



British Prime Minister May agrees with France, Germany on upholding N-pact with Iran



French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Theresa May and German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrive for the start of an EU-Western Balkans Summit in Sofia
Photo / Courtesy Reuters

LONDON (TIP): In sharp variance to US position on Iran Nuclear deal, British Prime Minister Theresa May agreed with the leaders of Germany and France on Thursday, May 17 to uphold the Iran nuclear deal after meeting on the sidelines of an EU summit in Bulgaria, May's spokeswoman said.

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Karnataka floor test at 4 pm on May 19th: Supreme Court of India Orders

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on May 18th ordered that the Yeddyurappa government seek majority on the floor of the House at 4 pm on Saturday, May 19th.

Earlier, Yeddyurappa had been given 15 days' time, but then the Congress-JDS leaders challenged the decision.

BJP leader BS Yeddyurappa placed before the Supreme Court the letters he had sent to

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Will B S Yeddyurappa stay on as Chief Minister? Will know on May 19th.

Photo/ PTI

United Nations Hails Jaipur Foot



Ambassador Maria Emma Mejia Velez, Permanent Representative of Venezuela speaking at a panel discussion on "Jaipur Foot" as Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations looks on, at the United Nations on May 15
Photo / Jay Mandal/On Assignment

NEW YORK (TIP): India's longstanding innovation, the Jaipur Foot project, is being hailed as an "excellent" example of South-South cooperation and multi-stakeholder collaboration as it has helped over 1.7 million persons with disabilities gain mobility in 34 countries.

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Vaisakhi Celebrated at the Indian Consulate, New York

Punjab's history and rich culture presented in talk, film, music and dance



The Sikh community honored the guest speaker Dr. Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh, the Consul General of India in New York Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty, and his wife Dr. Taruna Chakraborty.

Bidisha Roy

NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP): The Consulate General of India New York and The English language weekly newspaper The Indian Panorama teamed up to organize Vaisakhi celebrations at the consulate on May 11.

The month of Vaisakh in India which corresponds roughly to mid-April to mid-May is full of celebrations in India. It is a harvest period in India

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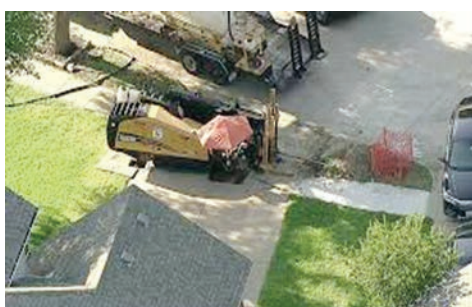
Gina Haspel is the first-ever woman to be named CIA director

Senate Confirms Gina Haspel as First Female director of CIA

WASHINGTON (TIP): History was made on May 17 when US Senate confirmed Gina Haspel as the first female director of CIA. After a protracted confirmation battle that resurrected a nationwide

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Fort Worth Gas Leak Leads to Recommended Evacuation



FORT WORTH, TX (TIP): Residents in North Fort Worth were asked to evacuate their homes due to a gas leak Thursday, May 17 afternoon, officials say.

In a tweet at 5:15 p.m., the Fort Worth Fire Department asked that residents on Los Padres Court between Basswood Boulevard and Arcadia Trail evacuate north of Arcadia. The department recommended evacuations for

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Indian American founded Texas-based Deepak Jain company acquires Gift Cards India

MURPHY, TX (TIP): The gifting platform Swych Inc, founded by Indian American Deepak Jain, has acquired Gift Cards India, which is headquartered in Mumbai. Swych was founded in 2016. This is the first major global buyout of Swych.

Gift Cards India, founded in 2011 by Firoz Khan and Cory York, is one of the pioneers in its domain in India. The company boasts of a robust aggregation and distribution network that has been successful in serving millions of customers in the country.

Jain, a Delhi University alumnus, is based in Texas.

With the acquisition of Gift Cards India, Swych's goal is to expand and become a leader in the connected digital network by closing the gap that existed between consumers who live thousands of miles away.

It also foresees a future where the combined strategy will bring borderless digital gifting to businesses, digital wallets, loyalty platforms, financial institutions and others, where the recipient of a gift can "Swych" it to spend it at his or her favorite brand across a global catalog.



"Digital gifting is an increasingly powerful engagement tool for retailers to attract consumers via offers, for consumers to gift their loved one on a special moment, for businesses to reward employees, and as a redemption method for loyalty points and miles. GCI's track record for all these use cases and innovation in the Indian market

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Vaisakhi Celebrated at the Indian Consulate, New York

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which is celebrated widely with a lot of enthusiasm. In some parts of India, it is celebrated as the beginning of a new year.

For the people of Punjab, and the Sikhs in particular, Vaisakhi holds a very significant and historic importance. Besides being Punjab's foremost social festival to celebrate good crop, Vaisakhi came to acquire an importance as a historic day when in 1699 the tenth Master of the Sikhs, Shri Guru Gobind Singh created the order of the Khalsa. His followers, 25 million upwards today, are known as Sikhs and are easily distinguishable because of their appearance, the most distinguishable being the turban (the headgear). Sikhism is the youngest and the fifth largest religion in the world.

Vaisakhi celebration at the Consulate was unique in more



Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty spoke highly of the Sikh community's contribution to making India a great nation and congratulated them on their achievements abroad

than one way. First, the gathering included not only the Sikhs and Punjabis but people hailing from many parts of India and adhering to different religions. Then there was a mix of non-Indians. Also present at the celebrations which lasted almost 2 hours were a few diplomats. A famous Indian classical dance guru Padma Shri Pratap Pawar from London who was in town also graced the occasion on an invitation routed through Malini Shah. Members of management from a number of gurdwaras which included gurdwara Nanak Naam Jahaj in Jersey City, gurdwara Nanak Darbar in Hicksville, and gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana in Richmond Hill participated.

Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty, the Consul General of India in New York who began with the Sikh greeting of Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh, described Guru Gobind Singh as a great person who changed the course of history. He praised the Sikhs for their valor and their charitable disposition. Expressing his happiness with the presence of the Sikh community to celebrate Vaisakhi, he said the Consulate's door were open to all to come and celebrate their festivals. He congratulated Sikhs on their birthday.

Ambassador Chakraborty was welcomed with a bouquet presented by Prof. Saluja's daughter Jaskiran Saluja Beri and her son Kabir Raj Beri.

Earlier, welcoming the gathering, Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, publisher and editor of The Indian Panorama described Vaisakhi as the most important festival of Punjab which is also the birthday of the Khalsa, the modern-day Sikhs. He called upon the gathering to celebrate the birthday of the Khalsa in a befitting manner.

The guest speaker, Dr. Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh, head of the Department of Religious Studies at Colby College, Waterville, a great scholar who has authored dozens of books and contributed hundreds of papers/ articles on religion and Sikhism, mesmerized the gathering with her profound knowledge of the subject and her forceful delivery. She spoke about the values held dear in Sikhism and mentioned that the Sikh Gurus were precursors of modern pluralism.

Dr. Taruna Chakraborty, the First Lady of Indian Consulate greeted Dr. Nikky with a bouquet.



Glimpses of Gatka, Sikh martial art. Members of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana, Richmond Hill, New York presented a thrilling display of Gatka.



Prachi Makkar (Right) and Surya Makkar initiated Vaisakhi celebrations with a shabad "Deh Shiva Bar mohe ihe..."



Dr. Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh makes a point



Dr. Taruna Chakraborty greeted Dr. Nikky with a bouquet



Jaskiran Saluja Beri and her son Kabir Raj Beri welcomed Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty with a bouquet

Prachi Makkar, a brilliant scholar and well known for her melodious shabad kirtan and Mata ki Bheta and her equally gifted brother Surya Makkar recited Mool Mantra and sang the shabad "Deh Shiva bar mohe ihe" which had the gathering spellbound.

Children from Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana gave an electrifying display of the Sikh traditional martial art called Gatka. This warfare involves use of various weapons, including sticks and swords. Going by the comments of the audience, Gatka performance impressed people the most. Mr. Daler Singh who is the senior most member of the Gatka Club also displayed his skill as did the coach

Another attraction was a documentary on Vaisakhi produced and directed by Prof. Indrajit S Saluja. The 17-minute documentary traced briefly the 5000-year-old history and



Prof. Indrajit S Saluja in his welcome address, described Vaisakhi as the most important festival of Punjab which is also the birthday of the Khalsa, the modern-day Sikhs.



Mr. Himat Singh Sarpanch was recognized for his cooperation in organizing the Vaisakhi festival. Seen from L to R: Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty, Himat Singh Sarpanch, Prof. Indrajit S Saluja

civilization of Punjab. It described creation of Khalsa and the celebration of Vaisakhi and finally listed the great Punjabis and their contribution in various fields. The documentary received much appreciation.

On this occasion, Balwant Hothi who made a major contribution to making of the documentary was recognized.

How can a Punjabi celebration be complete without Giddha or Bhangra? So, to cap it all, there was a thrilling Bhangra performance by the famous Bhangra group Soormay.

Manoj Vyas exhibited his paintings on the occasion.

Sikhs of the Tri-State are contributed hugely to the successful celebrations of Vaisakhi. Royal Indian Banquet and Restaurant (Mr. Himat S Sarpanch, Mr. Raghbir Singh Subhanpur, Mr. Balbir Singh Pahalwan, Mr. Pritam Singh Gilzian); Singh & Singh Distributors (Mr. Jatinder Singh Bakshi), and Richie Rich Palace (Mr. Jarnail Singh Gilzian) sponsored food and drinks. Pleased with the effort of Prof. Indrajit S Saluja in organizing Vaisakhi celebrations at the Consulate, Mr. Hardeep Singh Goldie, President of Akali Dal, New Jersey donated a sum of \$1000.00. **contd on Page 10**



Indian American Preeta Bansal awarded at APAICS gala

WASHINGTON (TIP): US Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY) presented the annual Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) Stewardship Award to Indian American Preeta Bansal at the organization's 24th annual Awards Gala on May 15th.

"I'm honored to present the APAICS Stewardship Award to Solicitor General Preeta Bansal for her leadership in public service, and for her efforts to empower communities," said the New York Democrat.

"Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is a time to honor and celebrate the achievements of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). Tonight, we recognize and celebrate Preeta for her immense contributions, and for her service and leadership to our community and the nation," she added.

The annual award gala is conducted during the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month to celebrate AAPI leaders who have positive impacts in their professional careers and communities.

Bansal served as a General Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor to the federal Office of Management and Budget from 2009 until 2011.

Currently the CEO of Social Emergence Corporation, a social-benefit, not-for-profit corporation that focuses on empowering communities, Bansal also teaches at the MIT Media Lab, where she is a Senior Advisor for Social Machines.

Bansal, who was raised in Lincoln, Nebraska, received an A.B. magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1986 and J.D. magna cum laude from Harvard Law School in 1989. She served as Supervising Editor of the Harvard Law



Preeta Bansal won APAICS Stewardship Award for her leadership in public service

Review. After graduating from Harvard Law School, she clerked for Chief Judge James L. Oakes of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit from 1989 to 1990 and for US Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens from 1990 to 1991.

Following private practice in Washington, DC, Bansal worked in the Clinton Administration from 1993 to 1996 as a Counselor in the U.S. Department of Justice and as a White House Special Counsel. At the Justice Department, she assisted Joel Klein, Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division, on United States v. Microsoft and other matters.

In 1999, newly elected New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer recruited her to serve in his office as Solicitor General of the State of New York, the statutory ranking officer after the Attorney General. In that capacity, she was in charge of the office's appellate activities, supervising 45 lawyers in the Solicitor General's Office who filed 40 to 50 appellate briefs each week, and she also helped manage the significant legal positions and amicus strategy of the 600 lawyers in the

Attorney General's Office.

2002-2003. She was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2003.

Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle chose Bansal for the bipartisan United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) in 2003, at which time she also rejoined private law practice in New York at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, Bansal led the firm's appellate litigation and complex legal issues practice. In a "Public Lives" profile of her in 1999, the New York Times referred to her as a "legal superstar." She has appeared as a commentator on legal issues and U.S. Supreme Court matters on CNN, C-SPAN and PBS news programs. She was mentioned as a possible Solicitor General in the Barack Obama administration before Harvard Law School Dean Elena Kagan was announced as Obama's selection for the post.

Bansal is a Henry Crown Fellow at the Aspen Institute and a Member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She received the National Organization of Women's "Woman of Power and Influence Award" in 2006 and was named one of the "50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America" by the National Law Journal in its inaugural list in 2008. In 2006, she was a co-chair for then-Attorney General-Elect Andrew Cuomo's transition team, and previously served as a board member of the Clinton Global Initiative, the National Women's Law Center and the New York City Bar Justice Center, and as a Commissioner on Mayor Bloomberg's Election Modernization Task Force.

Indian American Anuj Chopra and wife acquitted of sex crime charges



The Chopras, both 43 years old, were charged with sex felony charges by police in December 2017 for allegedly trying to solicit their teenage daughter's friends for sex.

MICHIGAN (TIP): Indian American Anuj Chopra and his wife, Leslie Chopra, have been acquitted of sex felony charges by the Ottawa County, in Michigan, prosecutors after the defense provided vital evidences to prove their innocence, local media reports said. In a dramatic turn of events, the defense attorney claimed that he received text messages from the alleged victims stating that the couple was innocent. He also said that police trained the witnesses and threatened them with jail term if they didn't comply.

The Chopras, both 43 years old, were charged with sex felony charges by police in December 2017 for allegedly trying to solicit their teenage daughter's friends for sex. Human trafficking charges were slapped on Anuj Chopra after he allegedly offered money in return for taking sex video of two teenage boys, who were his daughter's classmates.

He said he was only joking. The boys were close friends and called each other "Babe," testimony showed. Leslie Chopra was charged with distributing sexually explicit messages to minors using digital platforms. She allegedly sent a "selfie" wearing lingerie. According to Nunzio, who accessed thousands of texts messaged from the alleged teen victims, the police fabricated the case by pressuring teen witnesses to "bait Leslie Chopra." All the messages he accessed were shared with the prosecutors and police for verification after which the charges against the couple were dropped.

The incident that resulted in the police raiding the residence of the Chopras allegedly happened in the summer of 2016 when they were accused of sending nude pictures of a female student. The raid could not find any evidence that the Chopras sent the nude photos but shortly after that, a 17-year-old male student and two other witnesses befriended the couple's daughter, who also attended the same high school.

"Unbeknownst to the Chopras, the alleged victim was a good friend with the female student whose nude photographs were leaked in the summer of 2016," Nunzio said in an official statement. The three were brought into the school office and questioned, Nunzio said.

"The alleged victim revealed that he was merely joking around with the Chopras and that he, too, was threatened with jail if he did not cooperate with police. The alleged victim said that he told authorities what they wanted to hear, the defense attorney concluded."

Indian Origin Woman Murdered in England Home

LONDON (TIP): A 34-year-old Indian origin woman, Jessica Patel, who was a pharmacist was found murdered in her home in northern England's Middlesborough town and the British police are hunting for the killer. The body of Jessica Patel was found at her home on The Avenue in the Linthorpe suburb of the town on May 14th night. The local Cleveland Police said that the cause of her death is not being released by the investigative team at this time. "Specialist officers, including forensic teams, are working hard to establish what happened to Patel," a Cleveland Police statement said.

Police has made an appeal to people to contact them if anyone has any information about the incident. Detective Superintendent Tariq Ali also held a press conference to reassure the local residents. The victim ran a local chemist's shop in Middlesborough with her 36-year-old husband, Mitesh, whom she met while studying at university in Manchester.

"They were a really nice, friendly couple and they've become popular in the area since they took over the pharmacy," one of the couple's neighbors said. The couple's home is close to their pharmacy, which they ran for around three years. Both the home and work premises are now the focus of intense police searches.

Indian Origin Man Indicted in US in Multi-Million Dollar Scam

NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian origin man along with two other co-founders of a start-up cryptocurrency company Centra Tech have been indicted with a scheme to defraud investors, with authorities seizing digital currency worth more than USD 60 million raised from victims as part of the scheme.



Digital currency scam (representational)

Sohrab Sharma, Raymond Trapani and Robert Farkas were the three co-founders of Centra Tech. A grand jury in the Southern District of New York returned an indictment charging the three with conspiring to commit securities and wire fraud in connection with a scheme to induce victims to invest millions of dollars' worth of digital funds for the purchase of unregistered securities, in the form of digital currency tokens issued by Centra Tech.

The three men were arrested last month based on criminal complaints charging them with the same crimes, Attorney for the United States Robert Khuzami said.

Following their arrests, the Federal Bureau of Investigation seized 91,000 Ether units, consisting of digital funds raised from victims as part of the charged scheme. This seized digital currency is presently worth more than USD 60 million.

"As alleged, the defendants conspired to capitalize on investor interest in the burgeoning cryptocurrency market. They allegedly made false claims about their product and about relationships they had with credible financial institutions, even creating a fictitious Centra Tech CEO," Khuzami said.

Sohrab Sharma, 27, Trapani, 27 and Farkas, 31, are all residents of Florida. All three of them are charged in a four-count indictment that in all carry 65 years in prison.

In a separate action, the Securities and Exchange Commission also filed civil charges against the three men.

Indian Origin Man Killed in Australia in Accident

MELBOURNE (TIP): An Indian origin Australia based man died in a road accident on a highway in South Australia. The victim's father was also severely injured in the mishap and is undergoing treatment at a hospital.

The victim, identified as Amit Kumar Bonsrey, worked in a factory in Adelaide. He was delivering goods to Mildura, in Victoria, on April 30, when the fatal incident occurred, SBS Australia reported on May 15th.

Mr Bonsrey's father, Jagmal Singh Bonsrey, was with the victim at the time of the accident. Their truck collided with an approaching truck on Sturt Highway, Wigley Flat, in South Australia.

A family friend, Surender Chahal, said the victim's father was accompanying Mr Bonsrey on the drive. "His father accompanied him on the drive. He had been injured and underwent a 16-hour surgery. He remains in critical condition," Mr Chahal.

