant-based cuisine, gluten free, & wellness focused food.

Dalia is a trained Chef from the Natural Gourmet Institute and has studied Plant Nutrition at Cornell University. Her goal is to make unique dishes that are both delicious and nutritious using local and organic ingredients. Her cooking style is one you would call "healthy global fusion" as east meets west is part of her intuition. She comes to you from the kitchens of Jean Georges' Spice Market, Pure Food & Wine, The James Beard Foundation, and as Catering Chef for LinkedIn HQ NYC feeding 400 people daily.

# Indian American Judge Nominated to Federal Judgeship

**NEW YORK (TIP):** President Donald Trump nominated Diane Gujarati, a prosecutor of Indian descent, to a federal judgeship on May 11th. She had been former President Barack Obama's choice for the position.

The White House announced that Donald Trump is sending the nomination of Diane Gujarati, who is the Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division of the federal prosecutors for the Southern District of New York, to the Senate for confirmation as a District Judge on the Federal court for New York's Eastern District, which covers parts of the city as well the suburbs on Long Island.

Barack Obama nominated her for the judgeship towards the end of his term in September 2016 but she was not confirmed by the Senate requiring President Trump's renomination.

Her father, Damodar Gujrarati, is an emeritus professor of economics at the US Military Academy at West Point, which trains army officers.

Her renomination by Donald Trump shows both her legal standing as well as the administration's difficulty in



Diane Gujarati is the Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and is an announced nominee to be a United States District Judge

finding candidates within its ideological spectrum who will be able to win Senate support.

She is expected to have a smooth sailing in the Senate because of the

support of presidents from both parties.

A graduate of the Ivy League Yale University's law school, she has also been an adjunct professor at New York University School of Law.

Federal New York Eastern District Court is located in the New York City borough of Brooklyn.

The federal prosecutor's office for Southern District of New York, where started in 1999, is one of the most high-profile jurisdictions in the US as it includes Wall Street as well as the state's capital Albany.

Formerly headed by Preet Bharara, the office had prosecuted several important people in finance, including Rajat Gupta, Raj Rajaratnam and Mathew Martoma for insider trading on Wall Street and also several important politicians like New York Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver.

Rajat Gupta, one of the highest ranking Indian American business leaders, was managing director of consulting firm McKinsey and was sentenced to two years in prison and fined millions of dollars.

## Indian Origin Teen Wins A\* Star Talent Search Award in Singapore

**SINGAPORE (TIP):** Vijayakumar Ragavi, 18-year-old Indian origin girl, has won this year's A\*Star Talent Search award in Singapore for her study of genetic heart disease "hypertrophic cardiomyopathy".

Chennai-born Vijayakumar Ragavi, now a Singaporean citizen, topped the list of 611 other students from secondary and tertiary institutions according to reports.

She has been awarded a cash prize, a sponsored trip to an overseas conference and a trophy as well as a certificate for winning the competition.

Ms Ragavi said she spent almost two years studying and preparing for her award-winning project on hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

"It is estimated to be the most genetic heart disease in the world. People with the disease often suffer from arrhythmia induced sudden cardiac death," Ms Ragavi said.

Arrhythmia is a group of conditions where the heartbeat is irregular, too slow or too fast.

At the talent search, Ms Ragavi's research focused on stem-cell technology, which allows for the detection of genetic disease through blood samples, rather than the typical method of performing cardiac biopsies.

Such biopsies are extremely difficult procedures which entail taking a small piece of the heart so that it can be checked for genetic disease in the laboratory.



Chennai-born Vijayakumar Ragavi, now a Singaporean citizen, topped the list of 611 other students from secondary and tertiary institutions

Ms Ragavi designed a humanized hypertrophic cardiomyopathy model that recapitulates the disease phenotype. The subsequent findings set the foundation for gaining insights into disease pathology and therapeutic intervention.

"I really didn't expect to win. I was quite surprised since it was very unexpected, but I was happy that my parents were so proud of me," Ms Ragavi said.

She will be pursuing a degree in biomedical science at an overseas university next year.

"I want to become a researcher in future and thought this would be good exposure for me," said the Year 6

student from National University of Singapore's High School for Mathematics and Science.

"I want to work in the field of stem cell and regenerative medicine," she said.

Her parents, Rajamanickam Vijayakumar, who works at Hewlett-Packard, and home-maker Rajendran Gomathi are very proud.

A\*STAR Talent Search is a 2006 initiative, rewarding students who have performed well in scientific research. It is part of the A\*STAR Graduate Academy (AGA)'s Youth Science outreach to schools with the aim to inspire & sustain a passion in science in the young in Singapore.

FOR MORE NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS LOG ON TO  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



# Indian American Democrat Aftab Pureval wins Ohio District 1 primary

**OHIO (TIP):** Indian American Aftab Pureval has won the Ohio District 1 Democratic party primary unopposed on May 8th. He will face Republican incumbent Steve Chabot in the general election on November 6.

Pureval, the first Democrat to get elected as the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts in more than 100 years, is considered a rising star in the party.

Pureval's father came to the United States from India. His mother had lived as a Tibetan refugee in India before she moved to the United States, along with her husband.

Earlier, two other Democrats had also announced their candidacy from the district: Robert Barr and Laura Ann Weaver. But both withdrew from the race as the primary approached.

As the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts, Pureval is credited with ending nepotism.

"He is the right kind of moderate that I think fits the district and can help move the political center of gravity back to the middle from its right-wing trajectory in Washington," Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley had told the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Born and brought up in southwest Ohio, Pureval went to public schools and received a bachelor's degree in political science from the Ohio State University in 2005. He had served as a student body



Many political observers believe if anyone can flip the seat, it is the 35-year-old Pureval.

president at the university. During his tenure, he pushed the Ohio state legislature for increased funding for higher education.

After college, Pureval went to University of Cincinnati College of Law. There he worked in the Domestic Violence Clinic representing women who

were victims of violence. Later he moved to Washington, D.C., to join White & Case LLP, one of the largest law firms in the country.

Four years later, he returned to Hamilton County where he worked as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Dept. of Justice.

## Indian American Aakash Patel receives endorsement by Florida Lt. Gov. Carlos Lopez-Cantera in County Commission race



There are seven elected members on the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners. Patel is running from District 1.

**HILLSBOROUGH, FL (TIP):** Indian American Aakash Patel, who is running for a seat of the Hillsborough County Commission, has received the endorsement of Florida Lt. Gov. Carlos Lopez-Cantera.

The two have worked with each other for more than a decade and a half.

Patel had worked alongside Cantera during the latter's term in the Florida House of Representatives from 2004

through 2012. Cantera worked with Patel in his activities related to the Leadership Tampa Bay.

Earlier, the Indian American had received the endorsement of Danny Burgess, a member of the Florida House of Representatives.

"I had the opportunity to get to know Aakash Patel through his work with Leadership Tampa Bay and his service on their board of directors since 2014," Lopez-Cantera said. "Aakash has impressed me with his drive, ambition and ability to apply his conservative ideals to encourage and mentor others in the business community and leadership roles.

"I strongly support his effort to become a member of the Hillsborough County Commission where I am certain he will work to consistently apply his solid conservative principals in all that he does. I wholeheartedly endorse Aakash Patel, in his campaign to become the next Hillsborough County Commissioner for District 1," he added.

Patel thanked the lieutenant governor saying that he is extremely honored to have his support.

"I am extremely honored to have the support of such a true conservative friend as Carlos Lopez-Cantera. Having spent time advancing individuals in leadership roles beside the Lt. Governor, I sincerely admire his strength and guidance across the state of Florida," Patel said. "I sincerely thank Lt. Governor Lopez-Cantera for his endorsement of my campaign for Hillsborough County Commission."

Patel, who earned his bachelor's degree in political science and English literature from Florida State University, worked at The Tampa Bay Times' Tallahassee Bureau.

## Indian American Aziz Ahmad wins Ohio state house District 7 Democratic primary

**OHIO (TIP):** Indian American Aziz Ahmad won unopposed in the Ohio House of Representatives District 7 Democratic primary held on May 8th. In the November 6 general election, he will face Republican incumbent Thomas Patton.

Ahmad has been running a campaign largely focused on three issues: education reform, "common sense gun policy" and healthcare.

"As your representative, I want to help us innovate solutions to the issues we are facing in our communities every day," he says on his campaign website. "There is so much talent and potential in this district. I have seen and heard inspiring people all over the area talking and offering practical solutions that never see the light of day, because they don't reach the proper faculties. It's time for a change, which starts with engagement in politics on all levels (local, state and federal)."

A teacher by profession, he says that the current educational system is broken and needs immediate action to improve. "Better education is the basis to solving our state and national issues" he says.

Ahmad says that Barack Obama and Bernie Sanders are his role models, and he really appreciates the efforts of Obama in addressing the healthcare issue. The candidate says he also admires the progressive mindset of Sanders, which questions current system and creates ideas that can improve it.

A resident of Strongsville, he is a Teach for America Corps Member. He is also pursuing a master's degree in public administration and policy from American University.



Aziz Ahmad, Democratic Candidate, Ohio House of Representatives District 7

## Indian Americans owned startups get Google investment



**MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (TIP):** Google announced that it has made the first round of investments in two innovative companies owned by Indian Americans that have built next-generation products to explore the possibilities of digital assistant ecosystem.

In a blog post by Sanjay Kapoor, vice president of corporate development at Google, and Nick Fox, vice president of product at Google, wrote that the company has made the first batch of investments in four start-up companies, out of which two - Go Moment and Pulse Labs - are owned by Indian Americans.

The two firms have been identified by Google for investments because they are working on projects that are synonymous with the company's vision to make the life of users much easier than ever thought before.

According to Google, it has been providing tools for developers, starting from Android to Chrome to Action, to create products that enable a natural conversational experience to its users.

"To promote more of this creativity, we're opening a new investment program for early-stage startups that share our passion for the digital assistant ecosystem, helping to push new ideas forward and advance the possibilities of what digital assistants can do," says the blog post.

Go Moment, a technology startup based in Santa Monica, California, is founded by Indian American Raj Singh. Google was impressed with its product Ivy, which is a smart texting platform for hotels and the hospitality industry.

Ivy is a digital assistant platform that works as a personal assistant, communicating with hotel guests via text messaging - addressing some of the most frequently asked questions and services automatically, such as "What's the wifi code? "I'd like more towels" etc.

The app is designed in such a way that it can also book restaurant reservations, spa appointments and other revenue enhancing services. Ivy is based on the IBM Watson's artificial intelligence technology.

Pulse Labs, a Seattle-based technology startup, offers UX testing solutions for the developers who use the voice ecosystems such as Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant and Cortana.

The tool offered by Pulse Labs helps developers get UX feedback on voice applications that they are working on. Developers and designers of voice applications can use the platform to test what they've built with real people and quickly acquire in-depth insights and use that feedback to create a more engaging user experience.

Pulse Labs was founded in December 2016 by Indian American Abhishek Suthan and Dylan Zwick.

The new Google investment program will offer capital to provide additional financial resources for the development, hiring and management of selected startups. In addition to this they will also get expert advice from Google staffs ranging from engineers, product managers, and design experts to fine tune their platform.

The Google selected startups will be provided access to upcoming features and tools, so they can bring their products to market as quickly as possible. Google team will also offer promotional support through Google marketing channels and will also get exclusive access to the Google Cloud Platform.



# New York's attorney general Eric Schneiderman who was pursuing Donald Trump, resigns in the face of a scandal

**NEW YORK (TIP):** New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman abruptly resigned on Monday, May 7 night just hours after the New Yorker published a bombshell report about his personal life alleging he was violent toward four different women. Schneiderman, who did not respond to a request for comment on this story, issued a statement saying he had merely engaged in sexual "role-playing."

Schneiderman, who was elected in 2010, had been pursuing Trump on several fronts - his personal business, the special counsel investigation into the 2016 election and on behalf of New York state against actions taken by the Trump administration.

Trump allies - including his son Donald Trump Jr. and counselor Kellyanne Conway - celebrated the news of Schneiderman's downfall.

"Gotcha," Conway tweeted.

Schneiderman's perch in the Empire State gave him jurisdiction over Trump's company. He first took on Donald Trump in August 2013 when he sued Trump for fraud in conjunction with Trump University, a seminar series that the former attorney general called a "sham." Trump agreed to pay a \$25 million settlement to students of the program who had brought their own lawsuit, claiming they had been misled with false claims that the costly courses would guarantee success in the real estate business.

Since Trump took office, Schneiderman has been cooperating with Robert Mueller's probe into Russia's role in Trump's election. That was a threat to Trump because the president could pardon anyone indicted by Mueller but has no pardon power over state charges. In Albany, N.Y., Schneiderman had been pushing to change New York law to close a double-jeopardy loophole that might have prevented him from bringing charges in that situation.

Along with his work with Mueller, Schneiderman has filed a flurry of lawsuits against the Trump administration. This blitz included suits against each iteration of Trump's travel ban, the repeal of DACA and rollbacks in emissions standards. Schneiderman's office filed amicus briefs with the Supreme Court in cases involving the travel ban and LGBT discrimination. Other states also joined many of these suits, but Schneiderman often led the coalitions.

It's not known if Schneiderman has been conducting its own investigations into Trump's affairs. His office has not commented.

With Schneiderman stepping down, the solicitor general,



*Fall of New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman became a reason for celebration for Trump camp*

Barbara Underwood, becomes acting attorney general. A new attorney general could be chosen by the state Legislature, with both houses meeting in joint session. Democrats, led by Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, have the majority and would be able to pick Schneiderman's replacement. Multiple sources have told Yahoo News that the leading contenders include New York City Public Advocate Letitia James, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, Rep. Kathleen Rice, state Sen. Michael Gianaris and state Sen. Jeffrey Klein. Heastie did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

On Tuesday, the political buzz centered on James, who is known to be interested in the office and previously worked as an assistant attorney general. As public advocate, a nebulous position, she is New York City's second-highest elected official and one of the state's most prominent African-American women in office. A source familiar with the workings of the attorney general's office predicted James would be a vocal opponent of Trump if she's tapped for the job.

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman speaks during a press conference at the office of the New York attorney general, Sept. 13, 2016, in New York City. (Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

"I think she would be aggressive and political in terms of going after Trump," the source said.

But any replacement picked by the Legislature will serve out only the remainder of Schneiderman's term, which ends in December, unless that replacement runs for a full four-year

term in November. Party primaries are on Sept. 13.

A well-connected New York politico said legislators may forego naming a temporary replacement, leaving Underwood in the job and allowing voters to decide who should fill the office. Although there is already political pressure for the Legislature to choose this option, it would deprive legislators of the opportunity to reward a favorite and affect the shape of multiple upcoming races.

The source familiar with the workings of the attorney general's office predicted that, if Underwood remains in place, she would continue Schneiderman's existing work.

"If it's Barbara Underwood, she's like a lawyer's lawyer," the source said, noting she has argued before the Supreme Court.

"I imagine she would continue all the Supreme Court actions, but I don't know how aggressive she'd be in terms of going after new actions," the source said.

As for the election, New York's statewide races generally lean Democratic, but Republicans are hoping Schneiderman's woes could give them an opening. Republican Manny Alicantro, a corporate lawyer, launched a campaign shortly before the news broke. With Schneiderman out of the picture, more high-profile GOP candidates could also enter the fray. A Republican victory would be a major boon to Trump. Alicantro has criticized Schneiderman's attacks on the White House as attention-seeking gamesmanship.

There are at least two Democratic prospects eyeing that race who aren't on the Legislature's shortlist - former gubernatorial candidate Zephyr Teachout and ex-U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara.

Teachout gained notoriety in the state by mounting a surprisingly successful progressive challenge to Gov. Andrew Cuomo in 2014. In a tweet on Tuesday, Teachout said she is "seriously considering running for Attorney General." Bharara was fired by Trump last year and has since emerged as a major critic of the White House on Twitter and in a popular podcast.

If Schneiderman's successor takes on Trump, that person may have the advantage of putting in a full day at the office. The report detailing the abuse allegations also claimed Schneiderman drank heavily and used prescription drugs. Although all of the insiders who spoke to Yahoo News said they were stunned by the allegations, multiple sources who worked with Schneiderman said he regularly showed up to work several hours late. "We just thought he was lazy," a source said. **(Source: Yahoo)**

## Gujarat Day Celebrated

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** On May 2, the Federation of Indian Association of Tri-State and Gujarati Associations from various states in the U.S. organized an evening to celebrate 58th Gujarat Din at the Consulate General of India in New York. This was the second year where this group celebrated Gujarat Din at the Consulate General which was attended by more than 175 invited guests, dignitaries and the leaders of community organizations from the tristate area, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Honorable Consul General of India in New York, Mr. Sandeep Chakraborty was the Guest of Honor for the evening.

FIA President Srujal Parikh welcomed speech and introduced Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty and felicitated him with a memento of Gujarat.

In his address, Consul General Chakraborty welcomed and congratulated everyone on Gujarat Sthapana Divas and stated that "it is a proud moment that all organizations from the nearby states are here under one roof which is a biggest achievement and our endeavor should be a model and principles of our Government to be inclusive and you all are the best carriers of this message. Gujarat inspires our country with richness of its culture, diversity, architectural history and many other areas". Furthermore, he urged everyone to be a part of the biggest India Day Parade organized by FIA-Tri-State on August 19, 2018 at Madison Avenue in New York.

An inspirational written message from Chief Minister of Gujarat Mr. Vijay Rupani was very well received by the audience. The Chief Minister congratulated various organizations from Gujarati communities and appreciated to celebrate Gujarat Divas under one roof by these organizations.

Mr. Yogesh Patel, MLA from Gujarat attended the event as a special guest and addressed the audience by congratulating everyone and described the progress of Gujarat. Radhika Meganathan, author of "The Gurukul Chronicles" book was launched by the dignitaries including the Consul General. Ramesh Patel, Chairman of FIA, Dr. Sudhir Parikh from Parikh World-wide media, Pinakin Pathak, Chairman of Ohmkara, Vishnu Patel of Gujarati Samaj of New York, Rupal Shah, Gujarati Samaj of Baltimore, Bhupesh Shah, Gujarati Samaj of Delaware Valley in Philadelphia, Rajeev Desai, Vaishnav Parivar of Connecticut, Smita (Miki) Patel of India Performing Arts Center and Arvind Patel of Rajbhog Foods were among the supporting organizations who addressed the audience and felicitated by the Consul General Mr. Chakraborty.

The master of ceremonies Nishi Parikh, member of the Gujarat Sthapana Divas Committee did a marvelous job. Local singers Umesh Patel and Foram Shah sang famous Gujarati songs in their melodious voice which was applauded by all. Traditional Gujarati folk performances in colorful costumes were wonderfully choreographed by Smita (Miki) Patel of India Performing arts center and Priya of SBU Raas group in New York were among the highlights of the evening.

Event concluded with a vote of thanks from Dr. Tushar Patel, committee member of Gujarat Sthapana Divas who extended his sincere appreciation to all supporters and community organizations for their help and support to make Gujarat Sthapana Divas a huge success. A delicious and mouth-watering authentic Gujarati food was provided by Arvind Patel of Rajbhog Foods which was enjoyed by all.

*(Based on a Press Release)*

### THE GUJARAT DAY CELEBRATIONS IN PICTURES





# MODI ON JINNAH



By Dr. Mike Ghose

Prime Minister Modi has missed many opportunities to show his goodwill; he is yet to translate his 'good' intentions into 'outcomes.' The troublemakers from his party have presented him another opportunity to show his mettle and stop them from tearing the society apart. All he has to do is speak up about Jinnah's picture at Aligarh Muslim University.

Whether it is good, bad or ugly, we have to have to preserve our history as a reference. Every society has portrayed evil and good simultaneously, and religious scriptures are full of such stories. Not a single religion has wiped the wicked men in their narration.

Ravan is a part of our story. Should the man who abducted Ma Sita be removed from Ramayana?

Hitler is one of the vilest men in human history for attempting to annihilate a whole race. How can such a man be a hero to Modi's organization, the RSS?

Godse killed Mahatma Gandhi, and Godse's picture adorns the sacred halls of the parliament; does it mean Modi would have approved Godse to kill Gandhi?

No, we cannot change or alter history, it is what it is, and we have to live with it.

The rogues among us, the Indians are continually looking to brew trouble, while the Prime Minister remains silent or tacitly approves the agitation.

Sometimes I wonder, why didn't we heed Sanjeev Bhatt? When the Gujarat riots broke out, Mr. Bhatt said, Modi chose to remain silent for three days and hinted to his men to go ahead and do all the damage they can until he is forced to stop it.

Do you see a pattern here? When Dalit girls were raped and hung on the tree, Modi did not say a word. When Kalburge, Gauri Lankesh, and others were killed in broad daylight, Modi did not say a word. When Akhlaq was lynched and murdered, Modi did not say a word. The list is quite long, but the pinnacle of his silence came when the six-year-old Asifa and a four-year-old girl were raped, he did not say a word for two days until the entire nation came together to compel him to speak.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, in one of his books Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History clearly explains why raping of Muslim women is justifiable and not to do so when the occasion permits is not virtuous or chivalrous but cowardly. This idea is repulsive to the moderate majority of Hindus, but that is Modi's indoctrination as a pracharak of the RSS. Is that the reason he chooses to remain silent when rapes tear up the nation?

If Modi were dumb, I would not complain, but he is not.

