

## The INDIAN PANORAMA

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### Shashi Tharoor kicks up row with 'Hindu Pakistan' comment

**THIRUVANANTHURAI (TIP):** Congress leader Shashi Tharoor sparked off a controversy with his statement that if the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is voted to power again, it will rewrite the Constitution that will eventually create a "Hindu Pakistan."



Mr. Tharoor defended himself in a Facebook post to argue that the BJP and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) idea of a "Hindu Rashtra" was the "mirror image" of Pakistan.

The BJP demanded an apology from Mr. Tharoor and called his statement "an attack on Indian democracy and Hindus", while the Congress distanced itself

*contd on Page 32*

## Trump claims he subdued NATO allies with his 'go it alone' ultimatum

Tells European allies to increase spending or lose US support



Trump addressing a press conference after the meeting. CNN Screenshot

**BRUSSELS (TIP):** Donald Trump claimed a personal victory at a NATO summit on Thursday, July 12 after telling European allies to increase spending or lose Washington's support, an ultimatum that forced leaders to huddle in a crisis session with the US President. Trump emerged declaring his continued commitment to a Western alliance built on US military might that has stood up to Moscow since World War Two. People present said he had earlier warned he would "go it alone" if allies, notably Germany, did not make vast increases in their defense budgets for next year.

*contd on Page 32*

### Charges against Stormy Daniels dropped hours after arrest: Police said they made a mistake in arresting porn film star



Stormy Daniels arrested and released, with charges dropped

**COLUMBUS, OHIO (TIP):** Charges were dropped Thursday, July 12, against porn actress Stormy Daniels, just hours after she was arrested while performing at an Ohio strip club and charged with letting patrons touch her in violation of a state law, an Associated Press report says.

Her attorney said she was set up in a Columbus police sting operation, something police deny.

*contd on Page 32*

### '84 anti-Sikh riots: New SIT fails to start work as member's position remains vacant



More than two years after the Narendra Modi government set up the SIT to re-investigate serious anti-Sikh riots cases of 1984 that had been closed, it has managed to file charge sheets only in very small number of cases taken up for further probe. The new SIT is to probe 186 cases closed by the police.

File Photo

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A new SIT headed which was set up in January this year to further investigate 186 cases relating to the 1984 anti-Sikh riot cases in Delhi, has failed to start its work, the Supreme Court was informed on Thursday. *contd on Page 32*

### DEMARCHÉ TO UK OVER 'ANTI-INDIA' MEET

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India has issued a demarché to the UK protesting a meeting convened on August 12 in London by separatist organization Sikhs For Justice (SFJ).

*contd on Page 32*

### Trade War- US slaps more tariffs on \$200b Chinese goods

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Escalating the US-China trade war, the Trump administration on Wednesday, July 11, announced 10 per cent tariffs on an additional \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports,

*contd on Page 32*

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## GURVINDER S. SAHNI

ATTORNEY AT LAW

Gurvinder S. Sahni  
Attorney At Law

Tel. 718.846.3400  
Fax. 718-846-2299  
Email. [gs@sahnilaw.com](mailto:gs@sahnilaw.com)

117-07 101st Avenue, 2nd Fl. Richmond Hill, NY 11419

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# IDC Supports more specialized High School seats in New York City

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) endorses more specialized high school seats in New York City by participating in a community rally held on June 24, 2018 at the steps of Queens Borough Hall in Kew Gardens, New York. The rally brought together several community organizations and advocates in support of the keeping Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) and creating more specialized high school seats in New York City. The rally was organized by the Diversity and Achievement (DNA) Coalition, spearheaded by John Albert of "Taking Our Seat". Contact: [albert@takingourseat.org](mailto:albert@takingourseat.org).

## Statement by the Diversity and Achievement (DNA) Coalition:

"The most straightforward solution: create more schools that have a rigorous curriculum that all children have the opportunity to access. We can all agree that the school system is leaving many kids behind. Talented kids of all backgrounds should have access to a top-notch education".

## "Queens Stands to Lose the Most under NYC Mayor's Plan:

"Phase 1 of the Mayor's plan will set aside extra help for admission to those students who come from schools with high rates of poverty. Queens neighborhoods are on average richer than Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan neighborhoods. but not by much. That means Queens kids won't compete on a level ground in Phase 1 of the Mayor's Plan. The solution: more seats".

"Phase 2 of NYC Mayor's plan eliminates the SHSAT altogether and sets aside seats to the "top" students in each middle school. Fewer Queens students will earn entry into these schools, those few who are eligible will be forced to travel long distances. There are fewer specialized high school seats in Queens than in the other boroughs (except for Staten Island). The solution: more seats - in



Queens"

The program was moderated by Miguel Herrera. Speakers included: NYS Assemblyman Ron Kim; NYS Assemblyman David Weprin; David Lee (Chinese American Citizens Alliance); Tahseen Chowdhry (Stuyvesant HS graduate); Wah Chin (Chinese American Citizens Alliance of Greater New York); Mazeda Uddin (SAFE); Kenneth Chiu (Coalition of Asian American Civil Rights); Ashook Ramsaran (Indian Diaspora Council International); Rokeya Akhter (New American Voter Association); Darrell Sukdeo (Indo-Caribbean Advocate); several other community advocates, and students of SUNY and other schools.

Remarks by Ashook Ramsaran, President of Indian Diaspora Council International: "New York City is the greatest city with

most opportunities in education. There are opportunities for excellence in education which go hand-in-hand with excellence in education. The goal is to encourage and reward excellence in education, not to discourage high achievers. More specialized schools are better for encouraging more students to achieve higher levels of performance. Everyone benefits because all students strive for higher achievements. All parents in Queens and all of New York City should be more involved. Our kid's education matters. Our voices are important in this struggle for progress in education by being partners for excellence in education. IDC supports more seats in specialized schools and keeping the SHSAT tests".

For more information contact: Ashook Ramsaran at [AshookRamsaran@gmail.com](mailto:AshookRamsaran@gmail.com) Mobile (USA) +1 917 519 5783

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# Madhavi Mudgal Troupe casts spell with superb Odissi Dance performance at the Indian Consulate



The gathering enjoying a performance



Madhavi Mudgal in a solo performance

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** To Popularize Indian Classical Music & Dance Amongst Youth, the Consulate has launched a new initiative titled "Baithak@Consulate" which features prominent artists. Baithak will be an occasional series and will constantly strive to present Indian masters.

The third event in the series on July 08, 2018 featured Ms. Madhavi Mudgal, highly renowned exponent of the Odissi style of dance along with her dancers - Arushi Mudgal, Shalakra Rai, Shobha Bisht, Deepika Bisht & Kritika Uppal. A prime disciple of the legendary Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, Ms. Mudgal is credited with bringing a greatly refined sensibility to her art form. She has received repeated acclaim in the major cities and dance festivals that have featured her throughout the world.

On the evening of July 8, the Consulate ballroom was brought alive by the magnificence and splendor of the lyrical Odissi dance. Submerged in spiritual fervor, Madhavi Mudgal commenced the recital with an invocatory Manglacharan (an invocation to Lord Shiva from a 13th century musical treatise, the Sangitaratnakara), followed by Vadya Vaidhya (an abstract dance inspired by the variety of Taal Vadya of Odisha),



Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty presenting a plaque to Madhavi Mudgal



The troupe -Madhavi Mudgal, Arushi Mudgal, Shalakra Rai, Shobha Bisht, Deepika Bisht & Kritika Uppal- with the Consul General

Abhinaya (verses from Jayadeva's Gita Govinda are interpreted through expressions and codified hand gestures), Pallavi (a visual representation of musical motifs, where music and movement build up gradually into complex patterns) &

Madhurashtakan (a devotional song to Lord Krishna by the 16th century saint Vallabhacharya). From start till finish, the audience was held captive and spell bound by the dancers' immersion in the material they were presenting. Every shift of weight, every

darting glance, and every humming bird like flourish of the hands furthered the conversation they seemed to be having, with its shades of emotions.

(Based on Press Release)

## Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh honored with Sanskruti Award

**GANDHINAGAR (TIP):** The New Jersey-based physician, entrepreneur, publisher and philanthropist Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh, founder and chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media, was honored with a Sanskruti Award by the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, on July 4 at the Swarnim Sankul in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India.

The award was presented to Dr. Parikh by Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani and was given in recognition for his contributions to Indian literature, society and culture.

Along with receiving a plaque from Chief Minister Rupani, Dr. Parikh was honored with a turban given by Gujarat's Youth and Cultural Minister Ishwarsi Patel, a shawl by General Secretary Shridhar Parakar and a Sutra Mala by State President of Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad Prathapai Pandya.

"This award is given to an individual who contributes a lot to society, and we honor Dr. Parikh for his philanthropic work having contributed all his life to society by helping those in need in all different fields. He has also uplifted Gujarat in terms education a healthcare," said Chief Minister Rupani.

"Though he lives in America, Dr. Parikh has always been thinking about Gujarat and he has made a remarkable contribution in the lives of Indian Americans as well through health, literature and journalism," the Chief Minister added.

"I am extremely happy and proud to receive this award and thank those who have honored me today. With the blessing of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I started a think tank for India's global development as well as to strengthen the ties between India and the U.S.," said Dr. Parikh.

"I have recently acquired a TV Channel known as ITV Gold, to promote a New India and encourage Indian-Americans to take part in community events which will bring them closer to India. I also request



Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh receiving Sanskruti Award from Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani in Gandhinagar, July

second and third generation Indian-Americans to donate and contribute to charitable activities in India," Dr. Parikh added.

"Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad's goal is to inform Indians and outsiders about Indian literature," said Shridhar Parakar, the general secretary of ABSP, adding, "Literature is a mirror of society and when we look into the mirror we see the good reflection of society. As a result, it is the organization's humble opportunity to honor those who have contributed a lot to Indian literature,". The ABSP was established on October 27, 1966 in Delhi, to bring together writers, thinkers, critics and fans of Indian literature.

The event was emceed by Dr. Balwant Jani, a writer who is connected with many literary institutions and has contributed much to Indian literature.



## SHOMIK CHAUDHURI NO LONGER WITH FIDELIS INTERACTIVE

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Shomik Chaudhuri, formerly with Fidelis Interactive said in an email statement that he is "no longer with Fidelis Interactive." "Please be informed that I am no longer with Fidelis Interactive." "However, the South Asian Digital Network is my creation and I will carry it wherever I go. A lot of effort has gone into it and I will strive to revive it if I get some support", he said. "In the meantime, please feel free to connect with me on my official email shomik@shomikchaudhuri.com and my cell 646-498-5122", he added.



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# UN Women announces Marta Vieira da Silva as Goodwill Ambassador

**NEW YORK (TIP):** UN Women announced, July 12, appointment of world-renowned Brazilian soccer player Marta Vieira da Silva as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador for women and girls in sport. Ms. Vieira da Silva, popularly known by her fans as Marta, will dedicate her efforts to support UN Women's work for gender equality and women's empowerment across the world, inspiring women and girls to challenge stereotypes, overcome barriers and follow their dreams and ambitions, including in the area of sport.

An icon and role model for many, Marta is widely regarded as the best female soccer player of all time. She currently plays for the Orlando Pride in the National Women's Soccer League in the United States and as a forward on the Brazil national team. She is the all-time top scorer of the FIFA Women's World Cup tournament and was named Player of the Year five consecutive times. She was also a member of the Brazilian national teams that won the silver medal at the 2004 and 2008 Summer Olympics and named one of six ambassadors for the 2014 World Cup held in Brazil.

Welcoming the new Goodwill Ambassador, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said, "Marta Vieira da Silva is an exceptional role model for women and girls across the world. Her own life experience tells a powerful story of what can be achieved with determination, talent and grit. Sport is a universal language; it inspires and unites us as it stretches our limits. We look forward to working closely with Marta to bring the transforming power of sport to more women and girls, and to rapidly building equality. I am delighted to welcome her to the UN Women family."

"It is an honour to become a UN Women Goodwill Ambassador for women and girls in sport. I am fully committed to work with UN Women to ensure that women and girls around the world have the same opportunities

that men and boys have to fulfill their potential and I know, from my life experience, that sport is a fantastic tool for empowerment," said Marta. "All around the world today women are demonstrating that they can succeed in roles and positions previously kept for men. The participation of women in sport and physical activity is no exception. Through sport, women and girls can challenge socio-cultural norms and gender stereotypes and increase their self-esteem, develop life skills and leadership; they can improve their health and ownership and understanding of their bodies; become aware of what is violence and how to prevent it, and look for available services and develop economic skills."

Women in sport are more visible than ever before: during the 2016 Rio Olympics, approximately 4,700 women - 45 per cent of all athletes - represented their countries in 306 events. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders in 2015 has set the roadmap to achieve gender equality by 2030, and explicitly recognizes sport as an important enabler for development and women's empowerment.

Sport can empower, when combined with safe-spaces and holistic life-skills learning opportunities that boost a girl's autonomy. The 'One Win Leads to Another' programme, developed by UN Women and Women Win, has been working with young women and girls in Rio de Janeiro to provide sport and life-skills training, and has proven to dramatically improve girls' confidence and understanding of sexual health and rights, finances and leadership skills. The programme improves their ability to influence decisions that impact their lives at all levels, and is set to be replicated in Argentina and other countries throughout the world.

Yet, women and girls in sport continue to face serious challenges, and there is a long way to go in attaining equality in the world of

sport. Girls and women across the world get fewer opportunities, less investment, and face discrimination and even sexual harassment when they play sport. When they make it as professional athletes, they face the glass ceiling and a substantial pay gap. The total payout for the last Women's Soccer World Cup, for example, was USD 15 million, compared to USD 576 million for the last Men's Soccer World Cup.

According to the 2017 report from Sporting intelligence - the Global Sports Salaries Survey (GSSS) - among elite athletes, women earn on average only one per cent of what the elite men earn. In the Forbes ranking of the 100 highest-paid athletes, there was not one woman among the world's top earners.

UN Women Goodwill Ambassadors are prominent individuals from the worlds of arts, sciences, literature, entertainment, sport or other fields of public life who have expressed their personal commitment to UN Women's mandate and their determination to build momentum and resources around gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through mobilizing their audiences in their area of expertise and influence.

Marta has also served as an UNDP Goodwill Ambassador in past years.

**BRIEF BIO DETAILS:** Marta Vieira da Silva, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador for women and girls in sport

Marta was born in Brazil in 1986 and is a citizen of both Brazil and Sweden. Widely regarded as the best female soccer player of all time, she currently plays for the Orlando Pride in the National Women's Soccer League in the United States and as a forward on the Brazil national team.

A prolific goal scorer and gifted player famed for her dribbling ability, Marta finished the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup as the winner of both the Golden Ball and the Golden Boot for scoring seven goals. Scoring 15 goals at the 2015 World Cup, Marta became



*World-renowned Brazilian soccer player Marta Vieira da Silva has been appointed UN Women Goodwill Ambassador for women and girls in sport*

the all-time top scorer of the tournament. She was named FIFA World Player of the Year five consecutive times between 2006 and 2010 and was a member of the Brazilian national teams that won the silver medal at the 2004 and 2008 Summer Olympics. She was named as one of six ambassadors for the 2014 men's World Cup held in Brazil.

Growing up in a poor family from the scrublands of Brazil's north east in Dois Riachos, Alagoas, Marta played street soccer without shoes and was often shunned by the boys she could outplay.

She has previously served as a Goodwill Ambassador from 2010 to 2018 for the United Nations Development Programme, during which she promoted international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a special focus on women's empowerment.

## At the Crossroads: the Glen Cove Gurdwara

By I.J. Singh & Neena I. Singh

**T**here is no doubt that our beloved gurdwara is at an existential crisis at this time. We will stumble through it but will we learn any lessons? Look at all the gurduaras around us in this country in despair. Look at Sikh teachings and I am sure we can do much, much better. Let's see if we can remake our problems into a progressive opportunity rather than a destructive threat.

No question that sharp lines, etched in stone, if judged by the vicious bitterness of current communication, now divide our community. How best to move forward? Welcome the differences; life teaches us that all progress stems from differences and how we handle them.

We know of the move for all officers and trustees to resign and the gurduara to be managed by a collective of previous officers for a while, until we return to a more equitable and sensible frame of mind. Sounds good except for the correspondence that is hardly reflective, thoughtful, hopeful or helpful.

An apology at the gurduara by one side was followed by harsh responses from many sides. That cannot ever lead us to a productive solution. The issue of who has which papers and documents; how and when and to whom will they be delivered remains unresolved; also unresolved is the police report.

Keep in mind that the gurduara is a community institution, not a private holding corporation. We cannot allow any group to hijack the gurduara. If it is a privately-owned corporation where the major agenda is the elaborate menu at langar with lack of relevant community programs then our note today is out of order, as is our attendance at the gurduara. At this time the sangat is totally side-lined. Do they have a place and a role in this gurduara?



*Mata Sahib Kaur Gurdwara in Glen Cove, NY*

**We offer a few working ideas here:**

1. Both sides should immediately stop issuing statements to justify their own behavior or condemning the other side. Such activities absolutely do not help if the purpose is to resolve issues and differences.
2. In the meantime, we should nominate a small group of 3 to 5 individuals (men and women) to run the gurduara as an interim arrangement. There should be representation of both sides in this subcommittee. A war of words has no place here. We need to talk to each other, not talk at each other.
3. Let both sides provide any records they have to this small interim committee, who will hold them and secure them but will not issue any comments about them, except to see that they have received all material.
4. This subcommittee would design what procedures - corrective steps, apologies, or resignations etc. - are necessary to bring the community together and not split it

permanently. This subcommittee would also explore organizational and procedural mis-steps in how we run meetings, elections and related matters. At this time, we dare say that we have rules but rarely do we follow or understand them well. At this time the daily briefings continue to roil the community. They don't help at all.

5. This sub-committee should report its recommendations to the sangat in a public forum.

Clearly, the goal is NOT to determine guilt but to close the divisions in the community. Participants act from their own position that they think is justified and in good faith. But an institution must have room for different views as well. Good institutions have term limits for their officers. We can revisit the Constitution as well, although the problem at this time may be that it is not being used.

Let us create an institution that can be a model for other gurduaras that our community - young and old -- can find useful. Gurduaras should not collapse like Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom -- a house of cards. He failed to foresee the future; let's learn from that mistake. Gurduara of Slough in the UK seems like a good model; let's explore their functioning.

Let us focus on the program gurduaras can offer. Keep an eye on waste of community funds and resources: time, money and energy! Procedures for resolution of problems must exist in the framework of every institution.

Unanimity of opinion and homogeneity of thought does not make a successful progressive community and institution. Respect differences and work with them. An institution such as ours must display fundamental transparency, accountability and participatory self-governance.

*Any positive suggestions and initiatives should be both solicited and welcome? ijsingh99@gmail.com*

Michael Cohen purchased \$6.7 million Manhattan apartment days before FBI raids



Michael Cohen took out a \$3.5 million mortgage on a four bedroom, 19th floor unit at 111 Murray Street on April 3, according to real estate records and listings.

Photo / courtesy New York Daily News

**NEW YORK (TIP):** President Trump's former fixer and personal lawyer Michael Cohen bought a \$6.7 million apartment in a brand new Manhattan skyscraper less than a week before FBI agents raided his home, office and hotel room in April, according to records and reports.

Cohen, who's under criminal investigation over potential bank fraud and campaign finance violations, took out a \$3.5 million mortgage on a four bedroom, 19th floor unit at 111 Murray Street on April 3, according to real estate records and listings.

The mortgage was provided by the skyscraper's developers, Fisher Brothers, Witkoff and New Valley. Howard Lorber, the head of New Valley, and Steve Witkoff, the founder of Witkoff, are both longtime friends of Trump.

People familiar with the deal told The Wall Street Journal Cohen took the unusual step of securing a mortgage from the developers because he was having a hard time buying the unit via more traditional means because the building had not yet met city requirements.

The swanky TriBeca apartment building features a private dining room, a Turkish bath, a 75-foot swimming pool, an arcade room, a fitness center and a service that offers to book private planes, according to realtor site StreetEasy.

Six days after Cohen secured the mortgage on the 2,697 square foot unit, FBI agents stormed into his Midtown apartment, hotel room and office and seized a cache of records, including communications between him and Trump.

The raid was the result of a federal investigation out of the Southern District of New York.

Among other matters, the investigation focuses on whether Cohen violated campaign finance laws by paying porn star Stormy Daniels \$130,000 shortly before the 2016 election in exchange for her promising not to go public with claims she had sex with Trump in 2006.

Cohen, 51, has not been charged with any crimes.

## Harlem community members and officials speak out against landmarked brownstone's conversion into drug treatment facility

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Assembly Member Al Taylor, State Senator Brian Benjamin, and other officials, on July 12, joined Harlem community members and elected officials at an emergency rally against the planned conversion of a protected residential brownstone at 730 St. Nicholas Avenue, in the Hamilton Heights / Sugar Hill Historic District, for use as a drug treatment facility.

Community members announced Thursday's rally after learning that Argus Community, Inc., was beginning work Wednesday on physical renovations to the historic property, to convert it for use as an outpatient methadone clinic. The work was apparently slated to begin despite the fact that neither the city government nor the relevant state agency had yet given approval for the site's use as such a facility.

"Converting a brownstone on a residential block in a protected historic district into yet another drug treatment facility isn't fair to this neighborhood, which already hosts more than a fair share of such sites," said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer. "These facilities should be sited after an open, honest conversation about where the need really is. That conversation didn't happen here, Argus wasn't up-front about its intentions for this property, and that's why we're fighting back."