Mr Bonsrey died on May 15th, while his father is undergoing treatment at the Royal Adelaide hospital.

Mr Bonsrey is survived by his wife Jasvinder Kaur, a 15-year-old daughter and a one-year-old son.



Amit Kumar Bonsrey, worked in a factory in Adelaide

Trump lists Michael Cohen payment on federal form, raising legal concerns about Stormy Daniels payoff

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Trump should have disclosed Michael Cohen's hush payment to porn star Stormy Daniels as a financial liability last year, the government's top ethics watchdog concluded Wednesday, potentially opening the President up to legal complications.

David Apol, acting director of the Government Ethics Office, said in a letter appended to Trump's 2018 financial disclosure form that a payment Cohen made to "a third party" on behalf of the President during the 2016 election meets the requirements for a reportable "loan."

The letter does not explicitly state what Cohen's payment was for, but the President's legal team and Cohen himself have previously acknowledged he paid Daniels \$130,000 to keep quiet about allegedly having sex with Trump in 2006. Cohen has also admitted the hush payment was issued 11 days before Trump's election.

While Apol didn't say so in his letter, the revelations mean Trump could have committed a crime by not disclosing the liability in his financial disclosure report last year. Apol referred his findings to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein for any "inquiry" the Justice Department may pursue into the matter.

Trump acknowledged in the disclosure form for the first time that he fully reimbursed Cohen last year for "expenses" ranging between \$100,001 and \$250,000.

Ex-Mayor Rudy Giuliani insisted Trump disclosed the repayments to Cohen in this year's report out of "an abundance of caution."

"It's not a loan, but he reported it anyway,"



Giuliani, the latest addition to Trump's legal team, told the Daily News, directly contradicting Apol's findings. "It was in fact an expense, like paying a doctor. If you owe a doctor \$2,000 and you pay him back, that's not a liability."

Giuliani claimed Trump didn't list Cohen's payment to Daniels in last year's form because he didn't need to.

"There's nothing to report," Giuliani said.

Asked if Trump is worried, Giuliani delivered a one-word rebuke: "Nope."

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a legal watchdog group that first flagged Trump's disclosure omission in March, welcomed Apol's findings and swiftly filed a criminal complaint against the President. They called on the Justice Department to look into whether he "knowingly and willfully" failed to report required information - an offense punishable by up to one year behind bars.



"There is substantial evidence that President Trump had knowledge of the loan when he filed his public financial disclosures last year," Noah Bookbinder, the watchdog's executive director, said in a statement. "If the department is not already investigating the President's failure to disclose the loan last year, it should open an investigation immediately."

A spokeswoman for the Justice Department declined to comment.

Attorney Michael Avenatti, who represents Daniels in a civil lawsuit seeking to void her nondisclosure agreement with Cohen, said the financial form "conclusively proves" that Trump, Cohen, Giuliani and the White House deceived the "American people."

"This was NOT an accident and it was not isolated," Avenatti tweeted. "Coverups should always matter."

Cohen, Trump's longtime attorney and personal fixer, had his Manhattan office, home

and hotel room raided by FBI agents last month as part of a criminal investigation launched by federal prosecutors in New York. The agents seized a cache of records, including communications between Cohen and his clients.

Michael Cohen arrives at Manhattan Federal Court on April 16.

Michael Cohen arrives at Manhattan Federal Court on April 16. (Alec Tabak)

Whether Trump committed a crime by not disclosing the Cohen payments last year is a matter of whether or not he knowingly omitted them, according to experts.

"Trump may be wondering today whether the information DOJ seized from Cohen's office included any emails or other documents showing he knew of the debt when he filed last year's report," former Government Ethics Director Walter Shaub tweeted.

Shaub, who served as the ethics czar between 2013 and 2017, noted that Apol's letter to Rosenstein is tantamount to a "criminal referral."

Shaub also recalled that, while serving as ethics director, Trump attorney Sheri Dillon asked him if the President could submit his 2017 disclosure without certifying its contents as true.

"The strangest moment in my entire career," Shaub said.

Wednesday's financial disclosure dump also revealed First Lady Melania Trump raked in as much as \$1 million last year in royalties from photos of her owned by Getty Images.

It's not clear what photos in particular she received royalties for, but her spokeswoman told The News the payments pertained to images taken before Trump took office.

First in US: Man dies after electronic cigarette explodes

NEW YORK (TIP): An electronic cigarette exploded and killed a man in Florida this month, the authorities said, in what appears to be the first death attributed to vaping products in the US.

The man, Tallmadge D'Elia, was at his home in Florida, on May 5 when the device, also known as a vape pen, exploded, according to William A Pellan, the director of investigations at the medical examiner's office for Pinellas County.

He confirmed that the cause of the accidental death was a "projectile wound to the head," and that D'Elia, 35, had suffered burns on about 80% of his body. It appeared that the explosion had started a fire in the bedroom where he was found. One of the pieces removed from his head featured the logo of Smok-E Mountain Mech Works, which is based in the Philippines.

The company's owner did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment on Wednesday, but a representative told ABC Action News that its devices do not explode, adding that the problem may have stemmed from the battery. Smok-E Mountain makes a particular type of vape pen called a mechanical mod. Compared with more common types of vape pens, mechanical mods typically give users more direct access to the battery and do not use inner circuitry to regulate the voltage. A report from the United States Fire Administration last year reviewed 195 reports of e-cigarette-related fires and explosions from 2009 to 2016, none of which resulted in deaths. (NYT Times)

Donald Trump defends 'animals' remark, says he'll always use it

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump on May 17 defended his use of the word "animals" to describe some immigrants who enter the country illegally, saying he would continue to use the term to refer to violent gang members in spite of a sharp rebuke from Democratic leaders.

Answering a reporter's question during a meeting with NATO secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg, Trump said his comment a day earlier had clearly been directed at members of the MS-13 gang.

"MS-13, these are animals coming onto our country," Trump said, repeating his language from Wednesday. He added, "When the MS-13 comes in, when the other gang members come into our country, I refer to them as animals. And guess what? I always will."

Trump has been under fire for comments he made on Wednesday while railing against California for its so-called sanctuary immigration policies. Trump was speaking at a round-table with local California officials when he responded to a comment that had referenced MS-13. "We have people coming into the country, or trying to come in and we're stopping a lot of them," Trump said after Fresno County sheriff Margaret Mims complained about state restrictions that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities. "You wouldn't believe how bad these people are. These aren't people. These are animals."

Trump has repeatedly referred to members of the violent street gang as "animals" in speeches, rallies and at White House events. He has also used the term to describe terrorists

and school shooters.

Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., responded on Twitter to the president, saying, "When all of our great-great-grandparents came to America they weren't 'animals,' and these people aren't either."

And House minority leader Nancy Pelosi said, "Every day that you think you've seen it all, along comes another manifestation of why their policies are so inhumane."

Mexico's foreign ministry sent a formal diplomatic letter to the US state department complaining that Trump's comments were "absolutely unacceptable." The foreign ministry released a statement saying such comments create a difficult climate for Mexicans living in the United States.

But White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders defended the president's comments, arguing the word "animals" didn't go far enough. "This is one of the most vicious and deadly gangs that operates by the motto of, 'Rape, control and kill,'" she said, adding that, "If the media and liberals want to defend MS-13, they're more than welcome to. Frankly, I don't think the term that the president used was strong enough."

Trump was joined at the Wednesday White House meeting by mayors, sheriffs and other local leaders from California who oppose the state's immigration policies and who applauded his administration's hard-line efforts. "This is your Republican resistance right here against what they're doing in California," said assemblywoman Melissa Melendez, coopting a term used by Democrats opposed to Trump's

presidency. She, like others, said the president and his policies were far more popular in the state than people realize.

They were criticizing legislation governor Jerry Brown signed into law last year that bars police from asking people about their immigration status or helping federal agents with immigration enforcement. Jail officials can transfer inmates to federal immigration authorities if they have been convicted of one of about 800 crimes, mostly felonies, but not for minor offenses.

Brown insists the legislation, which took effect Jan 1, doesn't prevent federal immigration officials from doing their jobs. But the Trump administration has sued to reverse it, calling the policies unconstitutional and dangerous. Some counties, including San Diego and Orange, have voted to support the lawsuit or have passed their own anti-sanctuary resolutions.

Republicans see backlash to the law as a potentially galvanizing issue during the midterm elections, especially with Trump's anti-immigrant base. And Trump has held numerous events in recent months during which he's drawn attention to California's policies. During the session, Trump thanked the officials, saying they had "bravely resisted California's deadly and unconstitutional sanctuary state laws." He claimed those laws are forcing "the release of illegal immigrant criminals, drug dealers, gang members and violent predators into your communities" and providing "safe harbour to some of the most vicious and violent offenders on earth." (AP)

Indian American women lawmakers introduce a new bill to monitor the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers in the United States

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian American women lawmakers Rep. Pramila Jayapal and Sen. Kamala Harris on May 15th introduced a new bill titled Detention Oversight Not Expansion (DONE) Act to monitor the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers in the United States.

The bill is meant to keep a close watch of the ICE detention centers and proposes to halt the funding for any new construction, and expansion of such facilities.

According to the two Democrats, over the last two decades, the number of non-citizens held at ICE detention centers in the United States has increased by 400 percent and the inmates of these centers include women, children and pregnant women.

The bill's text also says that these inmates are often mistreated by the ICE agents and are forced to live in deplorable conditions, in violation of their basic rights.

"Even though the U.S. already houses the largest immigrant detention system in the world, the Trump Administration wants more detention beds without any oversight," said Jayapal in an official release posted on her website.

"The countless number of horrific assaults, senseless abuses and needless deaths of immigrants in detention prove that ICE isn't able to police itself. Our bill demands a higher accountability of ICE and a stop to detention expansion because our nation doesn't need more violence and further militarization - what we need is comprehensive and humane reform and real accountability," she added.

"ICE's indiscriminate approach to



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immigration enforcement continues to sow fear and anxiety in communities across the nation and strict oversight is long overdue," said Harris.

"It is unconscionable to subject detainees to inhumane conditions that include cases of unchecked sexual abuse, outright medical negligence, lack of access to counsel, and in some cases, even death. It's time to end the expansion of these facilities that divert these resources to address true public safety threats," she added.

The new bill proposed by Jayapal and Harris require the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to submit a report to Congress that includes a plan to decrease the number of detention beds by 50 percent of the number available as of the date of the enactment of this Act

by using alternatives to detention that are less costly to the taxpayer and have been shown to be successful.

It also proposes restoring and expanding the Family Case Management Program and calls for DHS' Office of Inspector General to conduct unannounced inspections of all immigration detention facilities to ensure compliance with national standards, focusing on the health, safety and care of detainees, especially as it relates to pregnant women. The DHS OIG will be required to submit a report of its findings to Congress.

Jayapal and Harris also recommend the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties to conduct similar investigations and submit a report of its findings to Congress.

Indian American Susheela Jayapal elected as Oregon's Multnomah County Commissioner

OREGON (TIP): Susheela Jayapal was elected as the Multnomah County Commissioner in Oregon on May 15th. Jayapal defeated construction contractor Sharon Maxwell, non-profit administrator Bruce Broussard and Maria Garcia.



Susheela Jayapal is the sister of Rep. Pramila Jayapal

Fighting her first major election, Jayapal won a four-way race with 54 percent votes. She replaced the current commissioner Loretta Smith.

Jayapal is an experienced attorney and advocate and is a long-time community volunteer.

She was expected to win the election after her strongest opponent, Black Parent Initiative CEO Charles McGee, decided to end his campaign mid-way following a sexual harassment allegation.

Congratulating her sister, Pramila Jayapal tweeted, "My sister, @SusheelaJayapal, just became the first #SouthAsian American elected in Oregon!!! #DiversityMatters"

Jayapal was endorsed by the Indian American Impact Fund. "Tonight's win by @SusheelaJayapal is our second big win of the cycle, following @RamForSenate's sweeping primary victory which positions him to be the first Indian American to serve in the Illinois state legislature. This is what progress and history look like!" the Impact Fund tweeted. Susheela Jayapal holds an undergraduate degree in economics from Swarthmore College and a law degree from the University of Chicago Law School.

She worked as a litigator at law firms in San Francisco and Portland. She also served as the General Counsel at Adidas America, serving as a member of the senior executive team responsible for the legal affairs of what was then a \$1 billion company.

As an attorney, Jayapal represented the government in taking on corrupt and negligent bank officers during the fiscal crisis of the 1980s; provided free legal services to people seeking political asylum in the U.S.; and worked on improving labor conditions at factories in Southeast Asia, developing and implementing adidas' first set of labor standards.

McDonald's® CONTINUES 2018 EDUCATION WORKSHOP SERIES IN EDISON

As immigration and college tuition in the US rise, McDonald's continues to provide educational information and resources for students and parents

OAK BROOK, ILL. (TIP): McDonald's will continue its popular Education Workshop series of 2018 with Edison, New Jersey as the second stop on the seven-month long tour across the United States. The event will take place on Saturday, May 19 at Edison High School from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, and will feature speakers covering a variety of topics such as college applications, admissions and financial aid.

Now in its 11th year, the McDonald's Education Workshop Series help provide Asian American families with tools and resources designed to navigate the higher education system. McDonald's is committed to sharing in-language resources to parents who are seeking information on college enrollment and financial assistance while providing engaging and inspiring resources to students.

"We are so excited to be able to bring back the McDonald's Education Workshop year after year," said Lizette Williams, Head of Cultural Engagement - US Marketing, McDonald's USA. "We continue to see a need in the Asian American community for relevant resources about the American education system and in-language materials, due to population growth largely fueled by immigration. McDonald's is proud to provide our customers with what's important to them, access to education."

Research shows that only four percent of Asian Pacific Islander American immigrants are English proficient, so there is a vital need for education information and resources to be provided in-language, so they can navigate the process of applications, enrollment and scholarships. One way the

McDonald's Education Workshop Series helps to inform parents and student is through its interactive booth, available at all the workshops, where students can engage in memorable ways to learn about the six critical criteria in college admission. In addition to the commonly-known criteria of grades, test scores and class rank, students should not overlook the importance of recommendations, extracurricular involvement and demonstrated interest to the desired school. Students will also have a chance to speak with representatives from various colleges and obtain scholarship information.

Attendees can also learn more about Archways to Opportunity, a comprehensive education program McDonald's launched in 2015 that provides eligible U.S. employees at participating restaurants an opportunity to earn a high school degree and receive tuition assistance. McDonald's recently announced that it will commit \$150 million over the next five years to better provide employees with the resources and financial support they need to pursue their education and career ambitions.

About McDonald's

McDonald's USA, LLC, serves a variety of menu options made with quality ingredients to more than 25 million customers every day. More than 90 percent of McDonald's 14,000 U.S. restaurants are independently owned and operated by businessmen and women who are independent employers, and set their own employment policies and practices, including pay and benefits for the people working in their restaurants. For more information, visit www.mcdonalds.com, or follow us on Twitter @McDonalds and Facebook www.facebook.com/McDonaldsUS/.

Indian American-founded SpringML opens office in Indianapolis and India

PLEASANTON, CA (TIP): On May 15th, SpringML, Inc., a leader in machine learning and advanced data analytics services, announced that it is expanding with new offices in Indianapolis and Hyderabad, India.



Indian Americans Prabhu Palanisamy and Girish Reddy are co-founders of the company. Palanisamy is the President and Chief Strategy Officer of the company, while Reddy is the Chief Technology Officer.

"In order to better serve our growing customer base, we are expanding our capabilities and starting to scale," said Charles Landry, CEO of SpringML in a press release.

"Opening offices in Indianapolis and Hyderabad gives us access to large, highly educated talent pools with great proximity to customers and partners," he said. "It also provides great career opportunities for those looking to join a company and work on complex machine learning solutions." Founded in 2015, SpringML helps businesses accelerate by providing them insights from their data. The company's application solutions and services apply machine learning to find solutions to some of the business problems, enabling them to serve customers quantifiable results. SpringML maintains strategic partnerships with Salesforce and Google.

The release also says that the new capabilities will enhance SpringML's commitment to provide state-of-the-art enterprise solutions and services that help customers benefit from the latest advances in machine learning and AI.

Our work in the energy, healthcare, technology and media industries drives major improvements to speed and accuracy by leveraging the power of automation and artificial intelligence.

Headquartered in Pleasanton, CA, SpringML is a Premier Google Cloud and Salesforce partner. The company has offices across North America.

TRINAMOOL CONGRESS SWEEPS PANCHAYAT POLLS IN WEST BENGAL



Trinamool Congress supporters celebrate with a poster of party chief and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee to celebrate their win in panchayat elections, in North 24 Parganas, on May 17. Pic courtesy: PTI

KOLKATA (TIP): Trinamool Congress delivered a thumping victory in the violence-ridden rural polls, pushing BJP to a distant second position and virtually reducing the Left and the Congress to irrelevance in all three tiers of the panchayat structure.

The rural polls are significant since it is the last pan-Bengal exercise before the Lok Sabha elections and would indicate the support base for the different parties.

While BJP aims to win at least 22 of the Lok Sabha seats in the state, Trinamool supremo and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who is trying to help form an anti-BJP front of regional parties for the Parliament elections, looks toward an opposition-mukt state at every level.

With love from India, 'Merry' is gift for Harry-Meghan wedding

NEW DELHI (TIP): Merry is his name, a sanctuary in Maharashtra now his home and Britain's soon to be married royal couple, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, his new 'owners'.

Merry the Indian bull — the name is a hybrid of

Meghan and Harry — is animal rights body PETA's wedding gift to the royals, who will be married on May 19.

Of course, the bull, who was rescued after a lifetime of pulling heavy carts and has now been adopted by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, will not make the actual journey to the cooler climes of England. Instead, a framed photograph will be sent.

According to PETA India, the royal couple is sure to receive a wide variety of wedding gifts, but their's may be the most unique.

Source: PTI



Karnataka effect: Congress, RJD to stake claim in Goa, Bihar

PANAJI/PATNA/IMPHAL (TIP): In a ripple effect stemming from developments in Karnataka, the Congress in Goa and Manipur and the RJD in Bihar, single largest parties in respective states, said on May 17 that they would approach the Governors and stake claim to form government.