If Modi were deaf, I would not complain, but he hears everything. Some of his party members are raising hell over Jinnah's photo at the Aligarh Muslim University. As head of



*A terrible controversy rages over Jinnah's picture at Aligarh Muslim University*

the most important democracy in the world, his role is to build cohesive societies and not allow destruction and chaos. It will damage India in the long haul.

All Modi has to do is a tweet or hold a press conference immediately after the incident- and say that he will not tolerate anyone messing with law and order, even if it were his ministers. If this man has good intentions, it is time to prove it. He should try this method at least five times and see how quickly things will stop from spreading.

No Indian should live in fear of the other; it is not good for the county, we should not be spending our time battling out on what you wear, eat, drink or believe. We should be spending time on how to save farmers, create jobs so fellow Indians can have three healthy meals. India's prosperity is partially driven by foreign direct investment and trade. If Modi does not control and puts a stop to harassment, lynching, rapes and chaotic situations, India may face what apartheid South Africa faced once. There is no incentive for the investors to feel safe with their investments in India. Modi's friends will run away with money; the average Indian will lose.

If Modi does not reign on these, he will sink India. <https://www.theindianpanorama.news/featured/modi-will-sink-india-if-he-does-not-rein-in-the-rapists/>

There are many Indians who have left India and gone on to become Citizens of other nations. Let's say if America and India are at odds, the American Indians will stand with the US, they have to prove their loyalty to America and will go against India. Should India strip all the civilian awards given to them because they are with the enemy now? I say no, what was done with good intentions should remain intact.

Jinnah was a part of our independence movement, together, we got the freedom. As Indians, we generally disagree with the partition, and Muslim Indians in particular, feel betrayed. That is a part of our history, and we have to live with it.

As a civilized nation, we cannot remove Jinnah's picture. Jinnah is part of India's history and will remain one. Will Modi speak up and put an end to the chaos or does it help him to play dirty and stay silent?

A few good videos:

1. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R-uF\\_T0sgw&feature=share](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R-uF_T0sgw&feature=share)
2. <https://www.facebook.com/NationalMirror1/videos/2009302016002489/>

*(The author is the president of the Center for Pluralism in Washington, DC. He is committed to building cohesive societies and offers pluralistic solutions on issues of the day).*



By Rishi Singh

## A LESSON IN WISDOM

After a long journey, Sri Ramchandra with his Vanara Sena, reached the southern coast of our vast land and beheld the expanse of water separating them from Sri Lanka. The search for Sita was over; Rama now knew where she was; it only remained to redeem her from Ravana, by peaceful persuasion if possible or by war, if necessary. In line with our tradition of seeking Divine help, before commencing any work, Sri Ram desired to consecrate and offer worship to Shiva. Arrangements were soon completed, except finding a suitable priest to guide the function. Sri Ram thought for a while and then decided on the best person available nearby - Ravana the king of Sri Lanka. Without hesitation he asked Hanuman to fly to Ravana's palace and request him to conduct the pooja.

There was considerable shock and dismay among the assembly; to invite an enemy to conduct a pooja, specially meant to conquer and destroy him! Will Ravana accept such a preposterous invitation?

But Hanuman as a loyal soldier implicitly obeyed the royal command and flew to Sri Lanka to convey the message to Ravana.

Men and women around him were also deeply shocked, surprised and mystified at this strange invitation from the prince of Ayodhya. Ravana, true to his stature as a great pundit in Vedic literature, true to the tradition that as a Brahman, he should never decline an invitation to organize Divine worship, and true to his intense devotion to Lord Shiva accepted the invitation. He came with Hanuman to Sri Ram's place, much to the consternation of everyone.

Soon the king of Sri Lanka made an inspection of all arrangements, and turning to Sri Rama, said, "O prince of Ayodhya, though you have made very satisfactory arrangements, you are not qualified to install the idol of Lord Shiva in the absence of your wife. Our edicts declare that no person, however high, can perform such ceremonies without his consort nearby".

The mood of the entire assembly now changed from confusion to curiosity - how would Sri Rama react? The noble prince smiled and calmly replied,

"We have invited you for the flawless performance of the ceremony. You have pointed out a flaw in tune with your duty as a pundit; I thank you for it. I now invite you to provide a solution, which also forms part of your duty." This exposition of Dharmic postures and privileges between the greatest

of kings and the noblest of men, was becoming even a treat for the Gods!

The king of Sri Lanka was not only a great ruler but also a great scholar. The scholar in him rose to the occasion now and Ravana said, "O Rama, I can and shall provide a solution, since I do not wish to bear the blame for non-performance of Divine worship, but on one condition. I shall arrange to bring Sita here for the pooja, but you should permit her to return to my place after the function".

All around, were astounded and speechless at the clash of wit and fantastic words between the two great men and waited with bated breath for Sri Rama's rejoinder.

The noblest of men, simply and cheerfully accepted the offer, and the ceremony was completed in all solemnity. As per Indian customs and traditions, after viewing the couple, Ravana said "Let victory be yours!" though he knew well, those words meant his own destruction.

Here was human values surpassing all constraints of Self. Only one more formality remained, that of honoring the priest. Sri Rama invited Ravana himself to suggest the fees for the function. It was at this moment that the greatest and the most crucial episode of Ramayana unfolded before an unbelieving audience.

Ravana, the king would not take any fees,

not even from Sri Rama, as he was always at the giving, and not the receiving end of fees or favors.

But again, the Vedic pundit in him came to the fore. He said, "Sri Rama, knowing you very well, the only fees I solicit is that you stand by me when my life departs".

And thus it came to pass, that when Ravana lay in his last moments Sri Rama was near him. It only reveals that ultimate comfort for everyone high or low is to have Divinity nearby at the moment of death.

May old people instruct their family and friends to put a few droplets of Holy Ganga water on their dying lips towards divine salvation. As legend has it, the Holy Ganga descended from heaven upon prolonged and deep penance of Maharishi Dadhich to revive his ancestors by leading the Holy Ganga over their ashes.

Lord Shiva had to be prayed for by Maharishi Dadhich to break the fall of Ganga from the heavens as it would wash away the very Earth where it descended.

Lord Shiva the benevolent then agreed to catch the Holy Ganga in his locks before she flowed down onto land.

The above has multiple lessons for all of us, few being persistence, perseverance, education, learning, contemplation, mutual respect, duty, wit, honor, morality, divinity.




**GUEST  
COMMENT**

## TRUMP'S IRAN WALK-BACK: DOUBLE WHAMMY FOR INDIA AFTER CATSA

Just when Indian diplomats were figuring out how to mitigate the impact of Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CATSA) on its arms and oil trade with Russia, South Block has another reason to burn the midnight oil. US President Donald Trump's intention to exit the Iran deal, and reimpose sanctions if Tehran declines to renegotiate, could send India's plans for the region in smoke. The sanctions will pretty much cover all areas of interest to India vis-a-vis Iran: petroleum, ports, shipping and banking. The bright side is that except for Saudi Arabia and Israel, pretty much the rest of the world has not taken kindly to Trump's attempt to redefine the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to cover "responsible" behavior by Iran both externally and domestically.

The world can be grateful that Tehran doesn't have an impetuous leader like Trump. Javed Zarif, Iran's chief negotiator for the deal, has resolved to diplomatically lobby with the other parties to the agreement. Yet, Trump's explanation that Iran could emulate North Korea by negotiating denuclearization will find few takers for it is widely realized that Tehran would have to be suicidal if it were to show signs of weakness. On the contrary, the US may have lost North Korea's trust by going back on the Iran deal just as it lost Palestinian support after Trump announced the shifting of the US embassy to East Jerusalem.

India needs to work with countries with a shared interest in the JCPOA to ensure that Trump's exit from the Iran deal does not harm its investments and plans for the region. India and other countries on the same page must also engage with Iran to discourage it from retaliatory malign behavior that may further muddy the waters. PM Modi will get the opportunity to discuss the issue with like-minded leaders when he meets them for two multilateral summits later this year. The problem for India is it has no company like the Chinese Sinopec which has no business interests with a US company and can thus escape sanctions. India will first have to make common cause with countries in the same Iranian boat.

(Tribune, India)

**AS I SEE IT**

# It's not about the nuclear deal

## THE U.S. WON'T EASE THE TERMS OF SANCTIONS ON IRAN, AS THE GOAL IS REGIME CHANGE IN TEHRAN



By Chinmaya R.  
Gharekhan

If - and that's a big if - the leaders of the U.S., China, South Korea and North Korea succeed in concluding a deal on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula as well as on a peace treaty formally ending the Korean War, they would be front runners for the Nobel Peace Prize. That deal could appropriately be called a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) if it lays down a detailed blueprint for denuclearization, with provisions of intrusive inspections. The only thing that could stand in their way is Iran.

There should be little doubt that U.S. President Donald Trump's real, but of necessity undeclared, objective in withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal is a regime change in Tehran. This goal is even more ardently desired by Israel and Saudi Arabia. Ever since Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made particularly provocative statements about Israel, Israelis of all political persuasions have wanted to get rid of the regime in Iran. The Saudis have openly called for cutting off the head of the (Iranian) snake. Thus, three important and powerful states have a congruence of interests seldom seen in recent times.

**IRANIAN DISCONTENT:** There have been frequent and persistent reports in the Western media for several months about large-scale demonstrations and protests by Iranian people against the regime. Living conditions are difficult. Iran did not get the goodies that it expected after signing the JCPOA. Inflation is high. The Iranian rial is trading at 75,000 to the dollar. People are angry with the government. According to the well-researched work Democracy in Iran: Why It Failed and How It Might Succeed by American academic Misagh Parsa, disaffection among the people has manifested itself in several forms. Hundreds of mosques do not have imams and the attendance at Friday prayers has dwindled dramatically. Some are converting to Christianity and, according to Professor Parsa, even to the Baha'i faith, which is the largest non-Muslim community in Iran. Professor Parsa states that there is massive corruption as well as economic inequality in Iran. All in all, he suggests that it is quite likely that there might be a revolutionary upsurge, though he is careful not to indicate any timeline for it.

**A DIFFERENT CALCULATION:** It is this discontent that Mr. Trump might be counting on tapping. His calculation seems to be that the reimposition of severe sanctions would render life very difficult, almost unbearable, for the populace who might, in the absence of other avenues, take to the streets, as they did in 1979 to overthrow the Shah's regime which too, like the present one, had strong military and oppressive secret services such as the Savak

**“The impact on India will be severe. The price of crude is already close to \$80. Energy imports from Iran will become difficult and expensive. Fuel prices will go up. The Reserve Bank of India might have to increase interest rates to contain inflation and step in to check the fall in the rupee's value. All this might have a direct bearing on politics, given the fact that the government was the beneficiary of low crude price for the first four years but may have to face consequences of inflation and attendant factors in its fifth”, says the author.**



US goal in Iran is regime change

but which could not defeat public anger, frustration and rage. For these reasons, Mr. Trump is unlikely to listen to voices of reason or to appeals from his Western allies. He is equally not likely to grant exemptions from sanctions to any country engaging in any form of trade and other transactions with Iran. His administration will follow strict interpretation of the guidelines regarding the sanctions regime.

**IRANIAN RESTRAINT:** Iran has shown restraint, forsaking knee-jerk reaction. It did not declare that the deal was dead, as it might well have done. It did not announce immediate resumption of uranium enrichment, which it emphasized will be at the industrial level. It has so far not called off International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. Iran will consult with the other signatories to the JCPOA for several weeks before taking any further action. This shows the maturity of Iranian diplomacy. It remains to be seen how long France and others will stick to their position of continuing to adhere to the deal; they will eventually have to fall in line in some way with the Americans, if not for political then for economic considerations. For Mr. Trump, the Republicans are fully with him and the Democrats will be too eventually.

Will Iran live up to the American calculation? For the present, Mr. Trump's decision has strengthened the hardliners. President Hassan Rouhani, regarded as a moderate, has no option but to take a defiant stance. The Iranian people, proud as they are of their heritage, will stand behind their regime. But there may come a time when their hardships reach a stage when they might feel compelled to take to the streets.

In the meanwhile, Iran will even more vigorously support the Bashar al-Assad regime in Damascus, in which it will be joined by Russia and Hezbollah, which has done very well in the parliamentary elections in Lebanon

this month. The Houthi rebels in Yemen will feel more emboldened to take on the Saudi-led coalition; of course, the Yemeni people will continue to suffer, as will the Syrian people, for years to come. Iran will more directly intervene in Iraq and render the possibility of progress in the non-existent peace effort in Afghanistan even more difficult.

If the regime in Tehran does not collapse, the Washington-Jerusalem-Riyadh axis might look for an alternative course of action, not excluding military. In that case, the Nobel Peace Prize will elude Mr. Trump.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has established special relationship with Israel and its present Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. He has also made efforts to forge intimate relations with the U.S. With both India has the upper hand, since it is they who want to sell expensive military hardware to India. Under the circumstances, India has made a well-drafted two-sentence statement on the Trump decision. The first strikes a balance between Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as also the international community's concern to ensure that its nuclear program remains strictly peaceful. The second sentence contains implicit disapproval of the American decision and warns, again implicitly, against any strong military action. For India, the question will also be: can it rely on the U.S. to honor even its written word embodied in international agreements? Mr. Trump wants to annul every single achievement of his predecessor - Obamacare, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris Agreement, and now JCPOA. India will have to remain vigilant in dealing with this administration; it would not be prudent to assume that it is a special case.

**FALLOUT FOR INDIA:** The impact on India will be severe. The price of crude is already close to \$80. Energy imports from Iran will become difficult and expensive. Fuel prices will go up. The Reserve Bank of India might have to increase interest rates to contain inflation and step in to check the fall in the rupee's value. All this might have a direct bearing on politics, given the fact that the government was the beneficiary of low crude price for the first four years but may have to face consequences of inflation and attendant factors in its fifth.

(The author is a former Indian Ambassador to the United Nations, was Special Envoy for West Asia in the Manmohan Singh government)

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Published by Prof. Indrajit Saluja

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# CAN THE BJP WREST KARNATAKA FROM THE CONGRESS?

"Yes", says Muralidhar Rao; Rajeev Gowda says "No"; For Sandeep Shastri, "It's Complicated" |

## Yes | Muralidhar Rao

**The JD(S) and the Congress are two faces of the same coin. The BJP will win with a majority**

Yes, we will definitely wrest power from the Congress. The Bharatiya Janata Party's preparation, both organizationally and politically, points to a victory for the party. We can also sense that the mood of the people in Karnataka has changed. People have problems, which the State government has failed to address. Whether it is in the agricultural sector, infrastructure, or urban management, mismanagement has become a major issue. People have been agitating for quite some time and their disillusionment with the ruling Congress is complete. The BJP leadership has worked hard to mobilize public opinion against the ruling party. The BJP will continue to do what it has been doing in the rest of the country, which is to fight against the Congress.

## Issues in Karnataka

As far as the issues in the campaign are concerned, in the last two years, the farm sector has been in the grip of an acute crisis and the government has been unable to address and arrest the problem of farmers' suicides. Close to 3,800 farmers have committed suicide in the last five years. The government has been insensitive to the issue. Even before the elections, we organized a special campaign for farmers, collected grains from them, and pledged to put an end to the crisis.

Look at Bengaluru. It has become a city of crime. It is full of potholes. It faced floods. Even the Lokayukta, P. Vishwanath Shetty, is not safe in his office and the attack on him demonstrated how law and order has deteriorated in the State. Corruption, scams and scandals have added to people's restlessness with the ruling party. The attitude of the State government to terror groups, particularly in coastal areas, is appalling. More than 24 activists have been killed by extremists. Not a single case has been pursued; arrests have not been made. The Congress's silence on the Popular Front of India, which should have been banned a long time ago, appears to indicate that the PFI enjoys protection from the government.

We have been accused of associating ourselves with the Bellary brothers. This has been completely misrepresented. Janardhana Reddy, who has been named in the FIR, has not been given a ticket and we have not used him in the campaign. His brother is a sitting MLA. There is no case against him. Also, don't you think Chief Minister Siddaramaiah could have taken action against the two brothers? Why didn't he?

## The BJP's promises

I think the promises made in our manifesto will persuade people to vote for us. In the farming sector, we have spelt out the issues we are going to pursue. For instance, to address the debt crisis, we have declared a ₹1 lakh loan waiver for farmers from nationalized banks and co-operative banks.

Bengaluru is a hub for translating the global ambitions of India. Instead, we now see the city being associated with crime and corruption. On the welfare front, we have conceptualized many programs for the people of Karnataka: free education for all students in government colleges, for BPL families, smartphones for women. We are working on a growth-centric plan and that's our promise to the people of Karnataka. We will get more than 150 seats. I have no doubt that a massive majority will come to the BJP. The Janata Dal (Secular) and Congress are two faces of the same coin. Both are pursuing vote-bank politics and are family-driven parties. We will win on the promise of development alone.

**(MURALIDHAR RAO IS A NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BJP)  
(AS TOLD TO ANURADHA RAMAN)**

## NO | Rajeev Gowda

**The voters prefer a stable government that has ensured inclusive growth**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi belatedly descended on Karnataka in a desperate attempt to revive the BJP's collapsing campaign. Unfortunately for him, the ground reality will demonstrate that Karnataka is not Gujarat. Mr. Siddaramaiah's inclusive welfare programs have ensured that

voters remain steadfastly with the Congress.

## Achievements of the Congress

Hunger will soon be history due to the Anna Bhagya scheme. Mathru Poorna is transforming the health of women, during and after pregnancy, while ensuring healthier children. Indira canteens help the urban poor access a nutritious meal at low cost. Dairy farmers received higher prices and children get milk in schools. Farmers gained from a loan waiver, subsidized rental equipment, and farm ponds. An integrated e-market increased farmer's income by 38% in 2015-16, according to a Niti Aayog report.

Karnataka leads India in investment intentions and follow through. The youth flock to Bengaluru, India's start-up capital. A quarter of jobs created in India were in Karnataka, as reported in April 2016. Mainstays like IT and biotechnology crossed revenues of \$50 billion. With an average GSDP growth of 8% over five years, people will be happy to stay with a government that works.

## Nightmare years of the BJP

Voters have not forgotten the five nightmare years, which were marked by incompetence and instability, when the BJP ran Karnataka. Three Chief Ministers took turns to defend corruption on a scale that shamed the State. B.S. Yeddyurappa led his Cabinet colleagues, the Reddy brothers, Katta Jagadish, Krishnaiah Setty, Harta Halappa, etc. to jail. Mr. Modi's rhetoric and flood of falsehoods cannot cover up that sorry track record, especially when the same crew is back helming the BJP's election campaign.

A track record in abetting instability is also true for the JD(S). Widely regarded as untrustworthy, it is now confined to the Old Mysore region. It will garner at least 10 seats less than its 40 in 2013. However, it has kept the BJP from gaining a foothold in Old Mysore. The BJP's absence in Old Mysore means that in 10 of Karnataka's 30 districts, it is likely to win only a handful of seats. Its old Hindutva laboratory, the coast, rejected it in 2013, and will do so again, turned off by polarization. The BJP won nearly half of Bengaluru Urban last time but will do worse now. It is in closely fought Mumbai-Karnataka and Central Karnataka that the BJP is hoping to gain seats. While it may be aided here by the Karnataka Janata Paksha and the Badavara Shramikara Raithara Congress coming back to the BJP fold, the chemistry has gone all awry owing to competing factions. In Hyderabad-Karnataka, it is counting on the eight seats given to the Reddy family to help it, but the leadership of Mallikarjun Kharge and the fact that the United Progressive Alliance granted 371(J) status to this region will ensure that the Congress stays ahead. Dalit anger at the BJP's injustice nationwide is reflecting across Karnataka. In contrast, Mr. Siddaramaiah has allocated budgets in proportion to the population percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Opinion polls show that Mr. Siddaramaiah remains the number one choice for Chief Minister. According to polls, voters consider the BJP to be the most corrupt party. A section of the Lingayats is expected to quietly vote for the party that responded to their aspirations. The Supreme Court awarding a larger share of Cauvery water to Karnataka has marked Mr. Siddaramaiah as a champion of the State's interests. He has also highlighted Kannada pride. A stable government which has delivered to all sections and ensured inclusive growth is what the voters prefer. On May 15, the Congress will be back with a bang, setting the trend for 2019.

**(RAJEEV GOWDA IS A CONGRESS MP AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AICC'S RESEARCH DEPARTMENT)**

## It's Complicated | Sandeep Shastri

**In several constituencies, the BJP, JD(S) and the Congress are engaged in a three-way fight**

The Karnataka electoral contest seems to be heading for a photo finish and is fascinatingly complex and suspense-filled.

## Contradictory trends

For the last three decades, Karnataka has never given a clear majority to the ruling party. This should make it easier to make predictions. The BJP could argue that it is the natural



War of words-Rahul Gandhi and Narendra Modi

alternative to the Congress. Yet politics often defies logic. Karnataka was also witness to another trend during the same period: it has almost always gone against the national trend during Assembly elections. Karnataka seems set to negate one of these two trends, but the question is which one.

The BJP is convinced that it will wrest Karnataka from the Congress and make a grand entry in the south on the strength of what it will term as an anti-incumbency vote. Even if one were to assume that there is anti-incumbency, the BJP does not become the natural beneficiary of that. Opinion polls have pointed to the split of the anti-Congress vote between the BJP and the JD(S). The BJP is also heavily banking on its star campaigner, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to help it. The dependence of the party on the Prime Minister was evident in the last-minute increase in the number of rallies that Mr. Modi was scheduled to address. Yet, the impact of his campaign is still a matter of debate.