"The opioid crisis has had a tremendous impact on our community and in communities around the nation," said U.S. Rep. Adriano Espaillat. "As we work collectively to address this growing national crisis, it remains critical that the community



"Converting a brownstone on a residential block in a protected historic district into yet another drug treatment facility isn't fair to this neighborhood": Gale Brewer

has a say and voice in our efforts to find immediate and long-term solutions on how best to support individuals and families along their journey through treatment and on the road to recovery."

"Our community has more than our fair share of these kinds of facilities. We believe people need help, and we are happy they want to provide it, but why is it that when these sort of things happen uptown there's a lack of communication and respect that you do not see in other neighborhoods?" said State Senator Brian Benjamin. "The community has spoken, and I am asking that our city and state health officials listen and not recommend that this project go forward."

"As both a representative of this community and Chair of the Council's Health Committee, I strongly support methadone

clinics including in this community and elsewhere in the City," said Council Member Mark Levine. "As such, I have recommended a far more suitable location at the Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center on 145th and Amsterdam, which would be much better fit for the community than the current proposed site on a historically landmarked residential block."

"While Manhattan Community Board No. 9 acknowledges that resources are needed within Community District 9 to combat the insurgent heroin and opioid addiction, we are adamant about finding the appropriate location and provider who will ensure safety and appropriate accessibility for their clients and the surrounding community," said Community Board 9 Chair Padmore John. "MCB9 is dedicated to keeping the community fully informed regarding all aspects surrounding the construction and maintenance of this facility."

The neighborhood is already saturated with transitional housing and drug treatment facilities, with multiple sites (including one operated by Argus itself) located within just a few blocks of 730 St. Nicholas Avenue. Residents and elected officials oppose the conversion of this historic brownstone on a residential block as inappropriate and unnecessary.

Argus originally had told Community Board 9 that the property would be put to a different use, and its current plan to open a methadone clinic is opposed by the community board, the West 147th Street Block Association, and the neighborhood's city, state, and federal elected representatives.

## ENDING GIRLS' INCARCERATION IS GOAL OF NEW TASK FORCE IN NEW YORK CITY

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The Vera Institute of Justice launched the Task Force on Ending Girls' Incarceration in New York City, a new multi-agency task force created in partnership with New York City agencies to address the unique needs of girls in the city's juvenile justice system. At a time when women's issues in general are a topic of significant national attention, the task force's findings will inform similar efforts in other cities and will help to fill a critical gap in reducing youth incarceration nationwide, as strategies for girls have largely been left out of justice reform conversations.

Last year, Vera released a report on the fastest-growing population behind bars—women in jail—as part of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge, an initiative to change the way America thinks about and uses jail. The report documented how virtually all new responses to address growing jail populations are based on research about men in jail and can have unintended negative consequences for women.

Similarly, in the juvenile system, successful reforms in the past decade have reduced the number of incarcerated youth by half, but the incarceration of girls nationally is falling at a slower rate than that of boys because of a lack of systematic focus on reducing girls' confinement. Today, girls in the juvenile justice system—who are disproportionately girls of color and/or LGBT/gender non-conforming (GNC)—are

still being swept into custody for low-level offenses that pose no risk to public safety.

To help shine a much-needed spotlight on girls in the juvenile justice system, all of whom are 16 or younger (under New York State law, 17- and 18-year-old girls are automatically tried as adults), the task force is examining the unique pathways that lead girls and LGBT/GNC youth into the juvenile justice system—such as disparities in school-based arrest—in order to design a comprehensive plan to interrupt those pathways. Because the number of girls in the system is relatively small (about 600 girls enter detention each year) and the vast majority are coming in on low-level, nonviolent charges, these reforms aim to not only reduce but end the incarceration of girls in New York City. The Task Force on Ending Girls' Incarceration in New York City is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and lessons learned will be disseminated to other jurisdictions nationwide through OJJDP's National Girls' Initiative.

Over the next seven months, the task force will bring together representatives from New York City agencies, community service providers, academia, and national nonprofits. It will also receive support from an advisory group of girls and LGBT/GNC youth who have experience in New York City's juvenile justice system, as well as from an expert advisory council comprised of key advocates, organizers, and other

stakeholders from an array of nonprofit organizations and universities in the city. The members of the Task Force on Ending Girls' Incarceration are listed in full below.

### Statements of Support

"Girls have been largely overlooked in the justice reform field, despite troubling disparities in their rates of incarceration—which are especially felt by girls of color. This initiative to develop effective gender-specific strategies will divert more girls from the justice system and keep them at home with their families. We hope that the ambitious goal of ending girls' incarceration in New York City will be an important step towards ending the incarceration of all young people."

- Vera President Nicholas Turner

"By ending girls' incarceration, New York City has the opportunity to decisively impact the lives of vulnerable and striving girls. This ambitious work requires both vision and data, which will be delivered by the key partners from across the city, sectors, and the nation whose talents are represented on this task force."

- Kimberlyn Leary, Ph.D., Co-Chair of the Task Force on Ending Girls' Incarceration in New York City and Associate Professor of Department of Health Policy and Management, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Policy.

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

# Suresh Iyer takes over as Ekal USA's new President

By Manu Shah

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Suresh Iyer's introduction to Ekal was a strange coincidence. In 2002, he was asked by a friend to host its Founder Shyam Gupta in a last minute change of plans. The conversation between the two turned to Ekal, lasted well into the night and by morning, Suresh had become a donor.

He gradually became more involved as a volunteer, then Chapter President, Chairman of the Board until 6 months ago when he assumed the role of President of Ekal Vidyalaya USA.

Ekal's new President absorbed the importance of education and the spirit of service early in life. The family lacked monetary resources but made up in a mother's determination to educate all six of her children. As they did well in school, she cleared out the balcony so they could coach other children who were not faring as well for free. Suresh recalls that despite a budget that stretched thin, there was always a snack for all the children after class.

These instilled values showed up time and again over the course of his life. After graduating and securing his first paying job at the Indian Space Research Organization as a scientist, the first thing Suresh did was to fund the education of several children who were academically good but couldn't afford the fees in his school in Bengaluru.

After brief stints at Air India and Tata Consultancy Services, USA, Suresh started his own company Infospectrum in 2002 based out of Southern California. The company provides tracking software for aerospace maintenance as well as real time tracking of transportation



Suresh Iyer has taken over as Ekal USA's President



Iyer with children in an Ekal Vidyalaya in India

Assets. Suresh is happy his entrepreneurial gamble paid off but clearly says his work with Ekal "brings a different level of satisfaction."

The Ekal movement started in 1989 with one village and one school. Today, there is an Ekal school in 70,000 villages in India offering free schooling, vocational training, digital competence and agricultural education. Suresh makes it a point to visit a school every time he visits India. If they are excited and curious to meet this visitor from America, he is no less impressed to hear a 6 year old confidently rattle off the multiplication table of 12. To him, it is proof that Ekal is effective.

It also made his day when a girl who had learned tailoring at an Ekal vocational school

told him she had opened her own tailoring center and was earning 5000 rupees a month.

As President, Suresh is charged about taking Ekal to the next level. The Foundation raised 8 million dollars last year and his goal is to cross 10 million this year. He's also working on putting a system of Donor communication in place and intends to strengthen those Ekal Chapters that need a little boost. Above all, he wants "Ekal's message to be out in the world loudly and clearly."

Three galas for fundraising are being planned for October in New York, Washington and Houston. Here reveals that just \$365 can support an Ekal school for an entire year.

Suresh is clearly thriving on this challenge

but admits he couldn't have done it without his wife Kanaka's unwavering support. A physician, she held the fort with their two boys while he took on various leadership roles at Ekal.

This spirit of service has also passed on to Suresh's two boys - Vasant and Sumant. Both have interned at Ekal villages and returned with a determination to do more. Vasant presented his thoughts at the Ekal National Conference in 2015 while Sumant is working with the Coimbatore team and Google mapping division to coordinate ways by which Ekal schools can be quickly plotted on Google Maps. This helps donors get information about schools they are supporting easily.

## The 2018 South Asian Spelling Bee Announces Dallas and New Jersey Winners

**METUCHEN, NJ (TIP):** Continuing its quest for the best speller in the community, the 2018 South Asian Spelling Bee ([www.SouthAsianSpellingBee.com](http://www.SouthAsianSpellingBee.com)) traveled to Texas and New Jersey with stops in Dallas and New Brunswick.

With a huge turnout this year, the Bee attracted some top talent as well as young and new spellers that competed for the coveted prizes and titles.

At the Dallas Regional, current Scripps National Champion and South Asian Spelling Bee alumnus Karthik Nemmani was at hand to interact with spellers and parents. Having attended the South Asian Spelling Bee for 5 years, Nemmani had specific insights about his experience at the event and its contribution to his success.

"The South Asian Spelling Bee gave me exposure and a competitive edge that other bees lacked," he told a standing room only crowd at the regional.

Sohum Sukhatankar (12) of Dallas, Texas was the regional champ and Rohan Raja (12) of Irving, Texas, was the first runner up at the Dallas Regional.

In New Jersey, Nitya Kathiravan (9) of Edison, New Jersey was the regional champ and Sujata Choudhury (11) of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, was the first runner up.

The event is open to children of South Asian descent up to 14 years of age. It will give South Asian children a chance to test their spelling skills in their core peer group. Interested spellers need their parent or guardian to register them online at [www.southasianspellingbee.com](http://www.southasianspellingbee.com).

Organized by Touchdown Media Inc., the South Asian Spelling Bee is celebrating its 11th anniversary this year and with regionals being held in 6 locations across the United States. Regional centers for this season include Washington, D.C. Metro, Charlotte, the Bay Area, Chicago, New



Dallas Winners: Karthik Nemmani (2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee Champion), Sohoh Sukhatankar (Regional Champion), Winston Fuller (Dallas Regional Judge), Rohan Raja (First Runner Up), and Cynthia Walters (Dallas Regional Pronouncer).



New Jersey Winners: Vandana Walia (New Jersey Regional Judge), Sujata Choudhury (First Runner Up), Nitya Kathiravan (Regional Champion) and Louise Silverman (New Jersey Regional Judge).

Jersey, and Dallas. All events will be free to attend and open to the public. An international regional in Accra, Ghana was conducted earlier this year, from where spellers of South Asian descent will qualify for the finals.

"For the past ten years, the Bee has consistently provided a firm platform for the community to come together and hone their craft. It's become a family activity that contributes towards the overall development of the child. We are proud to enter our eleventh consecutive year and look forward to engaging some of these wonderful spellers," said Rahul Walia, founder of the South Asian Spelling Bee and CEO of Touchdown Media Inc.

Within the past year the South Asian Spelling Bee has been exhaustively featured in "Breaking the Bee" and an

exclusive story on VICE News that followed the journey of South Asian Spelling Bee spellers and the importance of the South Asian Spelling Bee platform being a vital step in their spelling journey.

The top two spellers of each regional competition will advance to the finals to be held in New Jersey in August. Champion's grand prize of \$3,000 will be awarded to the winner at the finals.

This year, the Bee is proudly powered by Kawan- the world's most popular Roti paratha brand returns as the powered by sponsor and as always, Sony Pictures Networks is the exclusive broadcast partner for the South Asian Spelling Bee and will be airing the series across 120 countries.

"Kawan is proud to return as a sponsor and we have tremendous faith in

contributing towards crucial family time for the community. We look forward to getting to know the spellers and their families through this wonderful journey," said Tim Tan, Managing Director Kawan Food.

"Year over year, the South Asian Spelling Bee has made for great programming that gels with our ethos of compete family entertainment. We are all about family values and encourage platforms such as these that highlight the talent of our community," said Jaideep Janakiram, Head of Americas, Sony Pictures Networks.

For a complete schedule, registration and any other information, please visit: [www.SouthAsianSpellingBee.com](http://www.SouthAsianSpellingBee.com).

Find us on Facebook at South Asian Spelling Bee and you can follow us on our Twitter handle at Spell South Asian.


**GUEST  
COMMENT**

## A difficult campaign: on the Pakistan elections

**In the run-up to the election, Pakistan's judiciary and military are showing their hand**

Democracy has always been fragile in Pakistan. It was only in 2013 that a transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another was realized for the first time. As the country heads for the second such transfer, with a general election scheduled for July 25, the celebration is muted, overshadowed by a series of dramatic developments. Last week, former Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League leader Nawaz Sharif was sentenced to 10 years in prison in a corruption case involving undeclared property in London. The case, first outed in the Panama Papers, has seen Mr. Sharif disqualified from office and then barred from holding a party position in the ruling PML(N) after being held guilty by the Supreme Court. The charges are serious, even for a country plagued by corruption in high places. But many Pakistanis, including Mr. Sharif's critics, believe the anti-corruption court was overzealous, and even motivated by those in the deep state unhappy with his recent run as Prime Minister. In an unusual move, military and intelligence officers had been dispatched to cities around the world to gather as much evidence as possible against him. Mr. Sharif, who has been sentenced along with his daughter and son-in-law, accuses the Opposition parties led by Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf of having received support from the establishment to hold massive rallies calling for his ouster. This was a role Mr. Sharif himself played in the 1990s, when he was the politician favored by Pakistan's all-powerful establishment.

While the attempt to neutralize Mr. Sharif's political role in Pakistan's future is the biggest story in this campaign, it is by no means the only destabilizing trend. In the past few weeks, the media have battled harassment, with copies of the Dawn banned from cantonments. Journalists have faced death threats. This week, Awami National Party leader Haroon Bilour became the second member of his family to be assassinated, pointing to a systematic targeting of politicians who don't adhere to an Islamist line or kowtow to the military. The atmosphere is by no means conducive to the conduct of a free and fair election and has been further vitiated by terrorist groups being 'mainstreamed' in the polity. The most notable such group is the Allah-o-Akbar Tehreek. Sectarian groups and radical Islamist ideology are being tolerated by the military, despite harsh strictures on terror funding from the Financial Action Task Force, and an international grey-listing that threatens to cripple the economy. The elections will serve as one marker for the democratic process; the larger struggle in Pakistan for the deepening of democracy will continue.

(Tribune, India)



By Philip I. Levy

Since the start of the year, U.S. President Donald Trump has lashed out at allies and adversaries alike on trade. Often, as with India, the U.S. has pushed for enhanced security cooperation at the same time it declared trade relations a national security threat. The belligerence has left many baffled.

### Some pointers

A first question is why the Trump administration is launching its trade wars. There are at least three possible explanations worth considering: an actual casus belli, as with complaints about Chinese practices; a phantom casus belli, as in the preoccupation with meaningless bilateral trade deficits; or, finally, it might just be a straightforward desire to block trade.

The evidence seems to point to the last possibility - simple protectionism. While the U.S. has significant concerns about Chinese economic practices, such as China's aggressive approach to acquiring intellectual property from American businesses, the administration has been unable to focus its demands on these practices. When, a year ago, China offered a deal to address its steel overcapacity, Mr. Trump reportedly rejected the deal in favor of pursuing tariffs. Nor has the White House been able to prioritize among its global trade concerns. The discord with trading partners such as the European Union and Canada has undercut the possibility of presenting a united front on China complaints.

Further, the Trump administration's tariff justifications can shift rapidly. In May-June, the Trump administration extended steel and aluminum tariffs to Canada, among other countries. Ostensibly, the rationale was a threat to U.S. national security. Yet, at the G7 meetings later that month, Mr. Trump seemed to explain the aggressive U.S. stance by citing Canada's protective dairy regime.

There is ample evidence that Mr. Trump places a high priority on bilateral trade deficits, which he seems to equate with profit and loss statements. In May, hoping to assuage the President's concerns, Chinese Vice-Premier Liu. He came to Washington to offer increased Chinese purchases of U.S. goods as a means of resolving the looming tariff threat. The Trump administration initially struck a deal, then reversed it roughly a week later. Countries with which the U.S. runs a trade surplus have also not been immune from trade attacks; Canada is a prime example.

This then leaves the simpler explanation that Mr. Trump is fond of tariffs and believes that American industry will do better behind a wall of protection. He has been neither coy nor inconsistent about such feelings. When he first announced his intention to apply steel and aluminum tariffs in March, his press secretary was asked about the surprise policy

move. She replied, "This is something, frankly, the President has been talking about for decades."

### Within the system

The U.S. prides itself, however, on its political system of checks and balances. Even with a protectionist President, how can one individual recraft a country's long-standing trade position so dramatically? The puzzle deepens when one looks at the U.S. Constitution, which assigns the power to apply tariffs to Congress. And where are international protections against capricious protectionism?

Domestically, Congress has tried to shift responsibility for trade on to the Executive Branch ever since it engaged in an ill-fated bout of protectionism in 1930. The underlying presumption was that individual members of Congress were more likely to succumb to protectionist pressures from their narrower constituencies, while the President was more likely to consider the broader national interest. Most domestic legislative safeguards, therefore, protected against a president being more liberal than Congress might desire; there are relatively few protections against a President who is more protectionist. Over the years, the legal authorizations for a President to apply protection accumulated, largely unused. Thus, the steel and aluminum tariffs were justified under an obscure provision of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, a law granting national security powers from the midst of the Cold War. The upshot is that a protectionist President has ample tools at hand.

Turning to the global trading system, the burgeoning trade war demonstrates its limitations. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and World Trade Organization were never designed to block a major world power from running amok. They relied, instead, on the principal players in global trade respecting the system. Trade disputes were anticipated, of course, but they were intended to be sincere cases of disagreement about rules and acceptable practices. The WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism cannot act quickly enough to address the mounting spats about trade protectionism emanating from the U.S., a major reason why countries around the world have not waited for verdicts from their WTO complaints and have instead proceeded with retaliation.

### What lies ahead

Finally, we can ask: what comes next for the global trading system? In the near term, we are likely to see escalation. U.S. tariffs on \$34 billion of imports from China took effect on July 6. China has promised equivalent retaliation. Mr. Trump has promised to retaliate against that retaliation.

The Trump administration also announced its intention to use its national security justification for tariffs on the auto sector. There are reports that Mr. Trump wants such tariffs in place before the U.S. mid-term elections in early November. While such a



*There is little sign that Donald Trump will be turned from his protectionist path by appeals on the virtues of trade*

move would be qualitatively similar to the action against steel and aluminum trade, it would be quantitatively much more significant, given the magnitude of the autos trade. Europe has threatened retaliatory tariffs worth \$300 billion should the auto tariffs proceed.

There is little sign that Mr. Trump will be turned from his protectionist path by earnest explanations of the virtues of trade, though there have been valiant attempts both from the private sector and from members of Congress. If there is to be a change in the U.S. position, it is likely to come from an active reassertion of congressional authority over trade policy. At the moment, that still appears unlikely, but the pressures are mounting.

Even if the President has trumpeted his passion for protection for years, many in the U.S. assumed he was exaggerating. It is only in the last month or two that the effects of both protection and retaliation have begun to be felt. While some businesses have been helped, many more have been hurt. For example, while there are roughly 140,000 Americans who work in steel production, there are about 2 million who work in industries that use steel as a major input. Those latter industries are beginning to cry for help, along with farmers who are seeing sales lost to retaliatory barriers. Stories such as the relocation of production of Harley-Davidson motorcycles have called into question the President's claim that protection would revive American manufacturing.

All this has led to a deeply conflicted Republican Party, which holds a majority in both houses of the legislature. Traditionally, Republicans have been the more pro-business, pro-trade party and members of Congress running for re-election this November were planning to mount a campaign based on unity, tax cuts, and good stewardship of the economy.

Now those candidates need to decide whether or not to act against their President's trade measures. If they choose to, they have the power to legislate and block the President's trade belligerence, at the cost of enraging him. If they choose not to, they will likely disappoint their constituents. Their choice is likely to determine the next turn in Mr. Trump's trade war.

*(The author is a Senior Fellow at the Chicago Council of Global Affairs and adjunct Professor at the Kellogg School of Management, U.S.)*

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### The Indian Panorama

P.O. Box No. 190067, South Richmond Hill, NY 11419,  
Tel: 646-247-9458  
Email: editor@theindianpanorama.com  
**DALLAS EDITION**  
P.O. BOX 121695, ARLINGTON, TX 76012  
**Lovlien Kaurr, VP & Bureau Chief**

E-mail tipdallas01@gmail.com; Phone: 646-247-9458  
www.theindianpanorama.news  
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# Deep state, deeper problems: Pakistan



By Husain Haqqani

“

It is ironic that Mr. Sharif faces jail ahead of an election that opinion polls indicate his party would win, if voting was free and fair, even as a long list of internationally designated terrorists is free to seek votes. That contradiction is at the heart of why the outcome of the elections is unlikely to change any of the fundamentals of the Pakistan crisis. If the PML-N overcomes all odds and still manages to win, the corruption cases will continue to cast their shadow. If someone like Imran Khan wins with the help of invisible hands, he would start his term under a different cloud.”

”

Pakistan has been ill-served with the 'corruption is the only problem' oversimplification, as elections beckon

Whatever their outcome, Pakistan's general election scheduled for July 25 is unlikely to change four fundamental realities. First, Pakistan's military-led establishment will continue to wield effective power, drawing strength from allegations of incompetence and corruption against civilian politicians. Second, civilian politicians will continue to justify their incompetence and corruption by invoking the specter of military intervention in politics. Third, jihadis and other religious extremists will continue to benefit from the unwillingness of the military and the judiciary to target them as well as the temptation of politicians to benefit from their support. Fourth and finally, Pakistan's international isolation and economic problems, stemming from its ideological direction and mainstreaming of extremism will not end.

The conviction of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif by an accountability court last Friday has set the stage for him to portray himself as the latest martyr for democracy. He has argued, as others have done before him, that he is being punished not for corruption but for standing up to Pakistan's invisible government - the military-intelligence combine that has dominated the country effectively since 1958.

His supporters are willing to ignore the fact that Mr. Sharif's own political career was launched by the Pakistan Army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and the likelihood that allegations of unusual expansion of the Sharif fortune since the family's advent in politics are true.