However, questions are being raised on the surprising move by the two allies, more than a year after elections were held to the respective assemblies which appeared to be aimed at embarrassing the BJP. Also, the numbers are completely in NDA's favour in all three states.

The BJP, which emerged as the single largest party with 104 seats in Karnataka Assembly, was invited by Governor Vajubhai Vala on Wednesday to form the government despite the JD(S)-Congress combine staking claim by citing the support of 117 MLAs. The majority mark is 112 seats.

Goa Congress legislature party chief Chandrakant Kavlekar said the party would stake claim on Friday by submitting to Governor Mridula Sinha a formal letter containing signatures of all 16 party MLAs. The Governor has given 12 noon time for meeting Congress leaders.

In the Assembly elections held in March last year, the Congress bagged 17 seats in the 40-member House, falling short of the majority figure by four seats. The BJP, which got 14 seats, formed the government in alliance with Goa Forward Party and MGP, both of which had secured three seats each. Three Independents also went with the BJP. Kavlekar said the Goa Governor should also invite the single largest party to form the government "correcting her mistake of March 12, 2017".

Goa Congress chief Girish Chodankar said governors can't have two different set of rules. "While in Karnataka the Governor has invited single largest party, in Goa also the same precedent should be followed," he said. In Bihar, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said his party would also request the Bihar Governor to dissolve the state Assembly and invite the single largest party, which in the state is his party. The JD(U)-BJP



Congress and JD(S) MLAs stage a dharna in front of Gandhi statue near Vidhan Soudha in Bengaluru on May 17. Pic courtesy: PTI

Constitution under severe attack: Rahul Gandhi

RAIPUR (TIP): Against the backdrop of the political developments in Karnataka, Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday lashed out at the BJP-led government at the Centre, saying the Constitution was under "severe attack" in the country where an atmosphere of fear prevailed.

Addressing a Jan Swaraj Sammelan here on the occasion of the silver jubilee of 73rd and 74th amendment in the Constitution related to local self-governance, Gandhi accused the BJP and the RSS of capturing every democratic institution in the country.

Referring to the the press conference called by Supreme Court judges on various issues relating to the apex court judiciary earlier this year, Gandhi said, "The judiciary is under fear, the press is under fear and even the BJP members of Parliament are under the same fear as they cannot



speak a single word before the prime minister (Narendra Modi)."

"The Constitution is under severe attack in the country. In Karnataka, the MLAs are on one side and the governor on the other," he alleged, adding, "One after another, you can see every democratic institution in the country, like the MPs, MLAs, the press and the Planning Commission...the RSS is trying to induct its people."

alliance together with other allies have 131 seats in the 243 Assembly. However, the RJD is still the single largest party with 80 MLAs.

In the Manipur poll held last year, the Congress had won 28 seats in the 60-

member House and the BJP 21. The BJP joined hands with regional parties to claim support of majority of MLAs and Governor Najma Heptulla invited it to form the government, ignoring the claim of the Congress. Source: PTI

Kashmir ceasefire: Security forces keep fingers crossed

SRINAGAR (TIP): Security agencies were keeping their fingers crossed over a fresh unilateral ceasefire announced by the Centre during the fasting month of Ramzan that begins on May 17, as a similar exercise nearly two decades ago witnessed the killing of 129 people including 43 security personnel, according to officials.

The security agency officials felt a need to monitor the situation closely as terror groups had used such a window as an opportunity to regroup themselves and carry out more attacks on security establishments.

The Centre on May 16 announced that security forces would not launch any operation in the State during the holy month of Ramzan but they reserved the right to retaliate, if attacked. The announcement came ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir on May 19. "It is important to isolate the forces that bring a bad name to Islam by resorting to mindless violence and terror," a Union Home Ministry spokesperson said on May 16.

Quoting data, the officials said that during the unilateral ceasefire, popularly known as 'Non Initiation of Combat



Operations' (NICO), which was announced on November 19, 2000 and came into effect on November 28, terrorists carried out three fidayeen attacks on Army cantonment, police control room and Srinagar airport, and two massacres.

The previous ceasefire, which was announced by the then

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and extended twice — January 24, 2001 and on February 22 of the same year — also witnessed an attack on former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah.

From November 19, 2000 to May 23, 2001, 44 terrorists were killed by the security forces. During the period, 42 civilians also died which included massacre of six Sikh civilians at Mehjoor Nagar in Srinagar on February 3, 2001 and 15 civilians by Lashker-e-Taiba terror outfit at Morha Salui in Rajouri district on February 10.

During this period, the first Kashmiri fidayeen suicide bomber Afaq Ahmed Shah blew himself along with an explosive-laden car outside Badami Bagh Cantonment area on December 25, killing four security personnel.

According to the officials, the number of terrorists killed during the period was 44, civilians 42, Army (six), police (24) and other security forces (13). This included a fidayeen attack by terrorists at the Jammu and Kashmir Police control room on February 9, in which 12 people — eight policemen and four militants — were killed. Source: PTI

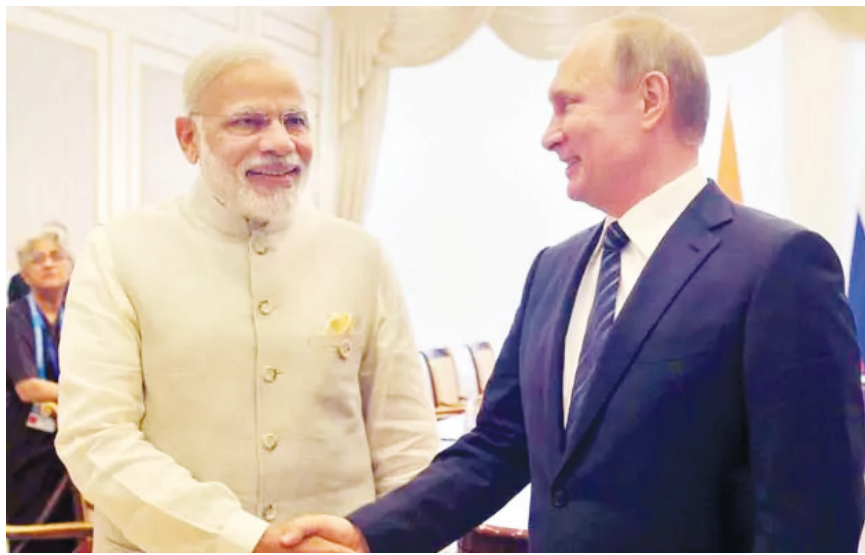
Modi to meet Putin on May 21; effort to shore up ties against sanctions by US

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi is headed to Sochi, a resort town in Russia for informal talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 21. He arrives early morning and will leave the same day. Like in Wuhan in China, PM Modi will hold several one-on-one discussion with Putin, and may have just one restricted bilateral involving other officials. Vladimir Putin will also host a lunch for PM Modi, but there will be no "guard of honour". There will be no other minister accompanying the PM and no documents or joint statement is expected from this meeting either.

Sources told NDTV that the no frills attached visit would be "agendaless, flexible and would have no formalities in terms of protocol," and would discuss several international and regional issues but not many domestic issues will be taken up as those are discussed at the annual summit between the two sides later in the year.

But talks on issues of energy cooperation in third countries and discussions on cyber security were not ruled out. The tricky issues involving defence deals would not be brought up, sources said, even as reports have emerged that India trying to acquire 200 Kamov Ka 226T helicopters from Russia was on the agenda.

Defending informal summits as a new template for talks, government sources said that the PM had held such meetings with many countries including the last minute stopover at Lahore in 2014, and in Berlin to meet Angela Merkel last month, and with Xi Jinping in Wuhan in



PM Narendra Modi is headed to Sochi in Russia for informal talks with Vladimir Putin on May 21.

April. "We have had informal meetings with practically all major nations in the last 12-18 months," sources said.

Describing Russia as "an old friend and trusted partner", sources disputed claims there was need to work on the relationship which had lacked substance in the last few years since India's proximity to the US had increased.

But is India recalibrating its relationship with the two giants Russia and China, given its divergence of views on several international issues with the US? Sources said, "We have communication channels open with both sides, and yes they do have a trust deficit - but we are not here to take sides, we talk to all countries and stakeholders

and this serves our national interest".

India has been upset with the US for imposing CAATSA (Countering America's Enemies Through Sanctions Act) on Russia which has disabled New Delhi's defence ties with the Russian defence companies and entities, and could jeopardise defence procurement, particularly the sale of S-400 air defence missiles. Along with this, sanctions on Iran are likely to affect India's trade ties and the development of the Chabahar Port.

Reacting to the move, sources today said "as far as we are concerned we are not going to allow our defence requirements to be dictated by someone else." *Source: NDTV*

PNB FRAUD: ED SEIZES MEHUL CHOKSI FIRM'S JEWELRY WORTH RS 85 CR

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate or ED on Thursday said it has seized over 34,000 pieces of jewellery worth Rs. 85 crore from the Gitanjali Group, owned by billionaire Mehul Choksi, in connection with the Rs. 13,000-crore Punjab National Bank or PNB fraud case.



Mehul Choksi

The agency said the jewellery was "brought from Dubai" and has been seized under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act or PMLA. "ED seizes over 34,000 pieces of jewellery worth Rs. 85 crore under PMLA of Mehul Choksi controlled Gitanjali Group brought from Dubai," it said in a statement.

Choksi, along with his nephew and millionaire designer jeweller Nirav Modi, is being investigated by the ED for allegedly defrauding PNB, the country's second largest lender. Modi, Choksi and others are being investigated by the ED as well as other probe agencies after the fraud came to light this year following a complaint by the PNB that they allegedly cheated the nationalised bank to the tune of over Rs. 13,000 crore, with the purported involvement of a few employees of the bank. *Source: PTI*

Indonesia gives India access to strategic port of Sabang

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indonesia has agreed to give India economic and military access to the strategic island of Sabang at the northern tip of Sumatra and close to the Malacca Strait, an Indonesian minister said on May 17.

Luhut Pandjaitan, Indonesia's coordinating minister for maritime affairs and a former military officer, said India will invest in the port and economic zone of Sabang and build a hospital. He noted the port's 40-metre depth is good for all types of vessels, "including submarines". In time, he said, the coast guards of the two countries could also work together. Sabang, also known as Weh island, is located 710 km southeast of the Andaman Islands and less than 500 km from the entrance of the Malacca Strait, through which almost 40% of India's trade passes.

Pandjaitan made the remarks while speaking on India-Indonesia maritime cooperation at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi, days ahead of PM Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia on May 31. *Source: HT*

Delhi to be most populous city in world by 2028: UN report

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Delhi is projected to become the most populous city in the world around 2028, according to new United Nations estimates released here on Wednesday, which said India is expected to add the largest number of urban dwellers by 2050.

The 2018 Revision of World Urbanisation Prospects produced by the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and released here today said that 68 per cent of the world population is projected to live in urban areas by 2050.

Currently, 55 per cent of the world's population lives in urban areas.

The report notes that future increases in the size of the world's urban population are expected to be highly concentrated in just a few countries.

Together, India, China and Nigeria will account for 35 per cent of the projected growth of the world's urban population between 2018 and 2050. By 2050, it is projected that India will have added 416 million urban dwellers, China 255 million and Nigeria 189 million.

Tokyo is the world's largest city with an agglomeration of 37 million inhabitants, followed by New Delhi with 29 million, Shanghai with 26 million, and Mexico City and São Paulo, each with around 22 million inhabitants. Cairo, Mumbai, Beijing and Dhaka all have close to 20 million inhabitants.

"By 2020, Tokyo's population is projected to begin to decline, while Delhi is projected to continue growing and to become the most populous city in the world around 2028," the report said.

The projected population size of New Delhi in 2028 is about 37.2 million, surpassing Tokyo's 36.8 million, it added.

By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities with



more than 10 million inhabitants, most of them in developing regions. However, some of the fastest-growing urban agglomerations are cities with fewer than a million inhabitants, many of them located in Asia and Africa.

Projections show that urbanisation, the gradual shift in residence of the human population from rural to urban areas, combined with the overall growth of the world's population could add another 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050,

with close to 90 per cent of this increase taking place in Asia and Africa, according to the new United Nations data set launched today.

The urban population of the world has grown rapidly from 751 million in 1950 to 4.2 billion in 2018. Asia, despite its relatively lower level of urbanization, is home to 54 per cent of the world's urban population, followed by Europe and Africa with 13 per cent each.

Today, the most urbanized regions include Northern America (with 82 per cent of its population living in urban areas in 2018), Latin America and the Caribbean (81 per cent), Europe (74 per cent) and Oceania (68 per cent). The level of urbanization in Asia is now approximating 50 per cent. In contrast, Africa remains mostly rural, with 43 per cent of its population living in urban areas.

Some cities have experienced population decline in recent years. Most of these are located in the low-fertility countries of Asia and Europe where overall population sizes are stagnant or declining.

"Economic contraction and natural disasters have also contributed to population losses in some cities," the report said.

Globally, fewer cities are projected to see their populations decline from today until 2030, compared to what has occurred during the last two decades.

The rural population of the world has grown slowly since 1950 and is expected to reach its peak in a few years. The global rural population is now close to 3.4 billion and is expected to rise slightly and then decline to 3.1 billion by 2050. Africa and Asia are home to nearly 90 per cent of the world's rural population in 2018. India has the largest rural population (893 million), followed by China (578 million). *Source: PTI*


**GUEST
COMMENT**

Arbitrary, capricious: on Karnataka mandate

The Governor has banked not so much on the count the BJP had, as on what it could engineer

In summarily ignoring the claim of H.D. Kumaraswamy, Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala abandoned both propriety and common sense, acting in a politically partisan manner unbecoming of his office. Mr. Kumaraswamy was elected leader of the Janata Dal (Secular) Legislature Party and, with the declared support of the Congress, had the backing of a majority in the newly elected Assembly. The leader of the BJP Legislature Party, B.S. Yeddyurappa, offered no demonstrable proof of majority, but was invited to form the government, and given all of 15 days to prove he had the confidence of the House, solely on the basis of being the leader of the single largest party. Far from ushering in a stable government, the Governor unbolted the doors to allow room for the BJP to try to engineer defections. In situations such as these, the Constitution allows an element of discretion to the Governor; but this power was never meant to be used arbitrarily and capriciously. In defense of the Governor's action, BJP leaders have cited the Bommai judgment, which ruled on the course open for the Governor in the event of a Chief Minister losing majority in the House, but offered no opinion on a post-poll situation, where it said the Governor had to "invite the leader of the party commanding majority in the House or the single largest party/group to form the government." Nothing in the judgment privileges the single largest party over the largest group when it comes to being given the first shot at forming a government.

The BJP leaders have now staked out positions that are at odds with those they adopted after the Assembly elections in Manipur and Goa, when the single largest party, the Congress, was denied a chance to form the government. Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had a weak defense on this turnaround: the Congress, he claimed, had not staked a claim in those two States. The Congress has taken the fight to the Supreme Court, which has asked the Attorney General to produce the letters written by Mr. Yeddyurappa to the Governor in support of his claim. When the members of the Congress and the JD(S) together constitute a majority in the House, it is unclear what letters Mr. Yeddyurappa could have presented to the Governor. No matter how things turn out from here on, the BJP has emerged as a bad loser. The party played a smart hand in Goa and Manipur to deny the Congress but is unable to accept defeat in Karnataka when beaten at its own game. Politics is not always about reaching for power; sometimes it is also about learning to sit in the Opposition. After all, power is only one of the means of politics, not one of its ends. The BJP may have bested the Congress in Karnataka, but it may not have paid the price for this victory yet.

(The Hindu)



By Gopalkrishna Gandhi

Mathematics is about numbers, and mathematics is an exact science. The addition, subtraction, division and multiplication of numbers in ganita is about getting problems right. Just that. Right. And a satisfaction is derived, both mathematical and aesthetic, in getting the exercise right. Precision is its sole dharma. Numbers, after a problem is done, stand still. They do not pull at each other, jumping from a plus to a minus, from the times or multiplication sign into an obelus or division sign. A sum does not try to or want to alter itself. The problem-solver or sum-beholder derives satisfaction from the purity of its precision.

Integrity of the arithmetic

Elections too are about numbers and are an exact exercise. But only until the sum is reached. That is, until the Election Commission finishes its calculations and declares the 'sum'. The Election Commission counts and then announces the counts, and once it has done that, retires. After that has been done, the President in the case of Lok Sabha elections or the Governor in the case of Vidhan Sabha elections takes over. It is in their hands that the result of the counting converts itself into the pattern of seats in the elected House. The President or Governor then becomes the keeper of the sum's integrity and has to see that the pattern of the sum is honored by the pattern of the seats. In other words, the architecture of the sum is retained by the architecture of their power. The keeper has to see that the integrity of that architecture is not garbled to create a house different in shape from the blueprint of the sum's design.

What was the blueprint of the design that the people of Karnataka drew? The blueprint came in four folds. All of us know them now only too well.

The first fold for the single largest party was the Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP's.

The second fold for the second largest party was the Congress's.

The third fold for the third largest party was that of the Janata Dal (Secular), or JD(S).

The fourth fold, which showed the first three in a pie, gave their relative shares: the first was smaller, if only slightly, than the second and third seen together.

We have to switch now from designs, graphs, squares and pies to what the Governor had to make of this four-fold design. We have to switch from arithmetic and geometry to a kind of algebra, the study of mathematical symbols, the rules for their handling, their groups, rings, fields. In other words, we have to switch now from how to

AS I SEE IT

Architecture of the Mandate

THE LESSON FROM KARNATAKA: THE PARTIES OPPOSED TO THE BJP MUST WORK TOGETHER FROM THE WORD GO

With the two parties having come together, and out-numbering the BJP MLAs, the real test of their political integrity lies in their staying together and defeating the Yeddyurappa government in the first confidence vote. There is only one way in which they can do that. And that is by staying together, staying determined, and voting on vote day unitedly. Will they let their unity and determination, numerical strength, numerical integrity be diminished? How may that be done? We know the way that happens.

move from the numbers to their mandate and see how a House is to be made from out of its mandate, a House for the mandate of the gana to dwell in. In this task, though working on and with numbers, a President or a Governor cannot function like a calculator. His task is mathematics plus ethics.