This is the first major test of Mr. Modi's capacity to sway an electorate in a State Assembly poll south of the Vindhyas. But can the faction-ridden State unit of the BJP and an increasingly sidelined chief ministerial candidate take the possible momentum generated by the Prime Minister's whirlwind campaign to the ground and translate that into votes? More importantly, has the BJP pitched its campaign on appropriate and relevant State-level issues and has its chief ministerial candidate inspired the electorate to favor the party?

The ruling Congress has its visible strengths but could well have peaked too early and lost the momentum in the crucial final week of the campaign. In the run-up to the campaign, it was clearly setting the agenda, pushing the BJP on the defensive. In its Chief Minister, the party found a campaigner who could bring together the diverse elements within the party to take on the opposition with a conscious focus on the local. Yet, there are factors that could halt this movement. The responsibility of defending the State government has virtually been left to the Chief Minister, with other Ministers busy managing their own small constituencies and contributing very little to the State-wide campaign.

## The JD(S) question

Further, the unhappiness of the electorate with the track record of the State government on the key issues of tackling price rise, generating employment, and controlling corruption is visible. A key strategy of the Congress to win over the Lingayats by recommending them a minority religion status appears to have backfired.

The presence of the JD(S) as a key player in select regions has converted the electoral battle in several constituencies into a three-way fight. By carving out for itself a segment of the anti-Congress vote, the JD(S) is surely eating into the BJP vote. Yet, the same could be said about the anti-BJP vote, which, especially in communally sensitive areas, could be split between the JD(S) and the Congress. The JD(S)'s efforts to be king-maker has led to a debate on whether Karnataka is once again heading for an Assembly with no party securing a clear majority.

**(SANDEEP SHASTRI IS A POLITICAL SCIENTIST AND THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF THE LOKNITI NETWORK)**

(SOURCE: THE HINDU)



## Moderate intensity earthquake hits northwest Pakistan

**PESHAWAR (TIP):** A moderate intensity earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale today jolted parts of northwest Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, but there were no reports of any casualty or damage to properties, an official said.

The quake, which shook parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Punjab and Islamabad, today evening 19:09 hours (local time), a Pakistan Metrological Department (PMD) official said.

This is the third quake that shook the northwest Pakistani cities since yesterday.

Two strong earthquakes with one measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale yesterday had jolted parts of northwest Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, injuring at least nine children and causing panic among the residents.

The epicentre of the quake was on Afghanistan-Tajikistan border region, at the depth of 187 km.

The tremors were also felt in Islamabad, Malakand, Chitral, Peshawra, Swabi, Malakand, Kohat, Mardan and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Last month, a 5.6-magnitude earthquake jolted many towns of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. (PTI)

## Pakistan's top judge orders probe into deadliest terror attack

**PESHAWAR (TIP):** Pakistan's top judge has ordered the first official investigation into the country's deadliest terror attack, a massacre at a school that killed more than 150 people in 2014, authorities said on May 10.

Relatives of the victims mainly children have long called for an accounting of the security and intelligence failures that allowed Pakistani Taliban gunmen to storm the school, run by the powerful military, in the northwestern city of Peshawar on December 16, that year.

No government or military official has ever been held to account for the security failings. Criticism of Pakistan's powerful armed forces, especially their counter insurgency operations, is largely seen as a red line in the country.

Supreme Court chief justice Mian Saqib Nisar ordered the formation of a judicial commission to examine the attack during a court hearing in Peshawar on Wednesday, Abdul Latif Yousafzai, advocate general of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, told AFP.

The inquiry was set to be completed in two months, he added.

No official explanation of the timing was given. But the announcement comes after the newly formed Pashtun Protection Movement (PTM) civil rights group has made the issue a central demand in recent months, putting renewed pressure on the government.

PTM is set to hold a massive rally in the sprawling port city of Karachi on Sunday, which is home to millions of ethnic Pashtuns and expected to draw thousands of supporters.

Following the announcement, families of the victims cheered the decision, with some moved to tears.

Ajun Khan, who lost his only son in the attack, told AFP he hopes the commission can uncover who was responsible for the negligence that allowed the militants to execute the hours-long bloodbath.

"We want the commission to probe the incident and place responsibility for the negligence and failure of the state to protect our children," Khan said.

The investigation comes after a dramatic improvement in security across the country following several successful military offensives targeting extremist strongholds.

The alleged mastermind behind the school attack was killed in a drone strike in 2017, according to the Pakistani Taliban, who have claimed responsibility for it.

The Pakistani state has also said it has hanged at least four men involved in the attack, though the nature of their role has not been made public. (AFP)

## Blasts rock Afghan capital of Kabul, casualties feared

**KABUL TIP:** Three blasts hit the Afghan capital of Kabul in rapid succession on May 10 and gunfire then broke out, police and interior ministry officials said. Police said one blast was near a police station in the centre of the city and casualties were feared. A suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance of the police station in central Kabul in an area near foreign embassies and government offices, an interior ministry official said. (Reuters)

# INDIA SENDS 2ND RELIEF CONSIGNMENT FOR ROHINGYAS IN BANGLADESH

**DHAKA (TIP):** India has sent to Bangladesh its second relief consignment to help tens of thousands of displaced Rohingya Muslims who fled Myanmar following a military crackdown, triggering one of the world's worst refugee crises.

Over 600,000 Rohingyas have fled Myanmar's violence-hit Rakhine state to neighbouring Bangladesh since August when the military intensified crackdown against alleged militant outfits of Rohingya Muslims.

Indian Navy Ship INS Airavat sailed from Vishakhapatnam and reached Chattogram port (formerly Chittagong) Port yesterday where Indian High Commissioner Harsh Vardhan Shringla handed over the relief consignment to Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzel Hussain Chowdhury Maya.

Officials familiar with the development said the 373-tonne consignment contained 104 tonnes of milk powder, 102 tonnes of dried fish, 61 tonnes of baby food, 50,000 raincoats and 50,000 pairs of gum boots.

"Another tranche containing 1 million litres of kerosene oil and 20,000 cooking stoves is expected to arrive soon," Shringla said.

He said India sent the relief in view of the specific needs of the "large number of (Rohingya) women and children living in the camps and the onset of monsoon".

"We hope this will bring some succour to the people living in camps," he said.

Bangladesh has repeatedly sought India's help to put pressure on Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya crisis.

During a recent high-level visit of UN Security Council, Bangladesh called upon India as well as Russia, China and Japan to play a stronger role for Rohingya's secured and dignified



repatriation.

Earlier, Bangladesh premier Sheikh Hasina engaged the foreign ministry to pursue a vigorous diplomacy with countries having direct borders with Myanmar along with Russia and sought enhanced Indian engagement in resolving the crisis.

"We want India to mount pressure on Myanmar so they quickly take back their displaced people," Hasina had told a visiting non-government Indian delegation.

She had warned that Rohingyas' longer stay in Bangladesh could create a security crisis, arguing that "when people remain frustrated and have no work, they could easily be indulged in militancy".

"We understand that the influx of large number of refugees has created unprecedented challenges for the government and people of Bangladesh,"

Shringla said.

India's foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale, who was in Dhaka last month, said "India has been fully supportive of the efforts being made to resolve the crisis, including early repatriation of the displaced people".

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will pay a two-day visit to Myanmar from May 10 during which key bilateral and regional issues, including the situation in the Rakhine state from where thousands of Rohingya Muslims had fled following violence last year, are likely to be discussed.

In December last, India had announced a development assistance of USD 25 million for the Rakhine state.

Earlier, India sent relief materials for 300,000 Rohingyas in September last year under 'Operation Insaniyat' to support Bangladesh in its humanitarian efforts. (PTI)

## SRI LANKA PRESIDENT URGES END TO POWER STRUGGLE

**COLOMBO (TIP):** Sri Lanka's president May 8 appealed to his prime minister to end a bitter power struggle and said the coalition government had failed to deliver promised reforms.

But Maithripala Sirisena suffered a new blow when 16 of his MPs joined the opposition. Sirisena told parliament that the coalition partners should commit to a reform agenda to revive the island nation emerging from a decades-long ethnic war that claimed more than 100,000 lives.

"This is not a time for parties to engage in a power struggle," Sirisena said after opening a new session of parliament.

"Although we formed a coalition government in August 2015, we still have not politically matured to accept and work within this reality. Consensus government is still a foreign concept to us."

He urged the government dominated by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) to work towards ethnic reconciliation to rebuild the country.

Tamil rebels who fought for independence for the island's ethnic minority were crushed in a military offensive that ended in May 2009.

The military drive has sparked allegations that more than 40,000 Tamil civilians were killed by government forces in the final months of the war.

Sirisena said the government must address the causes of the ethnic conflict and ensure a permanent political solution so that the nation of 21 million people does not return to war.

His remarks came a day after he announced he will not retire at the end of his term in January 2020 despite a previous pledge. That pits him against Wickremesinghe who also wants to contest the presidency.

Sirisena told a public rally in the former war zone of Batticaloa on Monday that he had unfinished business and no longer intends to retire when his five-year term finishes. (AFP)

## Need to address Tamil political issue: Lanka President

**COLOMBO (TIP):** Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on May 10 underlined the need to address the concerns of the Tamil minority in a political arrangement, saying though the problem has ended militarily, but no solution has been given for its causes.

Addressing Parliament on the ceremonial opening of a new session, he also called for support from political parties in addressing issues faced by the Tamil minority community in the war-affected North and East districts.

"Although the problem has ended militarily, no solution has been given for its causes," Sirisena said, referring to the 30-year-long civil war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) which left over one lakh people dead.

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. Referring to a main concern about land owned by Tamils being held for military purposes in the former conflict regions, the President said, almost 85 per cent of the land had now been released. (PTI)



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## Indian Origin Techie Srinivas Kuchibhotla's Killer Gets Life in Jail



While Purinton would be eligible for parole in 50 years, he was likely to spend the rest of his life in prison.

**KANSAS (TIP):** A US Navy veteran was sentenced to life in jail for killing Srinivas Kuchibhotla, the Indian Origin techie from Hyderabad, in a racially motivated hate crime at a bar in Kansas City last year. "Get out of my country!" Adam W Purinton had shouted before firing shots at Srinivas Kuchibhotla and his friend who were at a bar in the city of Olathe on February 22, 2017. Mr Kuchibhotla died after he was taken to a hospital, while his friend Alok Madasani was injured. Another man, Ian Grillot, who tried to intervene was also shot. Purinton was captured a day later at another restaurant, where he had allegedly boasted of killing Middle Easterners, according to The Kansas City Star.

The 52-year-old Purinton received the maximum punishment for the murder, and two sentences of 165 months each for the attempted murders, the prosecutor's office said.

The shooting came a month after President Donald Trump was sworn into office in January 2017 and ignited international outrage amid concerns of rising racial prejudice following the Republican's divisive election campaign.

President Trump was also criticized for not speaking against the incident. However, he raised the issue later in an address to the Congress. In January this year, Mr. Kuchibhotla's wife Sunayana Dumala was invited to Donald Trump's first State of the Union address. Hundreds of mourners marched through the Kansas City suburb in memory of Mr Kuchibhotla and also honored Grillot, who tried to save him. They held a vigil with Hindu, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh prayers.

## Association of Indian Muslims of America condemns police attack on AMU Students

**MARYLAND (TIP):** The Association of Indian Muslims of America has condemned last week's police attack on students of India's Aligarh Muslim University.

We, an organization of Indian Americans, learned with much sadness that last week a contingent of policemen in the city of Aligarh attacked a large group of students of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), at the campus of the university, causing serious injuries to many of them," an official release from the organization read. The organization said officers attacked students who were peacefully protesting against a recent communal incident wherein a group of Hindu extremists allegedly barged into the campus and committed violence over the display of a portrait of MA Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, in one of the University buildings.

The portrait of Jinnah was installed in one of the university buildings after he became a member of the AMU Students Union in 1938, said Kaleem Kawaja, the Executive Director of AIM.

He pointed out that there are portraits of Jinnah displayed in the main building of the Indian parliament and the High Court in Mumbai. In late 1948 after Mr. Jinnah's death, the Indian Constituent Assembly, the forerunner to the Indian parliament, passed a condolence motion and conveyed it to the government of Pakistan. The significance of Jinnah's photograph in an AMU building is a similar historical phenomenon that should not be misconstrued otherwise, Kawaja said.

He said that a large number of Indian Americans are very aggrieved at the outrageous and violent behavior of the police in abetting the illegal action of a bunch of extremists against the century-old AMU. "We categorically condemn this action of the Indian police and request the government of India to take appropriate action against the erring policemen and extremist Hindu activists," he said. The group said the way the law enforcement officers behaved reflected their partisan attitude.

The release said police escorted protestors from the extremist group, Hindu Vahini, to the main gate of the university before they entered the university premises. It added that police also beat up AMU students violently despite the peaceful nature of their protest.

"At the same time police authorities are continuing to refuse to file cases against the extremist Hindu Vahini volunteers for illegal violent trespassing," the release said.

# Donald Trump personally welcomes 3 Americans freed by North Korea back to the US

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Donald Trump personally welcomed home three American detainees on May 10 after they were released by Pyongyang, seen as a diplomatic win for the US President ahead of his planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

The Americans -- Kim Dong Chul, Kim Hak-song and Kim Sang Duk, also known as Tony Kim -- were freed yesterday while Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was on a visit to the North Korean capital to finalise the details of the summit.

The trio had been jailed for anti-state activities and placed in North Korean labour camps.

Trump and his wife Melania entered the plane after it landed in the early hours of Thursday and a few minutes later emerged with the three Americans of South Korean origin to wave to the media.

Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Karen Pence were also on hand to welcome the three men home.

Speaking to the media on the tarmac at Joint Base Andrews Air Force Base, Kim Dong Chul said his release felt "like a dream."

"We are very, very happy," he said.

The three former detainees earlier issued a joint statement thanking Trump for their release.

"We would like to express our deep appreciation to the United States government, President Trump, Secretary Pompeo, and the people of the United States for bringing us home," the trio said.

President Trump told reporters that it was "nice" of the North Korean leader to release the three men ahead



of their planned summit.

"Frankly we didn't think this was going to happen ... it's a very important thing to all of us to be able to get these three great people out," he said.

Trump said he wanted to pay his "warmest respects" to the family of Otto Warmbier, the American who was released by the North Koreans in a vegetative state, only to die days later. Asked if this was his proudest achievement, Trump said that would be "when we denuclearise that entire peninsula".

"It's a great honour. But the true honour is going to be if we have a victory in getting rid of nuclear weapons," he said.

Trump was also asked about the prospects of making a deal with the North Korean leader.

"I really think he wants to do something and bring his country into the real world," Trump said.

"I think this will be a very big

success. It's never been taken this far, there's never been a relationship like this."

Trump has previously said the release of the three Americans was part of working towards the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

"Some great things can happen, and that's what we hope," he added.

Trump said yesterday that he would announce the location and the timing of the summit in three days time. The two leaders are expected to meet sometime in June.

US media said Trump scored a diplomatic victory with North Korea releasing the three imprisoned American citizens.

After their meeting with Trump, the three men were expected to go to the Walter Reed Medical Center in Maryland for further evaluation and medical treatment, CNN quoted White House Press Secretary Lindsay Walters as saying. (PTI)

## 'Maximum pressure' campaign against N Korea worked: White House

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against North Korea has worked, the White House has said, ahead of President Donald Trump's historic summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

The White House statement comes a day after North Korea released three Americans who were detained in the country for months.

"The President has talked about, certainly, that the maximum pressure campaign has worked. We have seen North Korea make progress since that campaign started," White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters.

Sanders said Trump had also been very clear that some of the success was due to America's key allies and partners like South Korea's President

Moon Jae-In, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping, who played a "big role" putting pressure on North Korea.

"They have all played a big role in the maximum pressure campaign. But a lot of that is due to the fact that the President has spent time developing relationships with those individuals, and they've collectively been able to put pressure on North Korea," Sanders said yesterday.

Trump told reporters yesterday that the time and venue for his summit meeting Kim had been decided and would be announced in three days, ruling out the Demilitarised Zone that divides the Korean peninsula as a venue for the meeting.

Trump had spoken with Moon Jae-in to discuss Pompeo's visit to North

Korea.

"The two leaders welcomed North Korea's decision to release three American detainees, and expressed hope for joyful family reunions," said a readout of the call.

Trump would host Moon at the White House on May 22.

Sanders said the President viewed the release of three prisoners by North Korea as a positive gesture and a step in the right direction from the North Korean leader.

"However, total denuclearisation will remain the top priority," she said. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard called for building on the momentum.

"The nuclear threat posed to us by North Korea is real, and the need to denuclearise North Korea is urgent. Historic progress has already been made. (PTI)



# CIA has a very important role in monitoring China's rise as a global power: Gina Haspel

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Identifying China as a major national security challenge for the US, a top CIA official told lawmakers that the spy agency has an important role in monitoring China's rise as a global power.

"CIA has a very important role in monitoring China's rise as a global power," Gina Haspel, US President Donald Trump's nominee for CIA Director, told members of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee yesterday.

She is currently the acting director of CIA. If confirmed, Haspel would be the first female head of the spy agency.

"China efforts to diminish US influence, not only in the Pacific, but all around the world, China's unfair trade practices, and China's overt and illicit efforts to steal US technology and know-how and intellectual property," she said.

The CIA is raising its investment on each of these hard targets.

"We have incredible expertise on China at the agency. It is a very strong team. I'm very proud of our analysts. It is a subject that a week doesn't go by that, either, the President asks for an expert briefing or Secretary Mattis asks for someone to brief him on China issues," Haspel said responding to a question from Senator Marco Rubio.

For decades, American foreign policy towards China has been rooted in the belief that as they prospered, economically, they would embrace democracy, they would embrace the global



rule of law, Rubio said in his remarks.

"That consensus, by all accounts has been catastrophically wrong," he said.

"Today China is undertaking a comprehensive effort to supplant the United States and to undermine us. And they've benefited from the greatest transfer of wealth in history, through the theft and the forced transfer of intellectual property. They use unfair trade and other practices to undermine our industrial and technical base," Rubio said.

They gather and exploit data at an unrivaled scale. They're building the most capable and well-funded military in world, second to ours," he said, and asked if the CIA was equipped to meet this multi-

faceted challenge.

Haspel responded saying China, Russia, Iran and North Korea have very aggressive, offensive cyber programmes, both to steal secrets and in some cases, earn illicit money.

The CIA can, probably, make the biggest contribution, in collection, about these countries' activities and various groups activities so that we can inform the US government agencies that have to mount our defence," she said. "Everyone in the US government has been struggling, as all western governments are, on what is the most effective way to organise yourself for cyber defence. We're still working on that, but CIA has a big role," Haspel added. (PTI)

## Trump heralds capture of five Islamic State commanders

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** US President Donald Trump said on May 10 that five "most wanted" leaders of the Islamic State terror group had been captured, an apparent reference to the capture of five commanders of the militant group by Iraq.

"Five Most Wanted leaders of ISIS just captured!" Trump wrote in a post on Twitter, providing no further details.

Iraq had described the capture of the Islamic State commanders as "some of the most wanted" leaders of the group. The list did not include Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. (Reuters)

## Kim trying to set good conditions for meeting with Trump: Pompeo

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is trying to set good conditions for his meeting with President Donald Trump, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo said on May 9.

He also said that the place and date for the summit has been locked and would be announced soon.

"I think that Chairman Kim is trying to set good conditions for the summit, right. We are having good conversations, productive conversations. So, I think the work that President Trump has done to put us in this place made this possible," Pompeo told a group of reporters travelling with him.

Last month he travelled to Pyongyang secretly. At the time he was the CIA director.

Pompeo said that the meeting was very productive and that they have set a date and place for the meeting. He hoped that the name of the venue and date would be announced at the beginning of next week.

"We are planning on it, will be a single day, but in the event that there is more to discuss, there'll be an opportunity for it to extend into the second day as well," Pompeo said in response to a question.

He stayed in Pyongyang for about 13 hours, during which he met Kim.

"We had a chance to talk substantively about what we intend to be on the agenda, and also how we're going to begin to coordinate in the days ahead between now and the summit in a way both sides are confident that we will set the conditions for a successful meeting between the two leaders," he said.

Describing the release of three Americans, who were on his plane, he said this is incredibly exciting. "They seem to be in good health," he added. (PTI)

## Volcanic gases prompt door-to-door evacuation in Hawaii

**PAHOA, HAWAII (TIP):** Police went door-to-door in Hawaii to roust residents near two new vents emitting dangerous gases in areas where lava has been pouring into streets and backyards for the past week. Authorities ordered nearly 2,000 residents to leave two communities in the mostly rural district of Puna on Hawaii's Big Island last Thursday. Some ignored the order and stayed to watch over their property.

But on Tuesday, the emergence of the two new vents prompted Hawaii County to issue a cellphone alert ordering stragglers in Lanipuna Gardens to get out immediately. Police followed up with personal visits.

"There were a number of people at their residences," Talmadge Magno, the administrator for Hawaii County Civil Defense, said at a news briefing. There was no sign of holdouts in Lanipuna afterward, he said.

Edwin Montoya, 76, had planned to stay to care for animals and keep looters away from his family's property in neighboring Leilani Estates. But he was forced to evacuate after the new fissures emerged, including one just a mile away. (AP)

# Trump signs Holocaust property law that has angered Poland

**WARSAW (TIP):** US President Donald Trump has signed an act that Jewish groups praise as helpful in their efforts to reclaim lost property in Poland, but which the Polish government says is discriminatory.