## Spotlight on the judiciary

The conduct of Pakistan's judiciary in the matter has been far from judicious. The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Saqib Nisar, views himself less as an adjudicator in accordance with the law and more as a super policy maker. He has expressed interest in everything - from water scarcity to running of mental hospitals and prisons. He has taken to touring various government facilities and has even created a fund for the construction of dams. The fund will receive public contributions because the Chief Justice knows the exchequer does not have enough money to build the dams he wants built.

None of these actions is part of a Chief Justice's job description, even after recognizing that some judges are more activist than others. Justice Nisar has made his political biases well known and the case against Mr. Sharif proceeded in reverse order. Instead of beginning in a trial court where evidence of his wrongdoing was established beyond reasonable doubt, he was first disqualified by the Supreme Court and then put on trial.

But perceptions and common knowledge of political corruption cannot be a substitute for following legal principles. Elsewhere in the civilized world, the Pakistani practice of accusing someone of criminal conduct first in the highest court and then demanding that they prove their innocence would be deemed grossly unjust. The fact that this happens only in political cases further strengthens the view that politics, not corruption, is at the heart of such 'prosecutions'.

Moreover, the Supreme Court invited representatives of the Military Intelligence and the ISI to help investigate the money trail for Mr. Sharif's alleged properties in London. This highly unusual procedure itself casts doubt on the real motives behind the former Prime Minister's trial. The military-led prosecutions of politicians, even when their malfeasance is well known, helps the politicians in building their case that their political conduct is the



Pakistan goes to polls on July 25

source of their troubles.

Pakistan is, therefore, unable to hold the politically powerful accountable through its politicized judiciary. The cynical view of Pakistani politics would be that three decades ago the deep state advanced Mr. Sharif's political career while portraying Benazir Bhutto's spouse, Asif Zardari, as corrupt; now Imran Khan is the 'chosen one' while Mr. Sharif's alleged corruption is being targeted.

## Problem with this 'narrative'

The military, which now refers to itself as 'the institution', has helped build a simplified narrative to justify its constant intervention in political matters as well as to explain Pakistan's myriad problems. According to this narrative, civilian politicians are incompetent and corrupt, which is the only reason the military needs to periodically intervene to set things right. There is no explanation for how politicians would ever learn the art of governance if they are to be constantly corrected by unelected generals and judges.

Another part of 'the narrative' is the notion that Pakistan's dysfunction and periodic economic crises are the result of the massive corruption by civilians. Imran Khan and his supporters have been advancing that simplified narrative. Their message finds resonance with those who want to believe that once kickbacks on large projects and their corrupt practices are eliminated, Pakistan would somehow become the land of milk and honey.

There is, of course, no justification or excuse for corruption but Pakistan has been ill-served with the 'corruption is the only problem' over-simplification. Since at least 1990, it has become an excuse to gloss over more significant policy issues that hold Pakistan back. Corruption has been exposed in many countries, from Iceland to China but none of them is as dysfunctional as Pakistan.

Limiting national discourse to a discussion of corruption makes it impossible for Pakistanis to discuss how jihadi ideology and religious extremism are leading to Pakistan's isolation. Similarly, Pakistan's slow growth in exports, for example, is hardly a function of corruption. It reflects low productivity and inadequate value addition which are consequences of poor human capital development and failure to attract investment, among other factors.

Pakistan is the sixth largest country in the world in terms of population, has the sixth largest army in the world, and possesses one of

the largest nuclear arsenals. Yet, it has the highest infant mortality rate; more than one-third of its children between the age of 5 and 15 are out of school. The country's GDP on a nominal basis ranks 40 out of nearly 200 countries while its GDP per capita stands at 158 out of 216 countries and territories, according to World Bank data.

None of these facts, however, has found any mention in the election campaign of any Pakistani political party. Although Mr. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have at least cared to publish detailed manifestos, Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) published its manifesto on Monday, July 9, less than 20 days before the election. The party feels it only needs Mr. Khan's charisma and the outrage against corruption or enemies of Pakistan to claim voters' loyalty.

## Economic woes

The anti-corruption enthusiasm has sometimes added to Pakistan's economic woes. Pakistan is currently burdened with compensation payments running into billions that must be made to foreign companies whose contracts were cancelled as part of investigations into corruption of officials involved in awarding those contracts. But fighting corruption is a useful slogan if the deep state wants to avoid fighting all jihadis and does not wish to acknowledge the flaws of its national narrative.

It is ironic that Mr. Sharif faces jail ahead of an election that opinion polls indicate his party would win, if voting was free and fair, even as a long list of internationally designated terrorists is free to seek votes. That contradiction is at the heart of why the outcome of the elections is unlikely to change any of the fundamentals of the Pakistan crisis. If the PML-N overcomes all odds and still manages to win, the corruption cases will continue to cast their shadow. If someone like Imran Khan wins with the help of invisible hands, he would start his term under a different cloud.

Pakistan will, unfortunately, not emerge stronger after an election whose winner lacks credibility and whose loser is likely to initiate confrontation with the winner right after polling day.

*(The author, Director for South and Central Asia at the Hudson Institute, Washington DC, was Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. from 2008-11. His latest book is 'ReimaginingPakistan')*

## India Condemns Mistreatment Of Sikh Police Officer In Pakistan

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India on Thursday strongly condemned the mistreatment and forcible eviction of a Sikh police officer from his house in Pakistan.

"We have seen reports of a Sikh policeman being mistreated and forcibly evicted from his house and also objectionable questions being raised about his faith," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said here.

"We strongly condemn this. This is not the first time that the mistreatment of religious minorities in Pakistan has happened," he said.

Pakistan's first Sikh police officer Gulab Singh Shaheen has claimed that he was thrashed and evicted from his house in Lahore's Dera Chahal along with his children and wife following a property dispute with Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB).

Taking to social media late on Tuesday, Mr Singh claimed that he was evicted by ETPB. "My turban was forced open and hair was untied," Mr Singh said in a video he shared on Facebook.

He has also appealed to Sikhs across the world to help him and take note of disrespect to a Sikh's hair and turban.

The ETPB, established in 1960, is a statutory board of the government which administers evacuee properties and shrines of Hindus and Sikhs left behind by Hindus and Sikhs who migrated to India after the 1947 partition.

On Thursday, Mr Kumar said there have been reports of persecution of other minority communities too in Pakistan.

"Recently there was this incident in Peshawar in which an elderly Sikh leader was murdered," he said.

"We would like to request Pakistan to investigate this matter and that too honestly. They should take action according to their international obligations to protect the minorities in their country." (NDTV)

## Mahasohon Balakaya leader in hunger strike

**COLOMBO (TIP):** Leader of the Mahasohon Balakaya Amith Weerasinghe, who is in remand custody at the Anuradhapura Prison, had resorted to a hunger strike from July 12, demanding immediate release.

He had initiated the hunger strike stating that the law enforcement authorities were holding him with no valid charges.

Mr Weerasinghe was arrested on March 5, in connection with a communal violence incident occurred in Digana, Kandy.

He has been detained at the Anuradhapura Prison since March 10. (Daily mirror)

## Landslide Kills At Least 10, Destroys Nearly 300 Homes In Afghanistan

**KABUL (TIP):** A landslide has killed at least 10 people and destroyed nearly 300 homes in northeast Afghanistan.

Two helicopters with a rescue team and emergency aid flew to the province of Panjshir where the disaster struck late on July 11.

Omar Mohammadi, a spokesman for the National Disaster Management Authority, said on July 12 that rescue teams were looking for people trapped in the debris in the Khinj district.

Panjshir, located some 140 kilometers north of Kabul, is a tourist area and is known for its snowcapped peaks.

Northern Afghanistan regularly suffer landslides when snow melts in the spring, but deforestation in some areas has increased their frequency.

President Ashraf Ghani, in Brussels for the NATO summit, ordered authorities to provide victims with necessary assistance, his office said in a statement.

# Ex-Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif returns to face 'jail cell'



**LAHORE (TIP):** Sharif and his daughter Maryam both face arrest when they arrive back in Lahore from London on July 13.

The three-term PM was ousted from office last year after a corruption investigation. He was sentenced in absentia to 10 years last week.

He has accused Pakistan's security establishment of conspiring against him ahead of July 25 elections.

"There was a time when we used to say a state within a state, now it's a state above the state," he told supporters of his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party in London on Wednesday.

"Despite seeing the bars of prison in front of my eyes, I am going to Pakistan."

Thousands of supporters are expected to flock to the airport to greet Mr Sharif, who was convicted by an anti-corruption court last week over his family's ownership of four luxury flats in London.

Hundreds of party activists in Lahore are reported to have been detained ahead of his return.

He has called for a "mass gathering of the people".

Sharif, 67, has been one of the country's leading politicians for most of the past 30 years. His party has blamed the military for being behind his

conviction, saying it is going after the PML-N for its criticism of the security establishment and the party's policy to improve ties with India.

In May, the Dawn newspaper published an interview with Sharif in which he questioned the wisdom of "allowing" Pakistani militants to cross the border and kill 150 people in Mumbai, referring to attacks in the Indian business capital in 2008. The military, which has ruled Pakistan for about half of its 70-year post-independence history, has denied it has any "direct role" in the elections or the political process. Although he was disqualified from standing in the upcoming election by the Supreme Court, Sharif remains one of the most popular politicians in Pakistan, especially in Punjab, the most populous and electorally significant province.

The last time Nawaz Sharif was sentenced to a jail term after a military coup in 1999, he chose to accept a pardon and exile under a Saudi-brokered deal. But this time, he is walking into a jail cell.

Back then, it was thought that being the spoilt son of a wealthy father, he was too soft to face the various hardships that can befall a Pakistani politician.

But his moves this time underline that he is willing to traverse tougher

territory.

Sharif may well be contemplating wider protests after the election, which many believe the military has already "engineered" enough to ensure his party doesn't win.

And he may have made a huge personal sacrifice for this. Sharif has left behind his wife Kulsoom, who has cancer, on life support in a London hospital, knowing that he may not be able to return to be by her side.

Last week the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) court ordered Sharif to serve 10 years for owning assets beyond his income and one year for not co-operating with the NAB. The sentences are to be served concurrently.

His daughter, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, received seven years for abetting a crime and one year for not co-operating - again to run concurrently - while son-in-law Safdar Awan was given a one-year sentence for not co-operating.

Sharif and Maryam also received fines of \$8m (\$10.6m) and £2m respectively. Their lawyers say they will appeal against the verdict but the pair will have to surrender to the NAB before the appeal can be filed.

The case, known as the Avenfield Reference, relates to a number of properties in the UK capital. (BBC)

## 138 PEOPLE KILLED IN 2 MONTHS IN BANGLADESH POLICE CRACKDOWN ON DRUG DEALERS

**DHAKA, BANGLADESH (TIP):** The truth behind the 35-year-old's death depends on whom you ask: Police say he was a drug lord who was killed accidentally in a gunfight during a raid.

But Kamrul Islam's family says he was a father who had stopped dealing 10 years ago — and that his death was murder.

"We think all criminals and drug peddlers should be punished," said Shati Begum, Islam's sister-in-law. "But we don't want people like my brother-in-law, who left all this behind, to be killed."

Islam is one of 138 men who died in the first two months of a crackdown on Bangladesh's thriving drug trade, launched on May 3 by Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina. Anti-drug raids have also led to 16,000 arrests and 4,000 convictions, according to the Bangladeshi Ministry of Information, sparking concerns among human rights activists about the large number of fatalities and the swift conviction of suspects.

The government has played down those concerns. "Killing is not the major agenda of these drives," said Minister of Information Hasanul Haq Inu. He said that deaths occur when suspects become violent during raids and that authorities were investigating every death.

"The government is working within the parameters of the law," he said.

But the number of deaths and arrests has drawn scrutiny. In one neighborhood in the capital, Dhaka, in late May, officers from the Rapid Action Battalion, an elite police force, arrested 153 people in two hours, and more than half of them were convicted the following day. Among those arrested were barbers, tailors and students, some while lazing in bed. A month later, officers came back with sniffer dogs and AK-47 rifles and carted away 51 people; 18 were convicted.

Opposition party members have accused Hasina's governing Awami League party of using the crackdown to target opponents ahead of the general election this year. (AFP)

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## Mueller asks court for 100 more blank subpoenas ahead of Manafort trial



Special counsel Robert Mueller is asking a federal court in Virginia for 100 blank subpoenas in the case against former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort  
Photo /courtesy The Hill

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Special counsel Robert Mueller is asking a federal court in Virginia for 100 blank subpoenas in the case against former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort.

The request was made in a filing on Wednesday, July 11. The subpoenas would require their recipients to testify in the U.S. District Court in Alexandria on July 25, when Manafort's trial in Virginia is set to begin.

No further information was provided in the filing, and a spokesman for the special counsel declined to comment on the request.

The request comes roughly a month after Mueller filed a request for 150 blank subpoenas.

He is facing numerous charges, including tax evasion, bank fraud and failing to report foreign bank accounts. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges and has sought to delay the trial and move the venue to Roanoke from Alexandria.

Manafort has been held in the Northern Neck Regional Jail in Warsaw, Va., since last month, when a federal judge in Washington, where he is facing separate charges, revoked his bail in response to new charges that the former Trump campaign chair sought to sway the testimony of two witnesses in his trial.

Mueller's team is investigating possible collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia, as well as any other alleged crimes that may arise during the course of the probe.

# Manafort loses bid to stay in 'VIP' jail: First Trial set for July 25

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** U.S. President Donald Trump's former campaign manager Paul Manafort may face evidence at trial about alleged wrongdoing in the 1980s and lost a bid to stay at a jail where he said he was being treated like a "VIP," court papers on Wednesday, July 11 showed.

The developments came as Manafort gets closer to two trials where he will defend himself against a number of charges ranging from bank fraud to failing to register as a foreign agent for lobbying work for pro-Russia politicians in Ukraine.

Manafort's prosecution arose out of U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible collusion between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. One trial is set for July 25 in Alexandria, Virginia, and the second case in Washington, D.C., has a Sept. 17 trial date.

Judge T.S. Ellis, who is overseeing the Alexandria case, ordered a hearing for Tuesday to weigh motions by Manafort to move the first trial to a more Trump-friendly area of Virginia and to postpone it until after the Washington trial was done.

In a filing to Ellis on Wednesday, Mueller's prosecutors laid out their case for no delay. Contrary to Manafort's assertions, the prosecutors argued that his jail, while located two hours from Washington, had provided him with ample access to his lawyers and had not hindered his preparation for trial.

Far from being restrictive, prosecutors said Manafort had been given a personal telephone in his cell, which he used for more than 300 calls



Manafort in jailhouse jumps in Alexandria prison

with attorneys and others over the past three weeks and found a workaround to the jail's ban on email.

Prosecutors also cited taped phone calls from prison in which Manafort remarked that he was being treated like a "VIP" and had access to "all my files like I would at home."

Manafort was also afforded his own bathroom, shower and workspace, according to the court filing by Mueller's office.

In a rebuttal, Manafort's lawyers said the effort put into monitoring their client's phone calls showed that Mueller had "unlimited resources" and accused his office of choosing conversations "to support its version of events."

On Tuesday, Judge T.S. Ellis sought to address Manafort's complaint about the

remoteness of the jail by ordering him moved from the current facility in Warsaw, Virginia, to a jail in Alexandria closer to his attorneys and his home.

Manafort responded by asking that he be allowed to stay in Warsaw, citing concerns about safety and "the challenges he will face in adjusting to a new place of confinement" two weeks before trial.

On Wednesday, Ellis denied Manafort's request and ordered him moved to the Alexandria Detention Center, rejecting the notion that he would not be safe there. The Alexandria jail had experience with high-profile defendants "including foreign and domestic terrorists, spies and traitors," Ellis wrote.

Also, on Wednesday, Mueller's office filed a motion in the Washington case notifying the court of its intent to present evidence at trial about a Justice Department inspection into Manafort's lobbying activities in the 1980's.

According to the motion, the inspection found eighteen instances of lobbying and public relations activities that should have been disclosed to the Justice Department under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), among other allegations.

The omissions included lobbying by Manafort about a "Jerusalem Bill" and a "Saudi Arms Package", the motion said.

The evidence would be used to show that Manafort had knowledge about the disclosure rules under FARA and that it was not a simple mistake that he did not register for his work for pro-Russian politicians in Ukraine.

(Source: News day)

## IRS offers summer tips for temporary jobs, marriage, deductions and credits

**WASHINGTON(TIP):** Before starting a summer job, taking a vacation or sending the kids off to camp, the Internal Revenue Service wants taxpayers to know that some summertime activities may qualify for tax credits or deductions. The IRS also recommends that taxpayers check the amount of their withholding taxes now to help avoid surprises next filing season.

**Here are some tips from the IRS that may help taxpayers lower taxes and avoid issues with their taxes:**

1. Worker classification matters. As with other workers, business owners must correctly determine whether summer workers are employees or independent contractors. Independent contractors are not subject to withholding, making them responsible for paying their own income taxes plus Social Security and Medicare taxes. Workers can avoid higher tax bills and lost benefits if they know their proper status.
2. Summer workers may be exempt from tax withholding. Workers may not earn enough from summer jobs to owe income tax, but employers usually must withhold Social Security and Medicare taxes from pay. If self-employed or an independent contractor, workers need to pay their own Social Security and Medicare taxes, even if they have no income tax liability. This is important because these taxes count toward coverage under the Social Security

system. Normally, employees receive a Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, from their employer (even if they don't work there anymore) to account for the summer's work by Jan. 31 of the following year. The Form W-2 shows the amount of earnings. It also shows withholdings for state and federal taxes, Social Security, Medicare wages and tips. Employees use the information on this form when they file their annual tax returns.

3. Check withholding. For those who work a seasonal or part-year job, checking withholding now can help make sure employers withhold the right amount of tax. Taxpayers who work part of the year should check early in the employment period to determine an accurate amount for their withholding. The Withholding Calculator on IRS.gov helps employees determine whether they need to submit a new Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate to their employer. It estimates income, credits, adjustments and deductions for most financial situations. Employees can use their results from the calculator to fill out the form and adjust their income tax withholding. They must give their updated forms to their employers to take effect.
4. Getting married? Newlyweds can help make wedded bliss last longer by doing a few things now to avoid problems at tax time. First, report any name change to

- the Social Security Administration before filing next year's tax return. Then, report any address change to the United States Postal Service, any employers and the IRS to ensure receipt of tax-related items. Finally, use the Withholding Calculator at IRS.gov to make sure withholding is correct now that there are two people to consider. This is especially important for families with more than one wage earner, for taxpayers who have more than one job at a time, or for those who have children. For best results, do it as soon as possible.
5. Clean out, donate, deduct. If they are in good condition, those long-unused items found during spring or summer cleaning and donated to a qualified charity may qualify for a tax deduction. Taxpayers must itemize deductions to deduct charitable contributions, and be sure to have proof of all donations.
6. Help with service project, deduct mileage. While there's no tax deduction for time donated toward a charitable cause, driving a personal vehicle while donating services on a trip sponsored by a qualified charity could qualify for a tax break. Itemizers can deduct 14 cents per mile for charitable mileage driven in 2018. Keep good records of mileage.
7. Get tax credit for summer day camp expenses. Many working parents must arrange for care of their younger children under 13 years of age during the school vacation period. A popular solution - with favorable tax



consequences - is a day camp program. Unlike overnight camps, the cost of day camp may count as an expense towards the Child and Dependent Care Credit. See IRS Publication 503, Child and Dependent Care Expenses, for more information.

8. Refunds require a tax return. Although workers may not have earned enough money from a summer job to require filing a tax return, they may still want to file when tax time comes around. It is essential to file a return to get a refund of any income tax withheld. There is no penalty for filing a late return for those receiving refunds, however, by law, a return must be filed within three years to get its refund. Otherwise, the money becomes property of the U. S. Treasury.

**For details about any of these topics, visit [IRS.gov/GetReady](https://www.irs.gov/GetReady)**

# Historic celebration marks 25th anniversary of Jain Temple in Chicago



Lighting lamp ceremony with Illinois State Governor Bruce Rauner, Acharya Dr. Lokesh Muniji and invited guest at 25th anniversary of Jain Temple in Chicago



Illinois State Governor Bruce Rauner, Acharya Dr. Lokesh Muniji performing Aarti at 25th anniversary of Jain Temple in Chicago

**CHICAGO, IL (TIP):** The Jain Society of Metropolitan Chicago (JSMC), Bartlett Illinois, celebrated a milestone - the 25th Anniversary of its temple, with great enthusiasm, color and pride, from June 22 to July 1, 2018 at Bartlett, IL. About 4000 people from US and outside witnessed this historic celebration over the 10 days. This is the first Jain temple in North America with "Shikhar" or dome to complete 25 years. A number of dignitaries, speakers, and faith leaders from US and India graced the occasion.

The event was graced by political dignitaries including Illinois State Governor Bruce Rauner; Consul General of India Ms. Neeta Bhusan, US Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi and Peter Roskam, State representatives Christine Winger and Laura Murphy, State senator Tom Cullerton and Bartlett Village trustees.