The Governor's options

The Governor of Karnataka saw and may well have felt somewhat like this: If only Party One had just crossed the halfway mark and got a simple majority, his task would have been simple. He would have called its leader to form the government. But that did not happen. The people of Karnataka voted in greater strength against Party Number One than for it.

If only Party Two and Party Three had entered the election as a joint team, in what is called a pre-poll alliance, his work would again have been simple. He would have had to call that two-colored rainbow to name its leader and invite him to take the oaths of office. But that too did not happen. The majority of the people of Karnataka voted against the BJP but they did not vote cohesively for the Congress-JD(S) combine.

So, the Governor did not get it all that simple. But was what he did get all that complicated? Not really.

Though not a pre-poll alliance, Parties Two and Three did get together with a verve and vim they did not show before the elections to become one, and not only drew up a joint list of the newly elected MLAs to be but also chose a joint leader, unconditionally. There is nothing in any electoral law or court verdict to say that a post-poll alliance is ab initio null, void and to be disregarded. True, a pre-poll alliance is a neater, more up-front arrangement, but a post-poll one is not out of order.

The numbers in Karnataka were clear. They showed the people's integrated will, albeit in two frames hinged together requiring Parties Two and Three to be asked to form the government and seek the

approval of the House by its users on its floor. If defeated, then ask Party One to try its luck. That has not happened.

Had Party Two and Party Three not come together post-poll, Governor Vajubhai Vala could have ignored the fact that the non-BJP MLAs outnumber the BJP MLAs - and left it to the Chief Minister or the putative leader of the House to navigate his majority through the first confidence vote. But he has decided and that is that.

What now? With the two parties having come together, and out-numbering the BJP MLAs, the real test of their political integrity lies in their staying together and defeating the Yeddyurappa government in the first confidence vote. There is only one way in which they can do that. And that is by staying together, staying determined, and voting on vote day unitedly. Will they let their unity and determination, numerical strength, numerical integrity be diminished? How may that be done? We know the way that happens.

The principle of it

With millions of other Indians I have a political position that opposes the ideology of the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). But I also have a sense, again with millions of others, of a political ethics that tells me if the Congress had been in the position of single largest party in Karnataka as the BJP is in, and if the BJP and the JD(S) had got together post-poll as the single largest group, and if Governor Vala, citing the single largest party line, had called the Congress to form the government, I would have said exactly the same thing I have said here - in the reverse.

The lesson of the Karnataka Kanda is this: the parties opposed to the BJP and RSS's ideology must work together from the word go, and not let the imponderables of post-election decision-making imperil the will of the people.

(The author is a former Governor of West Bengal)

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A TIME TO THINK FAST: ON THE US EXIT FROM THE IRAN DEAL

The U.S.'s exit from the Iran nuclear deal puts India in a spot on many counts



By Happymon Jacob

American President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), popularly called the Iran nuclear deal, is bound to have serious implications for the international system, and for India. To be sure, the least affected will be the U.S.; European Union countries will be moderately affected due to the business ties with Iran; and the most affected will be countries closer to the region, in particular India. Moreover, for a U.S. administration that has made it a habit of accusing other countries of "undermining the rules-based order", this action has severely undermined the rules-based global order.

Unreasonable act

Washington's decision is unjustified and unreasonable for several reasons. For one, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has consistently maintained that Tehran has complied with the strictures of the JCPOA without fail. Moreover, Iran has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which prohibits it from developing nuclear weapons and has agreed to ratify the IAEA's Additional Protocol five years from now which will grant IAEA inspectors wide-ranging access to monitor nuclear-related activities in Iran. And yet Mr. Trump has thoughtlessly undone the outcome of negotiations that went on for close to two years.

Second, the argument that since the provisions of the JCPOA will become less strict over the years enabling Iran to move towards nuclear-weapon capability is not a credible rationale for undoing the deal. In fact, if indeed there are concerns about Iran potentially moving towards a nuclear option, efforts should be made to engage Tehran in negotiations rather than undo what has already been achieved. This is a classic case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

With regard to Iran's involvement in the various West Asian conflicts and "promotion of terrorism", Iran is not the only country engaging in them. And in any case the way out, again, is diplomatic engagement rather than further unsettle an already volatile region.

The implications

The global non-proliferation regime has taken a direct hit from the U.S.'s decision to renege on the Iran deal. It is important to understand that norms, rules, persuasion and good faith make up the moral foundation of the non-proliferation regime, and the inability of the great powers to abide by them will dissuade non-nuclear weapons states from signing on to or abiding by new or existing agreements, protocols or regimes. Second, even though Mr. Trump might think that playing hardball with Tehran will help him to extract concessions from Pyongyang, it is equally possible that the North Koreans will think twice before entering into any agreement with the untrustworthy Trump administration.

Third, Washington's unilateral and dictatorial withdrawal from the deal would create deep fissures in the time-tested but

The global non-proliferation regime has taken a direct hit from the U.S.'s decision to renege on the Iran deal. It is important to understand that norms, rules, persuasion and good faith make up the moral foundation of the non-proliferation regime, and the inability of the great powers to abide by them will dissuade non-nuclear weapons states from signing on to or abiding by new or existing agreements, protocols or regimes



Mr. Trump's Iran decision follows a pattern of similar unilateral steps - such as the withdrawal from the Paris climate accord and formal recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

increasingly shaky trans-Atlantic security partnership. Not least because it implies potential secondary sanctions against those European companies which are engaged in business deals with Iran. Here again, the U.S. does not have much to lose given its almost non-existent business contacts with Iran.

Besides, Mr. Trump's Iran decision follows a pattern of similar unilateral steps - such as the withdrawal from the Paris climate accord and formal recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Let alone the loss of face suffered by European leaders and the financial losses by their countries' firms, U.S. unilateralism has deep-running implications for the global security and governance architecture, and other multilateral arrangements and regimes. It is in this context that what French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said becomes significant: "The deal is not dead. There's an American withdrawal from the deal, but the deal is still there." The argument has found support in several global capitals.

Hassan Rouhani, the moderate President of Iran, who negotiated the nuclear deal, might lose his standing in the country as hardliners pitch for more aggressive steps, including developing a nuclear weapon capability and more military engagement in the neighborhood. The chief of staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Bagheri, has said that the "Iranian people never favored the nuclear deal". This is an indication of the hardline Iranian responses in the offing as and when sanctions are reimposed.

Iran's refusal to fall in line might prompt Israel and the U.S. to carry out attacks against Iran leading to Iranian counter-strikes

against American allies in the region, or even Israel. This would further destabilize a region already reeling under terrorism, wars and internal conflicts. Americans, and the international community, should remember how the misguided military campaign against the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq turned out to be a huge geopolitical disaster.

India's Persian dilemmas

While the U.S. has almost nothing to lose in reneging on the JCPOA, India has a lot to lose both economically and geopolitically, and it will take deft diplomacy to adapt to the changing alignments. A more unstable West Asia would ipso facto mean more difficult choices for New Delhi. More conflict in the region would adversely impact the welfare and safety of Indian expatriates in West Asia, leading to a sharp decline in the remittances they send home, and an assured hike in oil prices. Low crude oil prices had given India the much-needed economic cushion in the past few years - that phase of cheaper oil has now ended. Recall how the U.S. war on Iraq had a debilitating impact on Indian workers and the West Asian remittances. India also had to abandon the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline in 2008 thanks to U.S. sanctions against Iran.

The Narendra Modi government's efforts to maintain a fine balance between India's relations with Iran on the one hand and with the U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia on the other will be seriously tested in the days ahead. The new warmth between Iran and India could attract American ire. What is even more worrying is that unlike the last time when the U.S. imposed sanctions on Iran, and India had to choose the U.S. over Iran, the geopolitical

realities are starkly different this time. Not only are the Americans going it alone this time, but the regional ganging-up against the U.S. and in support of Iran will be more pronounced this time around, making India's ability to make a clear choice more difficult.

India's dreams of accessing Central Asia via Iran could also be dashed with the return of American sanctions against Iran. India's projects in Iran's Chabahar port have been widely viewed in New Delhi as a crucial plank of its Iran-Afghanistan-Central Asia strategy. With U.S. sanctions again tightening around Tehran, New Delhi may find it hard to continue with this project. As a matter of fact, thanks partly to India's dilly-dallying on Chabahar during the previous round of U.S. sanctions against Iran, Iran had invited Pakistan to the Chabahar project. Some have even suggested a potential link between Chabahar and Gwadar in Pakistan.

Given that there is little consensus around Mr. Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA, several of the dissenting parties might look for ways of thwarting U.S. efforts at isolating Iran. Such efforts, especially those led by China and Russia, both parties to the JCOPA, would have implications for the Southern Asian region as well. If indeed China manages to bring together a group of regional powers, including Russia, Iran, Pakistan and interested others, to counter Washington's influence in the region, New Delhi might find itself in a corner.

(The author is Associate Professor of Disarmament Studies, Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Vaisakhi Celebrated at the Indian Consulate, New York

CONTD FROM PAGE 2

Mr. Himat Singh Sarpanch was recognized for his cooperation in organizing the Vaisakhi festival.

While Mr. Himat Singh Sarpanch, a former President of Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah



One of the paintings Manoj Vyas exhibited

and his colleagues, Master Mohinder Singh (founder President), Mr. Raghbir Singh Subhanpur (former President) , Mr. Raghbir Singh Babby, President, Mr. Gurmej Singh (former President) Mr. Dilbagh Singh (former Vice President), with Sikh leaders from New York and New Jersey joining them, presented Shawls to the guest speaker

Dr. Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh, Ambassador Sandeep Chakraborty and Mrs. Taruna Chakraborty, Malini Shah, Community liaison to New York City Council Member Paul Vallone presented on behalf of the Council Member, citations from New York City Council to Dr. Nikky and Ambassador Chakraborty. Malini also presented citations to the classical dance guru from London Padma Shri Pratap Pawar, and Prof. Indrajit S Saluja.

In his thank you remarks, Prof. Indrajit S Saluja expressed his gratitude to all present. The Fourth Estate -Media which was present in great strength, earned special appreciation and gratitude of the organizers. Those present included Bidisha Roy from The Indian Panorama, Parveen Chopra from the South Asian Times; Sonia Lalwani, Harvinder Singh and Peter from Parikh Worldwide; freelancer Anjali Sharma, Brahm Kanchibhotla; Renee Mehrra and Ashok Vyas from ITV; Jaya Sharma, Davender Singh and Balwant Hothi from PTC TV; Atma Singh from Car Studio; Jus Punjabi TV, TV Asia, and Global Punjab.



Gatka team with Consul General, guests of honor, and organizers



Soormay gave a scintillating Bhangra performance



Mr. Jatinder Singh Bakshi who lent great support in organizing the event (fourth from left), joined the celebrations with his friends. They are seen here with the Consul General (fifth from left).



Balwant Hothi was recognized for his assistance in making the documentary on Vaisakhi.



Malini Shah presenting New York City Council Citation to Prof. Indrajit S Saluja

London Tops University Destination for International Students



NIRPAL SINGH SHERGILL



LONDON (TIP): London has been ranked the best city in the world for university students, according to a new international survey.

The capital of the UK replaced year's top city Montreal to rank as number one study destination for the first time in the QS Best Student Cities Ranking 2018. The study, carried out by QS Quacquarelli Symonds, builds the rankings based on a number of factors, such as affordability, desirability and the view of students.

The student survey quizzed 50,000 students about the quality of their experience in their city, and their willingness to remain there after graduating.

London scored highly in the likelihood of students getting a job (or converting a student visa to a graduate work permit and eventually permanent residence in the UK) in the city at the end of their degree study in the UK. The city has a reputation as a multi-national international city with strong levels of tolerance and diversity.

There is also a concentration of world-class universities, such as University College London and Imperial College London, which makes the city attractive to students. But the city did not score so well on affordability, coming in at 113th in the rankings.

Ben Sowter, research director at QS, said: "The 2018 ranking highlights the enduring quality of the student

experience available in London.

"The city benefits from outstanding employment prospects, more world-class universities than any other city, and enviable lifestyle opportunities. "These factors mean that the capital remains a great place to study despite eye-watering costs."

The Canadian city of Montreal dropped to fourth in the rankings, behind Tokyo in second and Melbourne in third.

Australia, which offers students the possibility of a longer term stay after graduating, also saw Sydney climb to ninth place, while the United States failed to see any of its cities make the top 10.

Paris ranked fifth, after topping the table in 2016.

WITH IRAQI FORCES IN CONTROL, DANES TO PULL OUT COMMANDOS

COPENHAGEN (TIP): Denmark says it is pulling back its special forces troops that are part of an international coalition fighting the Islamic State group now that formerly IS-controlled areas of Iraq have now been recaptured by Iraqi forces.

Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen says: "We have now reached a point where we can start the pull back of our special forces" that were in Iraq as advisers and trainers, among others, as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. Samuelsen said Thursday: "It is important to stress that the fight against IS isn't over yet," adding Denmark would continue its contribution in the fight against IS with a radar facility and ground staff. (AP)

EGYPT KILLS 19 JIHADISTS IN SINAI: ARMY

CAIRO (TIP): Egypt's army said May 17 it killed 19 presumed jihadists in the Sinai peninsula during a large-scale "anti-terror" operation.

Egyptian forces launched operation "Sinai 2018" in February in the peninsula where soldiers and security forces have been battling the Islamic State group.

A military statement said 19 suspected extremists were killed in gun battles with army and security forces in the central and northern Sinai in recent days. Around 200 jihadists and at least 33 soldiers have been killed since the operation was launched, according to official figures.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, on a visit to the Sinai last month, promised residents the operation would be finished "as soon as possible". (AFP)

South Korea to play 'mediator' to resolve North Korea-US summit doubts: Official

SEOUL: South Korea said on Thursday it would seek to mediate between the United States and North Korea after Pyongyang threatened to pull out of an unprecedented summit between its leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump on June 12 in Singapore.

North Korea on Wednesday said it might not attend the summit if Washington continues to demand it unilaterally abandon its nuclear arsenal.

Japan's Asahi newspaper on Thursday reported the United States has demanded North Korea ship some nuclear warheads, an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and other nuclear material overseas within six months.

The newspaper, citing several sources familiar with North Korean issues, said U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo appeared to have told the North Korean leader when they met this month that Pyongyang might be removed from a list of state sponsors of terrorism if it ships out those nuclear items.

The Asahi also reported that if Pyongyang agrees to complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation at the planned Singapore summit, Washington was considering giving guarantees for Kim's regime.

Doubts over the U.S.-North Korea summit arose on Wednesday when Pyongyang denounced U.S.-South Korean military exercises as a provocation and called off high-level talks with Seoul.

Trump has said it is unclear whether the summit will go ahead but he would continue to insist on denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

South Korea's presidential Blue House said it would seek to bridge the gap between the Washington and Pyongyang.

A Blue House official said the South Korean government or President Moon Jae-in intends to more actively perform "the role of a mediator" between South Korea, the United States and North Korea.

Trump will host South Korean President Moon at a summit at the White House on May 22, and the two are expected to discuss the upcoming U.S.-North Korea summit.

The Blue House intends to "sufficiently convey (to the United States) what we've discerned about North Korea's position and attitude... and sufficiently convey the United States' position to North Korea," thereby helping to bridge the gap between their positions, the official said.

"Seeing the announced statements and responses from North Korea and the United States, we see the two parties as having a sincere and serious attitude (to stand in each other's shoes)," the official said.

South Korea intends to continue discussions with North Korea to hold high-level talks North Korea cancelled on Wednesday, Blue House said in a separate statement on Thursday. Meanwhile, Chinese government's top diplomat, Wang Yi, said on Thursday the measures North Korea has taken to ease tension on the Korean peninsula should be acknowledged, and all other parties, especially the United States, should cherish the opportunity for peace.

Cancellation of the summit, the first between U.S. and North Korean leaders, would deal a major blow to what would be the biggest diplomatic achievement of Trump's presidency. This comes at a time when his withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal has drawn criticism internationally and his move of the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem has fuelled deadly violence on the Israel-Gaza border. (Reuters)

British armed forces stage rehearsal for the royal wedding

LONDON (TIP): Preparations are in full swing for the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on May 12 as hundreds of British armed forces officers came out on to the streets of Windsor today to stage a rehearsal for the big day.

The newly-wed royal couple will be doing a tour of the city centre of Windsor, around 41 kms from London, in a traditional horse-driven Ascot Landau carriage after they tie the knot at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle.

More than 250 members of the armed forces will accompany the carriage, as officials practice for the big day.

"Led by Director James Vivian, the St. George's Chapel Choir were in rehearsal for the wedding of Prince Harry, 33, and Meghan Markle," Kensington Palace said.

The palace had revealed yesterday that Prince Harry's niece, three-year-old Princess Charlotte, will be one of six young girls chosen as bridesmaids at the wedding. Her elder brother, Prince George, aged four, will be a pageboy among a total of 10 children chosen for the roles.

So far, all details of the bride's and bridesmaids' dresses and the pageboys' uniforms remain under wraps.

Some campaigners have handed over a petition to the UK Parliament to ensure the royal family pays for the enormous security costs involved in the royal wedding. The anti-monarchy campaign group Republic has gathered 32,000 signatures on an online petition calling for "no taxpayer funding for the royal wedding". (PTI)

Former Cambridge Analytica boss to appear before British lawmakers on June 6

LONDON (TIP): The ex-boss of Cambridge Analytica, a political consultancy that closed down after being involved in a scandal about the improper use of the data of millions of Facebook users, will appear in front of British lawmakers on June 6.

The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee said that Alexander Nix had accepted its summons. While Nix has testified once to the committee, lawmakers want him to give further evidence - a request he had previously declined.