The White House said on Wednesday that Trump signed the Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today (JUST) Act. It requires the State Department to report to Congress on what steps dozens of countries in Europe have taken to compensate Holocaust survivors or their heirs for assets seized under Nazi German and Communist rule.

The law does not give the US any powers to act against any country and does not single out Poland. But Poland is the only country in Europe that has not passed legislation to compensate former owners for assets seized in the upheavals of 20th-century European history, and Warsaw sees itself as the key target of the law.

The Nazis' seizure of Jewish-owned property in Poland during World War II, and the murder of most of Poland's Jewish population, was followed after the war by the Communist state's seizure of large amounts of property that was nationalized. Most of the original owners of that property were not Jewish.

Since the fall of communism, some claimants have regained lost property on



a case-by-case basis through courts, but so far Poland has not passed comprehensive legislation regulating the process, creating a situation that has been riddled by fraud and led to a sense of injustice.

Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz says he believes that the US pressure through the JUST Act unfairly sets Jewish claimants above non-Jewish ones, creating tensions within Polish society.

He argued that Polish law treats all Polish citizens equally, whether they are

from the Polish majority or from ethnic minorities that made up significant segments of prewar society - including Jews and Ukrainians.

"This position of the (US) Congress is not good because it wants some privileges for the Jews, for the Jewish community, but not for the Poles. I think that the Poles who live in the US may feel hurt by that," Czaputowicz said in an interview with The Associated Press last week.

He recalled that there were non-Jewish Poles who fought against Nazi Germany and then settled in the United States, leaving behind property that was seized by the Communist regime.

"Their property here remains without any settlement, and nobody speaks on their behalf, only on the behalf of the Jews. That is not good because that divides our society," Czaputowicz added.

Polish organizations have also lobbied Congress members in past months asking them to oppose the act, efforts that included a mass letter-writing campaign.

The World Jewish Restitution Organization said Thursday that it was grateful to Congress for passing the act unanimously, and to Trump for signing it. "This is a powerful statement of America's unwavering commitment to supporting Holocaust survivors in their quest for justice," said Gideon Taylor, WJRO Chair of Operations. (AP)



## PM NARENDRA MODI ARRIVES IN NEPAL ON TWO-DAY VISIT

**JANAKPUR (TIP):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here on May 11 on a two-day state visit to Nepal during which he will hold talks with the country's top leadership to build mutual trust.

Defence Minister Ishwar Pokhrel and Province 2 Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut received Modi at the airport.

This is the third visit of the Prime Minister to Nepal and the first high-level visit from India since the formation of the new government in Nepal this year.

In Janakpur, Modi will visit the 20th century Janaki temple and offer special prayers. Later, Modi will be accorded a civic reception by the Janakpur Sub-Metropolitan City at Barhabigha ground.

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has reached the Janaki temple to welcome his Indian counterpart.

Ahead of his visit, Modi said India would remain a steadfast partner of the Himalayan nation in its quest for growth and development.

Describing his trip to Nepal as a reflection of his government's commitment to 'neighbourhood first' policy, Modi had said the Himalayan nation had entered a new era and India would continue to support it. *Source: PTI*

## Sridevi's death: SC dismisses plea for independent probe

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea seeking an independent probe into the death of Bollywood actor Sridevi.

The actor had died on February 24 due to accidental drowning in her hotel bathtub in Dubai.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud dismissed the plea filed by one Sunil Singh who sought an independent investigation into the death of the actor.

He moved the top court after the Delhi high court had on March 9 refused to entertain his PIL to probe her death, saying authorities in India and Dubai had already looked into the incident. *Source: PTI*



## PWD scam: Kejriwal's nephew arrested, AAP fumes

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's nephew Vinay Bansal was arrested on Thursday by an anti-graft body in connection with alleged financial irregularities in a drainage project for the PWD, prompting AAP to allege a conspiracy to malign the party chief's image.

While Bansal was sent to one-day judicial custody by a Delhi court, his arrest triggered a political slugfest, with the BJP's Delhi unit demanding Kejriwal's resignation and Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia alleging that the Centre was using Delhi Police and the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) only "to harass and trouble" AAP leaders and their relatives.

The ACB claimed Bansal was a 50 per cent stakeholder in Renu Constructions that was allegedly involved in financial irregularities in laying a drainage system. *Source: The Tribune*

# Karnataka elections: Can Congress stop BJP's march into south India?

**MANGALURU/CHIKMAGALUR (TIP):** The Karnataka election is crucial for the Congress party—the polls will decide whether the party can halt the march of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into southern India and whether it is able to prevent its expansion to newer territories.

If indeed the Congress manages a verdict in its favour, it would be the first time since its historic defeat in the 2014 general elections that the party has retained a state. Interestingly, no incumbent government has been re-elected in Karnataka since 1985.

At stake for Congress is also the future of one of its last remaining regional bigwigs, chief minister Siddaramaiah, and the fight for electoral survival ahead of general elections next year. In the past four years, Congress has been defeated by the BJP in over a dozen states, drastically shrinking its political footprint.

Politically, one of the big bets of the Congress party in Karnataka is to cement its support base among economically weaker sections, particularly through populist schemes like the Anna Bhagya—a free rice scheme.

"This government has worked for the people. It has offered relief to people from poorer sections by providing several schemes like Anna Bhagya and health schemes. People always look for change but we feel that Siddaramaiah is connected to the grassroots and understands our problem," said P.S. Jagadeesh, a farmer and departmental store owner at Pattangere village in Kadur assembly constituency of Chikmagalur district.

To craft its return to power, the Congress in Karnataka is relying on the votes of Dalits, who make up 17% of the population, Muslims (11%) and Kurubas (8%), the community to which Siddaramaiah belongs.

Voters in coastal Karnataka also feel that with the Popular Front of India, a pro-Muslim political outfit, deciding that its political wing, Social Democratic Party of India, will not contest elections in the region, Muslim votes could further consolidate in the favour of the Congress party.

However, a section of voters are of the



## MODI SEES 'THREAT' IN ME, SAYS RAHUL

**Bengaluru (TIP):** Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi saw a "threat" in him, and the attack by him over his prime ministerial ambition was only aimed at "distracting attention".

Gandhi also hit out at Modi for raking up the issue of UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi's foreign origin, saying "my mother is Italian" but she was "more Indian than many Indians". "This election is not about Rahul. I have now learnt to deal with the PM. When he can't respond, he distracts," Gandhi said responding to questions about Modi's repeated attacks on him over his prime ministerial ambition.

Training his guns on Gandhi after he

publicly declared his prime ministerial ambition at an interaction here, Modi had wondered whether the country would ever accept such an "immature and naamdhar (dynast)" leader for the post. The Congress chief, who wrapped up his campaign tour of Karnataka with a press conference, referred to a story about Gautam Buddha to claim the PM had "anger" for everybody. "Modi has anger inside him and he has got anger for everybody not only for me. I attract that anger because he sees a threat in me. His anger is his problem, not my problem," Gandhi said. He mocked the PM over visiting temples and called him an "election Hindu" who remembered Hindu shrines only during polls.

*Source: PTI*

opinion that the trend of not returning an incumbent should continue and a change in regime should be sought.

"Modi is doing very good work at the centre. We also want to give BJP a chance in the state because it can work in tandem with the Union government," said Arun Patil, a salesman at a jewellery shop in Puttur assembly constituency of Dakshin Kannada district.

Political analysts say that the stakes are high for the Congress in this election and that populist schemes floated by the Siddaramaiah government could give the party an edge.

"Karnataka is the last remaining

bastion of the Congress party and so the stakes are very high. It is a make-or-break election for the Congress. The outcome of the Karnataka polls has the potential to change India's political map, particularly with respect to BJP's entry in southern India," said Muzaffar Assadi, former professor at Mysore University.

"There is neither much anti-incumbency against Siddaramaiah nor is there an outright vocal support in his favour. But under Siddaramaiah, the state has been an experimental laboratory for populist schemes for the underprivileged and that can go in his favour," Assadi added. *Source: Livemint*

# Kovind becomes first Prez in 14 years to visit Siachen

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** President Ram Nath Kovind on Thursday visited Siachen Base Camp and addressed the soldiers posted there. He also visited the Kumar Post. President Kovind is the second President of India to visit Siachen. The previous visit was undertaken by President A P J Abdul Kalam in April 2004. This makes President Kovind the first President to travel to Siachen in 14 years.

Addressing the soldiers, President Kovind said that as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and as the President of India, he has come among them carrying the gratitude of the entire country. The President noted that Siachen is the world's highest battlefield and it is difficult to live even a normal life in the extreme climate. In such a situation, it is extraordinary for soldiers to stay in a state of constant mobilisation and

combat readiness. Their determination and dedication are worthy of the highest praise – and their allegiance to the defence of India is an ideal for all our fellow citizens.

The bravery and valour of soldiers deployed in Siachen over the past 34 years, the President said, has given every Indian the confidence that our borders are safe and secure. The President said he had come to Siachen to iterate to the troops posted here that all citizens of India and the Government of India were always with them and supportive of their families.

The President also paid his respects at the Siachen War Memorial, which is a symbol of the sacrifice of 11,000 soldiers and officers who have been martyred since the Indian Army began Operation Meghdoot on the Siachen Glacier on April 13, 1984.





# Supreme Court reserves judgement on pleas challenging validity of Aadhaar

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Marathon hearings in the Aadhaar case, which went on for 38 days spread across four months, ended on May 10 with the Supreme Court reserving its verdict on petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the unique identification project.

A five-judge Constitution bench, comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dipak Misra, justice AK Sikri, justice AM Khanwilkar, justice DY Chandrachud, and justice Ashok Bhushan heard over 30 petitions against the Aadhaar Act and the Centre's defence of the controversial law.

Besides the law itself, the petitions challenged government orders that made it compulsory for linking of bank accounts, mobile phone numbers, permanent account numbers and filing of income taxes to the Aadhaar unique ID number.

The main thrust of the case brought by petitioners was that Aadhaar encroached on the privacy of citizens because it entailed collection of fingerprints, iris scans and other details of citizens with/without their consent.

At the end of the hearings on Thursday, Attorney General KK Venugopal remarked it was the longest case in the SC's history, behind only the Kesavanand Bharti case dating back to the 1970s, which was heard by a bench of 13 judges and dealt with powers of the executive to amend the Constitution.

The main thrust of the case brought by petitioners was that Aadhaar encroached on the privacy of citizens because it entailed collection of fingerprints, iris scans and other personal details of citizens with/without their consent.

Shyam Diwan, appearing for petitioner Kalyani Menon, termed Aadhaar "an electronic leash" and



argued the government could completely destroy an individual by "switching off" the 12-digit unique identification number. Kapil Sibal, appearing for the West Bengal government, called it the most important case to be decided by the SC since independence; the key issue is whether citizens can be deprived of their fundamentals rights including the right to make their own choices, he said.

Gopal Subramaniam, appearing for SG Vombatkere, said that in the absence of a comprehensive data protection regime, data retention covering the entire population was a risky proposition and it must be undertaken with substantive and procedural reasonableness.

Arvind Datar, appearing for Shanta Sinha, said the Act should not have been passed as a money bill; even if the Act is upheld, the unique ID can't be used for purposes other than distribution of subsidies, he said. Aadhaar must be revisited in light of the Supreme Court judgment that the right to privacy is a fundamental right, Datar argued. A money bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha; the Rajya Sabha cannot make

amendments to a money bill passed by the Lok Sabha and can only make recommendations that the lower house can choose to accept or reject. The ruling National Democratic Alliance was a comfortable majority in the Lok Sabha, but is in a minority in the Rajya Sabha, and presenting it as a money bill helped the government skirt resistance in the upper house.

P Chidambaram, appearing for Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, said the Lok Sabha speaker's decision to declare the Aadhaar bill a money bill attained finality only as far as parliamentarians were concerned; it does not prevent the Supreme Court from judicially reviewing the speaker's wisdom, he argued.

Attorney general KK Venugopal made the case that the Aadhaar law complied with the tests laid down in the right to privacy judgment. It's fair, just and a reasonable law with adequate safeguards, is in pursuance of a larger public interest, including preventing dissipation of social welfare benefits, and for prevention of black money and money laundering. And these are all legitimate state interests, Venugopal said. *Source: HT*

## STUDENT SEEKS SWARAJ'S HELP, SHE TELLS HIM TO REMOVE 'INDIAN-OCCUPIED KASHMIR' FROM PROFILE

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A medical student from Jammu & Kashmir in Philippines who thought he was scoring a point by listing his location as "Indian occupied Kashmir" on Twitter discovered the perils of doing so when he ran into trouble, and sought the help of the external affairs minister who responded saying there is no place called Indian-occupied Kashmir.



Sheikh Ateeq, whose Twitter handle was @SAteEQ019, requested Swaraj to help him get a new passport and said he needed one to get back to his "home, India" as his health was deteriorating.

"I am from J&K doing medicine course here in Philippines my passport got damaged I applied for new one 1 month ago I request u pls help me to get it as i literally need to go home for medical checkup," Ateeq tweeted on Thursday. He had asked Swaraj for help earlier, on April 5.

"Dear ma'am @SushmaSwaraj I greatly need your help. Is there anything u can do to rush the process of my passport as it is damaged. I need to get back to my home, India. My health is deteriorating and I cannot shoulder the expenses any more as I'm student (sic)," he said earlier.

Swaraj, who actively addresses people's concerns on Twitter, replied to Ateeq on Thursday saying she would have helped him had he belonged to Jammu and Kashmir, and that there was no place called Indian-occupied Kashmir.

Soon after, Ateeq corrected the location on his Twitter bio to "Jammu & Kashmir/ Manila". Swaraj acknowledged the correction in a tweet that was shared minutes later and asked the Indian envoy in Manila to help the student. "I am happy you have corrected the profile. Jaideep - He is an Indian national from J&K. Pls help him," the minister wrote.

## Nitish Kumar, Sushil Modi among 10,000 guests for Lalu Yadav son's wedding

**PATNA (TIP):** Lalu Yadav had missed his son Tej Pratap Yadav's engagement ceremony last month. The 69-year-old veteran politician, serving time for the fodder scam in the 1990s, reached home in Patna late on Thursday evening on a three-day parole to let him attend his eldest son's wedding later this week.

Tej Pratap Yadav is to marry Aishwarya Roy, the daughter of six-time Rashtriya Janata Dal lawmaker Chandrika Roy and a cabinet colleague of Lalu Yadav in many governments. The young couple had exchanged rings in the presence of some 200 guests at a Patna hotel.

The wedding is at a much larger scale at the city's veterinary grounds. A member of the Yadav household said the guest list runs into several thousand - another suggested it could touch 10,000 - and includes top political leaders from across the country. Friends as well as political rivals alike.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who ended his party's grand alliance with Lalu Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Party and the Congress, is expected to set aside their political rivalry and make it to the wedding. So will Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, the senior BJP leader who played an instrumental role to get central agencies probe Lalu Yadav, sons Tej Pratap and Tejashwi and daughter Misra Bharti.

When Sushil Kumar Modi hosted a reception for his son's marriage, Lalu Yadav had made it a point to show up and spend two hours to bless the newly-weds. Mr Modi is expected to reciprocate that gesture.

But Lalu Yadav, who was received by his family at the airport and driven straight home, will have to be careful not to violate parole conditions imposed by the jailors.

In Patna, Lalu Yadav will have to stay home or the venue of the wedding and has been banned from speaking to the media, his party supporters or make any political statement. If he does, he can be hauled right away back to Ranchi's Birs Munda central jail. "Lalu has been released on parole with his hands and feet tied," Rashtriya Janata Dal's Shivanand Tiwary had complained when he heard about the tough conditions. Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi promptly hit back, reminding him and other RJD supporters that the conditions had been imposed for good reason.

# In one voice, political parties call for ceasefire in Kashmir

**SRINAGAR (TIP):** All mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir, including the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), on Wednesday asked the Centre to declare "a unilateral ceasefire for the month of Ramzan and the period of the Amarnath Yatra."

"There was a unanimous decision of all the parties at the meeting that the Government of India consider a unilateral ceasefire in view of the coming month of Ramadhan and Amarnath Yatra to extend relief to the masses. The parties suggested that the Centre offer the ceasefire as former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee did in [November] 2000," Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti said after the meeting of all regional parties at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre here.

She had called for an all-party meeting in the wake of growing encounters and civilian casualties in street protests, especially in the past 40 days, leaving 69 people, including 28 civilians and a Chennai tourist, dead.

"Encounters and crackdowns are causing trouble to the common man. Efforts must be made to maintain the environment so that both Id and Amarnath Yatra are peaceful... It's important to retrieve the dialogue process," she said. An all-party team would meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the outreach. Terming the Agenda of Alliance (AoA) "a visionary document," Ms. Mufti said, "The need of the hour is to go back to the document and seek its immediate implementation.



The participants [of the meeting] wanted implementation of the AoA, which they believed would positively change the situation in J&K."

Senior BJP leaders, including Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta and Sat Sharma, were also present at the meeting. The all-party meeting was attended by the National Conference's Ali Muhammad Sagar, the Congress's G.A. Mir, the CPI(M)'s M.Y. Tarigami, the Peoples Democratic Front's Hakim Muhammad Yaseen, the Awami Ittehad Party's Engineer Rashid and the Democratic Party Nationalist's Ghulam Hassan Mir.

Ramzan will start in Kashmir next week and the yatra will begin from June 28 and will end on August 26. *Source: HT*



# 2018 New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF)

**“NYIFF is known around the world for its top-notch, out-of-the-box programming, and this year is no different. The New York audience is sophisticated, well-traveled, educated and discerning; as such, our content reflects what we think will resonate with the cinephiles of this cosmopolitan city and will keep them coming back for more.”**

**Aroon Shivdasani, Founder-Executive & Artistic Director, IAAC.**

**“We had to make some tough choices but I'm thrilled with our selections representing new independent Indian and South Asian cinema, as well works from the South Asian Diaspora”**

**Aseem Chhabra, NYIFF Director**

## About NYIFF

The New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) is the oldest, most prestigious film festival screening premiere of feature, documentary and short films made from, of, and about the Indian subcontinent in the Independent, arthouse, alternate and diaspora genres. Six days of screenings, post-screening discussions, industry panels, award ceremony, special events, nightly networking parties, red carpet galas, media attention and packed audiences build an awareness of Indian cinema, entertain & educate North Americans about the real India, and add to the amazing cultural diversity of New York City.

For further information, visit [www.iaac.us/NYIFF2018/index.htm](http://www.iaac.us/NYIFF2018/index.htm)

## About IAAC

The Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC) is a not-for-profit, secular service and resource arts organization charged with the mission of promoting and building the awareness, creation, production, exhibition, publication and performance of Indian and cross-cultural art forms in North America. The IAAC supports all artistic disciplines in the classical, fusion, folk and innovative forms influenced by the arts of India. IAAC works cooperatively with colleagues around the United States to broaden their collective audiences and to create a network for shared information, resources and funding.

Its focus is to work with artists and arts organizations in North America as well as to facilitate artists and arts organizations from India to exhibit, perform and produce their works here.

For further information, visit [www.iaac.us](http://www.iaac.us)

## About Qube Cinema, Inc.

Qube Cinema, Inc., a provider of end-to-end digital cinema technology and solutions, is the distribution partner for the festival. The company draws on decades of experience in cinema and provides a seamless digital environment for exhibitors, filmmakers and post-production companies with DCI compliant products that are flexible, reliable and cost-effective.

For further information, visit [www.qubecinema.com](http://www.qubecinema.com)

## About Qube Wire

Filmmakers increasingly rely on Qube Wire for secure and reliable movie content delivery to the festival.

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BY MABEL PAIS

The longest-running, most prestigious South Asian Film Festival in North America, NYIFF, kicked off on May 7 at the Village East Cinemas in the lower east side of Manhattan at 181-189, 2nd Avenue, New York, NY 10003.

The Festival continues until May 12 at the location.

The Festival boasts 78 shorts, documentaries and feature films screened over the period of 6 days.

### Festival Highlights:

The opening night red carpet took place on Monday, May 7th from 6 pm to 7 p.m. outside the Village East Cinemas, preceding the U.S. premiere of Ravi Jadhav's Marathi language film NUDE (with English subtitles).

The closing night red carpet will take place from 5-6 p.m., May 12, once again outside the Village East Cinemas, preceding the New York premiere of veteran NYIFF director Hansal Mehta's biopic on Islamic fundamentalist Omar Saeed Sheikh, OMERTA, at 6 p.m.

The centerpiece slot was occupied by Miransha Naik's Konkani language film JUZE (with English subtitles), making its North American premiere at NYIFF on May 10.

The entire festival schedule comprising of 78 films in 11 languages (English, Hindi, Marathi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Tulu, Konkani, Bengali & Assamese), is available on the festival's website. The programming boasts four world premieres, two international premieres, six North American premieres, one U.S. premiere and 11 New York premieres from four South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka), as well as North America and the United Kingdom.