Over the 10 days of celebration, numerous scholars and dignitaries from India, including Muni Shri Jinchandraji, Acharya Dr. Lokesh Muniji, Swami Shrutpragyaji, Charukeerti Bhattarakji, Gurudev Shri Rakesh Bhai Zaveri, Shri Dipakbhai Bardoliwala, Shri Sanjeevji Godha, Smt. Pramodaji Chitrabhanu, Smt. Tarlaben Doshi and Samanijis delivered thought provoking spiritual discourses to an eager audience. Keynote speeches on important topics were delivered by Padmashri Kumarpal Desai, Dr. Dipak Jain, Rahul Kapoor and Sajjan Shah. Vidhikar Shri Hiteshbhai, Shri Narendra Nandu, Shri Lalitbhai Dhami, Megh Nandu and Veer Sainik Jinaybhai performed unique poojans and rituals for the first time in the US. Singers Ashish Mehta and Vicky Parekh enthralled the audiences with beautiful musical scores. JSMC's home musical production Nem Rajul and Karmic Forces received an overwhelming response as much as the professional productions Sheth Motisha and Veer na Varasdaar played by Rangat Productions of Mumbai.

Many activities for the youth including sports day, field day as well as youth-focused seminars and shibirs kept the youth engaged. Amazing work was done in creating replicas of sacred places of worship Ashtapad and Giriraj Shatrunjay.

One of the highlights of the celebration was a 1.5-mile parade & procession starting at Bartlett's Eastview Middle School and ending at the Jain temple. The Sanghpati's of the 25th Anniversary Celebrations (Jayendra and Leena Shah, Kishor and Rashmi Shah, Prabodh and Lata Vaidya, Sanjay and Hemali Shah and Dr. Shailesh and Mayuri Zaveri) and other sponsor families walked with 12 superbly decorated floats, Bhagwan Palkhi and Rath, live religious music and dance, motorcycles and horse carriage. Despite nearly 100 degree temperature, the



A view of the gathering

parade had participation from more than 1000 members. The parade ended with a ceremonial flower shower from a helicopter. JSMC also created history by inaugurating the first memorial (Jeevant Smarak) of Gurudev Chitrabhanuji who is credited to have strengthened Jainism and united Jains in the US in the last 40 years. Gurudev's bust was sponsored by Ravindra & Pallavi Kobawala and Satish & Kinna Shah.

Since 1970s, Jain population in Chicago has exploded from less than thirty families to over 1900 families. With the mission of preserving and sharing the Jain way of life, the community built a beautiful Temple & Community Center in 1993 in Bartlett, IL on a 14 acre lot. Today this monumental temple and center standing on a 17.5 acre land with expanded facilities of 84,000 sq. ft.

President of JSMC executive committee Mr. Vipul Shah was ecstatic and mentioned that, "In this milestone year for all Jains around Chicago and indeed all of US, we have delivered a great experience to all our dignitaries, guests and members blending religion, education, culture and entertainment. All our programs have been received with tremendous enthusiasm". Chairman and Board of Trustees of JSMC, Mr. Atul Shah added, "Our unity, dedicated volunteers, generous donors and all other supporters have helped us to set a very high bar". Every day during the celebration, JSMC provided 3 sumptuous meals to all attendees and visitors. Many guests from Chicago and outside were thrilled with the overall execution and planning by the dedicated team of volunteers, Executive Committee members and Board of

Trustees.

PR & Media co-leads Mr. Hemant Shah (past Chairman) and Dr. Mukesh Doshi (past Chairman) also explained, "We are building on a very successful legacy of 48 years of JSMC." Chicago is very fortunate to have remarkable history of the first Jain who landed 125 years ago - when Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi pioneered Jainism in western world and represented Jains in first parliament of World religious conference held in Chicago in 1893. Since 1970, this society is standing on contributions of generous donors, dedicated volunteers and passionate leadership of visionaries. We are humbled to be part of this society that is regarded as symbol of unity and harmony among all Jains.

## About Jain Center of Metropolitan Chicago (JSMC)

Founded in 1970, JSMC caters to the religious, educational, cultural and community needs of Jains in and around Chicago. After building North America's first Jain temple with Shikhar in 1993, the organization undertook a major expansion in 2008-09. With more than 1900 families as life members, JSMC has maintained its unity of Shwetamber, Digambar, Sthanakvasi and Shrimad sects over the years and has continued to inspire the Jain values of non-violence, multi-pluralism and non-possessiveness.

These members engage in various religious, cultural, educational, and social and community activities on close to 160+ days in a typical year. Over 500 students register in the Pathshaala that meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday. The Center has

also become a preferred location to host other events - given its state of the art community hall and dining facility. A 7-person elected Board and a 13-person elected Executive Committee manage JSMC with support from many /committees.

Jainism is a religion and a way of life for Jains around the world. The primary purpose of JSMC is to increase the awareness of the principles of Jainism, achieve the unity of all Jains, provide a platform wherefrom to project the voice of Jain religion, promote the feeling of amity and unity among Jains and to promote inter-faith understanding. Jainism, which originated in India, at least five thousand years ago, has largest number of followers (about 4 million) in India. It has nonetheless, influenced the world peace through its message of non-violence and forgiveness. Jainism, indirectly influenced Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, as he followed the example and non-violent methods of Mahatma Gandhi in his struggle for equality and civil rights for all minorities in USA.

Jains have been on a path of Non-Violence, Non-Absolutism (Anekantvad), and Non-possession (Aparigrah) for thousands of years. For thousands of years, Jains have believed in meditation, yoga, animal compassion, vegetarianism, environmentalism, equal rights for women, respect for other cultures and forgiveness. Jains believe that universe is eternal and that Jain religion, which explains the rules of the universe, is therefore eternal, with no beginning and no end. Last perfected soul known (Tirthankar) to us is Lord Mahavir, who was born in 599BC, near Patna in Bihar, India.

(Photographs and Press release by Asian Media USA)

## ASI PERMITS CAMERAS IN ALL BUT THREE MONUMENTS

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on July 12 issued orders, permitting photography within the premises of protected monuments and sites. The organisation under the Ministry of Culture said photography within the premises of all centrally protected monuments and sites, except three would be allowed.

The three monuments to remain out of bounds for photography are Ajanta Caves in Maharashtra, Leh Palace with a huge treasure of paintings and the mausoleum at the Taj, Agra. Ajanta caves are a Unesco World Heritage Site. Leh Palace, overlooking the Himalayan range in Ladakh, is unique in architecture.

The orders came hours after PM Narendra Modi questioned the policy of restricting people from taking photographs.

The ASI, in its orders, said: "The decision comes in the wake of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi observing in his speech at the inaugural event of 'Dharohar Bhawan' in New Delhi that Space Technology in the modern era has developed to such an extent that one can photograph even minute objects from far off distances, and in this background, it is indeed ironical to restrict tourists and visitors from taking photos of their experiences at heritage monuments and sites."

Source: *The Tribune*

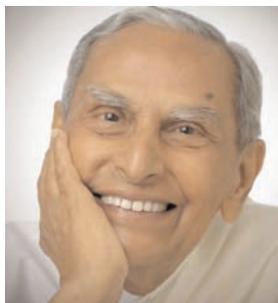
## SPIRITUAL LEADER DADA VASWANI DEAD

**PUNE (TIP):** Spiritual leader Dada JP Vaswani, head of the Sadhu Vaswani Mission, died on Thursday due to old age-related ailments, a mission member said. He was 99.

Born in Pakistan's Hyderabad city in a Sindh family, Dada Vaswani, as he was popularly known, was the head of the Pune-based Sadhu Vaswani Mission, a non-profit organisation involved in social work and charity. The organisation runs educational institutions and hospitals in the city.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had addressed the spiritual leader's 99th birthday celebrations last year through a video link. In May this year, President Ram Nath Kovind had visited the mission to inaugurate the Sadhu Vaswani International School.

Acclaimed as a humanitarian, philosopher, educator, and non-sectarian spiritual leader, Dada Vaswani had captivated the hearts of millions of people worldwide. Source: *PTI*



# Rahul starts performance reviews for Cong leaders, including self-appraisal

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** In his bid to fix accountability, Congress president Rahul Gandhi has initiated a monthly performance review of the party's central office bearers, two Congress leaders familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity.

Functionaries at different levels – general secretaries, leaders in charge of states, and secretaries – will have to fill up a two-page self-appraisal form on the 10th of every month to enable Gandhi to measure their performance, said one of the two leaders.

He said the forms will be submitted to the general secretary in charge of training and organisation, Ashok Gehlot, who will then give his inputs and forward the forms to the Congress president by the 15th of every month.

This is not the first time Gandhi has attempted a corporate-style appraisal system in the 132-year-old party.

Nearly a year before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, all the state chiefs were asked to conduct a self-evaluation and assessment exercise on their worthiness and capabilities.

In the appraisal forms, the office bearers have to mention the number of times they visited the state under their charge. They will also have to declare the number of meetings they addressed in different blocks and districts and give the figure of block and district committees formed that particular month.

In case these committees have not been set up, they have to specify reasons.

Apart from spelling out the leadership development initiatives undertaken by them, they also have to indicate the steps taken to resolve disputes, and provide details of training programmes and the election preparedness of the party in their respective states. The forms also require them to mention the steps taken to expand the Congress' presence in social media, influence people outside the party, media outreach efforts, and details of



## Modi to address 50 rallies in run up to 2019 Lok Sabha polls

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally addressing farmers in Muktsar in Punjab on Wednesday is just a precursor to a blitzkrieg of around 50 rallies that will be a build-up to the BJP's 2019 campaign.

These rallies will be separate from the poll-related rallies to be addressed by Mr. Modi in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh later this year. "The Prime Minister will be addressing rallies in Jungle Mahal in West Bengal, and in Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh this month, along with the proposed rallies in Odisha and at least two such events in Karnataka, possibly in Chikkodi and Haveri," said a senior source in the BJP. Each rally will try and cover 2-3 Lok Sabha constituencies, with the aim that by February, the Prime Minister alone would have covered 150 constituencies. Other senior leaders such as Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari and Amit Shah will also be addressing around 40-50 rallies with the aim that between all of them, all Lok Sabha constituencies would have been covered.

door-to-door campaigns and rallies on people's issues. "The idea is to fix the accountability and make the party organisation more responsive," the second leader said. "It will also determine whether an office bearer continues in office or needs to be replaced."

As general secretary in charge of the Youth Congress, Gandhi had in 2012 introduced a ranking system in the organisation to identify performing and non-performing functionaries. While active and performing office bearers were given a green rank, yellow was assigned to active but non-performing members,

and red to inactive non-performers.

Political observers said performance reviews are a critical element in organization building, especially when the Lok Sabha elections are approaching.

"Continuous evaluation of performance becomes necessary as the deadline for elections comes closer," said New Delhi-based political analyst Balveer Arora. "Monitoring of performance at different levels and of different party functionaries who are given responsibilities of states and regions becomes crucial in strengthening the organisation." Source: *HT*

# Sahara saves Aamby Valley as no buyer turns up

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Sahara Group has managed to save its flagship property Aamby Valley near Lonavala in Pune district of Maharashtra after no buyer turned up to buy it during an auction ordered by the Supreme Court.

SEBI counsel on July 12 told a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra that the Aamby Valley auction has failed as no one responded to the tender notice inviting bids despite several advertisements.

"We will lift the order attaching the property after the company pays Rs 982.80 crore by September 12, 2018," said the Bench which also included Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice AK Sikri.

Senior counsel Vikas Singh, representing Sahara, told the top court that the company has already paid Rs 19,000 crore out of the Rs 24,000 ordered by the court and it was ready to deposit almost Rs 1,000 crore in the next three months by disposing of its land in Maharashtra.

Singh informed the Bench that two companies-Sai Rydam Realtors and Prime Downtown Real Estate-have agreed to buy 3 acre land owned by Sahara in Vasai, near Mumbai.

The Bench court asked the two companies to deposit a total of Rs 982 crore to buy Sahara's land.

The buyers - who gave a bank draft for Rs 100 crore on Thursday to the SEBI counsel during the proceedings - were ordered to present two further bank drafts for Rs 200 crore each on July 24 and August 16.



Sahara Group founder Subrata Roy.

The remaining Rs 682.80 crore has to be deposited by September 12, 2018, the Bench ordered posting the matter for further hearing on September 14.

On a request made by Singh, it also allowed the company to manage the property for revenue generation to run Aamby Valley.

Angry over non-payment of money, the top court had on April 17, 2017 decided to sell Aamby Valley worth Rs 39,000 crore belonging to the Sahara group to recover money owed by the company to investors. Thereafter, it had turned down repeated Sahara's repeated pleas to halt the auction process

being overseen by the Official Liquidator of the Bombay High Court.

Sahara has been claiming that the actual worth of Aamby Valley-spread over 48 square km-was more than Rs 1 lakh crore but the reserve price of the property was fixed at Rs 37,392 crore. The sale by actual auction was to be held on October 10 and 11, 2017 but no buyers have come forward so far.

Sahara chief Subrata Roy was sent to Tihar jail on March 4, 2014. But the top court granted him a four-week parole on May 6, 2016 to attend his mother's funeral. His parole has been periodically extended since then.

On Thursday, Singh requested the court to withdraw the five policemen who were ordered to accompany Roy.

"These policemen can be withdrawn and put to some public service. There are lots of rape happening May be they can help prevent it," Singh told the Bench.

"Do you really think five policemen can prevent such incidents," asked Justice Sikri.

As SEBI counsel opposed the plea, Justice Sikri said, "He (Roy) has already paid Rs 20,000 crore. He will not run away for the remaining Rs 4,000 crore."

Singh repeatedly requested the Bench to ask SEBI to complete the verification exercise for which Sahara had paid Rs 50 crore. "It might turn out after the verification exercise that we have already paid more than when was due to us," he said. Source: *The Tribune*

# Amit Shah, Nitish Kumar discuss polls over breakfast in Patna

**PATNA (TIP):** Bharatiya Janata Party president Amit Shah on July 12 denied reports of a disagreement with the Janata Dal (United) over seat sharing for the coming Lok Sabha poll.

"All speculation about differences with Nitish Kumar are unfounded... You can continue to speculate, but we'll contest together and win all 40 seats in Bihar," Mr. Shah told a large congregation of party workers at Patna's Gyan Bhavan. "We know how to honour and keep our alliance partners together... if Chandrababu Naidu has parted ways with us, then Nitish Kumar has joined us... every day media keeps writing about differences between us, but the alliance between Nitish Kumar and the BJP will win all 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar," he asserted.

He urged the party cadres to reach out to voters and "make Narendra Modi Prime Minister once again".

Shah spoke about the political journey of the BJP since 1950. "Several leaders and workers have sacrificed their lives for the sake of our party... BJP started with just 10 members and now it has 11 crore members. The party rules in about 70% of the country and in 2019 too, it will come to power under NDA alliance with Narendra Modi as Prime Minister."

Mounting an attack on the Congress and its president Rahul Gandhi, Mr. Shah demanded to know what the party had done for the country during its rule of four generations. "Rahul Baba often asks what PM Modi has done, but the people of



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and BJP president Amit Shah at a breakfast-meeting at the state guest house, in Patna on July 12.

the country want to know what four generations of his family, who ruled the country for 55 years, have done...," Shah said. "When the Congress was in power for 10 years it had given Rs1.93 lakh crore to Bihar, but the Narendra Modi-led NDA government gave Rs 4.35 lakh crore in the last four years", said Shah. "Our mission is that every citizen of this country gets a house by 2022... every house gets electricity and toilet. But Rahul Baba, what have your four generations done in the last 55 years?"

Earlier, Shah was accorded a grand welcome by BJP leaders and workers in Patna, where he met Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and other senior BJP

leaders at the State guest house over breakfast. Later, he addressed party workers, booth-level in-charge. He also met party leaders in the evening to discuss the upcoming poll strategy.

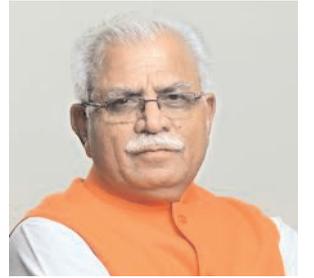
Later in the evening, he reached the official residence of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar 1, Anne Marg and had meetings with several leaders over dinner.

This was Shah's first visit to the State since the JD(U) formed the government in Bihar with the BJP in July 2017.

A large number of hoardings, posters and billboards with pictures of Shah and State BJP leaders dotted the State capital to welcome him. *Source: The Hindu*

## ACCUSED IN RAPE, MOLESTATION CASES IN HARYANA TO LOSE DRIVING LICENSE, PENSION

**CHANDIGARH (TIP):** Barring ration facility, the accused in rape and molestation cases in Haryana will now be debarred from government facilities such as old age pension, pension for the physically disabled persons, driving and arm licenses.



"These services will remain suspended till the court announces its verdict in the case. In case the accused is convicted and sentenced, he would not be eligible for these facilities anymore," Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced on July 12.

Virtually giving a warning to the perpetrators of crime against women and girls in the state to mend their ways, he reiterated the commitment of his government to make Haryana number one state in the country in terms of safety and security of women and girls.

Khattar said a comprehensive scheme for the safety and security of women would be launched either on Independence Day (August 15) or on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan (August 26) this year.

The chief minister said in case a rape victim wanted to hire a lawyer of her choice, except for the one provided by the state government, she would be provided financial assistance of Rs 22,000 for the fees.

"Provision of uninterrupted investigation in cases of rape and eve-teasing would be made in all police stations. The investigation officer would have to complete the investigation into a rape case in one month, and in eve-teasing within 15 days, otherwise action would be taken against him," he said.

Six fast-track Courts would be set up in those districts where 50 or more cases of rape, molestation and mental harassment are pending in the courts, Khattar said.

"I would shortly meet the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to request him to issue necessary directions to the court to record the statement of a woman on the same day and not to adjourn the hearing to any other day," he added. *Source: IANS*

## Farmers relieved after MSP hike, but Cong losing sleep: Modi at rally in Punjab's Muktsar district

**MALOUT (TIP):** Accusing the Congress of "betraying" the farmers during the "70 years" of its rule at the Centre, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at a rally in Punjab on Wednesday that the recent hike in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Kharif crops — approved by the NDA government — has brought much relief to the farmers across country.

"Ever since the government took the historic decision to hike MSP, the farmers are relieved. They are more confident in their produce now. However, the Congress and its allies are losing sleep. They cannot stand the fact that farmers in the country are sleeping well," Modi said at a 'thanksgiving' rally of farmers in Punjab's Muktsar district.

Modi praised the farmers for their contribution, but blamed the Congress for their agricultural woes. "I bow my head in front of the farmers, they have broken all records in terms of agricultural production and for their hard work. No matter what the situation, you have always worked in the interest of the country. But the lives of farmers, which should've been happy, was filled with woes. The reason is that in the past 70 years, the party which took the responsible to head the nation, only made commitments and did nothing. It cared only about one family and its peace," he said.



PM Narendra Modi, former Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar at Malout in Muktsar on July 11.

Modi said that the "entire country knows the reality" about the Congress' dreams, which were only in the interest of the Gandhi family.

"Why have the farmers been restricted to earning profit of only 10 percent of the cost for the past 70 years? Congress never cared about farmers. Congress betrayed them, and made false assurances. But NDA government took efforts to change this," said Modi. "Whether it is the soldier at the border or the farmer on his field, our government has attempted to enhance the lives of both. Our government implemented 'One Rank and One Pension' and also fulfilled its

promises relating to MSP," he added.

Modi assured that the farmers from Punjab and Haryana farmers will benefit from the new MSP. "For crops like maize, and jowar, MSP of more than 50 percent has been approved. For the farmers growing bajra, the MSP has been increased two-fold," he said.

He asserted that his government will not overlook the problems faced by the farmers, and said that the vision to double farmer incomes by 2022 was formed right after the NDA government was formed. "We have been holding constant discussions on this topic since then," he said.

## DEFAMATION CASE: TYTLER WITHDRAWS PLEA IN HC

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Congress leader Jagdish Tytler today withdrew from the Delhi High Court his plea challenging framing of charges against him in a defamation case filed by a senior advocate representing the victims in the 1984 anti-Sikh riot cases as the trial has already begun in the lower court.

Justice R K Gauba allowed the request of Tytler's counsel to withdraw the plea after he said he does not wish to press it as he would contest the matter in the trial court.

The defamation case filed against the Congress leader by senior advocate H S Phoolka is pending before a trial court which had on March 2, 2015 framed charges against Tytler saying he had prime facie defamed the lawyer by allegedly making imputations to harm his reputation.

Advocate Arunabh Chowdhury, appearing for Tytler, said the trial has already begun and evidence of the complainant was being recorded in the lower court.

He said they have to cross examine Phoolka on July 17 and they will raise the issues before the trial court.

The trial court is scheduled to hear the matter on July 17, 18 and 19. Tytler's counsel had earlier argued that the basis on which the trial court had framed charges in the defamation case was a video cassette obtained from a private TV channel. The video cassette was not certified as mandated under Indian Evidence Act and various Supreme Court rulings, his counsel had said.

Earlier, the trial court had issued notice to Tytler under provision of CrPC, after prima facie finding him guilty of defaming the senior advocate under section 499 of IPC punishable under section 500 of IPC. Tytler had pleaded not guilty and had claimed trial.

The politician had argued in the trial court that there was no legally admissible evidence to frame charge against him in the defamation complaint. Phoolka, who had earlier refused to accept Tytler's offer of 'unconditional apology', had countered his submissions contending that the complaint, statement of the complainant and other witnesses corroborating it, were enough to frame charges against him.

# Shaan's Golden Voice to fill the Halls of NJPAC, July 28

By Mabel Pais

## ABOUT NJPAC

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), located in downtown Newark, N.J., has the most diverse programming and audience of any performing arts center in the country, and is the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey - where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day.

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**T**he New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents an evening of romantic, high-energy music with Shaan - the "Golden Voice of India" and one of Bollywood's most popular, versatile vocalists on Saturday, July 28, 2018 at 8:00 PM.

Shantanu Mukherjee, popularly known as Shaan, is one of the most popular playback singers of the Indian music industry.