"We are glad that Alexander Nix has accepted our summons. The Committee will use the opportunity to address numerous inconsistencies in his previous evidence," Damian Collins, the committee's chairman, said in a statement.

The media committee is investigating fake news, and is increasingly focused on the role of Cambridge Analytica and Facebook in the 2016 Brexit vote and in the election of U.S. President Donald Trump.

Cambridge Analytica has denied doing paid work on the campaign for Brexit, and says its work on the Trump campaign did not use data at the centre of a Facebook scandal, where the details of around 87 million users were allegedly improperly obtained.

Cambridge Analytica said it pitched to Leave.EU, a Brexit campaign group, but did not do any work for them after it missed out on the official campaign designation to Vote Leave, which is separately being investigated for possibly breaches of campaign finance rules.

The committee said that Dominic Cummings, former campaign director Vote Leave, had refused to appear in front of lawmakers to discuss the campaign and its use of data.

Collins said that Cummings would be reported for failing to appear, which "could result in a decision that a contempt of parliament has been committed, a very serious outcome for the individual." (Reuters)



RANBIR KAPOOR TO ROMANCE VAANI KAPOOR IN 'SHAMSHERA'

A few days back, Ranbir Kapoor's new project 'Shamshera' was announced. The Yash Raj Films shared a film announcement teaser with fans where Ranbir's first dacoit look has been unveiled. The film also stars powerhouse actor Sanjay Dutt playing a pivotal part.

While the makers were tightlipped about the actress's name at the teaser announcement, it has now been revealed that 'Befikre' actress Vaani Kapoor will be seen opposite Ranbir in the venture.

Dutt will be seen playing negative role in 'Shamshera' whereas Ranbir will be seen in the titular role of a dacoit. This is the first time that the Kapoor lad will be seen playing this kind of a character on-screen. The venture will be helmed by Karan Malhotra.

Interestingly, Ranbir will be seen playing Sanjay Dutt in biopic 'Sanju' which is slated to hit the screens on June 29, 2018. The film is based on the controversial life of Dutt who has had a tumultuous journey in his personal and professional life which will be presented on the big screens.

'Sanju' has been directed by Rajkumar Hirani and has an ensemble star cast with the likes of Ranbir playing the titular role of Dutt. It stars Sonam Kapoor, Dia Mirza, Paresh Rawal, Manisha Koirala, Anushka Sharma, Karishma Tanna, Jim Sarbh to name a few.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN OWN ALIA BHATT'S WARDROBE

Bollywood actor Alia Bhatt has put a part of her personal wardrobe on auction. She shared about her 'closet cleaning for a cause' on Instagram. Alia's statement read, "I have the greatest pleasure to invite you to 'Mi Wardrobe is Su Wardrobe', a very special initiative that truly excites me."

The statement further read, "Mi Wardrobe Is Su Wardrobe is closet-cleaning for a cause. It will give you the chance to buy outfits straight from my personal wardrobe. And the best part? All proceeds will go to charity."

In another initiative, outfits worn by Anushka Sharma and Hrithik Roshan for their films will be auctioned for charity.

Some days ago, there was a huge uproar over Akshay Kumar putting the navy uniform he wore in Rustom on auction. He was even served a legal notice for doing so, but it seems the auction website, saltscout.com, has left the controversy behind. The navy uniform is still up for auction, with bids reaching Rs 2.35 lakh.

The latest items to be auctioned on the site are Hrithik Roshan's superhero jacket from Krrish and Anushka Sharma's kurta from Ae Dil Hai Mushkil.

While Krrish jacket is leading the race with a bid of Rs 70,000, Anushka's kurta has attracted a bid of Rs 18,500 so far. The bidding for both will close at 9:30 pm on June 3.

The website claims that the money raised from the auction would be used for social causes and 90% of the net proceeds from it would support NGO Janice's Trust, an animal rescue service, treatment centre and shelter based in Panchgani in Maharashtra.

However, these aren't the only items on the auction list. The upcoming items are Sonam Kapoor's outfit in the film Khoobsurat, and Ranbir Kapoor's shirt in Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani. The bidding for Sonam's clothes and Ranbir's shirt will start on May 17 and May 24 respectively.

A page on the website says, "At SaltScout,



we provide market-based approaches to support fundraising for social causes and to spur the market for socially conscious

shopping in a sustainable and scalable fashion."

Source: HT

Sunny Leone introduces Rysa as 'mini' Karenjit Kaur

Actress-model Sunny Leone is all set to reveal her entire life in a biopic titled Karenjit Kaur - The Untold Story of Sunny Leone, which will be streamed on ZEE5, a digital platform which has a plethora of original content for the viewers.

On Saturday, she took to her Instagram to introduce a young girl named Rysa, who will play her younger version in her biopic. Sunny shared the photo of the girl, writing, "Introducing mini me 'Karenjit Kaur Vohra' @heyyitsrysa @zee5 @namahpictures @freshlimefilms #karenjitkaur."

While Rysa will play the younger version of the actress in the biopic, Sunny will play herself for the later part of her life.

The show will revolve around Sunny, born as Karenjit and will trace her journey from her entry to the adult film industry and her subsequent rise in the Hindi film and television industry. Before her debut in Bollywood, Sunny had participated in the fifth season of the reality show Bigg Boss and that's where filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt noticed her.



While Rysa will play the younger version of the actress in the biopic, Sunny will play herself for the later part of her life

Soon she made her smashing debut in Pooja Bhatt's thriller 'Jism 2' in 2012. Post that, she went on to appear in several film namely Jackpot (2013), Ragini MMS 2 (2014) and Ek Paheli Leela (2015).

Sunny is also quite active in backing several campaigns. She backed the Rock 'n' Roll Los Angeles Half-Marathon to raise money for the American Cancer Society and has also posed for a People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) ad campaign.

She has been married to Daniel Weber, a musician in 2011 and they have been together for seven years now. Recently, the couple announced the birth of their twin babies - Asher Singh Weber and Noah Singh Weber through surrogacy. They also have adopted a baby girl from Latur in Maharashtra and named her Nisha Kaur.



Jodie Foster to receive honorary degree from American Film Institute

Veteran actor-filmmaker Jodie Foster will be conferred with an honorary degree from the American Film Institute (AFI). The 55-year-old actor will receive AFI Conservatory Doctorate of Fine Arts degrees honoris causa, along with fellow Academy Award-winner, production designer Dean Tavoularis, 85.

The duo will be recognised for their contributions to cinema during the AFI Conservatory's commencement ceremony on June 11, a statement on the institute's website read.

A two-time Academy Award winner for acting, Foster has starred in films such as 'Silence of the Lambs', 'Taxi Driver', 'The Accused', among others. She went on to take up directing with her debut 'Little Man Tate' in 1991, in which she also featured.

FESTIVAL LIKE CANNES OPEN DOORS TO SOCIAL AWARENESS: DIANE KRUGER

American actress Diane Kruger considers Cannes and other film festivals as an opportunity to create awareness about social causes.

In a conversation, she said, "The whole #MeToo movement has started that and we have to be vigilant with following up, and it definitely feels like the door is opening. I produce myself, or I've been trying to produce this new series about Hedy Lamarr. I've had this project for four years and it's been like trying to push a rock up a mountain. Nobody wanted to make it."

"Every studio said, 'We don't want to make a female biopic. Who wants to see that?' and it's finally gained momentum in the last six months, so I do feel like it's changing a little bit. Since Hidden Figures came out that's when things started to change. It's just there's more of an appetite and now there is proof that those types of films make money," she added.

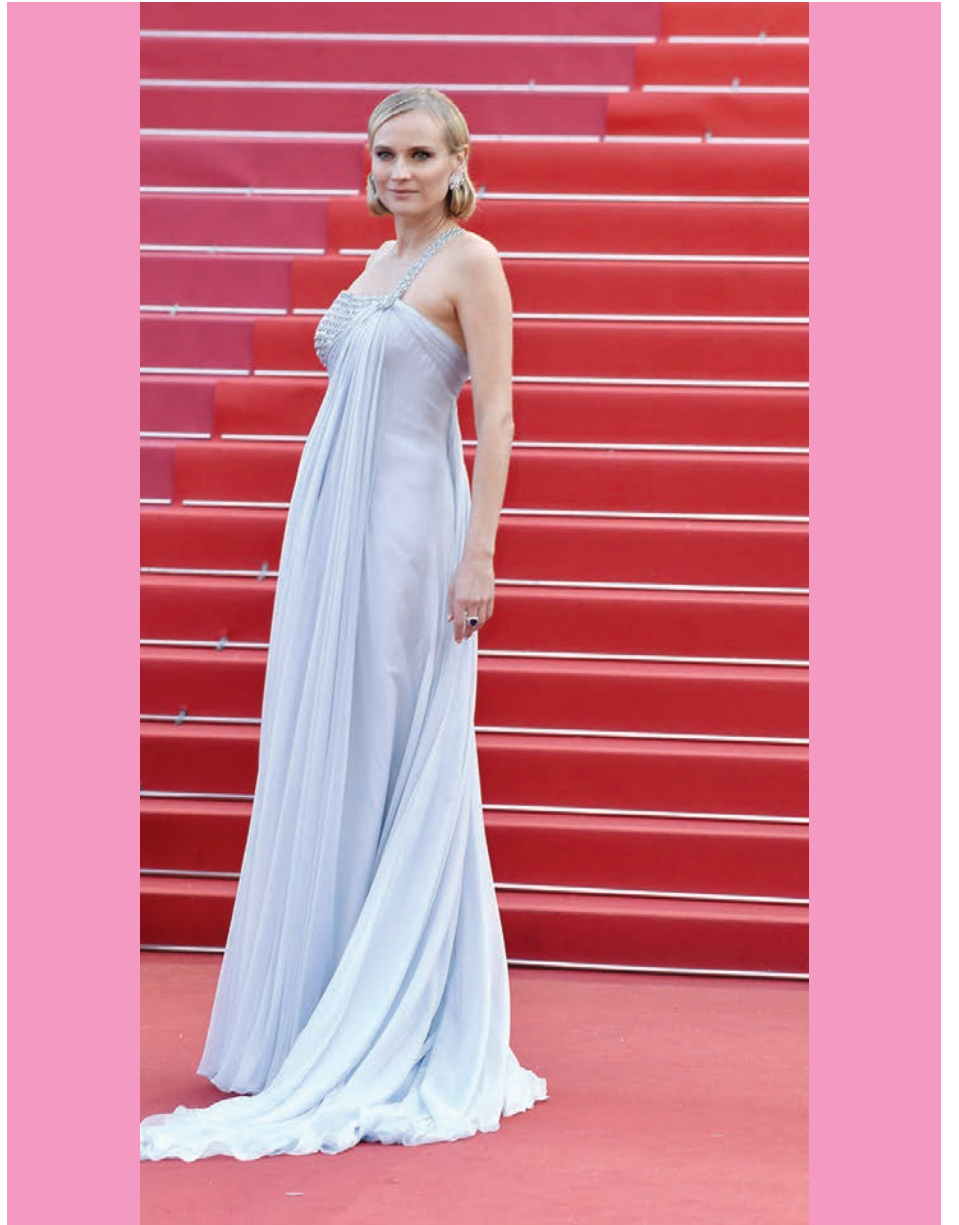
Hedy Lamarr was an Austrian-born American film actress and inventor. The Troy actress returned to the fest after her best actress triumph last year to present the Chopard Trophée to Joe Alwyn and Elizabeth Debicki.

She's the darling of the fashion world. And Diane Kruger was up to her usual glamorous tricks on Sunday evening as she arrived for the screening of Sink Or Swim at Cannes Film Festival.

The actress wore an ice blue gown, with a bejewelled corset and a one shoulder design to the French event.

The 41-year-old accessorised her ethereal look with statement diamond earrings and a small silver clutch bag.

Her golden tresses were slicked back behind her ears in a simple style and she wore a glamorous smokey eye with a nude lip.



Kristen Stewart defies Cannes' red carpet policy, ditches heels

She came, she posed, she kicked off her Christian Louboutin heels and made a political statement at the Cannes Film Festival.

Keeping with her rebellious reputation, Kristen Stewart, who was attending the premiere of Spike Lee's *BlacKkKlansman*, at the 71st Cannes Film Festival, marched up the steps to the Palais barefoot to protest against the festival's high-heels-only rule.

The *Twilight* star, however, was applauded by the Twitterverse for her act of rebellion.

The 28-year-old has been a vocal critic of the festival's red carpet policy, which was updated this year to ban selfies.

Last year, during a roundtable conversation at the event, Stewart reportedly said, "Things have to change immediately. It's just like you simply cannot ask me to do something that you are not asking him [to do]. I get the black-tie thing but you should be able to do either version flats or heels."



1 killed, 14 injured in suicide attack in northwest Pakistan

PESHWAR (TIP): A suicide bomber riding a bike rammed his two-wheeler into a Frontier Corps (FC) vehicle in northwest Pakistan on May 17, killing at least one civilian and wounding 14 others, including four soldiers, police said.

The bomber blew himself up near the forces' vehicle on Mall Road near Kachehri Chowk in Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, District Police Officer Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari said.

Rescue teams and security officials have reached the site of the explosion.

The Army said only four troops were injured in the blast and there was no casualty on part of the army troops.

The injured have been shifted to Combined Military Hospital, Nowshera.

"12 of the 14 injured have been shifted to CMH Nowshera and two to DHQ Hospital. The condition of four injured was stated to be critical," he said.

Ashraf Ghani apologises after Afghan air strike kills 30 children

KABUL (TIP): Afghan President Ashraf Ghani apologised on May 16 to the families of civilians, mainly children, killed when the country's air force sprayed an outdoor religious gathering with rockets and machine gun fire last month.

The April 2 airstrike on a ceremony attended by hundreds of men and boys in Dasht-e-Archi district -- a Taliban stronghold in the northern province of Kunduz -- left at least 36 people dead including 30 children, a United Nations investigation has shown.

Seventy-one people were wounded, including 51 children, it said, adding that it had "credible information" the tolls could be even higher.

Originally the government and military had said the Afghan Air Force targeted a Taliban base where senior members of the group were planning attacks.

The defence ministry initially denied any civilians had been hurt, then claimed the Taliban had shot them.

Today Ghani met families as well as local elders and apologised, a statement from the presidential palace said.

"(T)he difference between evildoers and a legitimate government is that a legitimate government apologises for the mistakes made," he said, according to the statement.

He also vowed that the government would pay compensation to the families, and build a minaret in memory of the victims as well as a mosque for the region. The statement gave no further details.

The UN investigators could not confirm if the casualties were all civilians or whether Taliban leaders had been present at the time of the air strike. They have called for further investigations.

The government has sent two teams to conduct an investigation into the incident but so far neither team has "publicly reported their findings", the UN said. (AFP)

280 Lankan Tamils, including 29 children, disappeared in one day: ITJP

COLOMBO (TIP): About 280 Tamils, including 29 children, who had surrendered before the Sri Lankan Army on the final day of the war against the LTTE in 2009, had gone missing in the single largest incident of enforced disappearance in the country's history, according to a rights group report.

The International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) website has listed 280 names of enforced disappearances of people in Sri Lanka which included at least 29 children, a release from the ITJP said.

"This is the largest single group of enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka's history - hundreds of people disappearing at the same time and place with multiple eyewitnesses both inside and outside the country," ITJP executive director Yasmin Sooka was quoted as saying in the release.

Calling on Sri Lanka's Office of Missing Persons to question the military commanders if it wants to recover the truth about these cases, the ITJP claimed that the commanders had even shook hands with the surrendered Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) leaders, who were alleged to have been executed. (PTI)

Nawaz Sharif to be asked to consult party before going public on sensitive issues: Shahbaz Sharif

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, facing the heat after his controversial remarks on the Mumbai terror attack, will be asked to consult the party leadership before talking on sensitive issues, PML-N chief Shahbaz Sharif on May 17 assured concerned party lawmakers.

In an explosive interview last week, the three-time prime minister had questioned Pakistan's policy to allow the "non-state actors" to cross the border and "kill" people in Mumbai as he publicly acknowledged that militant groups are active in the country.

His remarks triggered a major political controversy, ahead of general election in Pakistan.

Fearing that Sharif's reremarks could damage the party and mar their electoral fortunes, many lawmakers of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) during a parliamentary committee meeting, complained to Nawaz Sharif's younger brother and party chief Shahbaz, also the Chief Minister of Pakistan's Punjab province.

Shahbaz while defending his sibling, said: "No one is more patriotic than Nawaz Sharif". However, he also added that he will try and convince the PML-N 'supreme leader' to consult the party before talking on sensitive matters, Dawn newspaper reported.

The National Security Committee, Pakistan's top civil-military body, held a special meeting on Monday and came out with a statement, condemning the "fallacious" statement by Sharif about



the Mumbai terror attack and termed it as "incorrect and misleading".

Shahbaz, according to DawnNews TV's sources, said no one should say things which could hurt the country, and assured his party that there will soon be a softness in Sharif's rhetoric on contentious issues.

Several PML-N party members -- reportedly including Sardar Ashiq Hussain Gopang, Abdul Rahman Kanju and Shafqat Baloch -- expressed concern over Sharif's remarks.

Lawmakers apprised Shehbaz of the issues faced by them and the negative atmosphere following Nawaz Sharif's controversial statement on the Mumbai attacks, Geo TV reported, quoting sources as saying.

The lawmakers said that they will face

problems when they approach voters during election time.

The PML-N president promised to take their grievances to party supremo Nawaz Sharif, the report said.

Shahbaz, 66, who has taken over from 68-year-old Nawaz Sharif as the PML-N president following the latter's disqualification, said that "whoever arranged that interview is the biggest enemy of Nawaz".

Shehbaz also claimed that Nawaz Sharif's remarks were taken out of context.

In an attempt to do damage control, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi also intervened and said that media reports misquoted the former prime minister. Around 120 lawmakers of the party attended the meeting. (PTI)

Bangladesh opposition leader Khaleda Zia granted bail

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh's 72-year-old opposition leader Khaleda Zia was granted bail on corruption charges May 16 after her lawyers argued her health was at risk, paving the way for her to be released from jail.