NYIFF 2018 paid tribute to two Indian film industry icons who passed away in the last four months: Hollywood/Bollywood actor Shashi Kapoor and the India's first female superstar Sridevi. Kapoor's tribute comprised of two masterpieces Academy Award winner James Ivory's: SHAKESPEARE WALLAH and HEAT AND DUST. The festival also screened AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PRINCESS, starring New York author and chef Madhur Jaffrey, as part of its Merchant-Ivory Retrospective. To honor Sridevi's memory, NYIFF showcased the actress' 2012 return to Bollywood in ENGLISH VINGLISH, shot primarily in New York City.

### Additional highlights at the festival included:

Discovering the Film and Television Market in India Panel Discussion, Shooting films in New York State Panel Discussion, The



Opening night movie, Nude



Closing night movie, Omerta



Centerpiece, Juze



Heat And Dust

Inclusion Rider's Role in Diversifying Hollywood Panel Discussion, Networking events and nightly parties, The NYIFF 2018 winners will be announced at the awards night ceremony on May 12



English Vinglish

Photos / Courtesy NYIFF

the awards ceremony on May 12, immediately following the closing night film.

(Mabel Pais writes on the Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Health and Wellness, and Spirituality)

### Best Film:

BALEKEMPA

JUZE

LIGHT IN THE ROOM

NUDE

TAKE OFF

### Best Director:

Atanu Ghosh (MAYURAKSHI)

Ere Gowda (BALEKEMPA)

Rahul Nair (LIGHT IN THE ROOM)

Chezian Ra (TO-LET)

Nishil Sheth (BHASMASUR)

### Best Screenplay:

CHUMBAK

CRD

HER, HIM, THE OTHER

THE HUNGRY

JUZE

### Best Actress:

Sushama Deshpande (AJJI)

Vinitha Koshy (LIGHT IN THE ROOM)

Kalyani Mulya (NUDE)

Parvathy (TAKE OFF)

Bindu Raxidi (PADDAYI)

### Best Child Actor:

Mittal Chouhan (BHASMASUR)

Kapil Garo (ISHU)

Chandra Kiran GK (SUMMER OF MIRACLES)

Ali Halji (NOBLEMEN)

Rushikesh Naik (JUZE)

### Best Short:

AL-WAR

HUMMINGBIRD

MAACHER JHOL (The Fish Curry)

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# SONAM KAPOOR MARRIES ANAND AHUJA IN TRADITIONAL SIKH WEDDING

**B**ollywood star Sonam Kapoor on May 8 tied the knot with longtime beau Anand Ahuja, a Delhi-based businessman, in a traditional Anand Karaj ceremony that was attended by family members and close friends from the Hindi film industry.

True to her image of a fashionista, Sonam looked radiant in a red and golden Anuradha Vakil lehenga choli. The floral attire matched the brides blush, while the heavy jewellery elevated her royal look. Ahuja opted for beige bandhgala by Raghavendra Rathore.

The couple got married in the Sikh ceremony at Sonams maternal aunts bungalow in Bandra, here. The wedding ceremony started around 12:30 pm and ended at around 1:20 pm.

Father Anil Kapoor, mother Sunita Kapoor, brother Harshvardhan, Arjun Kapoor, Sanjay Kapoor, Boney Kapoor along with daughters Janhvi and Khushi, Mohit Marwah among other family members attended the wedding ceremony.

From Bollywood, megastar Amitabh Bachchan, son Abhishek and daughter Shweta were among the first ones to arrive at the venue.

Other industry celebrities who attended the wedding were Karan Johar, Saif Ali Khan, who arrived with wife Kareena Kapoor and son Taimur, Karisma Kapoor, Rani Mukerji, Jacqueline Fernandez, Swara Bhasker, Javed Akhtar, designer Masaba Gupta, Ranveer Singh, Aamir Khan, wife Kiran Rao and elder son Junaid.

The wedding ceremony will be followed by lunch, and later in the evening the newly weds will host a grand reception at a five star hotel for other relatives and Sonams industry friends.

Sonam and Anand, who have been dating for the past two years, announced their wedding a week ago. The wedding was preceded by two-day long celebrations that included mehendi and sangeet functions.

Source: PTI



## Cannes 2018: Desi girl Kangana Ranaut is a retro vision



**K**angana Ranaut is truly a vision to behold at the Cannes Film Festival. The Queen actress made her debut at the film festival in a glamorous black embellished saree by Sabyasachi. Kangana has accentuated her look with a teenmaniya necklace, crafted out of rose-cut diamonds, Colombian emeralds and basra pearls, as stated by the designer. Kangana's pictures were shared by Sabyasachi and the posts give a detailed description about her debut appearance at the Cannes.

Speaking at the Indian Pavillion at the 71st edition of the festival, where she had a discussion with Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) chairman Prasoon Joshi on women in Indian films, Kangana said the times have changed and gender bias is not the norm anymore in the film industry.

Asked if she is an exception, Kangana said, "I am not an exception. With the modernisation and the way the world has changed...the difference between men and women have changed. There is a certain equality that has come about in the system. People now question if actor and actresses put in the same effort, why can't they be treated as equals?"

She also talked about regional cinema: "We have four regional films that are being screened here. It is very endearing that our regional films - Bengali, Malayalam, Punjabi, Assamese - are getting such a platform and will be showcased here. Someone made a film for the first time in Lakshwadeep and it is getting such a grand platform as Cannes! The fact that filmmakers are now getting such wide platforms is great."







## JORDIN SPARKS WALKS RED CARPET 3 DAYS AFTER GIVING BIRTH

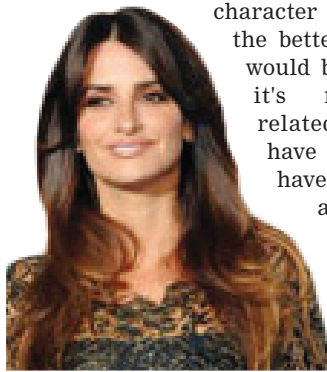
Just three days after giving birth to her first child, singer-actress Jordin Sparks hit the red carpet to promote her upcoming film 'Show Dogs'.

Sparks, who welcomed her son Dana Isaiah Thomas Jr on May 2, was spotted donning a floral Saloni dress, Schutz shoes and Melinda Maria jewellery at the movie's premiere.

At the premiere, Sparks, who is married to Dana Isaiah, described the birthing process as 'miraculously beautiful'.

"Dana caught him with my midwife, Simona, and when he handed him to me, I was absolutely overwhelmed with joy. He was and is everything we imagined," she said.

Source: ANI



# PENELOPE CRUZ, JAVIER GOT EQUAL PAYCHECKS FOR CANNES MOVIE

The entertainment industry has a long way to go when it comes to pay-disparity. However, that isn't the case with popular Hollywood couple Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem as the actress has revealed that the duo received equal paychecks for their new movie 'Everybody Knows.' According to a report, Cruz discussed her and Bardem's salary for the movie at its premiere at the 71st Cannes Film Festival on Wednesday.

When asked if the couple both received the equal paychecks for their latest movie, Cruz broke out a sly smile and replied: "Actually, yes."

The Oscar - winning actress then spoke about how she works with her real-life partner, who she first collaborated with in 1992 film 'Jamon Jamon'.

"We don't take the characters home at the end of the day. We have similar ways of work. The fact that we know each other and trust each other helps," Cruz said.

Cruz, 44, admitted that she had a different approach to roles when she was younger. "When I was in my 20s, I thought the more I would torture myself and the more I would stay in character for months, the better the result would be. I learned it's not really related to that. I have a life and I have a job. That allows me to jump from reality to fiction," she said.



## Selena Gomez has 'moved on' from Justin Bieber and is feeling 'strong'

Selena Gomez is proudly standing on her own two feet. After dealing with the fallout of yet another breakup from Justin Bieber, multiple sources tell E! News the singer is in a much better place and looking toward the future. We're told Gomez has "completely moved on" Bieber and is "not interested in getting back together with him anytime soon."

The insider explains, "She respects him as a person but has decided she is much happier doing her own thing. Selena rarely even talks about Justin anymore, and is fully open to dating."

A second source says Selena, 25, and Justin, 24, "aren't in contact." After things between the celeb pair began to fall apart in March, the "Sorry" performer began spending time with Instagram model Baskin Champion. Despite a whirlwind reconnection, it's safe to say Jelena is over for good.

"Selena is going in a different direction with her life," the source shares with E! News. "She's had a lot of self-reflection time and it's been good for her. She's hanging out with friends and taking it easy."

The "Wolves" songstress, who prior to Bieber dated The Weeknd for almost a year, is "learning to appreciate" the single life, adds the source. "You can never say never with her and Justin, but at the moment they aren't in contact and she's feeling very strong and content," our insider says.

Meanwhile, Selena's career only continues to pick up speed. After attending Monday night's 2018 Met Gala, the pop star is expected back in the recording studio as she completes her third studio album. The first source tells us, "Selena has been traveling constantly and is putting a lot of her effort into her new music and projects with Coach and Puma. She really wants to finish an album this year and is focused solely on making hits and keeping herself healthy."

Of course, Selena still experiences bouts of self doubt every now and then. In an Instagram video posted Wednesday, she alluded to disliking photos taken of her at the Met Gala. "Me when I saw my pictures from MET," SelGo captioned a video of herself sprinting through a parking garage still wearing her custom Coach gown and full glam.







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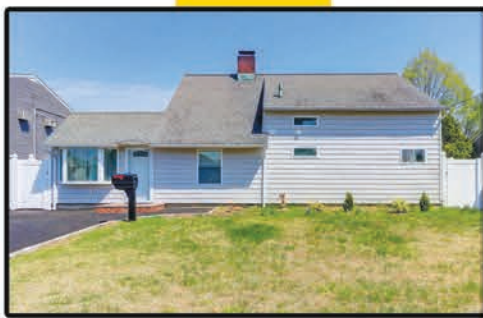
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## Google suspends all ads related to Irish abortion referendum

**LONDON (TIP):** Google says it is suspending all advertising connected to Ireland's abortion referendum as part of moves to protect "election integrity."

The internet giant says that from May 10 it will no longer display ads related to the May 25 vote on whether to repeal Ireland's constitutional ban on abortion.

Google says the move is part of its global efforts to protect election integrity. It applies to ads on Google and on YouTube, which it owns.

Google's statement Wednesday follows a decision by Facebook to ban foreign advertisements for the referendum, amid concerns about North American groups' influence.

The role of online ads in elections is under scrutiny after revelations that political consultancy Cambridge Analytica harvested Facebook users' data to micro-target political ads to select groups during the 2016 U.S. presidential race. (AP)

## Britain says world should hold Donald Trump to his word on finding new Iran solution

**LONDON (TIP):** British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said the world should hold U.S. President Donald Trump to his stated aim of finding a new solution to the Iranian nuclear threat.

Johnson, speaking to the British parliament, said it was now up to the United States to come forward with concrete proposals on Iran. (Reuters)

## UK foreign secretary Boris Johnson attacks Theresa May customs proposal as 'crazy'

**LONDON (TIP):** British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has attacked Prime Minister Theresa May's plan for a customs partnership with the European Union after the UK leaves the bloc -- the latest sign of dissent within her Cabinet.

Johnson told the Daily Mail newspaper that the partnership idea was "crazy" and would create a "whole new web of bureaucracy."

The comments come after May's Cabinet last week failed to agree on a preferred option for Britain's future customs relationship with EU. May's preferred option is a partnership under which the UK would collect import duties on behalf of the EU for goods arriving via British ports.

Johnson tells the newspaper that May's idea is "totally untried and would make it very, very difficult to do free trade deals." (AP)

## UK airports to add explosive detection dogs to screen cargo

**LONDON (TIP):** British officials say dogs trained to detect explosives are being deployed at airports to screen cargo for possible devices.

The Department of Transport said on Sunday that each dog has been trained for 12 months to be able to detect small traces of explosives. They will be based in airport cargo sheds to screen large volumes of freight as one additional layer of protection.

Aviation minister Elizabeth Sugg says the use of the dogs "will bolster our existing rigorous security methods."

Dogs are already deployed at UK airports, including London's sprawling Heathrow Airport, to aid police in identifying criminals and preventing drug transport and other illegal activities. (AP)

# Vladimir Putin, newly inaugurated, reviews Russia's 'invincible weapons' on Red Square

**MOSCOW (TIP):** Russia's Vladimir Putin watched advanced jets carrying a hypersonic missile he has touted as invincible scream over Red Square on Wednesday, days after the start of his fourth presidential term.

Part of an annual event marking the Soviet Union's World War Two victory over the Nazis, Putin looked on as thousands of troops marched past him and columns of tanks rumbled across the famous square in a show of military might reminiscent of those displayed during the Cold War.

Putin reviewed the parade from a tribune packed with Soviet war veterans, some of whom wore rows of campaign medals and clutched red roses. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in Moscow for talks on Syria, was also present, as was Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. Hollywood actor Steven Seagal, who was given a passport by Putin in 2016, was also a guest.

The authorities, backed by state media, use the event to boost patriotic feeling and show the world and potential buyers of military hardware how a multi-billion dollar modernisation programme is changing the face of the Russian military.

Putin, whose relations with the West are on a hostile trajectory, has said he does not want an arms race while warning potential enemies that his country has developed a new generation of invincible weapons to protect itself just in case.

"We remember the tragedies of the two world wars, about the lessons of history which do not allow us to become blind. The same old ugly traits are appearing along with new threats: egoism, intolerance, aggressive nationalism and claims to exceptionalism," Putin told the parade.

"We understand the full seriousness of those threats," added Putin, who complained about what he said were unacceptable attempts to rewrite history while saying Russia was open to talks on global security if they helped keep world peace.

Putin has sharply increased military spending over the 18 years he has dominated Russian politics, handed the Russian military significant policy-



making clout, and deployed Russian forces in Ukraine and Syria, stoking tensions with the West.

As commander-in-chief, he has also at times donned military uniform himself and been filmed at the controls of a strategic bomber and on the conning tower of a submarine in photo opportunities designed to boost his man of action image.

Weapons displayed on Red Square included Russia's Yars mobile intercontinental nuclear missile launcher, its Iskander-M ballistic missile launchers, and its advanced S-400 air defence missile system, which Moscow has deployed in Syria to protect its forces.

**'INVINCIBLE MISSILE':** The first public outing of the Kinjal (Dagger) hypersonic missile, carried by advanced MiG-31K interceptor jets, was one of several world premieres for Russian weapons. Putin disclosed the Kinjal's existence in March along with other missile systems he touted as unbeatable, describing how it could evade any enemy defences. Russian media have said it can hit targets up to 2,000 km (1,250 miles) distant with nuclear or conventional warheads and that the missiles have already been deployed in Russia's southern military district.

Russia's most advanced fifth generation Su-57 stealth fighter, which has undergone testing in Syria, also took part in the parade for the first time, as did an unmanned armoured reconnaissance and infantry support vehicle, the Uran-9.

Armed with a 30mm automatic cannon, a machine gun, anti-tank missiles and a rocket launcher, it looks like something out of a Hollywood science fiction film.

An unmanned de-mining vehicle, the Uran-6, was also put on show, as were Russia's latest military drones and an armoured vehicle designed to support tanks on the battlefield dubbed "The Terminator" by its maker.

An advanced Russian military snowmobile fitted with a machine gun, the Berkut, built to bolster Moscow's Arctic ambitions, also traversed the cobbled square. The Moscow parade was one of many which took place across Russia on Wednesday involving a total of 55,000 troops, 1,200 weapons systems and 150 war planes in 28 Russian cities.

Some politicians in former Soviet republics and satellite states regard the parade as crude sabre-rattling by a resurgent Russia they say poses a threat to Europe's security. Russia dismisses such allegations as nonsense. (Reuters)

## Sweden allows mosque to call for prayer in controversial move

**STOCKHOLM (TIP):** Swedish police today granted a mosque permission to hold a weekly call for prayer, triggering divisions among politicians and the public five months ahead of elections in a country which has taken in waves of asylum seekers in recent years.

The police permit, which is valid for a year, has caused concern among some politicians that it will exacerbate cultural tensions, while others maintained a neutral stance of the September 9 general election.

"Call to prayer will not strengthen integration in (the southern city of Vaxjo), but it will rather risk pulling the city further apart," city council Anna Tenje of the conservative Moderates told TT news

agency. But Sweden's Social Democrats Prime Minister Stefan Lofven said that ending segregation goes hand in hand with tackling unemployment and making sure schools and neighbourhoods have high standards. "The entire society in Sweden is built on having different religions," he told TT. According to a poll conducted by the social research company SIFO and published by the private broadcaster TV4 in March, 60 per cent of respondents said they wanted to ban the Islamic call to prayer from mosques in Sweden.

The police said in their statement that the mosque in Vaxjo will be allowed to hold the Islamic call to prayer, the Adhan, every Friday for three minutes and 45 seconds.

Leader of the Christian Democrats Ebba

Busch Thor, who contested the decision, said "people shouldn't have to hear it in their homes." The police said the volume of the mosque's speakers was not allowed to exceed a certain level so as not to risk disturbing households nearby.

They added the decision was based on the nation's public order laws and not on religion.

Vaxjo's mosque is the country's third to be allowed to hold a call to prayer, following one in a Stockholm suburb and another in the nation's southeast.

Avdi Islami, a spokesman for the Muslim community in Vaxjo, said thousands of Muslims visit the mosque every year and likened the prayer calls to ringing church bells. (AFP)



# Australian, 104, dies in assisted suicide in Switzerland

**LIESTAL (TIP):** A 104-year-old Australian biologist who drew international attention to his right-to-die case ended his life in Switzerland on May 10, an advocacy group said.

Exit International, the group that helped David Goodall carry out his wish, said the scientist was declared dead at 12:30 p.m. in Liestal, a town outside the city of Basel, where he had traveled to take advantage of Switzerland's assisted-suicide laws.

"My life has been rather poor for the last year or so. And I'm very happy to end it," Goodall said Thursday in the room where he died shortly after.

The British-born scientist said this week that he had been contemplating the idea of suicide for about 20 years, but only started thinking about it for himself after his quality of life deteriorated over the last year.

He cited a lack of mobility, doctor's restrictions and an Australian law prohibiting him from taking his own life among his complaints, but he was not ill.

Assisted suicide is legal in Switzerland, where the procedure is available for anyone who acknowledges in writing that they are taking their lives willingly — without being forced. But the practice is frowned upon by many doctors and some others who say it should be reserved for the terminally ill. Goodall and his supporters want the practice to be more accepted as a legitimate choice for elderly people in sound mind.

On Wednesday, Goodall told a crowded news conference that medically assisted suicide should be more widely available.

"At my age, and even at rather less than my age, one wants to be free to choose the



death and when the death is the appropriate time," he said.

Hundreds of people — some far more frail than Goodall, who used a wheelchair — travel to Switzerland every year to take their lives. The best-known group to help foreigners end their days in the Alpine country is Dignitas, but others include Life Circle in Basel, Goodall's choice.

Swiss law

Goodall took his life with an intravenous drip of pentobarbital, a chemical often used as an anesthetic but which is lethal in excessive doses. A doctor put a cannula in his arm, and Goodall turned a wheel to allow the solution to flow, Exit International said.

Philip Nitschke, director of Exit International, said that before activating the drip, Goodall had to answer "several questions so he knew who he was, where he was and what he was about to do."

"He answered those questions with great clarity, activated the process" while Beethoven's Ninth Symphony played in the background, he added.

His last words before losing consciousness were "this is taking an awfully long time," Nitschke said, but "he died shortly thereafter."

Exit International said Goodall had requested that his body be donated to medicine, or his ashes sprinkled locally.

"He wishes to have no funeral, no remembrance service or ceremony," the group said in a statement. "David has no belief in the afterlife."

The Swiss federal statistics office says the number of assisted suicides has been growing fast: Nine years ago, there were 297. By 2015, the most recent year tabulated, the figure had more than tripled to 965. Nearly 15 percent of the cases last year were people under 65 years old (AP)

## Spain takes tentative first step to legalising euthanasia

**MADRID (TIP):** Spain's lower house voted on May 8 in favour of examining a bill on legalising euthanasia, a first in the country even if there will likely be major opposition as it weaves its way through parliament.

Lawmakers voted 173 against 135 — and 32 abstentions — to examine the bill, which was originally drafted by Catalonia's regional assembly.

This is the first time that a bill aimed at legalising euthanasia makes it past this first hurdle after previous attempts failed, a parliament spokeswoman told AFP.

It seeks to modify part of article 143 of Spain's penal code, which currently bans anyone from causing or cooperating with the death of another person suffering from "a serious, terminal illness or one that causes serious, permanent ailments that are difficult to endure." The bill would make it legal for a person to cause or help cause the "reliable, peaceful, painless death" of another suffering from those problems if they "specifically, freely and unequivocally" ask for it.

Currently in Spain, people with incurable diseases only have the option to refuse treatment.

But according to an opinion poll conducted by research firm Metroscopia in March 2017, 84 per cent of Spaniards are in favour of allowing people with terminal illnesses to be helped to die "painlessly." Lawmakers from Spain's conservative ruling Popular Party and another from the regional party of Navarra voted against accepting the bill today.

Centre-right party Ciudadanos, meanwhile, abstained, while all the other groupings in parliament — most of them left-wing — voted in favour.

Now that it has passed the first hurdle, the bill will go through various stages in parliament — with different groups likely to present their amendments — before it gets to the final voting stage in the lower house. (PTI)

## Ex-head of Chinese insurance firm jailed for 18 years

**BEIJING (TIP):** Wu Xiaohui, the former chairman and CEO of China's Anbang Insurance Group, has been sentenced to 18 years in prison for fraud and embezzlement, a court said on May 10.