Shaan has been one of the most in-demand playback singers in the Bollywood industry, active in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, Telugu and Kannada films. Among the most popular films that have featured his vocals are 3 Idiots (2009), Om Shanti Om (2007), Saawariya (2007), Fanaa (2006), Dus (2005), Jhankaar Beats (2003) and Kya Dil Ne Kahan (2002).

Singer-songwriter Shaan has lent his voice to many a hit song in Bollywood, Suno Na (from Jhankaar Beats; 2003), Dus (2005), Chand Sifarish (Fanaa; 2006), and Behti Hawa Sa Tha Woh (3 Idiots; 2009), to name a few.

He is considered as one of the most popular  
v o i c e s  
f o r

romantic as well as melodious songs and is one of India's most versatile singers. He has sung a wide variety of songs in many languages: Konkani, Kannada, Bengali, Punjabi, Nepali, English, Hindi, Oriya, Malayalam, Telugu, Marathi and Assamese. He has also sung many Pakistani songs.

In addition to his work on television and the big screen, Shaan has released a series of successful solo albums of his own compositions, among them Loveology, Tanha Dil, Aksar and Tishnagi. His song Shuruat was made into a music video to promote the hit film, The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. In recent years, he has also branched out into other musical genres, lending his expert vocals to pop, sad songs, patriotic, jazz, ghazals, hip-hop, rock and many more.

He started his career at a very young age of 17 years in the year 1989. He has been showered with titles such as "Golden Voice of India", "Voice of Paradise", "Magician of Melody", and "Voice of Youth".

Shaan became popular with the song Musu, and he kept his presence felt with many hit songs in Hindi films. Shaan is not only an outstanding singer but also a talented music composer and lyricist.

Shaan, 45, is embracing reality with a smile. He sang for Bollywood for 20 years.

The singer feels that an artist needs to evolve with time to survive in the industry, and he's proud to have done that. There are no rules in the industry and he feels lucky to have been able to survive so long!

Now, although he does not sing for the Bollywood movie industry, he is not out of work, he says. If there's no film music, he has other avenues: he does live shows, he travels and he focuses his energies elsewhere. He released his independent single Surilee in 2017.

He is also widely known as a television host, on popular programs like Sa Re Ga Ma Pa, Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il Champs, and The Voice: India Star Voice of India and STAR Voice of India 2.

He appeared as a judge in Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il Champs 2014-2015 and The Voice India Kids 2016. In 2015 and 2016, Shaan was the winning coach in each of the first two seasons of The Voice. In 2016, in The Voice India Kids, he was the coach of the runner-up contestant.

As a child, Shaan began his career singing jingles for advertisements. After giving it up for a brief period he returned and, along with jingles, began to sing remixes and cover versions. In the 1989 movie Parinda, at age 17, Shaan sang a single line in the song, Kitni Hai Pyari Pyari Dosti Hamari.

Since Shaan belongs to a musical background: his grandfather lyricist Jahar Mukherjee, his late father composer Manas Mukherjee and his sister singer-actor Sagarika, all contributed to his in-depth knowledge of music. With his melodious singing, he has achieved a great place in the Indian music industry. With Shaan songs, many Bollywood films got an edge to their music.

He is married to Radhika Jolly. They have two children. Shaan affirms he survived for 20 years in the industry because he sang songs differently, even if they were of the same genre. Until and unless, you try to sing songs differently, you will not survive in the industry, he says. When you sing differently, you make your own sound, and you get to make your own footing. Further, he believes, if he did not constantly innovate himself, he would be outdated.

Talking about how he got back into the non-film space, the singer had said that his wife, Radhika is his pillar of strength and helped him get over his fear of rejection. She encouraged him to make music for himself, and to enjoy what he is doing. They have two sons.

*For more information on Shaan, visit <http://www.njpac.org/events/detail/shaan>  
For tickets to see Shaan, visit [www.NJPAC.org](http://www.NJPAC.org) or the NJPAC Box Office or call 888.GO. NJPAC (888.466.5722).*

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

*Shaan-The Golden Voice of India  
Photo / Courtesy NJPAC.*



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## Running away from home gave me courage: Mallika

**T**aking yet another stand to empower women of all ages, actress Mallika Sherawat on Tuesday recalled how eloping from home gave her courage in life after facing "innumerable hardships" in a "patriarchal family."

Mallika, who has spoken about women empowerment at various international platforms including the 65th United Nations DPI/NGO Conference in 2014, spoke about her struggle days on Twitter as she hailed the Supreme Court's decision to dismiss review pleas filed by three of the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case.

The actress said that the rape victim that finally been "delivered justice."

"Six years after she was brutally gang-raped in a moving bus in the capital city of India, we finally laid her memory to rest. She had worked hard to free herself from the shackles of roles that society often slots for its women," Mallika wrote.

The judgment came in response to a review petition filed by three death row convicts - Mukesh Singh, Vinay Sharma, and Pawan Gupta-against the Supreme Court order of May 2017, which said that Nirbhaya's rapists and killers should be hanged.

The girl, who succumbed to her injuries 13 days after the incident, was named Nirbhaya, meaning fearless, by a section of the media.

Mallika, 41, who hails from a small village in Hisar district of Haryana, later went on to spill her side - how she managed to take a stand for herself."For me it was running away from my home that gave me courage. Stifled in a patriarchal family, I neither had freedom nor choice. I faced innumerable hardships because I dared to question and challenge the status quo. When I got a choice, I ran as fast as my legs could carry me. And, I survived," Mallika wrote. ANI

# ANUSHKA SHARMA GETS FIRST TALKING WAX STATUE AT MADAME TUSSAUDS

**A**nushka Sharma's wax statue at Madame Tussauds Singapore will greet the visitors with pleasantries.

"Yes, it's true that the wax museum is set to unveil an interactive statue of Anushka. Madame Tussauds is extremely selective when it comes to zeroing in on the personalities that gets a unique interactive feature. Thanks to the special figurine, she joins the list of illustrious global icons such as Oprah Winfrey, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lewis Hamilton who also have their interactive sets at the Singapore museum," says an insider.

Unlike Oprah, Ronaldo and Hamilton, Anushka's statue boasts of have a feature that will "have her talk". "In fact, hers will be the first wax statue in Singapore museum with this feature. It's a new interactive feature that Madame Tussauds is introducing with her figurine. It only proves her popularity across countries because only a handful of global power leaders and icons have such interactive features with their statues," says the insider.

Explaining the details of Anushka's figurine, sources inform that her statue will be seen holding a phone. "Guests can take selfies with her statue and she will be heard saying warm greetings if one picks up the phone," informs the insider. While Anushka couldn't be reached for a comment, Alex Ward, general manager of Madame Tussauds Singapore says that they are "thrilled to be working with Anushka".

"She will have the first talking wax figure. Not just families, we also see many young adults from India coming to our attraction, and this is a great opportunity for us to cater to that audience. Anushka has been frequently requested by our guests and we are sure that she will be an incredibly popular addition to our attraction," he says.



## 'Karenjit Kaur is the real me, Sunny Leone is a brand'

**Sunny Leone is all set to give an insight into her life through Zee5's web series Karenjit Kaur - The untold story of Sunny Leone. The web series will start streaming from July 16 on Zee5**

**S**unny Leone is scared as she is all set to narrate her story in the biopic Karenjit Kaur: The Untold Story of Sunny Leone. The 37-year-old said she has tried to bare it all in the upcoming web series and is unsure how everyone will react to it.

"I have tried to be as honest as I could be. And that's why I am scared what will people think or say because they'll get to see the good, the bad, the ugly," she told ANI.

"In the biopic, everyone will get to see Karenjit Kaur Vohra. Karenjit is the real me. Sunny Leone is just a brand that I created. What people see in a song or a film or maybe a photoshoot, it's just a persona," she added.

Apart from Sunny herself, the series features Raj Arjun, Rysa Saujani, Karamvir Lamba, Bijay Jasjit Anand, Grusha Kapoor, Vansh Pradhan and Marc Buckner.

The web series will trace the journey of Sunny Leone, who was born as Karenjit Kaur Vohra to Indian immigrants in Canada. It will show her

struggles as a teenager and how financial crisis in the family led her to become an adult movie star.

The series will consist of two seasons with 10 episodes each. Season 1 premieres on July 16.

The web series also touches upon her relationship with her elder brother, who has always been very close to her. In an interview, Sunny had mentioned how he still calls her Gogo, a nickname that she was given as a child. Sundeep was the first one to know about Sunny's secret career and he was supportive towards her when she broke the news to her parents. After their death, the siblings have been each other's strength.

"It was a really interesting offer and I was excited. I thought I would be fine but when we started shooting, I realised I was not emotionally prepared. No person would be fine reacting to some really emotional and traumatic moments that they have pushed away. Going through it once again was really not easy and it was quite a challenging time to pull it off," says Sunny.





## Kerri Russell joins Star Wars Episode IX cast

**M**ission: Impossible III star Kerri Russell is in talks to join the cast of Star Wars: Episode IX. JJ Abrams, who helmed Star Wars: The Force Awakens, is directing the movie, reports The Hollywood Reporter.

Shooting for the final film in the trilogy - that began with The Force Awakens and continued with The Last Jedi - begins the end of July.

Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, and Adam Driver are all expected to return. Meanwhile, Russell recently wrapped the sixth and final season of FX's acclaimed drama, The Americans. *Source: ANI*

# JENNIFER LAWRENCE IS DEFINITELY NOT A FAN OF METHOD ACTING



**A**ctress Jennifer Lawrence says she was mortified when director Francis Lawrence urged her to keep the Russian accent she adopted for her role as ballerina-turned-spy in Red Sparrow outside of filming because she knew her friends would not be impressed.

"For two weeks before the movie, Francis would say, 'You should talk in the accent at home. Stay in the accent and talk to your friends in the accent'. I said, 'Francis, I don't have those kinds of friends. They would never call me again'," Lawrence told Star magazine.

Lawrence spent several months working on the accent and though it was tough, it was an essential part of her preparations, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said: "I had never done a foreign accent before so I spent four months before the movie figuring out what kind of dialect she would have. Once you get there and you have the costume on, you become the character and it's easier."

The Oscar-winning actress also struggled with the dance training she had to do and the experience left her amazed that people choose to put them through so much "mental and physical discipline".

*Source: IANS*

## Is Alexandra Shipp too light-skinned to play storm from X-Men?

**E**ver since Halle Berry was cast as Storm in 2000's X-Men, there has been controversy on how the comic book legend was portrayed on the big screen. For years, fans said it should have been Angela Bassett or an actress with a bit more melanin. As recently as March, a Medium.com article defended Berry as Storm. However, a younger version of Storm hit theaters in 2016 with X-Men: Apocalypse, and this time Alexandra Shipp brought the African queen to life. Many on Twitter raged that Shipp was also too light-skinned — the actress is now responding, and she isn't holding back.

Just a little background on Storm: she is one of the most iconic comic book characters in history. She was born Ororo Munroe and raised in Harlem and Cairo. Her mother was a tribal princess from Kenya, and her father was a photojournalist. She was orphaned as a child after her parents were killed during the Arab-Israeli conflict. After meeting Professor X, she joined the X-Men. She also married Black Panther and was queen consort of Wakanda during their marriage.



With all of these details — does this mean Storm should be browner than Berry and Shipp? Shipp says no.

In an interview with Glamour, the actress said, "[I tweeted back] at people who criticized me for not having dark enough skin for my role in X-Men because we're not going to have this conversation about a cartoon character. You're not going to tell me that my skin color doesn't match a Crayola from 1970. Growing up, when I was reading the comics, I pictured her looking like me. For any Black girl, for there to be a Black superhero, we picture them looking like us." She continued, "This conversation about Storm is so stupid, I'm out.... If I lose my job to another actress, I hope it's for her talent and grace, not her skin [color]. When I auditioned for the role, I wasn't like, 'Oh man, I'm not dark enough.' I was like, 'Finally, this is my moment.'"

She also added, "I'm not playing Harriet Tubman with a prosthetic nose and darkening my skin tone. I would never do that."

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Tel/Fax: 972-636-1669, Cell: 646-595-5026

E-mails: editor@theindianpanorama.com; tipdallas01@gmail.com; salujindra@gmail.com

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## Egyptian courts sentence 31 to death for killings, prison escape

**CAIRO (TIP):** Egyptian courts on Thursday sentenced 31 people to death in two separate cases, one involving the killing of a policeman and a security guard in 2015 and the other related to a 2016 prison escape, state news agency MENA and witnesses said.

In the Nile Delta town of El-Zagazig, the local criminal court sentenced 18 people to death in the killings of the policeman and guard, MENA said.

The agency said that the two men had arrived with gunshot wounds at a local hospital and investigators had established that the 18 were behind their deaths.

It said the 18 men, also convicted of incitement to violence against state institutions, were members of the Muslim Brotherhood which was banned in Egypt after the 2013 overthrow of former Islamist President Mohamed Mursi.

In the city of Ismailiyah, the local criminal court sentenced 13 people, witnesses and local newspapers said, including some whom court officials had described as takfiris, a reference to Islamist militants.

They said they had escaped from a prison in October 2016.

Six of the convicted men were in custody while seven were tried in absentia, the state-run al-Ahram newspaper reported on its website.

Egypt has cracked down on suspected Islamists since Mursi was toppled by former general Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

Sisi, who took over as president a year later, has since won a second term in office.

Hundreds of Islamists, including Muslim Brotherhood supporters and members, have received death sentences since 2013, and Egypt has carried out dozens of executions, according to security sources and rights groups.

Thursday's rulings are subject to appeals before the sentences are carried out. (Reuters)

## Kenyans call foul after MPs go to FIFA World Cup at taxpayers' expense

**NAIROBI (TIP):** Kenyans voiced outrage on Thursday as it emerged that a group of lawmakers had gone to the World Cup at the taxpayers' expense, even though the country had failed to qualify for the tournament.

The scandal erupted after some of the legislators posted selfies on social media of themselves enjoying matches in Russia.

"Isn't that a big bad joke, that leaders can travel all the way to Russia to watch football when we have a lot of problems here?" asked Sylvester Aseka, who sells second-hand computers in Nairobi.

"Oh my God, I want to believe that is not true, the pictures some of them are posting," said Jacinta Mong'ina, 26, a student. "It means they have a lot of time and resources to go to Russia. When will they serve their constituents?"

The Star daily newspaper reported that around 20 MPs had travelled to Russia at the beginning of the month and were expected to attend Sunday's final.

The cost of accommodation, per diems and match tickets was being footed by the government, it said.

The Star's estimate of the total cost was around \$450,000 (385,000 euros). By comparison, the minimum wage in Kenya is between \$120 and \$280 per month, depending on the skill. (AFP)

# Follower counts start dipping as Twitter removes locked accounts

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** US President Donald Trump lost about 1,00,000 of his 53.4 million followers while former president Barack Obama lost about 4,00,000 followers within a few hours after Twitter started removing millions of inactive accounts from users' follower numbers on July 12.

The micro-blogging site had on late Wednesday said it would begin removing 'locked' accounts from the follower numbers in a bid to offer a meaningful and accurate view of users' follower count. The move will significantly bring down the 'follower' count of many famous people, including politicians and celebrities.

As per initial reports, the new initiative has already impacted the follower base of Trump and Obama. Twitter said the most notable changes in follower counts will be visible in the next few days.

Reports say Twitter might end up losing 6 per cent of its total user's base. As of the first quarter of 2018, Twitter averaged at 336 million monthly active users.

Any notable change in the follower count of the 'most followed' Indians was not seen by late Thursday, but the number is widely expected to witness a drop in coming days. "We understand this may be hard for some, but we believe accuracy and transparency make Twitter a more trusted service for public conversation," said Vijaya Gadde, Twitter's Legal, Policy and Trust and Safety head.

As per data available, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, actors Amitabh Bachchan,



Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar are some of the most followed Indians on the platform. Last checked, PM Narendra Modi had 43.4 million followers on Twitter.

Explaining 'locked account', Gadde said in most cases, these accounts were created by real people but Twitter cannot confirm that the original person who opened the account still has control and access to it.

"If we detect sudden changes in account behaviour, we may lock the account and contact the owner to confirm if they still have control of it. These sudden changes in account behaviour could include tweeting a large volume of unsolicited replies or mentions, tweeting misleading links, or if a large number of accounts block the account after mentioning them," he said, adding that

until they see everything is okay with the account, they lock it.

The new reforms will also impact the follower base of people who have inflated their followers by buying automated or fake accounts for increasing their influence on social media and for other personal gains.

An audit carried out in March by Twiplomacy, a platform that assists organisations and governments to improve their digital strategy, claims that more than 50 per cent followers of major leaders, including PM Modi, are likely to be fake. The audit had said that Congress president Rahul Gandhi has the highest percentage of fake Twitter followers at 67 per cent. Twitter, however, had termed the report baseless. (ENS)

## Dubai warns of action against China on Djibouti trade zone

**DUBAI (TIP):** Dubai today threatened to take legal action against China for building an international free trade zone in Djibouti on a terminal disputed with the strategic Horn of Africa nation.

The warning came one week after Djibouti launched the first phase of Africa's biggest free trade zone, developed by China, months after scrapping a concession agreement with Dubai's global port operator DP World.

China, which has the only foreign military base near the Red Sea terminal, is developing and financing the free trade zone as it considers Djibouti an important part of its USD 1 trillion "Belt and Road" global investment initiative.

"DP World reserves the right to take all available legal actions, including claims for damages against any third parties that interfere or otherwise violate its contractual rights," the port operator said in a statement.

The tiny nation of Djibouti overlooks the Bab al-Mandab strait at the mouth of the Red Sea on the key shipping lane through the Suez Canal to Europe from the Gulf and Asia beyond.

In February it terminated a 50-year concession agreement with DP World over the Doraleh container terminal, claiming flagrant violation of state sovereignty and national interests.

Dubai has already sought arbitration in the dispute before the London Court of International Arbitration.

DP World reiterated today that its concession agreement over the terminal "remains in force" and warned that the "illegal seizure of the facility does not give the right to any third party to violate the terms of the concession agreement".

DP World, which operates 78 ports in more than 40 nations, has increased its interest in the Horn of Africa and nearby with contracts to manage ports in Yemen and the breakaway Somaliland.

Djibouti in 2017 unveiled three new ports and a railway linking it to landlocked Ethiopia, as part of its bid to become a global trade and logistics hub.

The trade zone, which is connected to Djibouti's main ports, aims to diversify the economy, create new jobs and lure foreign investment through tax-free incentives and full logistical support.

The new spat comes with Chinese President Xi Jinping scheduled to visit the United Arab Emirates next week.

The free trade zone is being run by Djibouti, the majority shareholder, along with three Chinese companies. (PTI)

## Canada to head up NATO training mission in Iraq



**OTTAWA (TIP):** Canada has announced it will assume command of a new NATO training and capacity building mission in Iraq, sending up to 250 troops, armoured vehicles and four tactical helicopters to the country later this year.

The Canadian troops will be deployed in the Baghdad region starting in the fall of 2018 to help "Iraq build a more effective national security structure and improve training for Iraqi security forces," said a government statement yesterday.

"We are proud to take a leadership role in Iraq, and work with our allies and the government of Iraq, to help this region of the Middle East transition to long-lasting peace and stability," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was quoted as saying.

The announcement came as Trudeau was attending a fraught NATO summit in Brussels, at which President Donald Trump stunned US allies by suddenly demanding that members double their defense spending commitments. The Iraq mission will complement Canada's existing efforts as part of the US-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group, to which it has been contributing air power, medical support and help in training Iraqi forces since 2014.

Canada also contributes to existing NATO efforts to train Iraqi forces to counter improvised explosive devices.

Last month Canada announced that its 210-strong special forces contingent in Iraq would no longer provide training support for Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga fighters.

In December 2017, following the retreat of IS from several areas in Iraq, Canada recalled its Aurora surveillance aircraft from the country while reinforcing its support for coalition logistics by sending a second CC-130J Hercules transport plane. (PTI)

# TRUMP SAYS MAY'S BREXIT PLAN WOULD KILL UK-US TRADE DEAL

**LONDON (TIP):** U.S. President Donald Trump lobbed a verbal hand grenade into Theresa May's carefully constructed plans for Brexit, saying on July 12 that the British leader had wrecked the country's exit from the European Union and likely "killed" chances of a free-trade deal with the United States.

Trump, who is making his first presidential visit to Britain, told The Sun newspaper he had advised May on how to conduct Brexit negotiations, "but she didn't listen to me."

"She should negotiate the best way she knows how. But it is too bad what is going on," the president said.

The Rupert Murdoch-owned tabloid published an interview with Trump as May was hosting him at a black-tie dinner at Blenheim Palace, birthplace of Britain's World War II Prime Minister Winston Churchill — the leader who coined the term "special relationship" for the trans-Atlantic bond.

The Sun said the interview was conducted Thursday in Brussels, before Trump traveled to Britain. His remarks on Brexit came the same day May's government published long-awaited proposals for Britain's relations with the EU after it leaves the bloc next year.

The document proposes keeping Britain and the EU in a free market for goods, with a more distant relationship for services.

The plan has infuriated fervent Brexit supporters, who think sticking close to the bloc would limit Britain's ability to strike new trade deals around the world. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and Brexit Secretary David Davis both quit the government this week in protest.

Trump came down firmly on the side of the Brexiters. He said Johnson, May's now ex-foreign secretary, "would be a great prime



minister. I think he's got what it takes."

Meanwhile, Trump said what May proposed on Brexit would hurt the chances of a future trade deal between the U.K. and the United States.

"If they do a deal like that, we would be dealing with the European Union instead of dealing with the U.K., so it will probably kill the deal," Trump said.

He said "the deal she is striking is a much different deal than the one the people voted on." In fact, much of Britain's division over Brexit — which has split the governing Conservative party and the public at large — stems from the June 2016 referendum on withdrawing from the EU not including language about would come next.