Zia was imprisoned in February after being accused of embezzling money intended for an orphanage, an allegation she said was politically motivated.

Bangladesh has for years been locked in an epic showdown between Zia, who has served as prime minister three times, and her arch-rival, current leader Sheikh Hasina.

In a unanimous ruling, the Supreme Court upheld a lower court's decision to grant Zia bail while she appeals against the five-year jail term, her lawyer Joynal Abedin told AFP.

She faces several other charges and it was not immediately clear when she would be released from the special jail in the capital Dhaka where she is the sole inmate.

Zia's lawyers said they told the court that she faced serious health risks if kept in prison and that she would be treated at a top private hospital once she is released.

"She has become very sick due to long solitary confinement," Abedin said, adding that Zia suffers from a neurological problem, arthritis and night-time fever. The Supreme Court had earlier suspended the lower court's decision to grant Zia bail, prompting her Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to condemn the move as part of a campaign by Hasina to silence the opposition ahead of looming national elections.

Zia faces more than 30 other inquiries related to violence and corruption.

Abedin said she was officially considered under arrest in at least six other cases and needs to get bail for each one, which may take days or weeks. However, the Supreme Court ruling is likely to have an influence on those proceedings.

"We hope she will be released shortly. These cases do not have merit at all. These are all politically motivated cases," Abedin said.

Mohammad Shamsuzzaman, an orthopaedic specialist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, visited Zia last month as part of a four-member government team.

He said her condition was not serious but that she had developed back pain and her arthritis had worsened in prison. (AFP)

Cargo plane crashes in Nepal, killing two pilots

KATHMANDU (TIP): A small Nepalese cargo plane on May 16 crashed in a mountainous district, killing both the pilots onboard the aircraft mostly used for flying food and other supplies to remote regions.

Pilot Kiran Bhattarai and co-pilot Aditya Nepali were killed when the Makalu Air cargo aircraft crashed at Simikot pass in Bahun Kharka in Humla district, police said.

The single-engine Cessna 208B Grand Caravan with call sign 9N-AJU had taken off from Surkhet to Humla district and was flying at a height of 12,800 feet.

The bodies of the two pilots have been brought to Kathmandu. There were no other passengers in the ill-fated aircraft, police said.

The bodies were brought on board a Simrik Air helicopter at around 1 pm, said Simrik Air staffer Kamal Gautam.

The aircraft took off from Surkhet Airport early today and was scheduled to land at 6:55 am in Simikot.

Makalu Air has three single-engine Cessna 208B Grand Caravan aircrafts to its fleet. Based in Nepalgunj, Makalu Air provides chartered passenger and cargo services.

The freight transporter aircraft was discovered wrecked and fragmented into three parts in Ekalbajkharka at around 11:00 am, a Nepalese media report said.

The plane was mostly used for flying food and other supplies in the mountainous region. (PTI)



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WHAT WOMEN MISS ABOUT BEING SINGLE

It may be a cliché to say that people always want what they don't have, but when it comes to relationships, sometimes that's the cold, hard truth.

Those who are single want to find someone who makes their heart dance and can officially take them off the market (aka the dating apps).

Those who are in a relationship, married or even married with kids like to flirt with the idea of kicking it all to the curb and downloading a dating app, where they can swipe themselves to a new life and a new lover.

Here's what married women who wish they were single had to say:

I miss sleeping alone

There's nothing like sleeping by yourself. That's something you don't get to do when you are in a relationship or even married, like I am, for four years. I miss the days when I could have the whole bed and even apartment to myself. Sharing is tough. Being single and selfish has such a giant appeal to me some days when I just need some alone time, or desperately want to go to sleep and stretch out on the bed.

I never got to use a dating app.

I see all my friends swiping on these dating apps, and it just seems like something I wish I tried. I met my husband the old-fashioned way: in person at a coffee shop. Sure, it feels like a romantic movie, but a part of me wishes I was dating now, when there are more options and meeting people is easier. I seriously wonder if he and I would have matched on one of these dating apps or what our profiles would have looked like. It would be kind of cool to test that out and see if in today's world, if we would be together with the help of one of these apps.

Going out to clubs would be more fun.

I used to love going out for a girls' night at a club, having a group of guys pay for our bottle service and dance with us all night. Now I go, and guys see my wedding ring and automatically



think I'm boring. I miss being single and able to flirt with an outrageously hot guy at a club until 4 am.

There's nothing like new love.

Ah, I miss the spark of new love. There's nothing like those first couple of dates with someone and all the anticipation over whether they like you, when they are going to kiss you or just watching their name pop up on your phone. I miss all those feelings. Everything is calm and predictable when you're married.

I'd feel young again.

Marriage makes me feel old. Maybe it's because I gave up on trying to look

nice all of the time, or maybe it's because I don't feel nice when I don't get attention from random guys like I did when I was single or looking. That's the only reason I wish I was single, to feel young and good about myself again.

I'd get the chance to start over.

I'll be honest and say I'm not in a good marriage. I'm not happy, and hope to get a divorce soon. The one thing I can look forward to is the chance to be single again and start from scratch. It's hard to reset a relationship that's just all wrong and making you miserable. It's easier to start things off on a good note with a new person.



GET RID OF PIMPLES FAST

Instead of shelling out for expensive acne treatments, learn how to get clear skin with these natural at-home remedies.

Green Tea

Green tea has antimicrobial and antioxidant compounds that can help fight acne. To get its effects, use a cooled cup of green tea as a face wash or lay the bag over the affected area.

Honey

Honey's antibiotic properties can help improve acne. Apply a teaspoon of honey to affected areas, or make a mask by mixing 1/2 cup of honey with 1 cup of plain oatmeal and leaving it on for 30 minutes.

Mint

Mint can help remove pore-clogging oil. To help clear acne before it begins, mix 2 tablespoons of finely chopped fresh mint with two tablespoons each of plain yogurt and oatmeal (use a blender to pulverize the oatmeal to powder). Leave the concoction on your face for 10 minutes, then rinse off with water.

Echinacea

Echinacea is traditionally used to speed wound healing and prevent colds and flu, but its antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties can help with acne as well. Use echinacea tea as a daily face wash by soaking a cloth with it, or put a few drops of tincture on a cotton ball and dab it on blemishes.

Aspirin

The salicylic acid in aspirin is a go-to for acne treatments, and the aspirin can dry up pimples and reduce inflammation. To take advantage of its benefits, form a paste by mashing aspirin in a little water, or dissolve four pills in 2 tablespoons of water.

Chamomile

Chamomile helps decrease inflammation from acne. In a blender or coffee grinder, combine the contents of a chamomile tea bag with enough water to form a paste, and apply that to acne. Alternately, steep two chamomile tea bags with 1 cup boiled water for 15 minutes. Let the tea cool, then use a cotton ball to dab it on your face after cleansing.

FOOD CORNER

MUGHLAI CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons Ghee
- 10 Cashewnuts
- 4 large Onions, finely chopped
- 6 Garlic Cloves, peeled
- 1 inch piece Ginger, peeled
- 3 Green Chillies
- 2 Cardamom Pods
- 1 Bayleaf
- 3 Cloves
- 1 inch Cinnamon stick
- 1/2 kg bone-in Chicken (cut into medium sized pieces)
- 1/2 teaspoon Turmeric Powder
- 1 teaspoon Coriander Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Chilli Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Garam Masala Powder
- 2 tablespoons Cream
- Salt to taste



Method

- To start with, soak cashewnuts in hot water for 10 minutes. Also rub turmeric powder all over the chicken. Set both things aside.

- Heat a tablespoon of ghee in a pan, and add the onions. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon salt over the onions and mix. Reduce the flame, cover and cook the onions till they are deep brown in colour. During the process of browning the onions, stir them around every 5-6 minutes to prevent them from sticking to the bottom and burning. This whole process of caramelizing the onions should take about 20 minutes.
- Once the onions are brown, transfer them to a food processor along with the soaked cashewnuts, garlic cloves, ginger, green chillies and 1/4 cup water. Grind to a smooth paste.
- Heat the remaining ghee in the same pan, and add cardamom pods, bayleaf, cloves and cinnamon. Saute for a minute or two and add the onion paste. Cook the onion paste on medium high heat, while stirring occasionally for 4-5 minutes. Add coriander powder, chilli powder, garam masala powder and salt and saute for another 2-3 minutes.
- Add chicken to the pan along with 1/4 cup water. Cover and cook the chicken for 20 minutes or till cooked through, while stirring the curry occasionally. This will be a thick gravy, but if you like your thinner, feel free to add a little water and bring the curry to a boil.
- Taste for seasoning, and finish it up by stirring in the cream. Switch off the flame. Let the curry sit for 10 minutes before serving with parathas and jeera rice.

HYPERTENSION: CAUSES, SYMPTOMS AND CURE

Hypertensive crisis happens when there is a sudden increase in blood pressure, potentially causing organ damage. For example, one risks heart failure, kidney failure or stroke when the blood pressure gets very high. Symptoms of hypertensive crisis can be breathlessness, chest pain, changes in consciousness, repeated vomiting, severe headache and convulsions. In such situations, emergency medical attention – including early control of blood pressure – is mandatory to avoid fatalities.

Hypertension is classified into two categories, Primary hypertension and Secondary hypertension. While 90 to 95 per cent of hypertension cases are primary, only 5 to 10 per cent people suffer from secondary hypertension. The main causes of getting affected by primary hypertension are lifestyle and genetic factors. Eating foods with high amount of salt, tobacco smoking or excess consumption of alcohol can increase the risk of high blood pressure. Secondary hypertension can be caused due to excess use of birth control pills, narrowing of kidney arteries and endocrine disorder. This type of high blood pressure tends to appear suddenly and other factors responsible for secondary hypertension are obstructive sleep apnea, thyroid, alcohol abuse and illegal drugs such as cocaine.

Stress and depression can also cause high blood pressure. But this can lead to a temporary increase in the blood pressure. Relaxing may control the levels. There may not be any signs or



symptoms of high blood pressure, even if it is reaching higher levels. A person with hypertension may feel dizziness, suffer from headaches, may feel short of breath or his/ her may nose bleeds more often. It should be noted that these symptoms may not even appear until high blood pressure has reached a life-threatening stage. The way we are leading our lifestyles, it has become crucial to be extra careful about our physical as well as mental health. Visit your doctor immediately if your body shows any different symptoms. Get your blood pressure checked at regular intervals so as to avoid any serious health complications.

While hypertension can pose a

significant risk of heart disease and stroke, it can be controlled. High stress levels, obesity, sedentary lifestyle and poor dietary habits are some of the main reasons for hypertension in young people.

How can it be prevented, then? Taking at least 10,000 steps a day, ensuring weight-loss and maintaining a healthy diet go a long way in preventing hypertension. Along with this, practice at least five minutes of mindfulness after waking up each morning to reduce blood pressure and stress, say doctors. "In cases you are a young hypertensive, go for a thorough medical check-up to ensure that there are no secondary or more sinister causes of hypertension."



YOGURT MAY HELP DAMPEN CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Eating yogurt may help reduce chronic inflammation, a factor in bowel disease, arthritis and asthma, according to a study.

The research, published in the Journal of Nutrition, explored the hypothesis that yogurt may help reduce inflammation by improving the integrity of the intestinal lining.

This could help prevent endotoxins - pro-inflammatory molecules produced by gut microbes - from crossing into the blood stream.

"I wanted to look at the mechanism more closely and look specifically at yogurt," said Brad Bolling, an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the US.

While anti-inflammatory medications like aspirin, naproxen, hydrocortisone and prednisone can help mitigate the effects of chronic inflammation, each comes with its own risks and side effects.

The study enrolled 120 premenopausal women, half obese and half non-obese. Half of the participants were assigned to eat 12 ounces of low-fat yogurt every day for nine weeks; a control group ate non-dairy pudding for nine weeks.

Bolling and his team took fasting blood samples from participants and evaluated an assortment of biomarkers that scientists have used over the years to measure endotoxin exposure and inflammation.

The results showed that while some of the biomarkers remained steady over time, the yogurt-eaters experienced significant improvements in certain key markers, such as TNE, an important inflammation-activating protein.

"The results indicate that ongoing consumption of yogurt may be having a general anti-inflammatory effect," said Bolling.

The research focuses on a different aspect of the study. Participants were also involved in a high-calorie meal challenge at the beginning and end of their nine-week dietary intervention.

The challenge, meant to stress an individual's metabolism, started with either a serving of yogurt or non-dairy pudding followed by a large high-fat, high-carb breakfast meal.

"It was two sausage muffins and two hash browns, for a total of 900 calories. But everybody managed it. They'd been fasting, and they were pretty hungry," Bolling said.

For both challenges, blood work showed that the yogurt "appetizer" helped improve some key biomarkers of endotoxin exposure and inflammation as participants digested the meal over the ensuing hours. *Source: PTI*

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Prenatal coffee consumption can make your child obese

Are you expecting? If so, refrain from drinking coffee, as babies born to women who drank coffee during pregnancy were found to be at a higher risk of being overweight, claims a study.

Consumption of even one or two cups of coffee per day by expectant mothers can put their babies into a higher risk of being obese at school age.

"There may be good cause to increase the restriction of the recommended maximum of three cups of coffee per day. Caffeine is not a medicine that needs to be consumed," said Verena Sengpiel, Associate Professor at the University of Gothenburg's Sahlgrenska Academy in Sweden.

However, the clear link between caffeine and the cause of obesity is not yet proved, the study showed.

Published in BMJ Open Journal, the team included 50,943 expectant mothers. The children born to women who had consumed caffeine during pregnancy were studied till they were eight years old.

During the study, children aged five years old, who were overweight or obese



were five per cent greater in the group whose mothers had the highest caffeine consumption in the study, compared to those whose mothers had the lowest caffeine consumption.

The risk of child obesity due to prenatal caffeine consumption was also seen among women who followed the

recommended amount as according to the National Food Agency, i.e. three cups of coffee every day.

Even though further studies are needed, it is better to reduce the consumption or completely refrain from caffeine intake during pregnancy, Sengpiel advised. *Source: IANS*

ACTIVE TWITTER USERS MOST LIKELY TO SPREAD FAKE NEWS: STUDY



WASHINGTON (TIP): Most active users on Twitter tend to spread fake news during public emergencies by retweeting or “liking” the original post, a study has found.

The study, published in the journal *Natural Hazards*, examined four false rumours - two each from the marathon and hurricane, including an infamous falsehood about the New York Stock Exchange flooding.

Researchers examined three types of behaviour. Twitter users could either spread the false news, seek to confirm it, or cast doubt upon it. They found that 86 to 91 per cent of the users spread false news, either by retweeting or “liking” the original post.

Only five to nine per cent sought to confirm the false news, typically by retweeting and asking if the information was correct, while just one to nine per cent expressed doubt, often by saying the original tweet was not accurate.

“To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate how apt Twitter users are at debunking falsehoods during disasters. Unfortunately, the results paint a less than flattering picture,” said Jun Zhuang, associate professor at University at Buffalo in the US.

Even after the false news had been debunked on Twitter and traditional news media outlets, the study found that less than 10 per cent of the users who spread the false news deleted their erroneous retweet and less than 20 per cent of the same users clarified the false tweet with a new tweet.

“These findings are important because they show how easily people are deceived during times when they are most vulnerable and the role social media platforms play in these deceptions,” said Zhuang.

On a more positive note, the study found that while Twitter users are likely to spread false news during disasters, Twitter and other media platforms move quickly to correct the misinformation.

It is important to note that the study does not consider Twitter users who may have seen the original tweets with false news and decided to ignore them, Zhuang said.

“It’s possible that many people saw these tweets, decided they were inaccurate and chose not to engage,” he said.

Source: PTI

NASA sending autonomous helicopter to Mars with 2020 rover

WASHINGTON (TIP): NASA has confirmed it is sending an autonomous helicopter to Red Planet that will travel with the Mars rover mission, currently scheduled to launch in July 2020.

The small, lightweight Mars Helicopter will demonstrate the viability and potential of heavier-than-air vehicles on the Red Planet.

“The idea of a helicopter flying the skies of another planet is thrilling. The Mars Helicopter holds much promise for our future science, discovery, and exploration missions to Mars,” NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine said in a statement on Friday.

Started in August 2013 as a technology development project at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), the Mars Helicopter weighs at 1.8 kg.

Its fuselage is about the size of a softball, and its twin, counter-rotating blades will bite into the thin Martian atmosphere at almost 3,000 rpm—about 10 times the rate of a helicopter on Earth.

“It’s fitting that the US is the first nation in history to fly the first heavier-than-air craft on another world,” said Representative John Culberson (Texas).

The chopper will attempt controlled flight in Mars’ thin atmosphere.

Source: IANS

WHATSAPP GROUP GETS NEW FEATURES

WhatsApp has added new features for Groups on the messaging app, including the option for catching up with messages, as well as more controls for admin. WhatsApp says the new features will be available on Android and iOS smartphones from today, though some of the features have been rolled out via the beta versions of the app earlier as well. WhatsApp has announced four important changes to the Groups feature.

First is Group Description, which was in fact rolled out in March for Android and iOS and it lets users add a description for the group. When a new person joins the group, the description will show up at the top of the chat. This can be useful for office groups which are created with a defined purpose in mind. To add a group description, users should open WhatsApp, tap on the group where they would like to add a description. In here, there is a Group Info section on the right-hand corner, just tap on the “Description” section right below the group name and then add one. The group description is visible to all participants of the group and those who are invited to join the group. Anyone can change the group description.

WhatsApp also comes with better Admin controls in group settings, which will allow admins to restrict who can change the group’s subject, icon, and description. There’s also a new Group catch up feature, which will let a



user quickly get updated with messages they might have missed from a group. Users can quickly catch up on messages that mention or reply to them by tapping on a new @ button that appears at the bottom right corner of the chat.

There’s also a participant search feature where users can find anyone in a group by searching for participants on the group info page. Finally, Admins can now remove admin permissions of other group participants. Additionally, group creators can no longer be removed from the group they started. Also WhatsApp is adding a new protection so users cannot be

repeatedly added to groups they have left, which should appeal to a lot of people, especially those who find themselves being dragged back to groups, they wish to leave.