Wu was also denied his political rights for four years and 10.5 billion yuan (\$1 billion) worth of his assets were seized, Efe news reported citing the court.

All his illegal gains will be recovered.

The trial of one of China's most successful businessmen began in March and Wu pleaded guilty to a fraud involving more than 75.2 billion yuan.

Wu was under investigation from June 2017 and in February was removed from his post as head of Anbang, one of the most important insurance companies in China.

According to the prosecution, Wu used Anbang as a fund raising platform and a channel to transfer customer premiums to line his own pockets.

He owned and controlled more than 200 companies that were little known and which had increased their participation in Anbang with investments to have absolute control over the group.

In 2011, based on Wu's decision, the company launched a new investment product and forged documents to obtain approval from China's Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC).

The CIRC set a limit on sales of the product, based on Anbang's financial statement, but Wu ignored it and issued false financial reports to make people believe in the group's ability to pay and raised much more than allowed. Anbang is known for several high-profile international acquisitions, including the purchase in 2014 of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. The CIRC took control of Anbang a year ago because the company struggled to pay investors after a wave of global purchases. (IANS)

# Israel destroys Iranian infrastructure in Syria in largest operation since 1974

**JERUSALEM (TIP):** In the largest operation in Syria since the signing of disengagement agreement in 1974, Israel today said it has struck almost all of the Iranian infrastructure on Syrian soil during the overnight raids in retaliation to a barrage of rocket fire on its territory by Iran.

The Israel Defence Force (IDF) claimed that the overnight clash, the largest-ever direct clash between the Iranian and Israeli armies, was a setback to Iran's military capabilities by "many months".

Israel's Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said that his army struck "almost all of the Iranian infrastructure in Syria" overnight in response to a rocket barrage at its military outposts in the Golan Heights by Iran.

Asserting that Israel does not want an escalation, Lieberman said that Israel won't allow Iran to turn Syria into a "forward base" against his country and that, Israel has no desire to expand their military presence to create new proxies and fronts.

"If it rains on us, it will pour on them," he said in a stern warning to Iran.

"I hope we finished this chapter and everyone got the message," he said, adding

Iran was truly the only country today that represents extremism, not just ideologically but also in its willingness to sacrifice its citizens, sacrifice its future for this same extremist ideology.

He also confirmed that no rocket landed in the Israeli territory.

An army spokesman said that four of the 20 rockets fired on Israel were intercepted by the iron dome anti-missile system and 16 fell within Syrian territory.

The IDF "suffered no casualties", either on the ground or in the air, and that no rockets fired from Syria made any impact in Israeli territory, the spokesman said, adding that "all of our planes returned home safely".

It was the "largest such operation (by Israel) against Iranian targets," it added.

"All targets that we engaged were effectively destroyed, causing significant damage to the Iranians," the spokesperson said.

The Agreement on Disengagement was an agreement between Israel and Syria, signed in May 1974, which officially ended the Yom Kippur War and the subsequent attrition period on the Syrian front.

The Israeli military accused the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' Al Quds force and

its commander, Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, of launching the attack at the Israeli Golan Heights.

This is the first time that Israel has directly accused Iran of firing on its territory.

Defence sources here said that Israeli operation targeted weapons storage, logistics sites and intelligence centres used by elite Iranian forces in Syria.

Five Syrian air-defence systems were also destroyed after coming under heavy fire, they said, adding none of the Israeli warplanes were hit. Russia is reported to have been informed in advance of the Israeli attack. There was no immediate word on Iranian casualties but according to reports in the regional media, there were several casualties as a result of the Israeli strike and that explosions were heard near the Syrian capital, Damascus.

The rocket barrage was fired from Syria at Israel at around midnight.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported a little later that Israel has attacked targets of the Syrian military on the outskirts of Quneitra in the Golan Heights. Siren alerts were sounded soon around midnight in the north and centre of the Golan Heights in northern Israel. (PTI)



# HOW TO FIND LOVE AFTER A PAINFUL BREAK-UP

A break-up can leave you totally exhausted, both mentally and emotionally. Especially, if you have been with your partner for years and planned a future together. When life turns out to be far from what you expected; you will be emotionally drained and confused. Falling in love again becomes a distant dream because getting over your past becomes your biggest challenge.

Whether you're going the online route, or trying to meet someone through more traditional methods – blind dates, church or synagogue gatherings, taking a class or volunteering at something that's important to you (and where potential dates might also be hanging out) – here are some useful suggestions to guide your search.

## Be honest

This does not, of course, mean revealing all the gruesome details about your marriage, your life, or yourself on a first date. But try to share truths about yourself in a positive light in the beginning of any relationship.

## Be upbeat

This might be hard when you're depressed, anxious and feeling hopeless about getting your life back on track. But it's still worth the effort. A positive outlook, even for an evening, is more likely to mean that your date will enjoy him or herself – and you may be surprised to learn that so will you!

## Be yourself

Be upbeat even if you're feeling down. It's actually okay to share that you're not feeling quite up to par just yet, even on a first date. Or that you're nervous. Just don't dwell on it.

## Be adventurous

Try something you've never done before. It might be sky-diving, but even



something a little (or a lot) less risky can be adventurous – if you take yoga, maybe try a different class. Even small changes in a routine can be exciting and scary – and the evidence is that they can create changes in your brain's chemistry that will make you feel better and more open to other possibilities.

## Be careful

Try to make sure that you are still being honest and true to yourself, even while you're trying new things and new people. This can mean that you have to check in with yourself on a regular basis. What does your gut tell you about

this person? And even harder, can you ask yourself whether or not you're just going for someone who appears to be the opposite of your last partner? The search for an opposite is very common; but it frequently doesn't work because, unconsciously, you may have chosen someone who still has characteristics like your ex. Or you may have ignored other warning signs because you were so focused on the ones you know can be problematic. Or you may have forgotten some of the good, early parts of the relationship, which really do not need to be jettisoned along with everything that went bad.



## HABITS THAT ARE MAKING YOUR LIPS DARK

Everyone aspires to have pinkish, soft and lustrous lips. Whether you are a man or a woman, you should try to maintain the skin and take special care of your lips. Take proper care for maintaining the lips by following the natural remedies or treatments and at the same time learn about the reasons responsible for causing dark black lips.

### Not exfoliating your lips

With the passing time, our lips start to lose its moisture and start to get dull and dry. So, it becomes very important that you exfoliate your lips frequently to maintain pink pouty lips.

### Smoking

Another common habit that can lead to dark lips. Regular smoking transfers the tar and nicotine to your lips and causes discoloration. So, it is suggested that you should avoid smoking to get rid of dark lips.

### Lack of moisturization

Chipped and dry lips can also lead to discoloration of lips. So, it is important that you retain the moisture of your lips by applying a hydrating lip balm. If you are looking for an ideal lip balm, look for the ingredients like shea butter and cocoa butter.

### Lack of lip care

When it comes to skincare, we almost forget about our lips which later results in dry and chapped lips. So, just like your skincare regime, it is very important that you have proper lip care routine too. You can also massage your lips with almond oil before going to bed as it helps in regulating the blood flow and makes your lip luscious.

### Skipping sunblock

Just like your skin your lips too need protection from the harmful UV rays. So, it is suggested that you opt for a lip balm with SPF 30.

## FOOD CORNER

### EGG MASALA CURRY

#### Ingredients

4 Egg, boiled, 1 tsp Ginger-Garlic Paste, 1 tsp Red Chilli Powder, 1/2 tsp Turmeric Powder, 1/2 tsp Salt, 1 tsp Cumin Powder, 1 tsp Coriander Powder,

#### For Curry

1 tsp Cumin Seeds, 1 Green Chilli, 1 Onion, finely chopped, 1 tsp Ginger, chopped, 1 tsp Garlic, chopped, 1 tsp Turmeric Powder, 1 tsp Coriander Powder, 1 tsp Cumin Powder, 1 tsp Red Chilli Powder, 1 tsp Salt, 1/2 Cup Water, 2 Tomatoes, 1/2 Cup Water, 3 Tbsp Coriander Leaves,

#### For Tadka

1/8 tsp Hing, 1/4 tsp Methi Seeds, 1 tsp Mustard Seeds, 1 Kashmir Chilli, 8-10 Curry Leaves, 1 tsp Kashmiri Chilli Powder

#### Method

- Take boiled eggs in a bowl. Add ginger-garlic paste, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, salt, cumin powder and coriander powder. Mix the spices thoroughly.
- Take a pan of oil, put the eggs in the pan and saute. Take a pan and add cumin seeds, green chilli and chopped onion. Saute them till golden brown and then add ginger, garlic, turmeric powder, coriander powder, cumin powder, red chilli powder and salt.



- Mix them well. Add water and let it simmer.
- Now add tomatoes, mix well and add more water. Mix them thoroughly. Grind the mixture to get the perfect mix of spicy gravy. Put the eggs into the gravy and mix.
- Now add coriander leaves and mix. Bring to simmer.
- Put hing, methi seeds, mustard seeds, kashmiri chilli, curry leaves and kashmiri chilli powder in a pan. Saute well. Pour it over the curry along with coriander leaves and mix well.

### MAKHANA KHEER

#### Ingredients

Popped lotus seeds, 1/2 Cup Cashew nuts, 2 tsp Ghee, Rock salt, 1/2 tsp Cardamom, 3 Cups Milk, According to taste Sugar, Dry fruits, chopped.

#### Method

- Roast the seeds and some cashew nuts on a pan with a little ghee and season with rock salt.
- As soon as it cools, take 3/4th of the mixture and grind it in a blender with some cardamom.
- In a separate deep pan, bring to boil 2-3 cups of milk.
- Add sugar, followed by the ground makhana mixture, and stir well.
- Add the remaining roasted makhana and cashew.
- Continue stirring until it thickens.
- The kheer can be served either hot or cold, garnished with chopped dry fruits.





# WALNUTS MAY IMPROVE HEALTH BY IMPACTING GUT BACTERIA

Walnuts may improve heart health and reduce colorectal cancer risk by impacting the gut microbiome—the collection of trillions of bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract, a study has found.

Walnuts are just one in a line of foods that contain dietary fibre and have interested scientists for their impact on the microbiome and health, said researchers from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the US.

Dietary fibre acts as a food source for gut microbiota, helping the bacteria to do their jobs—breaking down complex foods, providing us nutrients, or helping us feel full, they said.

Diets rich in nuts, such as walnuts, have been shown to play a role in heart health and in reducing colorectal cancer, researchers said.

The study, published in *The Journal of Nutrition*, shows that consuming walnuts not only impacted the gut microbiota and microbial derived secondary bile acids, but also reduced LDL-cholesterol levels in the adults in the participants.

This in turn is beneficial for cardiovascular, metabolic, and gastrointestinal health, researchers said. "We found that when you consume walnuts it increases microbes that produce butyrate, a beneficial metabolite for colonic health. So the interaction of walnuts with the microbiome is helping to produce some of those health effects," said Hannah



Holscher, an assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"It is about getting to the 'black box' that is all the microbes in our GI tract to see how they are interfacing with the food we eat and having downstream health effects," said Holscher.

"Some of those health effects are hypothesized to be related to the metabolites bacteria produce," she said.

For the study, 18 healthy male and female adults consumed diets that either included no walnuts or 42 grammes—about a third cup or a palm-full of walnuts—for two, three-week periods.

Faecal and blood samples were

collected at the beginning and end of each period to assess secondary outcomes of the study, including effects of walnut consumption on faecal microbiota and bile acids and metabolic markers of health.

Walnut consumption resulted in higher relative abundance of three bacteria of interest: *Faecalibacterium*, *Roseburia*, and *Clostridium*.

The microbes that increased in relative abundance in this walnut study are from one of the *Clostridium* clusters of microbes, and there is increased interest in those because they have the ability to make butyrate," Holscher said.

Source: PTI



## MASS VACCINATION MAY NOT PREVENT EBOLA

LONDON (TIP): Mass vaccination programmes will not help prevent new Ebola virus outbreaks, a study has found.

Researchers from University of Kent in the UK analysed the prospects for various Ebola virus vaccines and found that, for the foreseeable future at least, Ebola virus outbreak control depends on surveillance and the isolation of cases.

The findings come as the World Health Organisation has announced a new Ebola virus outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The study revealed that very high proportions of potentially affected populations would need to be protected by vaccination to establish herd immunity, which prevents virus transmission within a population.

The study identified that, in the critical phases of many Ebola virus outbreaks, the average infected individual infects four or more other people, which enables the virus to spread rapidly.

At this level, 80 per cent of a population would need to be immunised to prevent outbreaks, even if a highly effective vaccine that protects 90 per cent of individuals after vaccination was available.

Such vaccination rates are currently unachievable. In a vaccination trial during the West African Ebola virus epidemic, only 49 per cent of individuals who had been in contact with Ebola virus patients could be vaccinated.

Thirty-four per cent of contacts refused vaccination although they had been exposed to the disease.

There are currently no clinical vaccine candidates available that protect against all four human-pathogenic Ebola viruses. It also remains unclear whether the available vaccine candidates provide the long-term protection that is required for the sort of prophylactic mass vaccination programme that could prevent Ebola, which becomes repeatedly introduced into the human population from animal reservoirs. A large vaccination programme would also be costly and impractical, the study points out.

Costs for current Ebola virus vaccine candidates are estimated to be in a range of USD 15-20 per dose, with some 462 million people living in the areas affected by Ebola virus outbreaks, many of them in very remote rural areas.

In the absence of a realistic prophylactic mass vaccination programme, the researchers conclude that clinical vaccine candidates will need to be focused on health care workers who are often involved in disease transmission, potentially in combination with the vaccination of patient contacts.

Source: PTI

# Sauna bathing may reduce risk of stroke

Frequent sauna bathing may significantly reduce the risk of stroke, according to a long-term study.

In the 15-year follow-up study published in the journal *Neurology*, people taking a sauna four to seven times a week were 61 per cent less likely to suffer a stroke than those taking a sauna once a week.

"The findings are very significant and highlight the multiple health benefits of taking frequent sauna baths," said Setor Kunutsor from the University of Bristol in the UK.

Stroke is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide, placing a heavy human and economic burden on societies.

The findings by researchers, including those from the Cambridge University, involved 1,628 men and women aged 53 to 74 years living in the eastern part of Finland.

Based on their frequency of taking traditional Finnish sauna baths (relative humidity 10-20 per cent), the study participants were divided into three groups: those taking a sauna once a week, those taking a sauna two to three times a week, and those taking a sauna four to seven times a week.

The more frequently saunas were taken, the lower was the risk of stroke, researchers said.

Compared to people taking one sauna session per week, the risk was decreased by 14 per cent among those with two to



three sessions and 61 per cent among those with four to seven sessions.

The association persisted even when taking into account conventional stroke risk factors, such as age, sex, diabetes, body mass index, blood lipids, alcohol consumption, physical activity and socio-economic status.

The strength of association was similar in men and women, researchers said.

The mechanisms driving the association of sauna bathing with

reduced stroke may include a reduction in blood pressure, stimulation of immune system, a positive impact on the autonomic nervous system, and an improved cardiovascular function, they said.

In a recent experimental study, the same group of scientists also showed that sauna bathing has acute effects on the stiffness of the arterial wall, hence influencing blood pressure and cardiac function parameters.

Source: PTI

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## SCIENTISTS TRAIN SPIDER TO 'JUMP ON DEMAND'

Scientists have successfully trained a spider to jump different distances and heights for the first time, unlocking the secrets of how some predatory species catch their prey while hunting.

The study by researchers at the University of Manchester in the UK is the most advanced of its kind to date and first to use three-dimensional (3D) CT scanning and high-speed, high-resolution cameras to record, monitor and analyse a spider's movement and behaviour.

The aim of the research, published in the journal *Nature Scientific Reports*, is to answer the question of why jumping spider anatomy and behaviour evolved the way it did.

This improved understanding of spiders will help imagine a new class of agile micro-robots that are currently unthinkable using today's engineering technologies, researchers said.

"The focus of the present work is on the extraordinary jumping capability of these spiders," said Mostafa Nabawy, lead author of the study.

"A jumping spider can leap up to six times its body length from a standing start. The best a human can achieve is about 1.5 body lengths," said Nabawy.

"The force on the legs at take-off can be up to five times the weight of the spider - this is amazing and if we can understand these biomechanics we can apply them to other areas of research," he said. The researchers trained the spider, which they nicknamed Kim, to jump different heights and distances on a manmade platform in a laboratory environment. Kim belongs to a species of jumping arachnid known as *Phidippus regius*, or 'Regal Jumping Spider'.

Source: PTI

## NASA launches spacecraft to study Mars quakes

NASA on Saturday blasted off its latest Mars lander, InSight, designed to perch on the surface and listen for "Marsquakes" ahead of eventual human missions to explore the Red Planet.

"Three, two, one, liftoff!" said a NASA commentator as the spacecraft launched on a dark, foggy morning atop an Atlas V rocket at 4.05 am Pacific time (1635 IST) from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, marking NASA's first interplanetary launch from the US west coast.

The \$993 million project aims to expand human knowledge of interior conditions on Mars, inform efforts to send human explorers there, and reveal how rocky planets like the Earth formed billions of years ago.

If all goes as planned, the lander should settle on the Red Planet on November 26.

Its name, InSight, is short for Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport.

NASA chief scientist Jim Green said experts already know that Mars has quakes, avalanches and meteor strikes.

"But how quake-prone is Mars? That is fundamental information that we need to know as humans that explore Mars," Green said.

The key instrument on board is a seismometer, called the Seismic Experiment for Interior Structure, made by the French Space Agency.

Source: AFP



# NEW MESSAGE BUG CRASHES WHATSAPP, ANDROID DEVICES

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): A bug is being forwarded via messages, which when tapped, could send not just the WhatsApp Android app crashing but possibly even the entire Android device as well, the media reported.

"As with any message bomb, it involves sending and receiving a specially crafted message with hidden symbols in between spaces.

Tapping on a portion of the text will basically make the app 'expand' the hidden symbols, potentially overloading the app and even the OS," SlashGear reported on Sunday.

Such messages or "message bombs" are not new and not limited to Android. Even iMessage is not immune to bugs that could send the app crashing.

"There seem to be two variants of this WhatsApp message being forwarded. One involves an ominous black dot that comes with a warning on what will happen if you tap on it, which most curious cats will do anyway," the report added. Another "message bomb" which is causing the messaging platform to crash is more "nefarious, looks too



innocent" and does not come with a warning. The message includes special characters that do not display visibly but are used to change text behaviour.

A superfluous amount of these

invisible symbols causes WhatsApp to freeze.

Facebook-owned WhatsApp has not commented on the potentially disruptive bug so far.

Source: IANS

## Artificial intelligence system can predict school violence

WASHINGTON (TIP): Scientists have developed an artificial intelligence system that can help predict which students are at higher risk of perpetrating school violence.

The researchers found that machine learning—the science of getting computers to learn over time without human intervention—is as accurate as a team of child and adolescent psychiatrists, including a forensic psychiatrist, in determining risk for school violence.

"Previous violent behaviour, impulsivity, school problems and negative attitudes were correlated with risk to others," said Drew Barzman, a child forensic psychiatrist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in the US. "Our risk assessments were focused on predicting any type of physical aggression at school. We did not gather outcome data to assess whether machine learning could actually help prevent school violence. That is our next goal," said Barzman, lead author of the study published in the journal *Psychiatric Quarterly*.

Researchers evaluated 103 teenage students in 74 traditional schools throughout the US who had a major or minor behavioural change or aggression toward themselves or others.

The students were recruited from psychiatry outpatient clinics, inpatient units and emergency departments.

The team performed school risk evaluations with participants. Audio recordings from the evaluations were transcribed and manually annotated. The students, as it turned out, were relatively equally divided between moderate- to



high-risk, and low-risk, according to two scales that the team developed and validated in previous research.

There were significant differences in total scores between the high-risk and low-risk groups. The machine learning algorithm that the researchers developed achieved an accuracy rate of 91.02 per cent, considered excellent, when using interview content to predict risk of school violence.

The rate increased to 91.45 per cent when demographic and socioeconomic data were added.

"The machine learning algorithm, based only on the participant's interview, was almost as accurate in assessing risk levels as a full assessment by our research team, including gathering information from parents and the school, a review of records when available, and scoring on the two scales we developed," said Yizhao Ni, a computational scientist at Cincinnati.

"Our ultimate goal, should research support it, is to spread the use of the machine learning technology to schools in the future to augment structures, professional judgment to more efficiently and effectively prevent school violence," said Barzman.

Source: PTI

## New tech purifies water using sunlight

Scientists have developed a new technology that uses the sunlight to purify water with near-perfect efficiency.

The idea of using energy from the sun to evaporate and purify water was reportedly described by Greek philosopher Aristotle over 2,000 years ago.

By draping black, carbon-dipped paper in a triangular shape and using it to both absorb and vaporise water, researchers have developed a method for using sunlight to generate clean water with near-perfect efficiency.

"Our technique is able to produce drinking water at a faster pace than is theoretically calculated under natural sunlight," said Qiaoqiang Gan, an associate professor at the University at Buffalo in the US.

"Usually, when solar energy is used to evaporate water, some of the energy is wasted as heat is lost to the surrounding environment. This makes the process less than 100 per cent efficient. Our system has a way of drawing heat in from the surrounding environment, allowing us to achieve near-perfect efficiency," said Gan.

The low-cost technology, described in the journal *Advanced Science*, could provide drinking water in regions where resources are scarce, or where natural disasters have struck.