May's government is trying to satisfy Britons who voted for their country to leave the bloc, but to set an independent course without hobbling businesses, security agencies and other sectors that are closely entwined with the EU.

May insisted earlier Thursday that her plan

was exactly what Britons had voted for in the 2016 referendum.

"They voted for us to take back control of our money, our law and our borders," she said. "That is exactly what we will do."

Trump's undiplomatic attack on May, his host, will likely raise the temperature around an already controversial visit. Thousands of people are expected to protest against the president in London on Friday, when a 20-foot (6-meter) balloon depicting the president as a screaming baby will be flown near Parliament.

May and Trump are scheduled to hold talks and a joint news conference on Friday.

Trump's interview easily could overshadow the government's attempt to lay out plans for what it calls a "principled and pragmatic" Brexit. Britain is currently part of the EU's single market — which allows for the frictionless flow of goods and services among the 28 member states — and its tariff-free customs union for goods. That will end after the U.K. leaves the bloc in March. (WP)

## Putin hosts aide to Iran's supreme leader amid Syria talks

**MOSCOW (TIP):** Russian President Vladimir Putin has received the Iranian leader's top adviser hours after conferring with the Israeli prime minister about Iran's presence in Syria.

The Kremlin said Thursday that Putin has met with Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, but wouldn't offer any details of the talks. Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said that Velayati handed Putin letters from Khamenei and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Peskov said in a conference call with reporters that the letters dealt with bilateral relations and the situation in the region, but refused to elaborate.

Velayati's visit came hours after Putin hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who reaffirmed the Israeli demand for the Iranian withdrawal from Syria.

"Our opinion is known that Iran needs to leave Syria — that is not something new for you," Netanyahu said at the start of Wednesday's talks in the Kremlin.

Moscow has teamed up with Tehran to shore up Syrian President Bashar Assad's government, but their interests do not always converge. Russia also has maintained warm ties with Israel and demonstrated a readiness to take its security interests into account.

The Iranian presence in Syria is expected to top the agenda of Monday's summit in Helsinki between Putin and US President Donald Trump. Both the United States and Israel want Iran to pull out from Syria, but Russia has warned it would be unrealistic to expect Iran to fully withdraw from the country.

A possible deal could see Syrian troops replacing Iranian forces and its proxy Hezbollah militia in the areas near Israel's Golan Heights. (AP)

## Blast in Chinese chemical plant kills 19, injures 12

**YIBIN HENGDA (TIP):** An explosion at a chemical plant in China has killed 19 people and injured 12, the local government said on July 13, the latest deadly industrial incident in the world's largest producer of chemicals.

It is not yet clear what caused Thursday evening's blast at Yibin Hengda in an industrial park several hours southeast of Chengdu, the capital of the southwestern province of Sichuan, authorities in Jiang'an county said.

The injured are in stable condition and an investigation has begun, state news agency Xinhua said.

The company did not immediately answer telephone calls from Reuters to seek information.

Photographs on Chinese social media showed a huge fire and plumes of smoke rising from the facility.

The fire, which broke out early on Thursday evening, was put out by 11:30 p.m., the government said in its statement.

China has kicked off measures to improve industrial safety, ramping up checks over the last year, following some high-profile incidents at coal mines and chemical plants.

In 2015, an explosion in a chemical warehouse in the northern port city of Tianjin killed 165 people. Last year a blast at a petrochemical plant in eastern Shandong province killed eight people and injured nine. (CNBC)

## Vietnam jails 6 for disturbing public order in protests

**HANOI, VIETNAM (TIP):** A court in south central Vietnam has sentenced six people to up to two-and-a-half years in prison after finding them guilty of throwing rocks, bricks and gas bombs at police in protests against a proposed law on special economic zones.

The six were convicted of disturbing public disorder and sentenced at a one-day trial Thursday in Binh Thuan province, state-run Tuoi Tre newspaper says.

An underage protester was given an 18-month suspended sentence on the same charge.

Protests took place across the country last month over the proposed law the protesters fear will let the economic zones fall in the hands of Chinese investors.

Dozens of other protesters have been arrested and are awaiting trial.

## Mexico earthquake unearths ancient temple

**MAXICO (TIP):** A devastating earthquake that struck central Mexico last September gave way to a fascinating discovery: remnants of a rain god temple within an Aztec pyramid.

The temple, dedicated to a deity called Tlaloc and located within the Teopanzolco pyramid in Cuernavaca, Morelos state, belonged to the region's Tlahuica culture.

As a result of the earthquake, "the pyramid suffered considerable rearrangement of the core of its structure," said archaeologist Barbara Konieczka of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH).

The greatest damage was at the top, where two temples had already been discovered — one dedicated to the Mesoamerican god of the sun and war, Huitzilopochtli, and another to Tlaloc.

"The floor of both shrines sank and bent, which also put their stability in danger," Ms. Konieczka said.

When the INAH carried out studies with radar to examine the pyramid's structure, they found traces of the newly discovered Tlaloc temple. The structure is believed to date back to around the year 1150. Experts say it would have been around six meters long and four meters wide. Ceramic remains and an incense burner belonging to the Tlahuica culture were also found.

Shortly after midday on September 19, 2017, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit central Mexico, killing 369 people, mostly in the capital Mexico City. (hindu)

## A 1,300-Pound Crocodile That Evaded Rangers In Australia Finally Captured

**KATHERINE (TIP):** Following a nearly decade-long hunt, a massive saltwater crocodile has been captured in northern Australia, according to wildlife authorities.

Rangers caught the crocodile Monday after setting a trap on a private property near Katherine, a town in Northern Territory, Australia.

The evasive crocodile is said to be one of the largest trapped in the region, which is not far from the Nitmiluk and Kakadu national parks. It was estimated to be about 60 years old, but it is the reptile's size that is shocking - measuring more than 15 feet long (the average length of a car) and weighing more than 1,300 pounds (which is more than a grand piano), according to the Katherine Times.

"It is a bit of a thrill," wildlife ranger John Burke told the Australian Broadcasting Corp., "but you've also got to admire the size of the animal and how old it is. You've got to have a bit of respect for it." Rangers had been on the lookout for the giant creature since it was first seen nearly 10 years ago. In May, rangers saw three crocodiles while surveying the land, according to the Katherine Times. A trap was then set a couple weeks ago near Katherine River - and the crocodile, dubbed "big fella," swam right into it. A smaller crocodile, measuring almost eight feet, was also captured, according to the newspaper. Ranger Chris Heydon told the Katherine Times that once in the trap, the giant reptiles are sedated, "so there is no chance of us getting chomped."

The crocodile, a male, was "removed" to "help prevent human interaction in the more populated areas," the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife said in a Facebook post. The post included a photo showing the crocodile tied down on a trailer with duct tape around its jaw. The caption warned: "Large crocodiles can move around Top End waterways undetected and you should always Be Crocwise." (NDTV)

# OPEN RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE JUST AS SATISFYING AS MONOGAMOUS ONES

**Being in an open relationship or in a monogamous relationship makes no difference in happiness levels, even though non-monogamous relationships are stigmatised, says a new study**

People in open relationships are as happy as their coupled-up counterparts, says a new study done by the University of Guelph. In consensual, non-monogamous relationships, partners agree to engage in multiple sexual or romantic relationships.

Lead author of the study, Jessica Wood said, "We found people in consensual, non-monogamous relationships experience the same levels of relationship satisfaction, psychological well-being and sexual satisfaction as those in monogamous relationships."

However, consensually non-monogamous relationships still attract stigma, she added. Wood further said, "They are perceived as immoral and less satisfying. They are villainised and viewed as bad people in bad relationships, but that's not the case."

More than 140 people in non-monogamous relationships and more than 200 in monogamous ones were surveyed for the study. The researchers found people in non-monogamous relationships were just as satisfied with the relationship they had with their main partner as those in monogamous ones. Wood's analysis concluded that one important predictor of relationship satisfaction is not relationship structure but rather sexual motivation.

"This research shows us that our choice of relationship structure is not an indicator of how happy or satisfied we are in our primary relationships," she added.

The full findings are published in the Journal of Social and Personal Relationships. *Source: ANI*

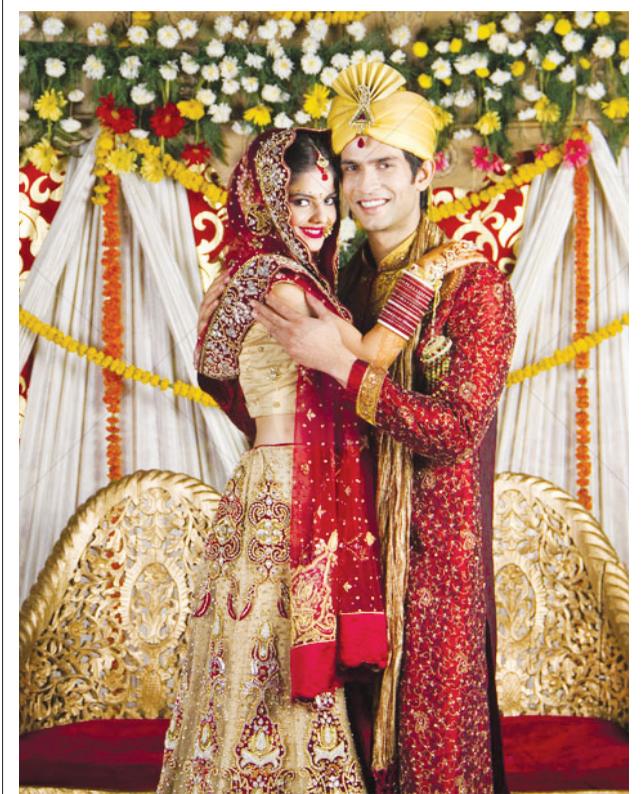


## Bad behaviour can undo all good gestures

Refraining from bad behaviour toward a significant other during stressful life events is more important than showing positive gestures, a study has found. Compared with positive behaviour, negative ones tend to trigger more intense and immediate responses, researchers said. How a couple works together during trying times is associated with individual well-being as well as satisfaction with the relationship.

"When people face stressful life events, they are especially sensitive to negative behaviour in their relationships, such as when a partner seems to be argumentative, overly emotional, withdrawn or fails to do something that was expected," said researcher Keith Sanford, a professor at Baylor University in the US. "In contrast, they're less sensitive to positive behaviour - such as giving each other comfort," he said. The study also found that low doses of a behaviour are most important, and over time, more extreme levels have less impact. "Because people are especially sensitive to negative relationship behaviour, a moderate dose may be sufficient to produce a nearly maximum effect on increasing life stress," Sanford said.

"After negative behaviour reaches a certain saturation point, it appears that stress is only minimally affected by further increases in the dose of relationship problems," he said. For the study, published in Journal of Family Psychology, researchers surveyed couples experiencing stressful life events to measure their behaviour, relationship satisfaction and quality of life. *Source: PTI*



## MARRIAGE IS ACTUALLY GOOD FOR THE HEART, SAYS RESEARCH

Even if marriage is sometimes more a bed of nails than roses, living into old age with a partner may help ward off heart disease and stroke, researchers said.

A sweeping survey of research conducted over the last two decades covering more than two million people aged 42 to 77 found that being hitched significantly reduced the risk of both maladies, they reported in the medical journal Heart.

The study examined ethnically varied populations in Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia, adding weight to the results.

Compared to people living in spousal union, the divorced, widowed or never married were 42% more likely to develop cardiovascular disease and 16% more likely to have coronary heart disease, the study found.

The risk of dying was likewise elevated for the non-married, by 42% from coronary heart disease and by 55% from stroke.

The results were nearly the same for men and women, except for stroke, to which men were more susceptible.

"These findings may suggest that marital status should be considered in the risk assessment for cardiovascular disease," concluded a team led by Chun Wai Wong, a researcher at Royal Stoke Hospital's department of cardiology, in Stoke-on-Trent in Britain.

Four-fifths of all cardiovascular disease can be attributed to a proven set of "risk factors": advanced age, being a man, high-blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, and diabetes.

Marriage, in other words, could be an important share of the missing 20%.

More precisely, living together -- with or without a wedding band -- is probably the operative factor, if indeed conjugal status has any impact at all.

But most of the 34 studies reviewed by Wong and colleagues did not identify couples out of wedlock or same-sex unions, so it was not possible to know whether, statistically, such arrangements were the equivalent of being wed.

Because the study was observational rather than based on a controlled experiment -- something scientists can do with mice but not humans -- no clear conclusions could be drawn as to cause-and-effect.

That leaves open the question of why marriages may be "protective".

"There are various theories," the researchers said in a statement.

Having someone around to take care of one's health problems and keep track of one's meds is probably a plus, as are two incomes or pensions instead of one.

More intangibly, not living alone is thought to be good for morale, and for neural stimulation. People living in couples, earlier research has shown, also have lower rates of dementia. *Source: AFP*

## FOOD CORNER

### HONEY CHILLI POTATOES SABUDANA KI TIKKI

#### Ingredients

2 potatoes, peeled and sliced, 3-4 Tbsp cornflour or maida, Salt to taste, 1 tsp red chilli powder, Oil, for deep frying, 1 tsp oil, 2 spring onions (with stalk), sliced, 1 Tbsp garlic paste, 1 capsicum, sliced, 2 Tbsp honey, Salt, to taste, 1/4 tsp soya sauce, 3 tsp white sesame seeds, 2 tsp chilli sauce.

#### For the potatoes

- In a bowl, add cornflour or maida, salt and red chilli powder
- Add the sliced potatoes and mix well until the potatoes are coated
- Heat oil in a wok and deep fry the potatoes until golden. Keep aside.

#### For the Base

- In a wok, add oil, garlic paste and spring onions. Saute on high heat for 1 minute.
- Add capsicum, honey, salt, soya sauce, chilli sauce. Saute for 2-3 minutes.
- Add the deep-fried potatoes and sesame seeds.
- Mix well and serve hot.

#### Ingredients

125 Gram Sabudana, 130 Gram Potato, 5 Gram Green chilli, chopped, 3 Gram Cashews, chopped, 3 Gram Cumin powder, 3 Gram Dry mango powder, 2 Gram Sendha namak, 300 ml Oil.

#### Method

- Soak the sabudana for overnight and drain the next day.
- Boil the potatoes and mash them.
- Mix in the sabudana pearls and add green chilli, cashew nuts, cumin powder along with dry mango powder and sendha namak.
- Make small equal size patties out of the mixture and fry until golden brown in hot oil.
- Serve with mint chutney.



# NOW, THALASSEMIA CAN BE TREATED IN THE WOMB

In a breakthrough, a gene editing technique has shown potential to treat beta thalassemia — a genetic blood disorder — paving the way for treating various genetic conditions during early stages of foetal development. The blood disorder condition reduces the production of haemoglobin — a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body.

Researchers from the Carnegie Mellon University in the US used a peptide nucleic acid (PNA)-based gene editing technique to successfully treat beta thalassemia in adult mice. PNAs are synthetic molecules that combine a synthetic protein backbone with the nucleobases found in DNA and RNA.

Mice treated using PNA while in utero showed levels of haemoglobin that were within the normal range, less spleen enlargement and increased survival rates, the researchers said.

“Early in embryonic development, there are a lot of stem cells dividing at a rapid pace. If we can go in and correct a genetic mutation early on, we could dramatically reduce the impact the mutation has on foetal development or even cure the condition,” said Danith Ly, Professor from the varsity.

In the study, published in the journal Nature Communications, the team showed that just one injection of the PNA complex into the amniotic fluid during gestation led to dramatic improvements in the mice’s symptoms and correction in 6 per cent of the beta thalassemia causing mutations.

The technique showed no off-target effects from the treatment, suggesting that the method would be better than other gene editing techniques like CRISPR/Cas9, which can erroneously



damage off-target DNA.

“The PNA technique is more ideal for therapeutics. It doesn’t cut the DNA, it just binds to it and repairs things that seem unusual. We looked at 50 million samples and couldn’t find one off-site error when we used our PNA gene editing technique,” Ly noted.

India has the largest number of

patients with thalassemia major in the world — about 1 to 1.5 lakh — and about four per cent of the population are carriers of the beta thalassemia trait. The technique might be able to achieve even higher success rates if they can administer it multiple times during gestation, the researchers said.

Source: IANS

## Living in a room without air conditioning can impact your memory

Living in dormitories without air-conditioning (AC) during a heat wave can lower students’ ability to focus, harm their working memory and increase reaction times, a Harvard study has found.

The field study, the first to demonstrate the detrimental cognitive effects of indoor temperatures during a heat wave in a group of young healthy individuals, highlights the need for sustainable design solutions in mitigating the health impacts of extreme heat.

“Most of the research on the health effects of heat has been done in vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, creating the perception that the general population is not at risk from heat waves,” said Jose Guillermo Cedeno-Laurent, research fellow at Harvard University in the US.

“To address this blind spot, we studied healthy students living in dorms as a natural intervention during a heat wave in Boston,” said Cedeno-Laurent, lead author of the study published in the journal PLOS Medicine.

Researchers tracked 44 students in their late teens and early 20s living in



dorm rooms. Twenty-four of the students lived in adjacent six-story buildings that were built in the early 1990s and had central AC. The remaining 20 students lived in low-rise buildings constructed between 1930 and 1950 that did not have AC. Researchers fitted each student’s room with a device that measured temperature, carbon dioxide levels, humidity, and noise levels, and tracked their physical activity and sleep patterns with wearable devices.

The study was conducted over 12 consecutive days in the summer of 2016. The first five days consisted of seasonable

temperatures, followed by a five-day-long heat wave, and then a two-day cool-down. Each day the students took two cognition tests on their smartphones right after waking up.

The first test required students to correctly identify the colour of displayed words and was used to evaluate cognitive speed and inhibitory control—or the ability to focus on relevant stimuli when irrelevant stimuli are also present.

The second test consisted of basic arithmetic questions and was used to assess cognitive speed and working memory.

The findings showed that during the heat wave, students in the buildings without AC performed worse on the tests than students in the air-conditioned dormitories and experienced decreases across five measures of cognitive function, including reaction times and working memory. During the heat wave, students in buildings without AC experienced 13.4 per cent longer reaction times on colour-word tests, and 13.3 per cent lower addition/subtraction test scores compared with students with air-conditioned rooms.

Source: PTI



## Mediterranean diet may help reduce bone loss: Study

**LONDON (TIP):** Eating a Mediterranean-type diet - rich in fruit, vegetables, nuts, unrefined cereals, olive oil, and fish - could reduce bone loss in people with osteoporosis, a study claims.

The study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, is the first long-term, pan-European clinical trial looking at the impact of a Mediterranean diet on bone health in older adults.

“This is a particularly sensitive area for osteoporosis as loss of bone in the femoral neck is often the cause of hip fracture, which is common in elderly people with osteoporosis,” said Susan Fairweather-Tait, a professor at the University of East Anglia in the UK.

More than 1,000 people aged between 65 and 79 took part in the trial, and volunteers were randomised into two groups - one which followed a Mediterranean diet and a control group which did not.

Bone density was measured at the start and after 12 months. The diet had no discernible impact on participants with normal bone density, but it did have an effect on those with osteoporosis.

People in the control group continued to see the usual age-related decrease in bone density, but those following the diet saw an equivalent increase in bone density in one part of the body - the femoral neck.

This is the area which connects the shaft of the thigh bone to its rounded head, which fits in the hip joint.

“Bone takes a long time to form, so the 12-month trial, although one of the longest to date, was still a relatively short time frame to show an impact. So the fact we were able to see a marked difference between the groups even in just this one area is significant,” Fairweather-Tait said.

Source: PTI

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### DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



**DR. SATISH ANAND**  
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAPI National  
E-Mail: sanandmd@gmail.com

**GITANJLI ANAND**  
Former President, India Association of Long Island (IALI)  
E-mail: gitanjlianand@gmail.com

# WHATSAPP SHARES 'EASY TIPS' TO SPOT FAKE NEWS, HOAX

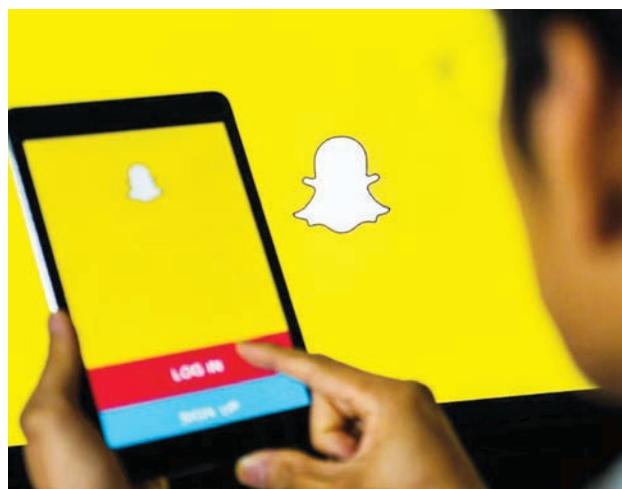


## INSTAGRAM MAY SOON OPEN UP VERIFICATION BADGE FOR USERS

**A**kin to Twitter, Instagram is considering allowing the blue tick enthusiasts to get their profiles verified.

The new 'request verification' process comes with an official request form that is accessible within the app for non-verified users, Mashable reported.

Using the feature, one will be able to provide account information and a copy of their ID to request the verification. It is to be noted that the blue tick is mentioned as reserved for notable public figure, celebrity, or global brand. *Source: ANI*



## SNAPCHAT MAY LET YOU SHOP AT AMAZON

**I**f you are an avid Snapchat user, you might soon be able to use it to shop at Amazon. An app researcher has discovered a code indicating a Camera Search or Visual Search feature.