WhatsApp is also testing a ‘Restricted Group’ feature on the Android beta version of the app. At its F8 conference, Facebook announced that WhatsApp will soon get a Group video calling feature, with up to four people in a group video call. Stickers will be added to the app as well.

The feature is expected to roll out soon, though no exact confirmation date has been given.

How to use Gmail’s new Confidential Mode

Google is not only refreshing Gmail with a new design but also adding a range of new nifty features. While the redesign focused on matching Microsoft’s Outlook in terms of productivity tools, a new set of tools focus on bringing some exclusivity.

Apart from Gmail’s AI-driven ‘Smart Compose’, Google now also lets you send self-destructing emails in a new feature called ‘Confidential Mode’.

The Confidential Mode is essentially a privacy-driven feature that lets you send emails with an expiration date — similar to self-destructing messages on Snapchat or Apple iMessage. Gmail’s Confidential Mode though could be a big feature for professionals who don’t want sensitive data to be leaked. The feature bars recipients from forwarding, copying/pasting or downloading or even printing the email contents.

HOW GOOGLE’S CONFIDENTIAL MODE FOR GMAIL WORKS

To get started, you will need the new Gmail. You can enable new Gmail design by clicking on the Settings icon and choose the “Try new Gmail”. Once activated, the Gmail page will reload with the new design and UI.

Now, click on the compose email. At the bottom of the compose box, you will notice a lock icon with a clock sign. On clicking, a pop-up menu will appear with



the options to set an expiration date, ranging from 1 day to 5 years.

You can also set a passcode for accessing the email. You can further customise this by adding email-based passcode or SMS-based passcode. For instance, if your recipient doesn’t use Gmail, they’ll get a passcode by SMS.

You can also remove early access to the email you’ve sent. To stop your recipient from opening the email before the expiration you’ve set, open your

Gmail. Click on Sent button on the left. Open the confidential email, and click on Remove Access.

Gmail’s new Confidential Mode can help with basic privacy, but it’s still in its infancy. “These restrictions help prevent your recipients from accidentally sharing your email,” Google said, before warning that “a malicious recipient or recipients with malicious programs might still be able to copy your message or attachments”.

Land acquisition woes thwart India's mega refinery plan with Saudi Aramco



NEW DELHI (TIP): At the International Energy Forum in Delhi in April, the world's top oil producer Saudi Aramco inked a preliminary deal to partner with a consortium of Indian players to build a \$44 billion refinery and petrochemical project on India's west coast.

The huge project was touted as a gamechanger for both parties — offering India steady fuel supplies and meeting Saudi Arabia's need to secure regular buyers for its oil. Despite the obvious benefits, though, the prospects for the plan — in the works since 2015 — are growing dimmer by the day.

Thousands of farmers oppose the refinery and are refusing to surrender land, fearing it could damage a region famed for its Alphonso mangoes, vast cashew plantations and fishing hamlets that boast bountiful catches of seafood.

"We earn enough to fulfil our needs and wedo not want to surrender our lands for a refinery at any cost," says Sandesh Desai, standing amid his fruit-laden mango orchard in Nanar, a village in Ratnagiri district, some 400 km south of Mumbai.

Land acquisition has always been a contentious issue in rural India, where a majority of the population depends on farming for their livelihood. In 2008, for example, India's Tata Motors had to shelve plans for a car factory in West Bengal after facing widespread protests from farmers.

And while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has tried to ease land acquisition rules to jumpstart delayed projects worth tens of billions of dollars, the government has faced resistance to amending populist laws enacted by his predecessors.

Like Desai, a majority of the farmers from 14 villages around Ratnagiri that need to be relocated for the refinery project firmly oppose the plan, a state government official told Reuters.

Opposition politicians and even a local ally of Modi's Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) support the farmers' movement, complicating matters further for the government ahead of state and general elections in 2019.

The state government, which is responsible for acquiring the land for the project, has so far failed to secure even one acre of the roughly 15,000 acres needed for the refinery, Maharashtra industries minister Subhash Desaitold Reuters.

"The state is not going to acquire land as a majority of the farmers are against the plan," said Desai, the minister, who is a member of the Shiv Sena, a regional party allied with the BJP in the Maharashtra state government. Under land acquisition rules, at least 70 per cent of the land owners need to provide consent for a project, he said.

Still, some believe that the opponents are only objecting to get better compensation packages for their land. *Source: Reuters*

Air India may have to pay \$8.8 million penalty to passengers for flight delay

New Delhi (TIP): Air India may have to pay a penalty of USD 8.8 million to 323 passengers of its May 9 Delhi-Chicago flight, which was delayed as a fallout of withdrawal of relaxations given on flight duty time limitation (FDTL) of the crew.

This incident has brought into focus in a plea by Air India and the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) which represents private carriers Jet Airways, IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir, to the Delhi High Court, seeking modification of its April 18 direction to DGCA to not permit variations in FDTLs.

Flight AI 127 was bound for Chicago on May 9 with a flight time of 16 hours. However, it could not land there on time due to inclement weather and instead was diverted to nearby Milwaukee.

The flight duration from Milwaukee to Chicago was 19 minutes.

The flight carrying passengers who had already travelled for 16 hours, could have taken off in two hours and reached Chicago, but what played spoilsport was the duty hour of the crew -- which was already exhausted by then. Due to withdrawal of the variations, only one landing was permitted for the crew that day.

Source: PTI

Forbes honours 100 Gulf-based Indian businessmen

DUBAI (TIP): Over 100 Indian businessmen and executives based in the UAE have been recognised for their phenomenal success in the Arab world by Forbes Middle East who have a collective net worth of \$26.4 billion.



Yusuff Ali M A, managing director of LuLu Group International takes the crown as the top Indian business owner in UAE.

Titled "Top 100 Indian leaders in the Arab world", the list consists of the heads of the region's top companies, as well as the most influential of experts, Forbes said in a statement.

Billionaires of Indian-origin, based in the Gulf, have a collective net worth of USD 26.4 billion, according to Forbes' World's Billionaires 2018.

The top three individuals, who are self-made billionaires in the UAE with a combined net worth of more than USD 12 billion, are leading the rankings, with retail magnate Yusuff Ali M A, managing director of LuLu Group International, taking the crown as the top business owner.

The Indian tycoon is the third-richest self-made billionaire in UAE with a net worth of USD 5 billion, Gulf News reported.

Also UAE-based businessmen BR Shetty, who holds a net fortune of USD 3.6 billion, and Ravi Pillai, with a net worth of USD 3.5 billion, are ranked second and third, respectively.

These top businessmen have now shifted their gaze and are claimed to also be investing heavily in the Arab region as well as India.

Navdeep Singh Suri, Ambassador of India to the UAE, said that the Indian community across the UAE holds key positions in all the different aspects of life.

"The work Indian leaders are doing in the region displays the finest aspects of India and we are privileged to have these leaders being ambassadors to the UAE and bridging the gap between the two countries," he said.

Suri also went on to say that the Indian businessmen have not only shone with their business successes, but that they also have been a contributing factor in India's success in various sectors, including healthcare, retail, construction, hospitality and manufacturing.

This has subsequently helped in the creation of jobs and better infrastructure in India. The Indian community is the most populous expat community in the Gulf. Many are long time residents of the region, having come to the Gulf much before the advent of oil that prospered the local economies, the statement said. *Source: PTI*

Flipkart stake acquisition is credit positive for Walmart: Moody's

HYDERABAD (TIP): Walmart's acquisition of 77 per cent stake in Flipkart is "credit positive" for the US retail giant, though the Indian e-commerce firm is expected to continue to make losses for the next few years, said rating agency Moody's in its Credit Outlook report.

On May 9, Walmart Inc said it is buying a 77 per cent stake in Indian e-commerce retailer Flipkart for about \$16 billion, but it is yet to disclose financing plans.

Moody's said it expects the deal to initially weaken Walmart's credit metrics, with retained cash flow (RCF) to net debt ratio likely dropping to the low-30 per cent range from 40 per cent currently and debt to EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) ratio likely to double from 1.6 times currently.

"Despite this deterioration, the acquisition is credit positive because it provides immediate scale in India's burgeoning retail e-commerce sector and we expect that a combination of increased cash flow and debt reduction will push the RCF/net debt ratio back above our 35 per cent."

"Although we expect that Flipkart will continue to generate losses for the next few years, our credit-positive view is based on India's compelling features, including its 1.2 billion residents and an economy that generates more than 7 per cent annual GDP growth," Moody's said.



India has more than 400 million millennials, a growing middle class and exploding smartphone penetration, all of which are critical as shopping continues to shift online, the rating agency said, adding "Following the announcement, we affirmed Walmart's Aa2 rating and stable outlook."

"As Flipkart is expected to generate meaningful losses for at least the next few years, this is clearly an investment for the future..." Moody's Vice President Charlie O'Shea had said.

Source: PTI

PNB posts biggest ever quarterly loss of Rs 13,417crore in Q4



NEW DELHI (TIP): The scam-hit Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Tuesday posted its largest ever quarterly loss of Rs 13,416.91 crore for the January-March period, mainly on account of high provisioning for bad loans.

The bank had reported a staggering standalone profit of Rs 261.90 crore in the fourth quarter of 2016-17. The total income for the fourth quarter also declined to Rs 12,945.68 crore from Rs 14,989.33 crore in the year-ago period.

The bank has witnessed deterioration in gross net non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans, which rose to 18.38% of gross advances at the end of March this year, as against 12.53% a year ago. Net NPAs also soared to 11.24% against 7.81% a year ago.

contd from Page 1

Karnataka floor test at 4 pm on...

Governor Vajubhai Vala in which he had staked claim to form the government in Karnataka.

The Supreme Court was hearing a petition moved by the Congress-JDS combine challenging the governor's decision to invite the BJP to form the government. Yeddyurappa, who was sworn in as the chief minister of Karnataka on Thursday, May 17, told a special bench headed by Justice AK Sikri that being the single largest party the BJP had the "mandate of people" of the state who had thrown out the Congress.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Yeddyurappa, told the bench that there was no pre-poll alliance between the Congress and JDS and they had formed an "unholy alliance" after the elections. In the May 12 polls, the BJP emerged as the single largest party with 104 members, while Congress secured 78, the JD(S) 37 and others three. (Agencies)

British Prime Minister May...

May met German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron to discuss US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from a nuclear deal between Iran and major powers. Trump has since imposed new sanctions.

"The leaders reiterated their firm commitment to ensuring the deal is upheld, stressing that it is important for our shared security," the spokeswoman said.

"They pledged to work with the many parties to the deal to this end. The leaders stressed that Iran must continue to meet its own obligations under the deal."

Merkel said EU countries agreed the Iran nuclear deal was "not perfect" but insisted it should be preserved, after the US withdrawal threw the accord into doubt.

"Everyone in the European Union shares the view that the agreement is not perfect, but that we should remain in this agreement and conduct further negotiations with Iran on the basis of other issues such as the ballistic missile program," Merkel said as she arrived for the summit.

Macron said the bloc was working to keep the existing agreement alive "so that our businesses can remain" in Iran. This effort would run alongside work to "pursue negotiations on a vital broader agreement," Macron said.

"The 2015 agreement needs to be completed by a nuclear agreement beyond 2025, an agreement on ballistic activities and (Iran's) regional presence," Macron said.

Meanwhile, the European Commission will launch on Friday, May 18 the process of activating a law that bans European companies from complying with US sanctions against Iran and does not recognize any court rulings that enforce American penalties.

"As the European Commission we have the duty to protect European companies. We now need to act, and this is why we are launching the process to activate the 'blocking statute' from 1996. We will do that tomorrow morning at 1030," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said.

"We also decided to allow the European Investment Bank to facilitate European companies' investment in Iran. The Commission itself will maintain its cooperation with Iran," Juncker told a news conference after a meeting of EU leaders. (Source: Agencies)

United Nations Hails Jaipur Foot

India's Permanent Mission to the UN along with the Jaipur based Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) organized a panel discussion here Tuesday, May 15, on the Jaipur Foot's 50-year journey of helping people with disabilities across the world. Following the panel discussion, an exhibition on Jaipur Foot was also inaugurated in the UN Secretariat Building. The exhibition which would be there till May 18 displays the Jaipur Foot making the beneficiaries.

In India, a longstanding innovation has been the 'Jaipur Foot', popularized by Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) and the organization has worked with over 1.7 million persons with disabilities in 34 countries across the world, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin said at the discussion.

"The organization has now worked for half a century for this noble cause. While the technology behind such innovations has continued to improve, the 'Jaipur Foot' has provided much needed assistance to those who are among the most affected and those who have very limited resources to seek the kind of assistance that is needed by them. They truly are working to ensure no one is left behind," Akbaruddin said.

Jagdish Dharamchand Koonjul, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the UN, said that his country is proud to be associated with the work of Jaipur Foot in Mauritius and in the Indian Ocean Region.

"In 2014, the Jaipur Foot Project, which represents an excellent template for South-South cooperation and South-North cooperation was launched in Mauritius to service the countries in the region," he said.

Koonjul stressed that the Jaipur Foot Project is a fine example of multi-stakeholder partnerships involving governments, civil society and the private sector to realize the Sustainable Development Goals in Mauritius.

"Besides ensuring the transfer of much needed technology in the field, the project has fostered a strong partnership with local and international organizations and in the development of capacity building programs in education, health, social and economic integration and rehabilitation," he said.

Koonjul told the audience at the panel discussion that in the Indian Ocean region, Jaipur Foot Mauritius has provided prosthesis free of cost to 1200 persons. In 2015, a 15-month old boy from Seychelles, Brendon became the youngest beneficiary of the Jaipur Foot.

"We are proud of the journey covered by Jaipur Foot in Mauritius by giving a much-needed boost to the self-esteem of people and improving the quality of life of the differently abled persons. Jaipur Foot has empowered them to lead an independent and productive life," he said.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National Vice President Vinay Sahasrabudhe said that in today's changing global circumstances, India is playing a very crucial and leading role, including in the rehabilitation of the differently-abled people.

"Jaipur Foot has become a symbol of Indian society's ability to empathize. Indian society definitely provides several avenues for the cultivation of more empathic and sensitivity-oriented initiatives and Jaipur Foot is one of them," Sahasrabudhe said.

He said that it is a "great honor" for India to be taking a lead and initiative and to be seen as a nation that is working for the rescue and rehabilitation of those who are differently-abled.

Founder and Chief Patron of BMVSS Devendra Raj Mehta said Jaipur Foot is the "epitome of frugal" or Gandhian engineering, which involves doing the maximum with the minimum.

He said that while the Jaipur Foot costs \$ 70, a similar

western prosthetic costs \$ 15,000.

Mehta said that the BMVSS in association with the ministry of external affairs will hold on the site fitment camps in Vietnam, Myanmar, Iraq, Nepal and Bangladesh in the coming months. These camps will ensure that 5000 persons get mobility and dignity. He said that now a Jaipur hand is being developed in association with a US university.

Prem Bhandari, the chairman of the Jaipur Foot USA, said that the Jaipur Foot USA took the initiative of creating awareness by holding a seminar on disability with the association of India's permanent mission in the United Nations. He said the Indian Americans are helping in popularizing the low-cost Jaipur Foot in the United States.

An Indian businessman based in Houston Rajiv Daga and his wife Neeta Daga donated Rs 1.35 crore to the Jaipur Foot. During the seminar in the United Nation, a Nigerian citizen John Mattes, who is a handicap was shown walking on the Jaipur Foot. John was flown at the initiative of the Jaipur foot to Jaipur where he was provided the Jaipur Foot within two days. Now he is able to walk.

Senate Confirms Gina Haspel...

debate about the agency's post-9/11 use of enhanced interrogation techniques -- thought by many to have constituted torture -- Gina Haspel will officially become director of the Central Intelligence Agency. She is the first operations officer in more than five decades - and the first-ever woman - to be named to the role. On Thursday, May 17, the Senate voted, 54-45, to confirm Haspel, one day after the Senate Intelligence Committee, in a 10-5 vote, reported her nomination favorably. Overall, six Democrats voted in support of her candidacy; two Republicans, Sens. Flake and Paul opposed it.

President Trump nominated Haspel to the post in March, in a tweet, while announcing that her predecessor, former CIA director Mike Pompeo, was being tapped to lead the State Department.

Much of Haspel's 30-year career at CIA was spent in the clandestine service and remains classified. Her reported oversight, in 2002, of a secret "black site" in Thailand -- where detainees were subjected to enhanced interrogation techniques, including waterboarding -- generated widespread controversy and ardent condemnation from civil rights groups. Her involvement in ordering the destruction, in 2005, of 92 videotapes - some of which documented the interrogations -- while serving as chief of staff to then-Director of the clandestine service Jose Rodriguez was also roundly criticized.

Among those opposed was Sen. John McCain, R-Arizona, who survived years of torture as a POW in Vietnam, and who, as he undergoes treatment for brain cancer, was not present for the floor vote. Last week McCain issued a powerful statement opposing Haspel's candidacy, calling her role in overseeing the use of torture by Americans "disturbing."

Indian American founded Texas...

has been impressive," said Jain, who is also the CEO of Swych. "By integrating GCI's presence and expertise with the powerful Swych platform, we aim to greatly accelerate our mission of becoming a truly global digital gifting powerhouse."

"The synergy between GCI Network and Swych further supports the mission of bringing borderless gifting services to consumers across multiple markets," Khan, founder and CEO of GCI, said. "We now provide even greater options, brands and flexibility of delivery to our customer base."

Swych currently operates in the United States, India, United Kingdom and Australia. It has expansion plans in Europe, Middle East, Canada, Japan, Colombia and Philippines.

Jain previously built and sold DeviceFidelity, a mobile commerce and security firm focused on enabling NFC and security on mobile devices. In 2014, the company was acquired by Kili, which is now part of Square.

Jain holds dozens of patents in the area of mobile security and financial technology.