Researchers have launched a startup, Sunny Clean Water, to bring the invention to people who need it. The company is integrating the new evaporation system into a prototype of a solar still, a sun-powered water purifier. Solar stills have been around for a long time. These devices use the sun's heat to evaporate water, leaving salt, bacteria and dirt behind. Then, the water vapour cools and returns to a liquid state, at which point it's collected in a clean container.

Source: PTI



# WALMART TO OPEN 50 NEW STORES IN INDIA IN 4-5 YRS

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A day after announcing US\$ 16 billion investment in India's largest online retailer Flipkart, Walmart Inc on May 10 said it will continue to grow its wholesale cash-and-carry business, adding 50 new stores in the next four-five years.

"We currently have 21 stores and plan to open 50 stores in four to five years. Plans are on track," Walmart India President and CEO Krish Iyer said at a select media roundtable called to explain the Flipkart deal.

Walmart Chief Executive Doug McMillon said Flipkart, in which the US retailer is acquiring 77 per cent stake, would continue to operate as a separate board-managed company with co-founder Binny Bansal as the CEO.

Flipkart gives Walmart an online presence. So far it had been handicapped by India's retail policy that does not allow overseas companies to sell directly to consumers (except in wholesale cash-and-carry segment).

Companies like Flipkart and Amazon operate as e-commerce marketplaces -- a segment where 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed.

"As we speak, we have a pipeline of 20 stores and we expect to open five stores in the current year and then pick up pace and eventually start opening 12-15 stores a year," Iyer said.

For the cash-and-carry business,



Walmart currently operates in nine states and 19 cities and the future expansion is focused on more or less the same geographies.

"We are not spreading thin. We are continuing in same geographies but primarily focus is on Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana," he said.

At its 21 Best Price wholesale stores, Walmart sells everything from fast-moving consumer goods to furniture to other retailers and institutions. It could potentially use these Best Price stores as pickup and delivery points to service online sales made on Flipkart.

Analysts believe that Walmart's investment in Flipkart, whose 34 per cent market share in India's online sales is ahead of rival Amazon's 27 per cent, will boost the Indian e-commerce company's logistical operations and help it move into new areas such as online groceries.

Walmart is buying 77 per cent of Flipkart from existing shareholders, including Japan's SoftBank, for US\$ 14 billion and investing US\$ 2bn of fresh equity. Walmart India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Walmart Stores Inc and offers close to 5,000 items through its cash-and-carry wholesale format.

Source: PTI

## SEBI splits post of CMD for listed firms



**NEW DELHI (TIP):** In sweeping changes to the way the listed companies constitute their Boards, markets regulator SEBI has asked them to split the post of chairman and managing director and have at least six independent directors, including a woman.

The changes need to be put in place in phases, SEBI said, while setting a deadline of April 1, 2019 regarding the independent directors. The companies will have more time to split the CMD post, for which the deadline is April 1, 2020.

The move comes after SEBI's Board in March accepted 40 of the 80 recommendations of the Uday Kotak panel on corporate governance. The panel had submitted its report to SEBI in October last year.

Among the new rules, SEBI has enhanced disclosure of related-party transactions and made mandatory secretarial audits for listed entities and their material subsidiaries.

Further, it has directed listed companies to have at least six directors and at least one of them needs to be a woman. Also, it asked the top 100 listed companies to webcast annual general meetings.

These regulations will come into effect in two phases. Most of the changes will be effective April 1, 2019, and April 1, 2020, the SEBI said in a notification.

Under the new norms, top 500 listed entities will have to ensure that the chairperson is a non-executive director from April 1, 2020. It will eventually lead to a split in the post of chairman and managing director.

Source: PTI

# Oil prices jump after US walks away from Iran nuclear deal

**O**il prices rose more than 2% on May 9, with Brent hitting a 3-1/2-year high, after US President Donald Trump abandoned a nuclear deal with Iran, likely curbing the OPEC member's crude exports in an already tight market.

Trump on May 8 pulled the United States out of an international nuclear deal with Iran that was agreed in late 2015, raising the risk of conflict in the Middle East and casting uncertainty over global oil supplies.

Brent crude oil futures rose to a session high of \$76.75 per barrel, their highest since November 2014. They were still at \$76.73 per barrel at 0344 GMT, up \$1.88, or 2.5%, from their last close.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up \$1.61 per barrel, or 2.3%, at \$70.67 a barrel, close to highs also last seen in late 2014.

In China, the biggest single buyer of Iranian oil, Shanghai crude futures hit their highest in dollar terms since they were launched in late May, at around \$73.25 per barrel.

"The big event of the night was President Trump's cancelling of the nuclear deal made with Iran back in 2015. Sanctions will therefore (likely) be re-imposed on Iran, which will ultimately affect Iran's oil exports," said William O'Loughlin, investment analyst at Australia's Rivkin Securities.

Iran re-emerged as a major oil exporter in 2016 after international



sanctions against it were lifted in return for curbs on Iran's nuclear programme, with its April exports standing above 2.6 million barrels per day (bpd).

This makes Iran the third biggest exporter of crude within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), behind Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Walking away from the deal means that the United States will likely re-impose sanctions against Iran after 180 days, unless some other agreement is reached before then.

ANZ bank said Trump's decision "puts into place a scenario that could see the crude oil market tighten significantly in H2 2018 and into next year."

### Exports to fall

Iran's exports of oil to Asia and Europe will almost certainly decline later this year and into 2019 as some nations seek alternatives in order to avoid trouble with Washington and as sanctions start to bite.

Despite this, it is not yet clear how strongly global oil markets will be affected. The United States buys no Iranian oil, while the other signatories of the agreement, Russia, Britain, France and Germany, are opposed to ending the agreement, and may continue to buy Iranian crude. Asia, by far the biggest importer of oil from Iran, will likely continue to take in some supplies as well, as it did during the previous round of sanctions.

Source: Reuters

## MARUTI RECALLS 52,686 UNITS OF SWIFT, BALENO



**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL) will undertake a 'service campaign' for new Swift and Baleno models to inspect a possible fault in the brake vacuum hose.

The company said on Tuesday 52,686 customers of new Swift and Baleno models, whose vehicles were manufactured between December 1, 2017 and March 16, 2018, will be asked to come in for the service campaign.

Starting May 14, owners of the vehicles included in this service campaign will be contacted by dealers for inspection and replacement of the faulty part. The inspection and replacement will be done free of cost.

A total of 44,982 units of new Swift, which was launched in February this year, and 7,704 units of Baleno will be covered under the service campaign.

Brake vacuum hose is a rubber pipe that creates and releases vacuum while applying brake but it has no impact on braking and braking distance.

Service campaigns are undertaken globally by automobile companies to rectify faults that may potentially cause inconvenience to customers.

Both the models are built on the same platform and share a common architecture. The Delhi-based company has not termed the exercise as a recall but 'a service campaign to address a potential inconvenience to the customer'.





### Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



**Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at [info@bejandaruwalla.com](mailto:info@bejandaruwalla.com) and on phone 011-91-8141234275 [www.bejandaruwalla.com](http://www.bejandaruwalla.com)**

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE MAY 14 - MAY 20, 2018

### Aries:

Ganesha says you rode the crest of achievements and glory and now your attention shifts to the needs of the family. Children will bring happiness and parents, in-laws, extended family, siblings call for your time. You also retreat from the cares of the world into your private shell. It could be a farm house, country home or even a quiet corner of seclusion. But you need to get away and be by yourself. You need to think things over as they have all been moving as fast as a Hollywood thriller.

### Taurus:

You make big purchases and fill your office and home with works of art. You feel like doing up your place tastefully and that costs money which you don't mind spending. You have new perspectives to life and are faced with a string of possibilities. You have many options and worry which to choose from; this is, of course, a good problem to have. Exert caution against overindulgence and try to maintain a sense of proportion, and balance.

### Gemini:

You need to make strong decisions and steer the boat in the right direction. You are energized and enthused to steer full steam direction. You achieve a lot and are single-minded and focused. The results are spectacular. You win applause and grow in several ways. There will also be happy times with friends and family. You should, once again, watch your temperament closely. Try not to slip into your dark moods.

### Cancer:

There is substantial growth in the last period. You have reached a point in your life and in your career where what you say is of consequence and you are listened to with care. Your innovative schemes and ideas win many admirers and you also make money. There are meetings, collaborations and all types of expenses too. You spend time with the family and there may be minor hospital expenses. But, once again, luck is on your side and all is well that ends well.

### Leo:

This is a formidable phase in which you push ahead hard and true. You are all fired up to make inroads and are greeted with success in all your activities. You spend on luxuries like there was no tomorrow; home and wardrobe renovation take a lot of your time. You also make sensible investments and may buy property. There is money to be made on the markets too. It will be in your interest if you can guard against overindulgence in this period.

### Virgo:

The bull - run in your life continues. There are new associations and, possibly, steaming sex. It may not last but will be well worth it while it does. You spend large sums on the object of your affections and, for a while at least, lose all balance and sense of direction. You throw caution to the winds and immerse yourself in your pet indulgence. Money and emotions remain in sharp focus this period and you also move up the ladder of success and fame.

### Libra:

There are many possibilities now, but it also depends on how you tweak them. This period is full of hope and promise. There may be an end to your struggles and mental confusion or they will just increase and blow up in your face. It depends on you in many and be healthy and more productive or get into needless emotional and psychic dilemmas and drown in their turbid waters.

### Scorpio:

Luckily, you are brought back to the real world just in time. Several domestic and work pressures mount and you are pressed to solve them and sort out your affairs. You will have to deal with finance, settlements and legal matters. You have the necessary negotiating skills, but all this is a waste of time and a detour from what you really want to do which is to ideate. There are expenses and pressures of all types and you are pushed to find answers.

### Sagittarius:

You continue on the practical plank and settle down to working hard. There are a lot of finer details that need your attention both at home and at work and there is no time for fanciful thinking. There are appraisals at work and several key decisions to be taken if self-employed. This is a valuable time and you can't squander it. Monies will have to be looked into, children's schooling, parents' and spouse's medical issues and several such matters hog your time and attention.

### Capricorn:

You will be relating better to people and will be making several long-term plans. There are indications of travel, and conferences, gathering and conventions to attend. All this will go a long way in bolstering your career. You meet up with associates and party. There is the danger of spiraling expenses and some ill-health too. You may get into arguments, altercations and unnecessary disagreements and could lose your temper and say things you would be better off not saying.

### Aquarius:

In many ways, this can be a beautiful period. There will be better health, better prospects and better income, and you will cool off and not enter unnecessary argumentation. There is a lot of entertainment on your plate including a dash of romance. You are in love with love and so any person or thing that suits the mood will become the object of your affections. You will pass through moments of heightened emotions and this can be very beautiful if you dare to share it with someone close.

### Pisces:

You decide to take the family out and have some truly wonderful moments. If intellectually inclined, you do exceptionally well. There will be several visitors and some even from overseas. So, a lot of your time will be spent socializing and travelling to tourist spots. Creative pursuits will be highlighted. It is a happy period with no particular accomplishment or achievement but nothing, also, to complain about.



**S**heshnag (the serpent god) comprises an important part of Hindu mythology. As the reclining couch and the roofing canopy of the god Vishnu, it has been a god venerated by all and worshipped by many for centuries.

It is considered to be the king of the serpent race and the ruler of the infernal regions called PATAL. God Vishnu sleeps over the bed of its coils during intervals of creation. SheshNag is also represented as one supporting the world on its hood. The Nags have three Kings, VAASUKI, TAKSHAK and SHESH. Shesh is said to represent the 'remainder' when the universe is destroyed and the power of creation (Lord Vishnu) rests on its coils.

The Nags are dwelling in an underworld, called NAG LOKA, which is an immense domain crowded with palaces, houses, towers and pleasure gardens. According to Varaha Purana, three of the lower worlds, PATAL, ATAL and SUTAL belong to the Nags. Their favorite places of visitations are the banks of river, IKSHUMATI, the NAIMISH forest on the shores of the GOMATI, the northern banks of the GANGA and the NISHAD land. They also dwell under the sea. These nags are not always the enemy of man and they even inter marry with them. Arjun of Mahabharata married a Nag girl named Uloopi.

#### Sheshnag as Ananta, the Timeless

Shesh Nag is the serpent with a thousand heads and is also called 'ANANTA', the timeless, because it does not die with destruction of the universe. All serpents are of divine extraction, because they are the children of Kadru, who herself is the descendant of Kashyap. The main city of Nags is Bhogvati (the city of pleasures), where Shesh appears like the White Mountain adorned with gems. The later Purana identify Shesh even with Krishna as Vishnu. Shesh is said to be the soul of Krishna's brother Balrama. Thus Shesh emerged from the body of dying Balrama and entered the earth, where he received a warm welcome by all other serpents.

#### Sheshnag's Avatar as Lakshman

In the Treta Yuga, Vishnu decided to descend on earth as Lord Rama, the seventh avatar of Lord Vishnu.

Lakshman—the younger brother. They were virtually inseparable. Lakshman was the younger brother and therefore had to obey every command his elder brother, Lord Rama, gave. Lakshman carried out the task beautifully and is commended for his staunch devotion to Lord Rama.

In his avatar as Lakshman, Sheshnag rendered unflinching service to God and received profuse grace. He exemplified the attitude of an ideal brother and self-sacrifice. When Lakshman was lying unconscious after being hit by the Brahmastra in the battlefield, Lord Rama said that he could get anything in this world but not a brother like Lakshman. Such was the love and devotion between the two.

Lakshman abandons life because Sage Durvasa appears at Rama's doorstep and seeing Lakshman guarding the door, demands an audience with Rama. At the time, Rama was having a private conversation with Yama. Before the conversation began, Yama gave Rama strict instructions that their dialogue was to remain confidential, and anyone who entered the room was to be relieved of their life. Rama agreed and entrusted Lakshman with the duty of guarding his door. When Durvasa made his demand, Lakshman politely refused. The sage grew angry and threatened to curse all of Ayodhya if Lakshman did not immediately inform Rama of his arrival. Lakshman, in a dilemma, decided it would be better that he alone die to save all of Ayodhya from falling under Durvasa's curse and so interrupted Rama's meeting to inform him of the sage's arrival.



Rama quickly concluded his meeting with Yama and received the sage with due courtesy. Lord Rama was Maryada Purushottam and stood by his words. In order to fulfill his brother's promise, Lakshman went to the banks of the river Sarayu resolved on giving up the world through penance. And reaches Vaikunthah before Lord Vishnu waiting for him.

#### Sheshnag's Avatar as Balarama

Balrama was the son of Vasudeva and Devaki. He was the elder brother of Lord Krishna. He is said to be the incarnation of "Sheshnag" (Serpent God on whom Lord Vishnu rests). His weapon was a plough. He is also called 'Haldhar'. He is a protector from desires, the divinity of strength or the strength of the divine, symbolizing duty, honesty and simplicity.

In the Treta age (there are four ages according to Hinduism- Krita (Sat) Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapar Yuga and Kaliyuga) Balarama's eternal incarnation was as Lakshman.

When Devaki was pregnant with the seventh child, Lord Vishnu called upon Yogmaya (divine illusion) and said, "Devaki's seventh eternal embryo should be installed in Rohini's (another wife of Vasudeva) body." Yogmaya transferred the embryo to Rohini's womb from Devaki's womb. This was done to prevent Kans from killing him at his birth. Kans was destined to be killed by Devaki's

eight son, and not to take any chances he was killing all the sons born to Devaki at birth.

Rohini got pregnant and after nine months, eternal incarnation in the form of Balrama was born. Kans was informed that Devaki's seventh child was dead. Balrama was growing up at Nandbaba's house. After one year Krishna was born. Both of them were beautiful and attractive. Sage Garg had said at the time of naming ceremony that this child will have infinite strength (BAL). That is why he is called Balarama. Because he was drawn

from Devaki's to Rohini's womb, He became known as Lord Sankarsana (ploughing) and because of His strength, He is known as Lord Balrama. He was so powerful that he, single handedly, at a very tender age, killed the great demon, Asura Dhenuka, who was in the form of an ass.

Just before Rukmani's marriage, Revati, daughter of King Raivat of Aanart region was married to Balrama. For lifetime, Balramaji was always with Krishna and protected him. He was elder to Krishna so he could not order him but whenever Krishna needed him; he never hesitated to give his service to him.

He had contributed towards killing the demons and giants. Balrama had gone with Krishna in the Dhanush Yagna organized by Kans. He supported Krishna in killing Kubal, the elephant. While wrestling, Balrama threw Mushtik (trusted lieutenant of Kans) so badly that he was killed on the spot.

Jarasandh used to attack Mathura on and off. Balrama, along with the army of the Yadavas used to fight with Jarasandh and send him back every time. When Kalyavan came to attack, even Jarasandh came with him. Balrama caught hold of Jarasandh with his strong hands. Krishna asked Balrama to leave him saying that there were many demons and if Jarasandh is left alive then he will make an army of the demons. When Jarasandh will come once more with the demon's army, many more demons can be killed. So Balrama relieved him. Jarasandh had twenty-three armies with weapons. Slowly and gradually, Balrama defeated them all. When Kalyavan had encircled them – then Krishna ran in front of them and Balrama confronted his army. Krishna got Kalyavan burnt and Balrama defeated his army.

Balrama trained both Bhima and Duryodhana in club-fighting. Eventually, his students faced one another in the final combat of the Kurukshetra war. Because of this, Balrama chose to remain neutral during the conflict. Eventually when Bhima (of greater strength) defeated Duryodhana (of greater skill) by dealing a blow below the navel with his mace (a move against the rules of mace combat), Balrama threatened to kill Bhima. This was only prevented when Krishna reminded Balrama of Bhima's vow to kill Duryodhana by crushing the very thigh he exposed to his wife Draupadi.

Today also there are many temples of 'Dauji' (elder brother) where he is worshipped. It is a common belief, he bestows materialistic richness.

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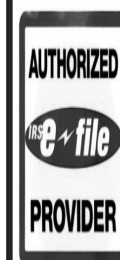
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contd from Page 1

## Trump scraps the Iran nuclear...

known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA. France, Germany, and the UK regret the U.S. decision to leave the JCPOA. The nuclear non-proliferation regime is at stake.

- **Emmanuel Macron (@EmmanuelMacron) May 8, 2018**  
He had described the agreement, which was negotiated by then US secretary of state John Kerry, as a bad deal.

I am deeply concerned by today's announcement that the US will be withdrawing from the JCPOA & will begin reinstating US sanctions, says @antonioguterres. Full text here: <https://t.co/LqC2WFJfAC>

- **UN Spokesperson (@UN\_Spokesperson) May 8, 2018**  
The Iran nuclear deal was reached in Vienna in July 2015 between Iran and the P5 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council) plus Germany and the European Union.

Trump's decision would have global ramifications, straining Iranian economy and heightening tensions in the Middle East.

**IRAN WILL REMAIN IN N-DEAL, SAYS ROUHANI:** Meanwhile, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday, May 8, that Iran would remain committed to a multinational nuclear deal despite US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the 2015 agreement designed to deny Tehran the ability to build nuclear weapons.

"If we achieve the deal's goals in cooperation with other members of the deal, it will remain in place... By exiting the deal, America has officially undermined its commitment to an international treaty," Rouhani said in a televised speech.

"I have ordered the foreign ministry to negotiate with the European countries, China and Russia in coming weeks. If at the end of this short period we conclude that we can fully benefit from the JCPOA with the cooperation of all countries, the deal would remain," he added.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is the full name for the nuclear deal, struck in 2015 between Iran, the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council - the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France - and Germany.

Rouhani added that Iran was ready to resume its nuclear activities after consultations with the other world powers which are part of the agreement.

Trump's announcement was hailed by Washington's principal allies in the Middle East, Israel and Saudi Arabia, both sworn foes of Iran.

Under the deal, Iran curbed its nuclear activities in return for the lifting of most sanctions imposed on the country.

Trump said he would reimpose economic sanctions on Tehran immediately. His decision puts pressure on his European allies, who are key backers of the deal and reluctant to join the United States in reimposing sanctions on Iran.

**BANKING TURMOIL:** Some Iranians had been cashing in their savings even before Trump's announcement he would pull out from the international deal with Iran, straining a banking system weighed down by bad loans and years of isolation.

An official with Iran's biggest state-owned Melli Bank told Reuters savings had declined by an unspecified amount, although he said this was a temporary phenomenon and that they would recover once the uncertainty over Trump's decision passed. "When there is political uncertainty, its psychological impact on people causes a drop in savings. But it will pass after Trump's deadline," the official said before the announcement, declining to be named. A senior Iranian central bank official said conditions within the banking system had deteriorated in the past year, and "we have still not passed the danger zone" but added that the central bank had "all the measures ready to prevent any crisis".

**EU WILL STAND BY IRAN:** Europe will stand by the international nuclear accord with Iran, EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini said in a live press statement in Rome on Tuesday. "The EU is determined to preserve it," she said. "We expect the rest of the international community to continue to preserve it, for the sake of collective security." "The nuclear accord belongs to the whole of the international community," Mogherini added. "To the Iranian people I say: do not let anyone dismantle this deal, one of the greatest achievements of the international community." "I am particularly worried about tonight's announcement of further sanctions," she said, adding that the deal with Iran "is the culmination of 12 years of diplomacy."