As the name suggests, the feature would allow you to scan objects and barcodes to show you results from Amazon, Engadget reported.

It is not clear as to when the feature will officially roll out, but when it does, it would seek to place Snapchat more than just a platform for sharing messaging and possibly get the service a cut from the purchases. *Source: ANI*

**U**nder fire over fake and provocative messages being circulated on its platform, WhatsApp today began an awareness campaign to help users identify and prevent the spread of false information, hoax messages and fake news.

With rumours on WhatsApp triggering lynching in parts of the country, the Facebook-owned messaging service brought out full-page advertisement in leading newspapers, first in the series of its user awareness drive, giving "easy tips" to decide if information received is, indeed, true.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had last week asked for greater accountability from WhatsApp, saying that the government will not tolerate any misuse of the platform to spread fake messages designed to "provoke" and "instigate" people.

In response, WhatsApp had informed the government that fake news, misinformation and hoaxes can be checked by the government, civil society and technology companies "working together".

Reiterating the message today, it said: "To fight fake news, we all need to work together - technology companies, the government and community groups. If you see something that's not true, make people aware and help stop the spread."

The latest campaign by WhatsApp also outlines ways to spot false information including identifying forwarded messages (a feature that will be rolled out starting this week), coaxing users to "double check" on information using multiple sources to establish authenticity of a news or a photograph.

The full-page advertisements splashed across major dailies also nudged users to question information that is meant to instil anger or fear and to think twice before sharing such messages.

It cautions the users to "look out for messages that look different" and to watch out for signs like spelling mistakes in order to determine accuracy of information circulated.

"Be thoughtful about what you share....If you are not sure of the source



or concerned that the information may be untrue, think twice before sharing," it said, adding that accompanying links seemingly of well-known websites should also be scoured for unusual characters and spelling mistakes to establish authenticity.

WhatsApp also reminded its users that fake news "often" goes viral and just because "a message is shared many times, does not make it true".

When contacted, a WhatsApp spokesperson said: "This morning we are starting an education campaign in India on how to spot fake news and rumours. Our first step is placing newspaper advertisements across the country in English, Hindi, and several other languages.

The company will build on such efforts going forward, the spokesperson added.

The WhatsApp spokesperson did not reply to a specific question on the number of accounts that have been blocked so far this year in India or globally for circulating fake news.

"We ban accounts based on user reports and by the manner in which messages are sent. We use machine learning to identify accounts sending a high volume of messages and we are constantly working to improve our ability to stop unwanted automated messages" the spokesperson added.

Rumours on WhatsApp have triggered a spate of incidents involving mob fury, a recent one being lynching of five men

on the suspicion of being child-lifters in Maharashtra's Rainpada village of Dhule district.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on July 2 had written to WhatsApp asking it to take immediate steps to prevent the circulation of false information and provocative content, and emphasised that the company "cannot evade accountability and responsibility".

Outlining steps it has taken to curb abuse of its platform, WhatsApp -- in its response to a notice sent by India's IT Ministry -- had said last week that it has the ability to prevent spam but since it cannot see the content of private messages, blocking can be done only based on user reports.

With India being its biggest market with over 200 million users, the Facebook Inc-owned messenger service had asserted that it responds to "valid" law enforcement requests in investigating crimes.

WhatsApp had also told the government that it is "horrified by these terrible acts of violence" and its strategy to deal with the situation involves giving people the controls and information they need to stay safe while working proactively to prevent misuse of the service.

Without specifying whether it will stop services of any person found to be spreading fake news, the company had said it has made changes on group chats to prevent the spread of unwanted information. *Source: PTI*

# Scientists claim to have discovered the world's oldest colour – and it is pink

**S**cientists have discovered the oldest colours in the geological record - 1.1 billion-year-old bright pink pigments extracted from rocks deep beneath the Sahara desert in Africa.

The pigments taken from marine black shales of the Taoudeni Basin in Mauritania, West Africa, were more than half a billion years older than previous pigment discoveries, said Nur Gueneli from The Australian National University (ANU).

"The bright pink pigments are the molecular fossils of chlorophyll that were produced by ancient photosynthetic organisms inhabiting an ancient ocean that has long since vanished," said Gueneli.

The fossils range from blood red to deep purple in their concentrated form, and bright pink when diluted, according to a study published in the journal PNAS.

The researchers crushed the billion-year-old rocks to powder, before extracting and analysing molecules of ancient organisms



*Biogeochemistry Lab Manager Janet Hope from the ANU Research School of Earth Sciences holds a vial of pink colored porphyrins representing the oldest intact pigments in the world.*

from them.

"The precise analysis of the ancient pigments confirmed that tiny cyanobacteria dominated the base of the food chain in the oceans a billion years ago, which helps to explain why animals did not exist at the time," Gueneli said.

The emergence of large, active organisms was likely to have been restrained by a limited supply of larger food particles, such as algae, senior lead researcher Jochen Brocks, an associate professor at ANU.

"Algae, although still microscopic, are a thousand times larger in volume than cyanobacteria, and are a much richer food source," said Brocks.

"The cyanobacterial oceans started to vanish about 650 million years ago, when algae began to rapidly spread to provide the burst of energy needed for the evolution of complex ecosystems, where large animals, including humans, could thrive on Earth," he said. *Source: PTI*

# India becomes world's sixth biggest economy, edging out France: World Bank

**PARIS (TIP):** India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France into seventh place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017.

India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of last year, against \$2.582 trillion for France.

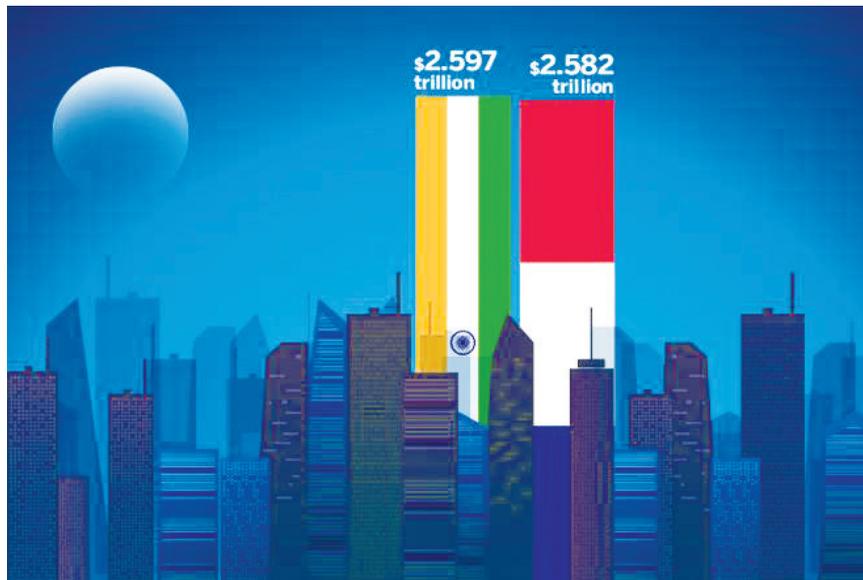
The economy rebounded strongly from July 2017, after several quarters of slowdown blamed on economic policies pursued by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

India, with around 1.34 billion inhabitants, is poised to become the world's most populous nation, whereas the French population stands at 67 million.

This means that the country's per capita GDP continues to amount to just a fraction of that of France which is still roughly 20 times higher, according to World Bank figures.

Manufacturing and consumer spending were the main drivers of the Indian economy last year, after a slowdown blamed on the demonetisation of large banknotes that Modi imposed at the end of 2016, as well as a chaotic implementation of a new harmonised VAT regime.

India has doubled its GDP within a decade and is expected to power ahead as



a key economic engine in Asia, even as China slows down.

According to the International Monetary Fund, India is projected to generate growth of 7.4% this year and 7.8% in 2019, boosted by household spending and a tax reform.

This compares to the world's expected average growth of 3.9%

The London-based Centre for Economics and Business Research, a

consultancy, said at the end of last year that India would overtake both Britain and France this year in terms of GDP, and had a good chance to become the world's third-biggest economy by 2032.

At the end of 2017, Britain was still the world's fifth-biggest economy with a GDP of \$2.622 trillion.

The US is the world's top economy, followed by China, Japan and Germany. *Source: AFP*

## BMW finalises accord to start producing electric Minis in China

**B**MW AG will make Mini cars in China for the first time, sealing a joint-venture agreement to produce electric vehicles with partner Great Wall Motor Co. in the world's largest automotive market.

The 50-50 owned venture will make battery-powered vehicles for both partners at a new plant in Jiangsu Province, BMW said in a statement Tuesday. The expansion is the German luxury carmaker's second this week in China, part of a parade of accords announced at a Berlin summit with Chancellor Angela Merkel and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in attendance.

"Today's signing represents a new level of cooperation between China and Germany," BMW chief executive officer Harald Krueger said in the statement.

Creation of the venture, called Spotlight Automotive Ltd., coincides with China's April decision to ease foreign-ownership restrictions in the country, with the possibility that Western automakers



could eventually buy out their local partners. On Monday, BMW agreed to lift output at a separate venture with Brilliance China Automotive Holdings that will lessen the sting of higher Chinese import tariffs on its US-made SUVs.

The company sold 560,000 BMW brand vehicles to customers in China in 2017, more than the US and Germany combined. China was Mini's fourth-largest market, with around 35,000 units delivered, it said.

"This underlines the brand's additional global potential, which will now be

significantly supported through the joint venture with Great Wall Motor," BMW said.

The company pledged last year to build electric models at its factory in Oxford, England. It said Tuesday that any plans to expand in China don't affect the brand's commitment to Britain.

Founded by billionaire Chairman Wei Jianjun, Great Wall has become China's leading SUV producer by offering consumers spacious models at prices cheaper than sedans from the likes of Volkswagen AG and General Motors Co.

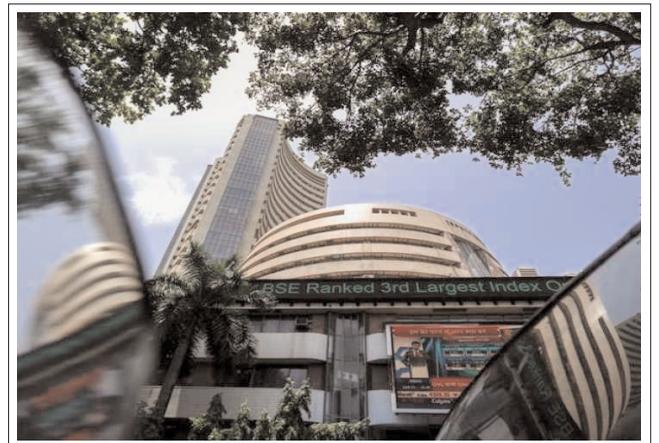
## Vistara places \$3.1 billion order for 19 jets with Airbus, Boeing

**A**irbus SE and Boeing Co. split firm orders for 19 jets from Vistara, the Indian affiliate of Singapore Airlines Ltd. that is seeking to bolster its local operations and also start international flights.

Vistara will buy 13 of the A320neo and A321neo jets that have a list price starting at about \$111 million each and six Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners at about \$282 million apiece. The combined order is valued at \$3.1 billion, excluding customary discounts. Additionally, Vistara will be renting 37 new A320neo family aircraft from leasing companies, according to a statement from the carrier Wednesday. The airline currently has a fleet of 21 single-aisle Airbus planes.

Vistara, Jet Airways India Ltd. and SpiceJet Ltd. are among Indian carriers boosting orders from Asia as regional operators add routes and swell their fleets to meet travel demand.

*Source: Bloomberg*



## SENSEX SOARS TO RECORD HIGH, NIFTY RECLAIMS 11,000-MARK

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Aided by an overnight fall in crude oil prices, the BSE Sensex gained over 282 points to close at a new all-time high of 36,548 points on Thursday.

Index heavyweight, Reliance Industries (RIL) jumped 4.42% to hit all-time closing high, regaining the market capitalisation of \$100 billion after a gap of 10 years. RIL is the second company after Tata Consultancy Services in the \$100-billion club.

While the Sensex is at an all-time high, it has not been a broad rally and many small and mid caps have not performed well.

VK Sharma, Head, Private Client Group, HDFC Securities said the overnight selloff in Brent crude prices and positive global markets move throughout the session, helped Indian markets to extend the gains.

The broader NSE Nifty index also reclaimed the 11,000-mark, touching a high of 11,078.30 before ending at 11,023.20, up 74.90 or 0.68%. An appreciating rupee, sustained buying by domestic and foreign institutional investors and an encouraging start to the earnings season spurred buying momentum, brokers said.

### Industrial growth slips to 7-month low of 3.2%

- Industrial production growth slipped to a seven-month low of 3.2% in May mainly due to sluggish performance of manufacturing and power sectors coupled with poor offtake of fast moving consumer goods
- Factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) was revised down to 4.8% in April from previous estimates of 4.9%, according to the data released by the Central Statistics Office on Thursday
- Inflation rises to 5-month high in June
- Retail inflation rose to 5% in June, a five-month high, despite easing food prices, government data showed
- The retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 4.87% in May. It was 1.46% in June 2017. The earlier high was in January this year at 5.07%

### RIL back in \$100 bn market-cap club

- Reliance Industries spurted 4.42% to hit its all-time closing high, re-entering the \$100 billion market cap club
- It was the biggest gainer

## TOYOTA RECALLS 2,628 UNITS OF INNOVA, FORTUNER

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) is recalling 2,628 units of its MPV Innova Crysta and Fortuner to replace faulty fuel hose routing.

The recall covers petrol-powered Innova Crysta and Fortuner units, manufactured between July 18, 2016 and March 22, 2018, to inspect fuel hose routing and correct if required.

"In line with its commitment to safety first and customer satisfaction, the company is implementing this recall," TKM said. *Source: PTI*





### Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE JULY 16 - JULY 22, 2018

### Aries:

Ganesha says let me start with a quote that is relevant in this context. 'We cannot solve all our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them,' said Albert Einstein. You have created several problems for yourself by thinking in circles. Now you are trying to get out of the spot with the same reasoning. It won't work. You will have to reinvent yourself and look for out-of-the-box solutions.

### Taurus:

You realize that you have to get down to the hard slog, and this period grounds you. You have the knowledge. Now you tweak it with some imagination and get about solving your problems. There is money to be made, and work calls. There is a lot pending, and deadlines loom large. There are altercations, temper tantrums and mood swings. But you get through all the mundane challenges of life and strike it rich. Ganesha holds your hand.

### Gemini:

There is fire in your belly with the force pushing you. You are a different person now. You see a goal and you go all out to get there. You realize this and there is no stopping you. You bushwhack the opposition and steam ahead like an Indian locomotive from the Perambur coach factory. There are ego drives, passions, and hard work. You impress with your drive, determination and daredevilry. Ganesha is thrilled.

### Cancer:

You started in a torpor, undid all the rust around you, and then screeched ahead of the opposition. You had a late start, but then caught up with the opposition and left them behind by a distance. You scorch the tarmac and end up trumps. You follow the advice of Steve Jobs in an address to Stanford University: 'Don't be trapped by dogma - which is living with the results of other people's thinking.

### Leo:

You are moving powerfully ahead, and secretly too. You have a point to prove and nothing will stop you. You take short cuts and may be tempted to use unethical methods to get to your goals. You believe that the end justifies the means. There could be brushes with the law and unwarranted altercations. Passions touch raw heights. There could be several dalliances of the flesh and the heart.

### Virgo:

This is a trying period. You come up against several roadblocks and challenges. You widen your social circle and meet up with people you would not normally associate with in the everyday run of life. There are maudlin moments too, and you take a back seat and watch the world go by. You go searching for a guru, look for salvation in mantra, tantra and yantra and spend time in old-age homes or looking after street children or even stray animals.

### Libra:

You are steadfast and zooming ahead. You like the fragrance of greenbacks and succumb to its lure. There are money and honey, awards and accolades. Those in jobs get promotions and new perks. Freelancers widen their base. There is success and you are pleased. You prepare a nest egg for the family. There is also new love. Those in committed relationships bond ethereally. Singles play the field. Ganesha watches.

### Scorpio:

You are on steady ground and power away. You are like a batsman in the slog overs of the IPL simply feasting on the bowling, even if it is the best attack in the world. On the work front, you go through all details and job descriptions with a magnifying glass. You cannot be conned. In cricketing terms, you cannot be stumped. Family life is steady, and children bring joy. You have found firm ground and do your best to hold on to it. Ganesha is happy.

### Sagittarius:

You are turbo-charged and powering away. There is fire in your belly. There could be international travel. You make money but also spend it with consummate ease. There are several affairs of the heart but you are simply unable to hold on to one, for a variety of reasons. You know that you have the same number of hours per day that Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, Albert Einstein and others who made a success of their lives had.

### Capricorn:

'Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain but it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving,' said Dale Carnegie. You are in an emotional phase. You take to the arts, take time off and visit art galleries, amusement parks, or go for a long walk through the woods. You want to get away from it all and come back refreshed and rejuvenated. The rat race is getting to you.

### Aquarius:

Your mind is everywhere. It doesn't lodge itself in one house; it occupies them all. You could be networking furiously. You ensure that there are food and fire for the mind, but, I am afraid, in the mood you are in, the body may be neglected. There are maudlin moments and you may escape in indulgences. Money slips through your fingers, along with old friendships. New vistas open up and you are reinvented.

### Pisces:

Your mind is still the knave. It is the joker in the pack of cards. It is a drunken monkey short-circuiting your best intentions. Often, the influences of period can spill over to the next. Your mind wanders like a puppy that has lost its leash. You are in the swamp, neck-deep in the boggy mud. Faced with unfamiliar terrain, you get into a shell like a crab and retreat into your inner world. Money continues to slip through your hands as your inner turbulence drives you nuts. Ganesha holds your hand.

# ASTONISHING FACTS ABOUT JAGANNATH TEMPLE IN PURI

The sacred seaside town of Puri is just a short enchanting drive away from Bhubaneswar in Odisha. The majestic Jagannath Temple in Puri is a major pilgrimage destination for Hindus and is a part of the "Char Dham" pilgrimages.

It took three generations worth of time and effort to brick up the humongous walls of the famous Puri's Jagannath Temple located in Odisha. The temple is of utmost importance to the Hindu devotees as it is one of the Char-Dham Pilgrimages. It also serves as a mighty historical structure built about millennia ago, in the year 1078. Millions of people visit Odisha to gain Lord Jagannath blessings.

The temple is famous for its annual Rath Yatra which is witnessed by millions as the three colossal chariots carry the deities. The English word Juggernaut shares its origin from this annual parade. But that's not the sole speciality of the place! Some enigmatic activities without any scientific explanations have caught the travellers eye worldwide. Here are some of these mind boggling facts -

## Defying Nature's Code of Conduct

Even a child knows any piece of cloth is dominated by the wind to fly according to its course. The same principle has numerous applications; from the giant sails on your ship to a small flag in your hand all follow the same code. But it looks like the flag mounted on the top of the Jagannath Temple is a unique exception to the principle. This particular flag flows in the opposite direction to the wind's course without any scientific background to back it up.

## The Climb

Every day a priest scrambles the walls of the temple with a height equivalent to that of a 45 storey building, to change the flag atop the temple dome. This ritual dates far back to the day the temple was built. The practice is done with bare hands without any protective gear. It's believed if the ritual is skipped one day from the calendar, the temple will be shut down for a long 18 years. This might make the professional climbers jealous.

## A light with no darkness

A necessary detail while sketching anything is shading. Shading happens when sunlight glows one part of the subject leaving a shadow on the other, which ultimately triggers shade. But, what if something has no shadow?

The temple is reported to have no shadow at all, at any time of the day from any directions possible. Could it be an architectural marvel or the Lord Jagannath's message to humanity?

## The Riddle of The Sudarshan Chakra

There are two mysteries present at the pinnacle of the temple in the form of the Sudarshan Chakra. The first oddity revolves around the theory of how the hard metal weighing about a tonne, just got up there without any machinery just with a human force of that century.

The second is one deal with the architectural technique related to the



Chakra. From every direction you look, the Chakra looks back with the same appearance. It's like it was designed to look just the same from every direction.

## Nothing's Above God, So Nothing Fly Above It Either

The sky is the bird domain. We see birds sitting, resting and flying above our heads and rooftops all the time. But, this particular area is restricted, not even a single bird is encountered above the temple dome, even an airplane could not be seen hovering above the temple.

Might be because Lord Jagannath doesn't want the view of his holy mansion to be disturbed!

## The Food Is Never Futile Here

In Hindu mythology, wasting food is considered a bad sign; the Temple crew

follows the same. A total number of people visiting the temple varies between 2,000 to 2,00,000 people every day. Miraculously, the Parsadam prepared every day is never wasted, not even a bite. Could this be an effective management or the Lord's will?

## Mute Water

Seconds, after you put the first step inside the temple from Singha Dwara entrance, the audibility to the ocean waves is entirely lost. This phenomenon is more prominent in the evening time. Again, no scientific explanation adds up to this fact. The sound returns when you leave the temple.

According to the local lore, it was the will of the Subhadra Mayi, the sister of the two lords who wished for serenity within the temple gates. Hence her will was duly fulfilled.

## Reverse gear of the Breeze

Take any place on Earth, on daytime the breeze from sea comes to land and the opposite happens in the evening. But, in Puri, the breeze has a tendency to contradict and opt for the exact opposite direction. In the daytime, the breeze blows from land to sea and the opposite in the evening happens.

## Magical Methods to Cook

The traditional way to cook the Parsadam is preserved by the priests here. Exactly seven pots are used as vessels mounted over one another and are cooked using firewood. Enchantingly, the top most pot is cooked first, and the rest follows the same order!

## Deities Disintegration

The deities are buried from every 14 to 18 years, one above another, replaced by new ones. These deities are made up of metal and are believe to be disintegrated on their own.