Fort Worth Gas Leak Leads to...

residents on Los Padres Court, Catlow Court and San Isabel Court. A contractor for AT&T struck the gas line when a crew was putting in cable, a spokesman for the Dallas-based company said. The leak seeped into the sanitary sewer system, causing gas to bubble up in homes through sinks and toilets.

Residents were allowed back into their homes around 7:30 p.m.





Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE MAY 21 - MAY 27, 2018

Aries:

Emotions continue to run high. You are traipsing an electric wire, ready to snap. Nothing works out your way completely and several compromises will have to be made in all your dealings. Sometimes, you feel defeated but Ganesh advises you to just hang in there and wait patiently for the tide to change. You do spend time at work and at home solving various domestic issues, but you are not all there.

Taurus:

You make a conscious effort to handle the situation that is slowly getting out of hand. This results in dividends, and a type of parity is restored in your affairs. There are splendid opportunities for advancement and this is a good time to strike. There is money to be made and new ventures waiting to be started. You are looking at achievements and recognition. You identify areas of potential growth and go for it.

Gemini:

The hard work phase continues. You do well and earn plaudits from your peer group. You are moving ahead uncompromisingly and are meeting all your targets and schedules. There are expenses, wining and dining and affairs of the heart. You could be embroiled in an office affair and this disturbs the peace. You are much more alert, lively and healthy and filled with new found zeal. You are driven to make a success of your life and your hormones are also flying off in different directions.

Cancer:

A lot of quality time will be spent with family and friends in this period. There could be weddings, engagements and other family functions to attend. While a lot of time is spent with family, I must hasten to add here that it may not all be happy. There could be illnesses and some strife in the form of divorce or some problem in an alimony suit. You will either be the mediator or one of the parties needing help; any which way you will be in the thick of it.

Leo:

There is sharpness in your life, an edge that was never there. You realize that you have been procrastinating and postponing the settlement of various pending issues in your life. So, this period, you try to set your house in order. Friends and new and old romances show up, but you are preoccupied with the nitty gritty. Your life is on the verge of an upheaval and if you don't plug the corners now, it may just be too late. So, you go about cleaning the stables with single-mindedness.

Virgo:

A lot is happening in your life now. You are in the edge of many cross-currents and will participate in all kinds of social activities. You feel wanted, cherished and loved. You realize that you are really popular and don't have to be the lone wolf any more. You don't have to carry the cross and chafe your shoulders. You are publicly feted and are the cynosure of all eyes. You feel blessed, loved, humbled and feel at peace and in gratitude to existence for making this happen.

Libra:

No full lasts long, and work calls. You'll get back to business and profession in a really big way now. Work is on an upward swing and you will be actively involved in new business enterprises and undertakings. You make good money and will feel secure. There will be travel too. Collaborations, purchases, comforts, luxuries and vestiges of the good life infuse you with fresh enthusiasm. You display awesome stamina and can move mountains during this period.

Scorpio:

You continue with a scintillating performance and consolidate your gains. There will be expenses and a hectic social life. Family ties will be strengthened, and you will be busy renovating, redecorating and refurbishing. You will be the center of attraction at family gatherings and you will enjoy it. Your interactions will be stronger and more meaningful, and life will acquire a pleasant hue.

Sagittarius:

This can be a period of new beginnings both at home and at work. You will make money and also spend it. Lending / borrowing, funds, capital-raising, loans, stocks, realty and buying and selling will occupy your time. This is the tie to plan and strategize for the coming period. There are many new openings on the anvil and a lot depends on how you optimize the chances that come your way. This can be a very profitable phase and it all depends on how you cash in on it.

Capricorn:

You spend time helping the poor and the downtrodden. You visit old people's homes, hospitals, hospices, shelters, half-way homes and other such institutions and help out with cash and kind. You have great empathy for the underdog and frequently take this route. Even if you don't have the resources to do this you spend time helping out family members, friends, colleagues and others in distress. You feel god about it and the world is a better place thanks to souls like you.

Aquarius:

You scatter your energies and they don't result in much. Money comes in through one hand and goes out with ease through the other. You while away time merrymaking and hanging out with friends as though you have no care in the world. Momentarily, at least, your life has lost direction. You look for approval, but it isn't forthcoming. You are told in no uncertain terms, by friends and family that you need to get your act together, and fast. You value their opinion and make amends.

Pisces:

The period sees a thread of intensity in all your dealings. You are pushing ahead without stops with a new resolve and ambition. You are confident and charismatic, full of magnetism and drive. Your popularity soars and all that you embark on or consolidate leads to success. You don't have much time for the family now, but work and its rewards are appetizing. Ganesh sees you turbo charged as you successfully accomplish one task after another.

RCB BEAT SUNRISERS BY 14 RUNS TO STAY ALIVE IN IPL

BENGALURU (TIP): AB de Villiers and Moeen Ali struck breezy half-centuries as Royal Challengers Bangalore held their nerves under pressure to eke out a 14-run win over table-toppers Sunrisers Hyderabad in a must-win match and stay afloat in the Indian Premier League here on May 17.

Asked to bat, RCB posted a mammoth 218/6 before surviving a scare from Sunrisers skipper Kane Williamson (81 off 42) and Manish Pandey (62 off 38) to restrict the visitors to 204/3.

De Villiers (69 off 39) and Ali (65 off 34) overcame a bad start to stitch 107 runs off just 57 balls for the third wicket to not only set the platform for RCB's total but also keep their team in contention.

Chasing the mammoth total, Sunrisers started on a positive note, piling up 47 runs off the first five overs before Shikhar Dhawan hit one straight back to Yuzvendra Chahal off his own bowling in the next over.

Alex Hales (37 off 24) was going great guns before de Villiers pulled off a blinder of a one-handed catch at mid-wicket



RCB beat SRH by 14 runs in a high scoring IPL encounter.

boundary off Ali to send the Englishman back. But Sunrisers captain Williamson had other intentions as he took the attack to the opposition and hit Tim Southee for consecutive

boundaries before clobbering Ali for two fours and a six in the next over to keep his team abreast with the required run-rate. Williamson went about his business in elegant fashion

without taking much risk and was ably supported by Pandey at the other end as the duo stitched a magnificent 135 for the second wicket off just 68 deliveries to take Sunrisers close. *Source: PTI*

TOSS MAY BE FLICKED OUT OF TESTS

NEW DELHI (TIP): Should international cricket toss away the toss to ensure an even playing field? The relevance or rather the fairness of the tradition, which is as old as the game itself, will be up for discussion at the International Cricket Council's cricket committee meeting scheduled for May 28 and 29 in Mumbai. "Test cricket's fundamental starting point may be scrapped, as the ICC's cricket committee prepares to debate whether or not the coin toss should be removed as a way of reducing home ground advantage in the looming Test Championship," ESPNcricinfo reported on Thursday.

The toss of coin has been a part of international cricket since the very first Test, between England and Australia in 1877, to decide which of the two competing teams get to bowl or bat first. The coin is flipped by the home captain and the call is made by the visiting skipper. But its relevance has been questioned in the recent past with critics saying that the practice was resulting in unfair advantage to host teams.

"There is serious concern about the current level of home team's interference in Test pitch preparation, and more than one committee member believes that the toss should be automatically awarded to the visiting team in each match, although there are some others on the committee who do not share that view," the website quoted a letter, sent to all panel members of ICC's cricket committee, as saying. The toss was done away with in England's County Championships in 2016 and even in India there was a proposal to get rid of the norm in the domestic circuit, but it was shot down. The England and Wales Cricket Board had claimed that matches lasted longer due to the move and led to a more even contest between bat and ball.

The ICC cricket committee features ex-India captain Anil Kumble, Andrew Strauss, Mahela Jayawardene, Rahul Dravid, Tim May, New Zealand Cricket chief executive David White, umpire Richard Kettleborough, ICC match referee Ranjan Madugalle, Shaun Pollock and Clare Connor. *PTI*

Asian Champions Trophy: Indian women enter final

DONGHAE CITY (TIP): Defending champions India qualified for the summit clash of the women's Asian Champions Trophy after edging past Malaysia 3-2 on May 17.

India, who beat Japan 4-1 and China 3-1 in their previous matches, sealed a spot in the final with a match in hand in the pool stage. They are sitting atop the table with nine points and will next take on hosts South Korea on Saturday in what would be a rehearsal for Sunday's final.

South Korea beat China 3-1 in the other match on Thursday, taking their tally to seven points. They are second on the table, with third-placed China four points behind with one game to play.

India had beaten Malaysia 6-0 in a warm-up match before the tournament, and it seemed India were going for a repeat with their attacking start. They earned a penalty corner in the very first minute, but Malaysia denied drag-flicker Gurjit Kaur.

India got the breakthrough when Gurjit converted a penalty corner in the 17th minute. She found the bottom right corner to get her second goal in two matches.

India did not look their attacking best. However, the halftime break helped India regroup. They defended more aggressively and the high press worked as India scored in the 33rd minute. Vandana Katariya intercepted a pass in the Malaysian circle before finishing with a reverse strike to get her third goal



of the tournament. For the third match in a row, India went 2-0 up.

But their two-goal lead didn't last very long. Three minutes later, India conceded a penalty stroke when defender Deep Grace caused an infringement while attempting to stop a Malaysian attacker from taking a shot on goal. Nuraini Rashid converted the penalty stroke.

The following minutes saw India win

as many as three PCs but could not make much of it. India, though, regained their two-goal lead in the 40th minute. A brilliant long pass by skipper Sunita Lakra was deflected in by young forward Lalremsiami.

Malaysia, who had earlier upset Japan 3-2, fought back into the match with a 48th-minute goal from Hanis Onn, but India hung in to take the three points.

Source: PTI

PHOGAT SISTERS DROPPED FROM ASIAD CAMP OVER 'SERIOUS INDISCIPLINE'

NEW DELHI (TIP): Axed from the national camp for "serious indiscipline", the celebrated Phogat sisters will have to explain their absence for any chance of a comeback, the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) said on May 17 after one of them, Babita, claimed to be injured. Geeta and Babita Phogat, both Commonwealth Games medallists who became household names after their life story was brought alive on the silver screen in blockbuster 'Dangal', along with their younger siblings Ritu and Sangeeta were ousted from the ongoing national camp in Lucknow.

The WFI cited their unexplained absence from the camp as reason. "The wrestlers selected for the national camp are expected to physically report to the camp within 3 days. If they have any problems or issues they should go there and report it to the coaches and find a solution," WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh told PTI.

"But Geeta, Babita and others (in all 13) did not do that. They were incommunicado. This is serious indiscipline on their part and the WFI felt it's time to pull the plug. So we have told them to sit at home and enjoy," he said.

The federation's action against the wrestlers means that they could be barred from the Asian Games trials scheduled later this month. The Asian Games are scheduled to be held in August-September later this year in Indonesia.

Singh, however, hinted that the wrestlers could be given a lifeline if they can come up with a satisfactory explanation for their actions.

"Let them first come to us and explain the reasons behind their actions. For now they are out of the national camp," he said. The men's and women's national are being simultaneously conducted in Sonapat and Lucknow from May 10 to 25.

Source: PTI



Babita and Geeta Phogat.

Besides inviting beaches, coastal Karnataka is also popular for its range of ancient temples. While, some temples in Coastal Karnataka are small, others are big and empowering. While some tourists visit Karnataka's holy places along with other places/attractions, many visit Udupi/Mangalore districts exclusively for its places of worship. Some are in the city, while others are far away amidst the Western Ghats. All these temples have long-standing history and the power of these gods and goddesses are feared and respected by the devotees. In this article, let us familiarise ourselves with some of the popular temples in Karnataka. On your next visit to Karnataka, do not forget to seek divine blessing from these places.

KOLLUR MOOKAMBIKA TEMPLE

Mookambika Devi Temple in Kollur is about 130 km from Mangaluru and 440 km from state capital Bengaluru. It is located amidst the hills of Kodachadri in Western Ghats, next to river Souparnika. Mookambika Temple in Kollur is believed to be over 1200 years old. As per the legend, Parvathi came down to earth to eliminate a demon named Kamasura, who with his devil mischief was creating lots of trouble to the local people. Goddess made him dumb first to rein him (Mooka in Kannada) but when his trouble making habit didn't stop, he was eventually killed. Thanking Goddess Parvathi for relieving them from the trouble of Kamasura, local people started worshipping Parvathi devi and the temple was formed in Kollur. Kollur temple celebrates its annual festival during Navarathri and attracts lakhs of devotees during this period. Temple complex offers free meals to all visitors. During special occasions when crowd is large, special queue for darshan is facilitated for those who can pay extra. Lots of budget accommodations are available in Kollur. KSRTC runs buses to Kollur from Bengaluru and other major cities. Kundapura is a nearby city. Private buses are also available in large numbers. However, after 8 pm it will be difficult to get public transportation.

KATEEL DURGAPARAMESHWARI TEMPLE

At a distance of just about 20 km from Mangaluru is the popular Durgaparameshwari Temple in Kateel. This holy temple is located in the middle of River Nandini. The name Kateel is derived from two words? 'Kati' meaning waist and 'Ile' meaning earth. Kateel means the central area of earth.

History: Arunasura was a demon growing strong with powers and was disrupting peace on earth. Gods were helpless as Arunasura had secured special powers from Brahma that he cannot be killed by any two or four legged creatures. When Arunasura's bad deeds grew beyond control, Adhishakti came down on earth as a beautiful woman, lured him and teased Arunasura to agitate him. An angry Arunasura tried to kill Adhishakti, she turned herself into a rock. Arunasura tried to break open the rock, during which a series of big furious bees emerged and stung him repeatedly till his death, thus eliminating one more bad soul on earth. On this success, saints and sages performed abhishekam to lord Adhishakti who later took the form of a linga in the middle of river Nandini. Thus the Durga Parameshwari Temple is built around this. Kateel is well connected by public transportation and accommodation is available. Mangalore is the nearest town.

UDUPI SRI KRISHNA TEMPLE

Udupi is considered as the final resting place of Lord Krishna. Sri Krishna Temple and matha was set up in the 13th century by Madhvacharya. Legend has it that once Kanakadasa, a worshipper of Lord Krishna was denied entrance into the temple. Determined to see god, Kanakadasa kept praying hard from the outside itself. Impressed by his devotion, it is believed that

TEMPLES IN COASTAL KARNATAKA



Lord Krishna's idol turned to face Kanakadasa and a small hole formed on the wall so that Kanakadasa can get a glimpse of Lord Krishna. This spot is now known as Kanakana kindi (window of Kanaka). Apart from Sri Krishna temple, there are two other temples in Udupi? Chandreshwara and, Anantheshwara. Once in every two years, a grand festival named 'Paryayotsava' is held in Udupi. During this time, temple management changes hand from one of the 8 mathas (Asta matt) to another. When in Udupi, do not miss to enjoy mouth watering Gadbud ice cream at Diana. Udupi is well connected by road and rail from all over Karnataka. Maple Beach, St

Mary's Island, Manipal End point, Kapu light house are some of the other attractions near Udupi. Mangalore airport is about 60 km away.

SRINGERI SHARADA TEMPLE

Goddess Saraswati resides in Sringeri, a temple town some 100 km away from Mangaluru and 330 km from Bengaluru. To foster the sacred tradition of Sanatana Dharma, Jagadguru Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada established the first of the four vedic Peethams at Sringeri in 14th century. The hills around Sringeri was used by Sage Rishyashringa who performed strong Tapas.

Adi Shankara Acharya was very confident about the divine power of the land. It is also believed that on the banks of River Tunga, a cobra was spreading its hood to cover a frog, (which is Cobra's meal in the food chain), who was in labour pain and cobra was giving it protection from harsh sun above. Such sanctity inspired acharya to set up his first math here in Sringeri. Sringeri also serves as a centre for vedic learnings. Temples of Horanadu is nearby. Agumbe hills, Kundadri hills, Kuppalli are nearby attractions. Sringeri is well connected by public transportation and basic accommodations are available in town. Shivamogga, Udupi and Chikmagalur are the major towns closer to Sringeri.

DHARMASTHALA MANJUNATHA SWAMY TEMPLE

Dharmasthala Manjunatha Swamy Temple, located on the banks of Netravati River, is popular for a range of activities such as dispute resolution offered by Dharmadhikari Sri Virendra Hedge, honesty tests, social service events like mass Marriage functions and so on. Temple gets over 10000 visitors a day on an average and all are served free food by the temple authorities. The name Dharmasthala resembles religious harmony. A Jain Theerthankara is also worshipped besides Lord Manjunatha. People from different communities are involved in temple management. Temple doesn't differentiate between deities on the basis of cast, creed, religion or any other parameters. Similar to Tirupati, you will find many devotees dedicating all their hair to lord here in Dharmasthala. Dr Virendra Heggade is passionate about cars and has a collection of 20-30 vintage cars. During your visit to Dharmasthala, do not miss to explore vintage car collection of Virendra Heggade. No photography is allowed inside, but you can buy a booklet containing photos of the cars. Temple management also runs a range of academic institutes where students are offered quality education at affordable price. Dharmasthala Manjunatha Swamy Temple is at a distance of about 75 km from Mangaluru down and 320 km from Bengaluru. It is well connected by public transportation.

MURUDESHWARA TEMPLE

The gigantic idol of Lord Shiva at Murudeshwara is visible from a distance. This is the second tallest Shiva statue in the world (tallest one being in Nepal). It is built on Kanduka Hill, fenced by Arabian Sea on three sides. There are a series of sculptures close to the statue, telling stories from the past, and a golden chariot. These are a treat to photographers and general visitors alike, even if you're not god fearing. Try parking your car near the statue and take a photo as if statue is sitting on the car! Murudeshwar Temple complex is fronted with a 20 storeyed tower, called Raja Gopura (king's tower). Do climb up this 238 ft temple tower (ticket Rs 10 per head) for scenic all around view of Murudeshwara. The view is certainly worth it. The temple complex provides meals to visitors during lunch time. Adjacent to temple campus is the beach, where one can try jet ski, boat rides and other beach activities. Scuba diving is also organised at Netrani Islands, about 20 km off the Murudeshwara coast. Murudeshwara is well connected by road and several accommodation options are available.

Source: HappyTrips

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