**MOST AMERICANS REJECT MOVE:** Less than one in three Americans agrees with President Donald Trump's decision to pull the US out of an agreement to limit Iran's nuclear program, according to a Reuters/Ipsos national opinion poll released on Tuesday, May 8.

The poll, conducted on May 4-8, ahead of the President's announcement to end the deal, found that 29 per cent of adults wanted to end the deal with Iran and five other world powers to ease sanctions and limit Iran's nuclear program. Another 42 per cent said the US should remain in the deal, and the remaining 28 per cent said they "don't know". Even among those who are

registered as Republicans, less than half - 44 per cent - advocated ending the US involvement in the deal. Another 28 per cent wanted to remain, and the remaining 28 percent said they did not know. - Agencies

**'US UNDERMINED COMMITMENT TO TREATY':**

If we achieve the deal's goals in cooperation with other members of the deal, it will remain in place... By exiting the deal, America has officially undermined its commitment to an international treaty. Hassan Rouhani, Iranian President

**'WILL WORK COLLECTIVELY':** We will work collectively on a broader framework, covering (Iran's) nuclear activity, the post-2025 period, ballistic activity, and stability in the Middle-East, notably Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Emmanuel Macron, French President

**'IT'S A HISTORIC MOVE':** Israel thinks that Trump made a historic move, and this is why Israel thanks him for his commitment to confront the terrorist regime in Tehran, and his commitment to ensure that Iran never gets nuclear weapons. Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister

**'DECISION MISGUIDED':** Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the deal is misguided. I believe that the decision to put the JCPOA at risk without any Iranian violation of the deal is a serious mistake. Barack Obama, former US President. (Source: PTI and agencies)

## Israel attacks Iranian targets in...

, was a setback to Iran's military capabilities by "many months".

Israel's Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman said that his army struck "almost all of the Iranian infrastructure in Syria" overnight in response to a rocket barrage at its military outposts in the Golan Heights by Iran. Asserting that Israel does not want an escalation, Lieberman said that Israel won't allow Iran to turn Syria into a "forward base" against his country and that, Israel has no desire to expand their military presence to create new proxies and fronts. "If it rains on us, it will pour on them," he said in a stern warning to Iran.

"I hope we finished this chapter and everyone got the message," he said, adding Iran was truly the only country today that represents extremism, not just ideologically but also in its willingness to sacrifice its citizens, sacrifice its future for this same extremist ideology.

He also confirmed that no rocket landed in the Israeli territory. (Source: PTI)

## Pakistan's former Prime Minister...

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in a press release said its Chairman Justice (retd) Javed Iqbal took notice of reports making rounds on news channels claiming that Sharif allegedly laundered USD 4.9 billion to India, the Express Tribune reported. According to the media report, this incident is mentioned in the World Bank's Migration and Remittance Book 2016, the release said. However, details of the media report in question have not been mentioned in the brief statement issued in Urdu, Geo TV reported. The statement claims that the amount was laundered to the Indian Finance Ministry after which Indian foreign exchange reserves witnessed an increase and Pakistan suffered as a result. Sharif is facing three corruption cases at the accountability court following the Supreme Court's verdict in the Panama Papers case. An NAB inquiry is also under way against him for alleged illegal expansion of a road leading to his estate in Lahore's Jati Umra locality.

Once formulated, this will be the fifth case against the ousted premier by the NAB. Earlier today, the accountability court sought more time from the top court to end the trial on references filed by the NAB against members of the Sharif family. Accountability court judge Muhammad Bashir, who presides over the hearings, has written a letter to the top court requesting for a second extension in the trial. Earlier in March, the Supreme Court had granted a two-month extension to the accountability court to wrap the proceedings. However, as the two-month deadline expires, the case is nowhere near its end, with the Al-Azizia Steel Mills and Flagship Investments still untouched, the country's top anti-graft body is running out of time. The Supreme Court of Pakistan had disqualified Sharif last year, forcing the three-time prime minister to resign. Sharif has dismissed the corruption charges as politically motivated.

The political future of Sharif, who leads the country's most powerful political family and his party, has been hanging in the balance since then. If convicted, he can be jailed. World Bank denies reports Sharif laundered US\$ 4.9 billion to India

Meanwhile, the World Bank has denied as "incorrect" the media reports in Pakistan that cited its report to allege that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif laundered US\$ 4.9 billion to India. Pakistan's top anti-corruption body, National Accountability Bureau, on Tuesday ordered a probe against the embattled former prime minister and others after reports of his involvement in the money laundering emerged in the media. The World Bank in a statement said, "In the past day, there have

been media reports citing the World Bank's Remittances and Migration Report of 2016. These media reports were incorrect.

The World Bank's Remittances and Migration Report is an effort by the World Bank to estimate migration and remittances numbers across the world, it said.

"The report does not include any mention of money laundering nor does it name any individuals," said the World Bank, which was issued after media reports cited its annual report for allegations that Sharif laundered US\$ 4.9 billion from Pakistan to India.

In its annual report, the statement said that the World Bank estimates bilateral remittances between countries using the methodology summarized in the World Bank Working Paper 102 South-South migration and remittances by the authors of the report. The World Bank also referred to a statement by the State Bank of Pakistan which rejects estimates of US\$ 4.9 billion in remittances from Pakistan to India on September 21, 2016, and provides an explanation of the methodology used in the World Bank report and the official remittances numbers. (Source: PTI)

## Trump: Will meet Kim on June...

Trump's announcement came hours after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo returned home from North Korea with three detained Americans.

Trump, who personally greeted the trio at the Andrews Air Force Base, praised Kim for their release ahead of their summit.

"The highly anticipated meeting between Kim Jong Un and myself will take place in Singapore on June 12th. We will both try to make it a very special moment for World Peace!," Trump tweeted.

Trump has struck a cautiously optimistic tone in discussing the prospects of reaching a deal during his upcoming summit with Kim, saying he is hopeful a historic agreement can be brokered while also warning the talks could prove unfruitful.

But the President saw the release of the three Americans as yet another reason for optimism as he prepares for the summit. "We are starting off on a new footing-I really think we have a very good chance of doing something very meaningful. A lot of very good things have happened," Trump said as he greeted the three former prisoners.

The Americans-Kim Dong Chul, Kim Hak-song and Kim Sang Duk, also known as Tony Kim-were freed yesterday by North Korea while Pompeo was on a visit to Pyongyang to finalize the details of the Trump-Kim summit.

The summit, which has been in the works since Trump accepted Kim's invitation to meet in March, will be the first ever meeting between a sitting US president and North Korean leader. US officials had also considered holding the summit at the Korean demilitarized zone or in Mongolia, but ultimately settled on the city-state of Singapore as the location.

Meanwhile, Kim Jong-un has said that the meeting with Trump will be positive towards easing tensions on the Korean Peninsula, Pyongyang state media reported on Thursday, May 10. Kim made the remark to visiting US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday, May 9 the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

During the meeting with Pompeo, Kim described the planned summit as "historic" and "the excellent first step towards promotion of the positive situation development in the Korean peninsula and building of a good future".

This was Pompeo's second visit to the Asian country after his secret trip over Easter, when he also met with Kim, to finalize preparations for the summit, reports Efe news.

"At the meeting, an in-depth discussion was made on the practical matters for holding the North Korea-US summit and its procedure and ways. Kim Jong-un reached a satisfactory consensus on the issues discussed with the US state secretary," Yonhap News Agency quoted KCNA as saying.

This is the first time that the North Korean leader officially spoke of the meeting with Trump, which has been scheduled for the end of May or the beginning of June and will be the first meeting in history between the heads of government of the two countries. KCNA said Kim also "accepted an official suggestion of the US President for the release of Americans who have been detained" and gave an order "on granting amnesty to them for their repatriation". The three Americans-Kim Dong-chul, 64, Kim Sang-duk, 58, and Kim Hak-song, around 60-who had been held prisoners in North Korea, were all born in South Korea but later acquired the US citizenship.

Pompeo also delivered Kim a "verbal message" from Trump, adding Kim highly appreciated that the US President had shown "deep interest in settling the issue through dialogue".

Details of Trump's message were not disclosed.

The North's media covered Wednesday's meeting extensively.

The Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of North Korea's Workers' Party, devoted the front page to the Kim-Pompeo meeting, with relevant photos, including those showing the two shaking hands. (Source: PTI / IANS)



# RISHIKESH: HUB OF YOGA, MEDITATION AND SPIRITUALITY

Ever since the Beatles rocked up at the ashram of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the late '60s, Rishikesh has been a magnet for spiritual seekers. Today it styles itself as the 'Yoga Capital of the World', with masses of ashrams and all kinds of yoga and meditation classes. Most of this action is north of the main town, where the exquisite setting on the fast-flowing Ganges, surrounded by forested hills, is conducive to meditation and mind expansion. In the evening, an almost supernatural breeze blows down the valley, setting temple bells ringing as sadhus ('holy' men), pilgrims and tourists prepare for the nightly ganga aarti (river worship ceremony). You can learn to play the sitar or tabla; try Hasya yoga (laughter therapy), practise meditation or take a punt on crystal healing.

But Rishikesh is not all spirituality and contorted limbs; it's now a popular white-water rafting centre, backpacker hang-out and Himalayan-trekking gateway.

## NEERGARH FALLS

Rishikesh is the home to many lesser-known waterfalls and the beauty of these hidden treasures is that one has to take a trek of few Kilometres to reach the falls. If you wish to spend some quality time with your family and friends amidst nature-rich environs, you can definitely plan a waterfall trekking in Rishikesh.

The trekking to Neergadh Waterfall starts 3 km away from Laxman Jhula on the Badrinath Highway. It is one of the most frequented waterfalls as it is easiest to access. Visit Neergarh Waterfall just after monsoon season and you will witness water cascading thousands of feet from the mountain top. There are small pools along the hike where a hiker can sit and enjoy the serenity of falls, while soaking the tired feet. You can also consider taking a dip into the pool of fresh water.

Trekking through Neergarh waterfall and passing by shallow pool will give you a feel and touch of what the state of Uttarakhand is all about. The best thing about this adventure activity is that it does not require any special skill to trek, owing to easy path and can be undertaken by people from all age group. Vendors are also available here to sell the beverages, which will cost slightly higher but a cup of tea in hand will be a good idea to enjoy the surreal beauty of the place.

## NEELKANTH TEMPLE

Neelkanth temple is one of the most sacred places of worship for Hindus. It is situated on a hill above Swargashram and located at a distance of 32 km from Rishikesh. Neelkanth temple is considered to be an apt example of complete natural hill heaven that lies adjacent to mountain ranges of Nar-Narayan. Owing to its raw beauty & religious significance, both the devotees and nature lovers visit the place round the year. The way to the temple is quite exhilarating. There are steep & narrow roads taking above the hill, which will add the extra spice of adventure amidst the beauty. There is river flowing on one side and mountain terrain is on the other side. Road is very curvy and narrow with steep slopes.

## TREKKING

Trekking is all about reconnecting yourself with nature and exploring the wonders of the



Himalayas. For adventure enthusiasts, it is a much sought after option to escape the daily mundane life to find themselves in the lap of nature. Walking through verdant landscape, lush greenery and waterfall, and breathing in fresh air really prove to be a refreshing experience. Located in the lap of the Shivalik Himalayas, the picturesque town of

Rishikesh offers a host of scenic locales for trekkers.

It gives the trekker a chance to witness the outstanding scenery of flowery green meadows, dense forests, fascinating local communities and astounding landscape of the eastern part of the Garhwal Himalayan ranges.

There are all sorts of treks available near Rishikesh, which can be categorised into easy, moderate and hard treks. Small treks can be done in the adjoining villages and waterfalls while longer treks can be taken in near-by mountains. Few famous treks which can be taken near Rishikesh are Neer Garh waterfall trek, Kunjapuri trek, Neelkanth Temple Trek, and Jhilmil Gufa Trek. Longer treks which serve route from Rishikesh are Gomukh (Gaumukh) Trek, Valley of flower Trek, Tungnath-Chandrasheela Trek, Deoria Taal Trek, Hemkund sahib trek, Kuari Pass Trek and Roop Kund Trek.

## DEVPRAYAG

In Sanskrit, prayag means 'confluence' and Devprayag stands for 'holy confluence'. Devprayag is the confluence of two holy rivers Alaknanda and Bhagirathi to form Ganga. According to religious scriptures, Devprayag is one of the five important holy confluences. Rivers like Bhagirathi, Alaknanda & the mythological river Saraswati (flowing underground) meet to form the River Ganga. River Bhagirathi originates from Gangotri and Alaknanda originates from Badrinath, both of which are considered sacred destinations for Hindus across the world. Devprayag is the last prayag of River Alaknanda. Religiously, the site is very sacred and holds immense significance among the Hindu followers. It is believed that Lord Rama and the King Dushratha did penance here.

There is an ancient temple of Raghunathji built above the confluence with massive rocks. It is believed that the temple was built more than ten thousand years ago. There is a small water spring called Baitalshila, which is believed to have powers to cure leprosy. Devprayag is also hugely blessed with divine natural beauty and showers tourists with its serenity. The place is accessible throughout the year and can be visited anytime. Try avoiding Devprayag during monsoons, when the water level rises and there are chances of roads getting blocked due to landslides. Devprayag is a small town situated in Tehri Garhwal district in the state of Uttarakhand, located on the Rishikesh-Badrinath highway.

## RAJAJI NATIONAL PARK

Rajaji National Park is known for its pristine scenic beauty and rich bio-diversity. A paradise for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts, Rajaji National Park or Chilla Park is just 25 km away from Rishikesh. A normal safari by jeep usually takes 3 to 4 hours to complete the 36 km stretch of safari range and costs around Rs. 1200-1500 per person. It is carried out twice in a day; at 7 am in the morning and around 2 pm in the afternoon. Rajaji National Park is home to Asian elephants, deers, birds, tigers (only few), and antelopes such as the Nilgai, langoors etc. This park is the first staging ground for the migratory birds when they cross Himalayas to enter India. The Himalayan pied kingfisher, fire tailed sunbird & great pied hornbill can be spotted here. The safari in the park is organised throughout the year, adding its touch of special essence every season. Don't miss out on an early morning drive along the river stream which connects to Power House in Chilla. In addition there are many hotels and tourist complexes available around Rajaji National Park at Haridwar and Rishikesh, which makes it even more convenient to visit



# Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Delhi Daredevils, secure play-off spot

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Shikhar Dhawan and Kane Williamson shared an unbeaten 176-run stand to overshadow a breathtaking hundred by Rishbah Pant as Sunrisers Hyderabad sailed into the Indian Premier League playoffs with a commanding nine-wicket victory over Delhi Daredevils.

Delhi's total of 187/5 was a challenging target but Dhawan (92\*) and captain Williamson (83\*) ensured Sunrisers sauntered home in 18.5 overs. Sunrisers' brilliant performance came after Pant's maiden IPL hundred, an epic 128 not out off 63 balls which was not enough to arrest his team's slide.

With just six points from 11 games, Delhi are now certain to make another early exit from the tournament. Sunrisers, who lead the table with 18 points from 11 games, showed that they could not just defend small totals but also chase down stiff targets.

Dhawan, due for a big score, rose to the occasion with a sublime innings that was laced with nine boundaries and four sixes. Williamson was not far behind as he breezed to his sixth



Rishbah Pant plays a reverse sweep against Delhi Daredevils.

fifty-plus score of the competition. Earlier, Pant helped Daredevils overcome a poor start to reach an imposing total. Pant was

unstoppable as he toyed with arguably the best bowling attack in the competition, single-handedly giving a fighting chance to a struggling Delhi. His

special knock comprising 15 fours and seven sixes made up for his involvement in run-outs of captain Shreyas Iyer and Harshal Patel (24).

Source: PTI

## Mumbai's upward march continues, Knights stalled

**KOLKATA (TIP):** Mumbai Indians produced a brilliant bowling and fielding performance after Ishan Kishan's batting pyrotechnics as the defending champions thrashed Kolkata Knight Riders by 102 runs to stay in the hunt for a playoffs berth in the Indian Premier League here on Wednesday.

Sent in to bat at the Eden Gardens, Mumbai scored an imposing 210/6, riding on 19-year-old Kishan's 21-ball 62, studded with five fours and six sixes, and then bowled KKR out for 108 in 18.1 overs.

Brothers Krunal and Hardik Pandya returned with figures of 2/12 and 2/16, respectively, while all the other five MI bowlers took a wicket each as they excelled as a bowling unit.

Chasing an imposing target of 211, KKR suffered a batting collapse. Chris Lynn and Nitish Rana top-scored with 21 each while all the other KKR batsmen came a cropper. Their highest partnership was 31 between Lynn and Uthappa (14) for the second wicket.

KKR made a disastrous start to their run chase as Sunil Narine (4) was out on the second ball, top-edging a Mitchell McClenaghan short delivery to Krunal Pandya. Lynn and Uthappa were going strong but a horrible mix-up in the fourth over led to Lynn being run out as the home side were reduced to 32/2. The two wickets meant KKR were lagging behind in the powerplay overs as they could score just 47 from the first six overs.

Earlier, Kishan smashed a 17-ball half-century as MI overcame a slow start to post 210/6. Ishan tore apart KKR's bowling, hammering Kuldeep Yadav for four consecutive sixes, en route to his 62 (5x4, 6x6).

Source: PTI

## Rahane to lead India against Afghanistan in Kohli's absence

**BENGALURU (TIP):** Virat Kohli's much-hyped county stint paved the way for Karun Nair's comeback even as senior batsman Rohit Sharma was dropped from the 15-strong Indian squad announced here on May 8 for the historic one-off Test against Afghanistan next month.

Vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane will lead the team in Kohli's absence, the selection committee, led by MSK Prasad, announced after a meeting in which multiple squads were picked. Rahane, however, has been dropped from the ODI squad for England tour. He was part of India's 50-over squad during the South Africa tour.

Ambati Rayudu and KL Rahul were notable comebacks in the ODI squad for the England tour, while young speedster Siddarth Kaul was rewarded with the ODI and T20 berths against Ireland and England for his consistent IPL performance.

Nair, only the second Indian to score a triple-century, is making a comeback after 14 months. The 26-year-old Nair scored 612 runs for Karnataka in the last Ranji Trophy with three hundreds. Nair has played six Test matches, scoring 374 runs, but after his 303 against England at Chennai, his sequence of scores read 26, 0, 23 and 5.

Kohli has been named captain for the two-match T20 series against Ireland. Interestingly, Surrey had officially announced that Kohli would be available for the entire month of June, but the two T20 Internationals



are scheduled for June 27 and 29. Surrey's county game against Yorkshire at Scarborough is scheduled from June 25-28.

"Except Virat, all Test specialists are playing. He is going for a cause as he wants to come well prepared for the England Test series. He is very keen to do well in English conditions. It is a great opportunity for us to win the series," chief selector Prasad said at a media conference.

Source: PTI

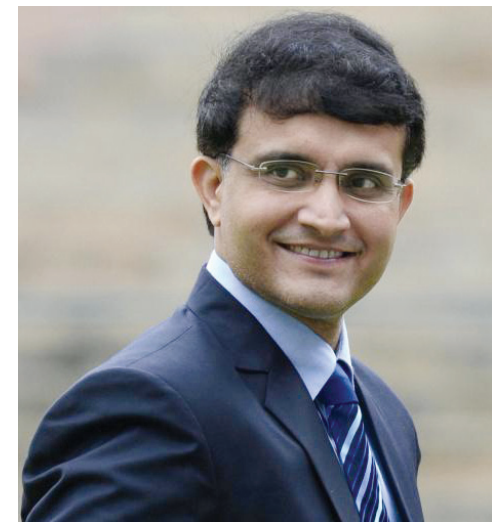
## India should play day-night Test, it's the future: Ganguly

**KOLKATA (TIP):** The Indian cricket board may have refused to play a day-night Test in Australia later this year, but former India captain Sourav Ganguly feels the pink-ball contest is the future and the country will have to embrace it someday. "Day-night Test is the way forward. Every country has to play day-night Tests. India have reservations but that's the long term future for Test cricket," said Ganguly.

India are one of the only two current Test-playing nations to have avoided playing pink-ball cricket at international level, Bangladesh being the other one.

Even as Ganguly sounded critical of India's decision to avoid playing day-night Test, the former left-handed batsman said the Indian team had the potential to win pink-ball Test matches. "They are a good side, they will win day-night matches also. It's just a different ball, I don't think there's any other difference. And they have such class players, they can win," he said. On Wednesday, former Australian skipper Michael Clarke had said that India refused to play a day-night Test in Australia because they felt they had a better chance against Australia with the traditional red ball. "Remember India have never beaten Australia in Australia. This is their chance and that's exactly what Kohli, Ravi Shastri and all in Indian cricket would be thinking," Clarke had said.

The Australian reasoned that the wickets are flatter and spin-oriented during the day, while at night there's little spin and a bit more movement with moisture around. "They prefer to take their chances during the day. I can understand why they do not want to play



under lights."

Ganguly also backed Kohli's decision to skip the historic Test against Afghanistan. "I think since the side is Afghanistan, he has chosen to play county cricket. If it had been any other team, he would have not gone. It just shows how important the England tour is for him," said Ganguly.

Ganguly said India were good enough to beat Afghanistan without Kohli. "India will beat Afghanistan without Virat. And hopefully they can do well in England also."

The former India captain expressed surprise at the exclusion of Ajinkya Rahane from the ODI squad for the England tour. "I am surprised Rahane is not in the team. He should have been in the team. He has been moved around too much, he is a quality player," Ganguly said.





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