## The Rath Yatra

The Rath Yatra is an annual parade in which the deities are carried outside the temple on 2 set of chariots (3 each). The first chariot carries the deities till the river which separates the Jagannath Temple and the Mausi Maa temple. After that, the idols are boarded in 3 boats to cross the river. Now the second chariot comes in play. It carries the deities from the river to the Mausi Maa Temple where the ritual takes place.

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contd from Page 1

## Trump claims he subdued NATO...

"I let them know that I was extremely unhappy," he said, but added that the talks ended on the best of terms: "It all came together at the end. It was a little tough for a little while."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who called the summit "very intense", and other leaders including French President Emmanuel Macron, played down the extent to which they had pledged to accelerate spending plans as fast as Trump wanted.

Macron and others said they did not interpret Trump's words as a direct threat to quit the alliance Washington founded in 1949 to contain Soviet expansion. Trump, asked if he thought he could withdraw from NATO without backing from Congress, said he believed he could but it was "unnecessary". Others say Congressional approval would be required and would be unlikely to be forthcoming.

Trump hailed a personal victory for his own strategy in complaining loudly that NATO budgets were unfair to US taxpayers, and the emergence of what he said was a warm consensus around him.

Several diplomats, however, said his undiplomatic intervention, including pointing at other leaders and addressing Merkel as "you, Angela", had irritated many.

### Spending targets

- o NATO members have committed to spending at least 2% of their national income on defense by 2024, though the terms allow for stretching that in some cases to 2030
- o The United States, far the biggest economy, spent 3.6% last year, while Germany, the second biggest, paid out just 1.2% and only a handful of countries met the 2% target.
- o Trump said he wanted them all to hit that target by January, prompting consternation. Many have already settled their 2019 budgets and the sums involved are immense.

## Shashi Tharoor kicks up row...

and advised its leaders on "responsible phraseology." At an event in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday, July 11, Mr. Tharoor said: "If they have been able to win a repeat of their current strength in the Lok Sabha, then frankly, our own democratic Constitution, as we understand, will not survive... because then they will have all the three elements they need to tear up the Constitution of India and write a new one." And that will enshrine the principle of Hindu Rashtra, that will remove equality for the minorities, and that will create a Hindu Pakistan...and that is not what Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and great heroes of freedom struggle fought for."

I will say it again: Tharoor

He said: "I have said this before and I will say it again. Pakistan was created as a state with a dominant religion, that discriminates against its minorities and denies them equal rights. India never accepted the logic that had partitioned the country.

"But the BJP/RSS idea of a 'Hindu Rashtra' is the mirror image of Pakistan a state with a dominant majority religion that seeks to put its minorities in a subordinate place. That would be a Hindu Pakistan, and it is not what our freedom movement fought for, nor the idea of India enshrined in our Constitution."

Mr. Tharoor said many proud Hindus like him cherished the inclusive nature of the faith and had no desire to live, as their Pakistani neighbors were forced to, in an intolerant theocratic state.

"We want to preserve India and not turn our beloved country into a Hindu version of Pakistan," he wrote.

Mr. Tharoor got some support from former Vice-President Hamid Ansari.

"I have not read what he [Tharoor] has said. But he is an educated man, a writer, an MP...and heads Parliament's committee on external affairs. Whatever he says, he will say after thorough consideration," Mr. Ansari told a TV news channel.

The BJP used strong language to hit back at him.

"Shashi Tharoor is the same person who called Indians 'cattle-class'. He is 'cattle-class-ing' the Indian democracy. You call yourself an educated and erudite spokesperson of the Congress. If you want to love Pakistan, do so, but do not display such hatred towards Indians," BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra told reporters at a briefing.

Congress communication chief Randeep Surjewala, however, articulated the party's position in a series of tweets. "India's values & fundamentals are an unequivocal guarantee of our civilizational role & set us apart from the divisive idea of Pakistan. All Congress leaders must realize this historic responsibility bestowed upon us while choosing words &

phraseology to reject BJP's hatred," he said.

"Modi Govt thrives upon an unprecedented atmosphere of division, bigotry, hatred, intolerance & polarization for last 4 years. Congress, on the other hand, represents India's civilizational values of pluralism, diversity, compassion & harmony between faiths & ethnicities," added Mr. Surjewala. (Source: PTI)

## Demarche to UK over...

The SFJ that claims to be an international advocacy group has offered to sponsor youth and political activists from Punjab to travel to London for the August meeting. The meeting at Trafalgar Square is aimed at shaping up the "London Declaration on Referendum 2020" campaign seeking a separate Khalistan.

India has lodged its protest through diplomatic channels against the proposed "anti-India activity". "We have taken it up with UK and have issued a demarche. We expect UK will not allow such anti-India activities to be carried out in UK," said MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar.

India's official response comes a day after the British High Commission spokesperson in Delhi defended the right of people in the UK "to gather together and to demonstrate their views, provided that they do so within the law".

"However, will not tolerate any groups who spread hate or deliberately raise community fears and tensions by bringing disorder and violence to our towns and cities and the police have comprehensive powers to deal with such activities," the British High Commission spokesperson told The Tribune in a cautious statement.

Khalistan remains a sensitive issue in bilateral ties between the two countries. In April, India had lodged a protest with the UK after the Tricolour was burnt by Khalistani elements at Parliament Square, while PM Narendra Modi was addressing a diaspora event in Westminster.

"Majority of the Sikh community have good relations with India and with the country where they stay. The rest are fringe elements," underlined Raveesh Kumar on Thursday.

According to its legal adviser based in New York, the SFJ plans to provide sponsorship letters to participants from Punjab and also arrange free stay for them from August 10 to 14. It plans to unveil a declaration advocating for "Sikhs' right to self-determination for the independence of Punjab" at the Trafalgar meeting.

Separatist group Sikhs For Justice plans to sponsor Punjab youth and political activists to travel to London for August 12 meet aimed at shaping up the "London Declaration on Referendum 2020" campaign seeking Khalistan

## Trade War- US slaps more tariffs...

prompting Beijing to warn of "counter measures" to safeguard its interests.

The Trump administration's move comes after the US imposed 25 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods worth \$34 billion last Friday. Beijing immediately responded with its own tariffs on US goods worth \$34 billion. The retaliatory tariffs that China enacted Friday targeted US cars and major agricultural goods, such as soybeans and meat.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer released a list of thousands of additional goods that could face 10 per cent tariffs after a public comment period. It includes fruit and vegetables, handbags, refrigerators, rain jackets and baseball gloves.

(Source: PTI)

## Charges against Stormy Daniels...

Charging documents say Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, was arrested for touching a patron at a "sexually oriented" business in violation of the law commonly known as the Community Defense Act.

The documents said that Daniels, who was semi-nude, allegedly touched some of the patrons' breasts and allowed them to touch her. She allegedly performed the same act with several officers who approached the stage and forced one officer's head into her bare chest.

She was released on bail before 6 a.m. Thursday. Daniels posted \$6,000.

Daniels' attorney, Michael Avenatti, told The Associated Press that some patrons touched Daniels in a non-sexual way during her performance. He told MSNBC later Thursday that police had prepared a sting operation with multiple officers. He said female undercover officers asked Daniels if they could place their face between her breasts.

"It was an absurd use of law enforcement resources," Avenatti said.

The three counts against Daniels were first-degree misdemeanors, with a maximum penalty for one count would be six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Thursday afternoon, city prosecutors dropped the charges, saying the Ohio illegal touching law can't be enforced because Daniels has only appeared once at the Columbus club.

The law refers to someone "who regularly appears nude or seminude" at a club. Avenatti successfully argued Daniels "has not appeared consistently and repeatedly at Sirens," according to prosecutors.

Police said two other women were arrested along with Daniels. Prosecutors are also checking whether those women will be prosecuted, said City Attorney Zach Klein.

The police department "engages in these operations routinely," said spokesman Sgt. Dean Worthington.

Avenatti posted on Twitter a statement by Daniels that said she apologized to her fans in Columbus, but she would not perform her previously scheduled Thursday night show.

## '84 anti-Sikh riots: New SIT fails...

Counsel for the petitioner who has been instrumental in getting the order for a fresh SIT probe told a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra that a member's position was vacant in the SIT headed by former Delhi High Court judge SN Dhingra.

The SIT which is to probe 186 cases closed by the police, has yet to commence its work despite the court's order to submit its first report in August, the petitioner's counsel told the Bench.

CJI Misra said he was aware of the matter and he would soon look into it.

The Centre had on February 5 told the Supreme Court that ex-IPS officer Rajdeep Singh has refused to be a part of the new SIT and he would be replaced by former Indian Police Bureau Director General of Police NR Wasan. Serving IPS officer Abhishek Dular is the third member of the SIT.

Justice Dhingra was a trial judge when punishments were handed out in 1990s to the accused of the Trilokpuri massacre of 1984. Kishori Lal, dubbed as the 'butcher of Trilokpuri', was among those sentenced by him.

Almost 3,000 people were killed, most of them in Delhi, in the anti-Sikh riots that broke out following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984.

The Bench had in January noted that the previous SIT had not carried out further probe into these 186 cases in which closure reports were filed. It had taken the decision after perusing the report of a two-judge supervisory panel which scrutinized 241 cases relating to 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi closed by an earlier SIT formed by the NDA government for re-investigation.

Submitted on December 6, the report of the supervisory committee comprising Justice JM Panchal and Justice KSP Radhakrishnan was perused by the court.

The court had already made it clear that it would not reopen cases in which accused had been acquitted.

It had assigned the task of examining the said 241 cases closed by SIT to the supervisory committee which was to make recommendations as to whether the cases were rightly closed or not.

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More than two years after the Narendra Modi government set up the SIT to re-investigate serious anti-Sikh riots cases of 1984 that had been closed, it has managed to file charge sheets only in very small number of cases taken up for further probe.



# UDHAGAMANDALAM: QUEEN OF HILLS

Called the Queen of Hill Stations picturesque, green Udhagamandalam better known as Ooty is the most popular hill station in the South. Located in the Western ghats at a height of 2240m, Udhagamandalam is the headquarters of the Nilgiris district where the two ghats ranges meet. Nature has been generous with this region, which is by far the most beautiful in the state.

Apart from coffee and tea plantations, trees like conifers, eucalyptus, pine and wattle dot the hillside in Udhagamandalam and its environs. Summer temperature is rarely higher than 25°C with a minimum of 10°C and winter is distinctly cooler with a high of 21°C and a low 5°C. Curiously enough, this slice of paradise remained unknown to the great southern dynasties and it took the British to discover it in the early 1800s. They were, however, not the first inhabitants of this land as a tribe called Todas had been living there long before the British came, claiming that the Nilgiris had been their home since time immemorial. But the credit for modernising Udhagamandalam and making it accessible goes to the British who constructed the first railway line in the area and made it the summer capital of the Madras Presidency.

Ooty with smaller hill stations of Coonoor - 19 kms and Kothagiri. 31 kms from Ooty are the other hill stations of this district. Nilgiri is India's first biosphere. It has been declared as one of the 14 'hotspots' of the world because of its unique bio-diversity. Nilgiri presents a truly breath taking kaleidoscope of visual treats and soul stirring experience.

## Nilgiri Mountain Railway

The Nilgiri Mountain Railway built by the British in 1908 is a World Heritage Site. It's a 46-kilometre beautiful toy train journey that starts from Mettupalayam and goes through tunnels, curves, bridges and beautiful scenery to reach Ooty in five hours. From 300 feet to 7200 feet, the Ooty toy train is definitely a ride to cherish. Here's a tip – try to sit on the side that looks out in to the valley for the best views on the way up.

## Ooty Lake

Ooty Lake is a popular destination for picnicking, paddle boating and enjoying Ooty leisurely. Built in 1825, it is a 2.5-kilometre long lake meandering through the scenic beauty of the Nilgiris.

## Botanical Garden

Ooty Botanical Garden, spread over a huge area of 22 hectares and with more than 650 species of flowers and trees, is a horticulturist's delight. The highlight of the garden is a fossil tree that is believed to be 20 million years old. Another attraction here is the Toda tribe settlement towards the top of the garden. Be privy in to the lifestyle and culture of this tribe during your visit.

## HOW TO REACH OOTY

Ooty's colonial charm and innate splendor attracts tourists from all over the world every year. Ooty has a well linked network of Air, Rail and Road ways.

### By Air



The nearest airport to Ooty is located in Coimbatore. The hill station is at a distance of about 98 kilometers from the Coimbatore Airport. The airport is connected to Bangalore, Chennai, Mumbai and Cochin by Indian Airlines flights. In order to reach Ooty from the airport, one has to hire a taxi or a bus to reach Ooty.

### By Rail

The hill station of Ooty has a railway station of its own. It is called the Udhagamandalam railway station and can be reached by The Nilgiri Mountain Railway (a.k.a. Toy Train) from Mettupalayam. Though the toy train isn't very fast but the scenic beauty of this route attracts many tourists. Mettupalayam is the nearest major railway station to Ooty. One can also hire a private taxi to reach Ooty here. The distance of Ooty from Mettupalayam is about 52 km.

### By Road

Ooty is also connected to all the nearby towns and cities by good roads. The hill station connects to various other important cities of South India like Chennai, Bangalore, Mysore, Coimbatore, etc. The road to Ooty from Coimbatore is popular for its scenic beauty. As Ooty is located on NH 67 several tourist buses and taxis commute here without any hassle.

## Shopping in Ooty

Shopping in Ooty is one of the most exciting and thrilling experience for tourists who love to go on a shopping spree. Endowed with sprawling tea gardens and luxuriant green forest, Ooty is known for its fine flavored and aromatic tea leaves, delicious honey, eucalyptus oil and several fruits.

The shopping malls of Ooty are flooded with natural products of forests. Ooty is a paradise for those who love shopping.



Surrounded by tea gardens, the tourists can smell the enchanting scent of fresh tea leaves while taking a stroll in the long winding paths of Ooty. The fresh tea leaves are purchased by the tourists as a relic of the beautiful place of Ooty. Another prominent itinerary in the list of items while shopping in Ooty is the pure and sweet honey which is available in all the stores and shopping centers of the place. The natural oil of Eucalyptus has a great demand

among the shoppers because of its medicinal value. The markets of Ooty are full of fresh fruits that impart a colorful look to the place.

The exquisite piece of the embroidered items by the tribal community of Toda represents the rich traditional art and craft of South India. The delicately designed jewelry of Silver is another attraction for the tourists who purchase such items as souvenirs for their near and dear ones.

# IT'S FRANCE VS CROATIA IN FIFA WORLD CUP FINAL

## England's World Cup dream dashed as Croatia win semi-final in extra time

Croatia will compete in its first World Cup final after putting England to the sword in Moscow with a dramatic extra-time win.

For the third consecutive match, Croatia was forced to play 120 minutes after this semifinal ended 1-1 in normal time. But unlike in victories over Russia and Denmark, it did not need penalties to decide the outcome as Mario Mandzukic's 109th-minute winner proved decisive.

Kieran Trippier's first international goal, an exquisite free-kick in the fifth minute, gave England a lead which was negated when Ivan Perisic drew his team level in the second half.

After a poor first half, when Croatia's exertions to reach the last four looked to have taken their toll, Zlatko Dalic's men found seemingly endless reserves of energy after the break to set up a showdown in the Russian capital against France for the sport's ultimate prize.

Dalic had admitted pre-match that brutal last-16 and quarterfinal matches had impacted his side, but he also said there could be "no excuses." And despite falling behind, his players made sure there wouldn't be as Croatia, a country with a population of just four million - one-13th the size of England's - and ranked 20th in the world, continued its unexpected journey in Russia.

Though it is the third/fourth place play-off against Belgium that England must now prepare for and not a first final in 52 years, these have nonetheless been golden weeks for English football.

After years of misery at major tournaments -- from agonizing penalty shootout defeats to group stage exits and, arguably the nadir, defeat to Iceland at the European Championships two years ago -- it was a surprise that Gareth Southgate's team had even reached the last four, which made the



occasion all the more joyous for the country's fans.

Thousands had congregated in fan zones -- an estimated 30,000 people had gathered in London's Hyde Park alone where a special screening had been organized -- to watch England compete in a World Cup semifinal for the first time in 28 years. The country's National Grid even braced itself for a 2,000MW-plus power surge as it anticipated kettles being switched on and beers being grabbed from fridges.

At a time when the country's government was in chaos, football had offered a chance to forget, to unite and to hope.

Eleven of Southgate's 23-man squad featured in that humiliating Euro 2016 loss to Iceland. Lessons had been learned, progress made but when cold-blooded ruthlessness was needed, England's inexperience on a grand stage such as this told as its young players failed to capitalize on a dominant start.

The first half provided little evidence that it would be Croatia, a country which had last reached a World Cup semifinal in 1998, lining up in the Luzhniki Stadium Sunday.

Having taken the lead, England controlled the first half. For players taking part in a match described by their coach as the biggest in a generation, those in white shirts were also impressively composed, though there were occasions when they lost their cool in front of goal.

Harry Kane, the Golden Boot leader with six goals at this tournament, uncharacteristically missed a chance after Dele Alli and Jesse Lingard combined on the edge of the box to send their captain free at the near post. The striker could not curl his shot beyond Danijel Subasic.

In the 35th minute, it was Kane and Alli who created an opportunity for Lingard, but the Manchester United forward dragged his effort wide when he should have at least hit the target.

England managed just two shots on target in 120 minutes and, ultimately, a lack of cunning and guile was its problem.

Croatia posed little problems in attack as England's defense comfortably dealt with the crosses which came its way, while the pace of Raheem Sterling put Croatia's backline on its heels.

But after the break, Luka Modric -- who in this competition has strengthened his claim as the world's best midfielder -- weaved his influence; harrying, going in search of the ball and creating space. Eventually, England folded.

Sime Vrsaljko's cross from the right flank found Perisic and the forward beat a stooping Kyle Walker to guide the ball home with his outstretched boot for his 20th international goal.

Minutes later Perisic beat England's defense again but, fortunately for Southgate's men, the far post came to their rescue as the Croatian's driving shot hit the woodwork.

A lovely ball from Marcelo Brozovic then set up Mandzukic who, despite perfectly controlling the cross with his chest, could not steer the ball either side of Pickford. That was to be the last notable chance of normal time.

Calm restored in possession, England regained momentum in the opening stages of extra-time. Superb on-the-line defending from Sime Vrsaljko prevented John Stones from heading in Trippier's corner.

But Pickford was also called into action -- brilliantly denying Mandzukic from six yards with his foot, keeping his team in the match and enhancing his burgeoning reputation.

Mandzukic was ruthless on his next opportunity, however. Perisic headed into the box and the striker drifted in behind Stones to finish at the near post. It was poor defending and a lapse in concentration which ended England's dream of reaching what would have been only its second World Cup final.

Source: CNN

## India vs England: Rohit Sharma, Kuldeep Yadav guide visitors to victory

**NOTTINGHAM (TIP):** Already reeling from the heartbreak in football World Cup, England sports received a double blow within 24 hours as India added to their agony with a crushing eight-wicket win in cricket on July 12.

While the football heroes went down in a blaze of glory in Russia, fighting till the final whistle against Croatia, it was abject surrender by their cricketers at their bastion, Trent Bridge, in the opening One-day international.

Led by inspired performances from left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav and opener Rohit Sharma, India routed the hosts to go one-up in the three-match series.

After Kuldeep again exposed England players' limitations against spin bowling to bundle them out for 268, Rohit Sharma lit up the arena with a stroke-filled 137 (114 balls; 15 fours, 4 sixes).

He cashed in on the easy conditions to add 167 runs with skipper Virat Kohli (74, 82 balls) in an entertaining second-wicket partnership and made light of the chase. It was Rohit's second successive hundred, after the sublime unbeaten 100 in the T20 game at Bristol on Sunday.

It was a day when nothing went right for the England team. The England openers, Jonny Bairstow and Jason Roy put the new ball bowlers under pressure with a whirlwind 73-run partnership in 10.2 overs. But Kuldeep came up with a repeat



Kuldeep Yadav (left) took six wickets during India's first ODI encounter against England in Nottingham on July 12.

show of his opening act in the T20 series at Old Trafford -- where he got five wickets -- to again terrorise the batsmen with his bag of tricks to claim a six-wicket haul (10-0-25-6).

It was an embarrassing batting effort from Eoin Morgan's men with only Jos Buttler shining. Once he was out for 53, the rest of the innings caved in.

Source: HT

## SERENA WILLIAMS SETS UP WIMBLEDON FINAL CLASH AGAINST ANGELIQUE KERBER

Serena Williams is one win away from equalling Margaret Court's grand slam record of 24 titles after cruising past Julia Goerges into the Wimbledon final.

Williams has improved round by round at SW19 over the past two weeks and her power was a joy to behold as surprisesemi-finalist Goerges was beaten 6-2 6-4.

Prowling the baseline, Williams was aggressive and precise with her groundstrokes, keeping Goerges pinned back and working hard just to remain in rallies.

The sheer energy it took to stay with the 25th seed eventually took its toll, though, and Williams was ruthless in converting. Williams will now face Angelique Kerber in Saturday's final in a repeat of the 2016 showpiece, a match the American won in straight sets.

In the early stages Goerges was brimming with confidence, her serve and forehand getting some success that suggested an upset was not out of the question.





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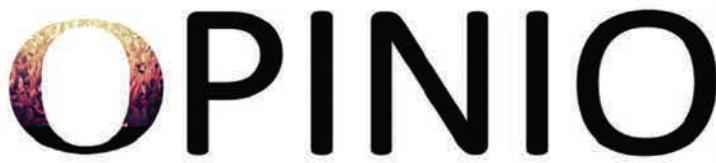
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